Operation Better Block, Inc. (OBB) is a nonprofit organization located in and serving the neighborhood of Homewood. The organization was founded in 1971 with the purpose of promoting community revitalization and restoring the community to its former vitality on a block-by-block basis. The mission of OBB is “To strategize, organize, and mobilize residents block by block to benefit the Homewood community.” This goal is achieved through providing services in five core areas: community organizing, community outreach, community safety, community development, and youth development. Along with this, OBB is the go-to place when residents have issues or concerns regarding their community. OBB works to create an economically viable, stable, safe, engaged and attractive neighborhood with a diverse population that is self-sufficient in its capacity to meet the ongoing challenges.

Homewood is a predominantly (94%) African-American community whose challenges include sub-standard schools, high crime, blighted and abandoned properties. Homewood was once a thriving neighborhood with a population of over 30,000. Through many significant events in history, Homewood began to deteriorate and presently has a population of just over 6,000. The residents and the neighborhood as a whole face many struggles. The poverty rate for children in Homewood is over 50%, which is double that of the City of Pittsburgh. Additionally, 50% of the total parcels in the community are vacant lots, and 23% of all residential addresses are vacant. This high level of concentrated poverty and vacant properties has led to severe educational and social consequences. Although Homewood is challenged in many facets, it is also one of Pittsburgh’s most promising neighborhoods. Within its one square mile are many assets which include: YMCA, YWCA, Health Center, CCAC Campus, Carnegie Library, Sickle Cell Society, Alma Illery Primary Care Health Center, and Afro-American Music Institute to name a few.

Here are some of the various aspects that an intern here at OBB typically works on and gains an understanding of:
- Micro level and macro level service provision
- Neighborhood dynamics
- Broad understanding of social and economic issues

Some of the day-to-day tasks that an intern would typically have are as follows:
- Learning and completing various methods of outreach
- Relationship building with residents and other entities (nonprofits, government)
- Planning and participating in community events
- Conducting surveys to assess properties
- Doing resident surveys throughout the neighborhood
- Mapping different neighborhood statistics and data
- Collecting property and resident data
- Creating spreadsheets/databases to manage data
- Working on resident engagement in neighborhood planning processes
- Implementing community plans

Policy/Research related initiatives:
- Land bank
- Tangled titles