

Multicultural Subcommittee

of the

COVID-19 COMMUNITY TASK FORCE

Meeting Minutes

Friday, June 12, 2020 | 3:00 - 4:00 P.M.

Google Meet | Online

Members: Chair Nubia Peña, Co-Chair Byron Russell, Co-Chair Ze Min Xiao, Aden Batar, Juan Becerra, Mayra Cedano, Rebecca Chavez-Houck, Dulce Díez, Jake Fitisemanu Jr., Mike Haddon, Emma E. Houston, Dustin Jansen, Deneiva Knight, Celina Milner, Mikelle Moore, Asha Parekh, Tami Pyfer, Ming Wang

Absent: Jess Anderson, Dr. Marc Babitz, Silvia Castro, Neelam Chand, Dr. Len Novilla

Guests: Joél Arvizo-Zavala, Rozanna Benally-Sagg, Jenny Hor, Claudia Loayza, Nate McDonald, Katherine Potter, Tinesha Zandamela, Yehemy Zavala Orozco

Welcome – Byron Russell, Co-Chair

Byron Russell welcomed attendees to the meeting.

Communications – Juan Becerra

The communications workgroup played the [interfaith public service announcement](#) (PSA). Penna Powers will later add Spanish subtitles. Their additional projects include a multicultural PSA and an influencer roster. The latter focuses on having community members serve as a spokesperson for media interviews and presentations.

Digital Equity – Deneiva Knight

The digital equity workgroup will focus on increasing access under three main themes:

- Broadband services
 - Compile a list of low-cost internet service providers (ISPs)
 - Partner with ISPs to pay for services on behalf of clients
 - Increase broadband coverage in rural areas and public WIFI overall
 - Create a statewide pledge asking ISPs to deliver affordable service
- Digital devices
 - Develop a statewide refurbishment program and donation drive for free or low-cost devices
- Digital literacy
 - Partner with organizations currently providing courses in different languages
 - Expand digital literacy learning to a broader audience including rural areas
 - Provide in-person digital literacy consultations
 - Develop basic skills learning modules
 - Leverage students to train older adults

The Utah State Library Division (USL) and Salt Lake City Public Library (SLCPL) are part of the subcommittee's resource partner coalition. They both received CARES Act funding to address the digital divide. USL partnered with the Utah Division of Indian Affairs to raise LTE towers in rural and tribal areas, which includes the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe and Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation. SLCPL launched the digital navigator program, which teaches digital literacy.

Food Security – Celina Milner

The food security workgroup will address access to culturally relevant emergency food, collaborate with multiple entities within the emergency food ecosystem and center racial and social food equity in emergency food responses.

Their current projects include:

- Add Comunidades Unidas (CU) as a Utah Food Bank neighborhood distribution point
- Support the implementation of the Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer program
 - The Utah State Board of Education (USBE) voted on and approved the data sharing that is needed to apply. USBE will coordinate efforts with the Utah Department of Workforce Services (DWS).
- Increase access to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and summer feeding programs
 - The state has completed all the waivers for SNAP.

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- The summer feeding program began on June 1. Anyone under the age of 18 can receive a free meal. Students are not required to provide identification, school information or be enrolled in the free or reduced meals program.
- Create a map of all food sites using data points from the Utah Food Bank, Utah 211 and FeedUT in partnership with the Utah Division of State History

The Cache County Food Pantry has relaxed pantry applications. The Church of Latter Day Saints will work with families to access food for free or have food boxes delivered if they are quarantining. Additionally, some households are receiving monetary support if they are sick and cannot work.

Housing and Social Services – Asha Parekh

The housing and social services workgroup will focus on the lack of availability and the inaccessibility of housing and social service programs for multicultural communities. They plan to address these issues in the following ways:

- Housing
 - Gather data and measure the impact of evictions on multicultural communities
 - Ensure members of the community can seek services and receive them
 - Track the time between the rental assistance approval date and the receipt in funding
- Mental health
 - Influence and shift mental health and substance use funding streams from the Utah Department of Human Services (DHS) to multicultural communities
 - Track data from DHS to ensure members of the community can seek services and receive them
- Unrestricted funds
 - Identify funding resources that will bridge the CARES Act funding gap for undocumented communities

Undocumented and immigrant households have called CU about family members testing positive for COVID-19, being hospitalized or passing away. Some families lack funding to pay for funeral and medical services. The Mexican Consulate provides some financial support but only for Mexican nationals. CU is also addressing workers' rights regarding the recent coronavirus outbreak at JBS, a beef processing plant in Hyrum. Both refugee and immigrant families feel disenfranchised and do not know where to report possible violations.

Other Business

- The subcommittee is submitting a budget proposal to the Utah Governor's Office of Management and Budget. This includes translation services and nonprofit funding.
- The subcommittee and World Trade Center Utah will host a webinar on how to access business loans through the Paycheck Protection Program on June 18. It will feature Giles Witherspoon-Boyd and Dean Hirabayashi.
- DWS is creating training videos in English and Spanish for community health workers on SNAP and unemployment insurance. Their Connections Team will dedicate resources to these workers if issues need to be escalated.
- DWS has experienced communication challenges with the rental assistance program in regards to undocumented households and is working with Utah Community Action (UCA) to address the community's concerns. Community health workers can directly contact UCA's chief executive officer for any issues.
- Gov. Gary Herbert announced that Nubia Peña and Dustin Jansen will join his executive team.

Action Items

- Connect the digital equity workgroup with the Hope Corps program – **Nubia Peña**
- Research the process in standardizing the applications in accessing emergency food and rental assistance – **Nubia Peña and Celina Milner**
- Connect Mayra Cedano with Jaceson Maughan of the Utah Labor Commission – **Nubia Peña**

Next Meeting

Friday, June 26, 2020 from 3-4 P.M. through Google Meet with updates from:

- Economic sustainability
- Health equity
- Language access