

Multicultural Subcommittee of the COVID-19 COMMUNITY TASK FORCE

Meeting Minutes

Friday, June 26, 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, Neelam Chand, Rebecca Chavez-Houck, Dulce Díez, Jake Fitisemanu Jr., Mike Haddon, Dustin Jansen, Celina Milner, Dr. Len Novilla, Asha Parekh, Tami Pyfer, Ming Wang

Absent: Jess Anderson, Dr. Marc Babitz, Silvia Castro, Juan Becerra, Mayra Cedano, Emma E. Houston, Deneiva Knight, Mikelle Moore

Guests: Susana Alba, Joél Arvizo-Zavala, Rozanna Benally-Sagg, Susi Felch-Malohifo'ou, Jenny Hor, Claudia Loayza, Jill Love, Nate McDonald, Katherine Potter, Ixchel Rangel, Oreta Tupola, Jeannette Villalta, Tinesha Zandamela, Yehemy Zavala Orozco

Welcome – Byron Russell

Byron Russell welcomed attendees to the meeting.

Racial Equity and Inclusion Fund – Nubia Peña

Select members of the subcommittee will review applications for the fund. The team is developing a process that removes systemic barriers. The anticipated grant period is from August to December.

Salt Lake City Stars Partnership – Nubia Peña

The Salt Lake City Stars launched an online auction to benefit the Racial Equity and Inclusion Fund. The donations will be distributed among multicultural nonprofits providing COVID-19 emergency assistance.

Utah Department of Workforce Services – Nate McDonald & Asha Parekh

- The Utah Department of Workforce Services (DWS) will hold a virtual job fair on June 30. Eighty employers are participating. The department is prompting job searches as the weekly stimulus unemployment insurance will expire in July.
- Food and Nutrition Service extended the application deadline for Pandemic EBT. DWS is resolving data issues with the Utah State Board of Education but the proposal is nearly complete. Families receiving SNAP assistance and students enrolled in the free and reduced meals program are eligible.
- DWS is working with community health workers (CHW) to train them on the SNAP and unemployment insurance program with materials in English and Spanish. CHW can directly contact the Connections Team if issues need to be escalated. Through the COVID Community Partnership, DWS partnered with the Utah Department of Health (UDOH) to work with CHW and community based organizations to distribute the information. Any group, however, can request access to the training.
- DWS also spoke with Logan representatives regarding the coronavirus outbreak in Cache County, which affected refugee and undocumented workers. The call provided resources for unemployment insurance and rental assistance.

Governor's Office of Economic Development Partnership – Ze Min Xiao

The subcommittee is working with the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) to reach a more diverse audience.

Spanish Press Conference – Claudia Loayza

In working with the Governor's Office and the Utah Division of Multicultural Affairs, Dr. Tamara Moores Todd of Intermountain Healthcare, Camera Ruppe of the Utah Labor Commission and Mayra Cedano of Comunidades Unidas reported on the immediate needs of the Latino community regarding COVID-19. The group hopes to convene another briefing in a few weeks.

Health Equity – Dulce Díez

- In forming the COVID Community Partnership, the state's racially diverse legislators appropriated \$250,000 to the Office of Health Disparities (OHD) to incorporate CHW within COVID-19 related services. OHD is working with the Governor's Office of Management and Budget to expand funding until December. The initiative also expands the hiring of CHW to 80 individuals. For undocumented and mix-status households, UDOH contracted with the Association for Utah Community Health to provide wraparound services.
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- The University of Utah is collecting statewide epidemiological data related to COVID-19. In the second phase, the workgroup is supporting their efforts by tailoring the project to the needs of racially diverse groups and collecting information on the social determinants of health.
- CHW have expressed difficulty in understanding information relayed to them from UDOH regarding the contact tracing group. UDOH has hired 40 bilingual contact tracers to alleviate this responsibility from CHW.

Language Access – Ze Min Xiao

- The purpose of the workgroup is to collaborate with existing frameworks and address gaps within language access.
- A short-term goal is engaging the community through a town hall listening tour. In partnership with the communications workgroup, the language access team will assess the challenges and solutions, which includes determining a community's preferred communication style and partnering with community organizations to capture responses. The workgroup will develop questions and standardize a method to collect feedback.
- The long-term goals include reversing or modifying the state code designating English as the state's official language. This effort will require legislative, executive, community and tribal support. Another goal is to create a language translation and interpretation volunteer taskforce. The plan includes recruiting volunteers and paid staff during emergencies, developing training and examining existing standards.

Economic Sustainability – Nubia Peña

- The workgroup may develop policy briefs that elevate and highlight best and culturally relevant practices to increase inclusion, diversity, and equity in Utah's workplace culture.
- Loan applications for the Paycheck Protection Program closes on June 30. The World Trade Center Utah, Goldman Sachs and Suazo Business Center have hosted training for multicultural communities.
- GOED is hiring an individual to oversee support within diverse markets.
- The Pacific Island Business Alliance provides non-registered businesses, microenterprises and sole proprietors with microlending loans as some cannot access emergency funding. The process, however, may be too time consuming for a small loan. Zee shared that the International Rescue Committee provides loans that are not exclusive to the refugee population, which these groups can potentially apply for. The workgroup can also consider and discuss additional solutions with GOED.

Other Business

- "A Mask for Every Utahn" is a statewide program that provides each household with up to six free masks. The subcommittee has partnered with GOED to provide them to nonprofits serving multicultural communities and personal protective equipment to diverse businesses.
- Salt Lake County announced the cancellation of free coronavirus testing, which caused communities in areas such as Glendale to believe all testing sites were not operating.
- Among federally recognized tribes in Utah, the Navajo Nation has been hit the hardest by coronavirus. Other reservations have experienced less cases. Native students in rural areas also lack internet access. The Governor's Rural Partnership Board is supporting rural broadband service and teleworking efforts.
- Community members have requested for more coronavirus testing on the weekends. While Intermountain Healthcare provides this option, the wait time for results has families deciding between taking time off work or heading back. The Wellness Bus has a faster turnaround time for testing results but they do not provide services on the weekend. Part of the issue is the small capacity to process tests and contact trace in a timely manner. The Wellness Bus focuses on serving diverse populations and those without health insurance but services have been utilized by individuals outside of these categories, which takes resources away from these communities.
- Some healthcare assistants only test people with symptoms, which deters those who are asymptomatic from accessing tests.

Next Meeting

- Friday, July 10, 2020 from 3-4 P.M. through Google Meet with updates from:
 - Digital Equity
 - Food Security
 - Housing & Social Services