

Multicultural Advisory Committee of the State of Utah's COVID-19 Response

Meeting Minutes

Friday, May 21, 2021 | 3:00 - 4:00 P.M.
Google Meet | Online

Members: Chair Nubia Peña, Co-Chair Byron Russell, Co-Chair Ze Min Xiao, Heather Borski, Dulce Díez, Emma E. Houston, Dustin Jansen, Dr. Len Novilla, Asha Parekh, Brian Yazzie

Absent: Jess Anderson, Aden Batar, Juan Becerra, Silvia Castro, Mayra Cedano, Neelam Chand, Rebecca Chavez-Houck, Brittney Cummins, Jake Fitisemanu Jr., Mikelle Moore, Ming Wang, Nicholina Womack

Guests: Ciriac Alvarez Valle, Dr. Joél Arvizo-Zavala, Luna Banuri, Nancy Basinger, Rozanna Benally-Sagg, Mayra Cardozo, Angel Castillo, Maegan Castleton, RyLee Curtis, Valentina De Fex, Maria Garcia, Tina Groves, Jenny Hor, Claudia Loayza, Nate McDonald, Joscelynne Mendoza, Angelo Papastamos, Betty Sawyer, Adam Snow, Jeremy Taylor, Taysha Tiatia, Oreta Tupola, Jeannette Villalta, Marti Woolford, James Yapias

Welcome – Byron Russell, Co-Chair

Byron Russell welcomed attendees to the meeting.

Language Access – Ze Min Xiao, Rozanna Benally-Sagg & Mayra Cardozo

- The Public Information Officer (PIO) Survey is being sent out to identify best practices locally and statewide. The survey will identify barriers to support diverse communities around communication and the vaccine and pandemic-related information. The Language Access group partnered with Language Mission JIC, the Communications workgroup, and the Utah Department of Health.
 - The information will be used to create a best practices document for PIOs statewide, and a PIO curriculum development.
- The survey will inform an outreach panel at the September conference. The group is currently coordinating with Joe Dougherty of the Utah Department of Public Safety, and part of the PIO leadership chapter in Utah, to create the conference proposal. The panel will be centered on the lessons learned in equity and communications. Different speakers such as members from the Governor's Office, and grassroots organizations will participate. The recording will be available online on the PIO website alongside additional resources.
- The vaccine clinic calendar is now available with Claudia Loayza as the manager. Any information that the calendar should host should be emailed to Claudia.
- Outreach marketing materials will be shared in later weeks.

Housing & Social Services – Asha Parekh & Dr. Joél Arvizo-Zavala

- The Diversity in Utah Data Book helped showcase disparities and will aid in future programs with housing assistance.
- The largest demographic of rental relief is white. Overall good distribution across the state based on the general population, currently the Latix population around 23%. The bigger piece around housing assistance will take from the published data book to help improve further issues.
- From the recent Community Health Worker (CHW) Survey there is a clear need for the community to have more CHWs with their knowledge in equity outreach regarding vaccinations. The research is to provide the state with data and information to embrace a more community-oriented service. Spanish-speaking CHWs showed they are spending more time committed to COVID-related support.
- The need for more professional learning includes: data analysis, evictions proceedings, addressing discrimination capacity in technology. One of the things COVID has shown is how vital technology is. Community-based decision-making around professional learning is key to connecting to the culture of collaboration and growth.
- Organizational supports such as managers and supervisors of CHWs are one of the most important factors in their success. Leadership and teamwork is crucial for CHW efficiency.
- Further research into the sense of connectedness. In terms of compassionate learning CHWs are more aware of the work they do than anybody because of friendships with community members.
- Future reports will include more demographic details of the application members.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Utah – Nancy Basinger

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- Currently the mentor program has a waitlist of forty women who want to be mentors (“Bigs”) but currently only five girl mentees (“Littles”) are registered. Big Brothers Big Sisters is reaching out for more children (6-16 age range) to apply for the program. There is a flyer available that will be sent to the group that has more information. There’s an option to sign up your child, or to refer a child.
- Mentors provide positive results for young children. The parents or guardians are involved in the process with once a month talks about youth protection, and open communication with the mentor. This means that children and parents or guardians have to want to be part of the process.
- Nubia Peña mentioned that recently Gov. Spencer Cox did a service project with Volunteers of America and the biggest needs are meals, and mentors. Has Big Brothers Big Sisters developed a system for those in foster care, are homeless, or without a guardian with the mentor program?
 - The program has a significant number (around 20 percent) of those in the foster care system—the language used is normally parent or guardian. Big Brothers Big Sisters is open for further suggestions on how to increase that percentage. The current model requires an adult in the child's life as they will be part of the progress.
 - Nubia will do an email introduction with a peer prevention specialist and the juvenile justice early intervention program, who can help out further.
- In terms of representation of the mentors, the program always focuses on diversity. With Utah’s demographics, white mentors are currently the most common. Some mentors speak Spanish, but the total percentage is unknown. Further suggestions on how to increase diversity is appreciated.
- Currently they have partnerships with schools and religious communities across the state. Those on the call are open to furthering the partnerships with school districts to increase awareness and increase Spanish-speaking mentors.
- James Yapias has done previous work with Girls on the Run in the Salt Lake City School District. Girls from all walks of life need mentors and are available for further partnership with Salt Lake City.
- Ciriac Alvarez Valle has people who are interested in being mentors, and will reach out for further communication.
- Angel Castillo has had great experiences with the Ogden School District and has discovered that most schools are open for partnership if asked. Angel is also open for further partnership opportunities.

Other Business

- The Utah Division of Multicultural Affairs (MCA) says goodbye to fellow Taysha Tiatia as she moves onto another opportunity. Taysha oversaw the majority of the 2021 Multicultural Youth Leadership Day planning, as well as other countless projects with staff members. We thank Taysha for her dedication to her fellowship with MCA.
- Maria Garcia with NeighborWorks has a program to help homeowners but currently the budget only allows for support in Salt Lake City. How can we increase funding to get people access to these programs?
 - Nate McDonald mentioned that there have been federal dollars given to the state and some groundwork has already been done. Looking to communicate further to get this process started.

Next Meeting

Friday, June 4, 2021 from 3:00–4:00 P.M. through Google Meet.