

ONEROUGE

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

Facilitated by

 **WALLS PROJECT**
thewallsproject.org

onerouge.org | 225-434-0515 Ext 4

BY THE NUMBERS

IN 2021 WE SAW

48

ONEROUGE
COMMUNITY
CALLS (2021)

160

ONEROUGE
COMMUNITY
SPEAKERS (2021)

3

ONEROUGE
COALITIONS
BUILT (2021)

12

MEMBERS
OF THE ORC
LEADERSHIP
COUNCIL

400

MEMBERS IN THE
ONEROUGE
COMMUNITY NETWORK



ONEROUGE COALITIONS

MISSION

The movement called OneRouge Coalitions will foster an inclusive community culture in our city that leads to equitable opportunities for all.

CONTEXT OF NEED

The compounding crises of 2020—including a global pandemic, racially motivated violence, and widespread protesting—clearly exposed how the structural inequities in American society are defined along lines of race. These unprecedented and disruptive circumstances have sparked a fierce sense of urgency to collaborate in support of systemic change.

Raymond Jetson of MetroMorphosis and Casey Phillips of The Walls Project codified the idea of “stronger together”—a saying popularized by local Capital Area bumper stickers—uniting the energies and resources of their respective nonprofit organizations through a Document of Cooperation. Their hope was to spark a movement and create an environment that will help build prosperity and empower people of the city to accelerate their own lives.






RESPONSE

The response is OneRouge Coalitions, a movement which adheres to a formalized collective impact framework in the hopes of creating systemic change in the capital region by disrupting drivers of poverty. By adhering to the collective impact model, OneRouge is:

- Advancing strategies, programs, and teams to mobilize groups of community members into systems-level collective action, expand individual and community capacities, build prosperity, and establish sustainability for individuals and communities in need.
- Encouraging a culture of inclusion resulting in increased representation of those who may not have participated in the past and taking an iterative approach in strategies and programming to achieve systemic change.
- Promoting strategies and programs that center the voice of those with lived experience and allow for co-creation of solutions that position individuals for career advancement, entrepreneurship, academic success, and improved health and well-being.
- Supporting strategies and programs that will improve the community—making it safer, more secure, and a welcoming place in which to live, work, recreate, and invest.
- Supporting systems that promote positive change within and for the benefit of individuals, private businesses and industry, educational institutions, non-profit organizations, and government.

HOW IT WORKS

OneRouge will establish a dedicated community coalition for each driver of poverty—such as access to fresh, healthy food or affordable housing—and will follow the conditions of movement building in support of the collective impact framework. These conditions are:

 <p>Shared Community Aspiration</p>	 <p>Strategic Learning</p>	 <p>High-leverage activities and loose/ tight working relationships</p>	 <p>Inclusive and authentic community engagement</p>	 <p>Containers for Change</p>
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OneRouge Coalitions maximizes stakeholder engagement within each coalition through organizational structures and processes that encourage and elevate relevant voices. Structures and processes are dependent on (1) current community need and corresponding coalition action, (2) levels of community and volunteer participation, and (3) a particular coalition's phase of work (organizing, launching, ramping up, evaluating, strategic planning, etc.). Following describes these actions:

- Identify specific short-, medium-, and long-term goals for each coalition.
- Create an organizational structure within each coalition to support goals, conduct work, and evaluate performance.
- Structures may include establishing a Coalition Lead, a Coalition Steering Committee, an Advisory Council, and subcommittees representing Practitioners, Data/Policy Work, and Fund Development leaders for each coalition. Coalition structures can expand, and contract as needed.
- Conduct frequent open meetings that create safe spaces of equity and truth among all participants. Encourage coalition engagement with community stakeholders in support of (1) information sharing, (2) networking among stakeholders, and (3) building and maintaining momentum in pursuit of goals. Meeting frequency may include combinations of general assembly meetings and coalition committee/subcommittee meetings.
- Current coalition practice includes one general assembly meeting and one subcommittee meeting per month but is not required of all coalitions.

The collective impact process, though often seen as slow and laborious, results in long-term, systemic change. Plus, an investment in collective action that is specifically focused on one specific driver will likely also impact another driver—indirectly increasing the value and impact of other types of services and programming currently offered in the community. For example, this is particularly true of education, health and wellbeing, career development, and many other human conditions that rely heavily on housing affordability and stability. So, until the issue of safe affordable housing or hunger is addressed, many of the community's other types of social and public service offerings will never realize their full, intended impact.

WHO IS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS MOVEMENT?

OneRouge Coalitions work focuses on BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) and LMI (Low- to Middle-Income) populations and engages Louisiana's capital region residents of all ages, meeting participants at their level of interest and need. Creating a comprehensive OneRouge Coalitions system requires the development of separate coalitions, each focused on a specific element or driver of poverty. Should the number of Drivers of Poverty change, so then will the number of coalitions change. Initial coalitions will be formed in support of the following Drivers:

- Access to healthy food (coalition has been formed—CAFÉ, Capital Area Food Equity)
- Access to quality education and challenges to completing graduation and obtaining relevant certifications (coalition has been formed)
- Access to affordable transportation (coalition has been formed)
- Lack of homeownership and escalating rental costs (subject matter experts have been interviewed for early stages of coalition formation)
- High number of households with children living in poverty
- High poverty rates and low wages for single mothers
- High teen birth rates
- Growing number of neighborhoods with concentrated poverty
- English proficiency and cultural differences

HOW WALLS IS HELPING

The Walls Project's commitment to OneRouge Coalitions is demonstrated in dedicated goals outlined in Walls' formal, Board-approved organizational strategic plan, which reads:

- Goal #1 Walls will create an actionable plan to increase internal capacity to sufficiently support OneRouge Coalitions and the expected expansion of additional coalition work (including coalitions focused on food equity, education, and transportation).
- Goal #2 Walls will develop a strategic plan to increase resources in a variety of areas, including but not limited to funding, human resources, shared responsibilities/duties, ways to "share" or split income, alliances/community partners.
- Goal #3 Walls will maximize the potential of the collaboration between MetroMorphosis and Walls in support of OneRouge Coalitions with branding, networks, roles and responsibilities, and more.
- Goal #4 Walls will identify the union and intersection of elements within all working coalition areas to (1) address issues in a comprehensive way while also (2) finding efficiencies among the different coalitions.
- Goal #5 Recognizing the origins and growth of ORC in response to extraordinary community need brought on by COVID, as well as the increased frequency of storms and flooding as a result of climate change, Walls will increase emphasis on working in areas related to disaster planning, preparedness, and potential response on behalf of members of the community.

The Walls Project is currently supporting OneRouge Coalitions as follows:

- Hosting weekly Friday Zoom calls (to date, there have been 100+)
- Grant writing (thus far, ORC coalitions have secured over a half million dollars in funding)
- Communications / Graphic Design (many video, in-person, and virtual presentation have been given)
- Podcasts / Media (the second season is about to begin!)
- Data collection, storage, and analysis
- Serving as Financial Agent
- Providing physical collaboration space (at Walls' HQ on America Street)
- Increased consideration of emergency planning and readiness (on behalf of broader community needs—well beyond the needs of The Walls Project)

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

Give Your Time

OneRouge wants people and groups from all walks of life to participate in this collaborative and consensus-building movement. Whether it's attending a Friday call, helping to lead a coalition, or suggesting the movement reach out to a subject matter expert—it's all valuable to the collective impact process.

Share Your Talent and Leadership Abilities

Collective impact only works when the voices of relevant lived experience(s) are recognized, elevated, and valued. Talent and leadership in the process is about bringing specialized knowledge and/or subject matter expertise to the table, but including all kinds of stakeholders in the discussion is critical to long-term success.

Provide Funding

Conducting work always has a cost; even if the cost is not in dollars. Energy and focus for one subject or effort, detracts energy and focus from another subject or effort. There comes a time when additional, dedicated resources are needed to deal with everything that needs to be done. Those additional resources—well beyond generous volunteers or in kind donations—require financial support to secure more manpower, time- or work-saving equipment, and/or highly efficient and/or automated solutions.

Join the Team!

Join the ranks, energy, and community spirit of folks on the following pages who are consistently involved in OneRouge work!



onerouge.org



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OneRouge Team



Raymond A. Jetson
MetroMorphosis



Casey Phillips
The Walls Project



Sheretta Harrison
MetroMorphosis



Helena Williams
The Walls Project



Pepper Roussel
*OneRouge Program
Coordinator*

Additional support from: Judy Touzin, MetroMorphosis; Samantha Morgan, The Walls Project; Tom Donley, The Walls Project; Mary Bergeron, The Walls Project

Leadership Council



Rev. Alexis Anderson
PREACH
Executive Director



Donald Andrews
Southern University
Dean of College of Business



Alfredo Cruz
Let's Fix It!



Adonica Duggan
*Baton Rouge Alliance for
Students*
CEO



Gwen Hamilton
*New Schools for Baton
Rouge*



Dustin LaFont
Front Yard Bikes
Executive Director



Korey Patty
*New Orleans BioInnovation
Center*
Regional Economic
Competitiveness Officer



Katie Pritchett
Baton Rouge Health District
Operations Director



Myra Richardson
Red Torch Consulting
Owner



Frankie Robertson
The Amandla Group
President



Jan Ross
*Huey & Angelina
Wilson Foundation*
Executive Vice President



Karen Stagg
Connections for Life



Courtney Scott
*Office of Mayor-President
Sharon Weston-Broome*
Assistant Chief Administrative Officer

Coalition Fiscal Partners



Coalition Core Partners



Coalition Core Partners con'td



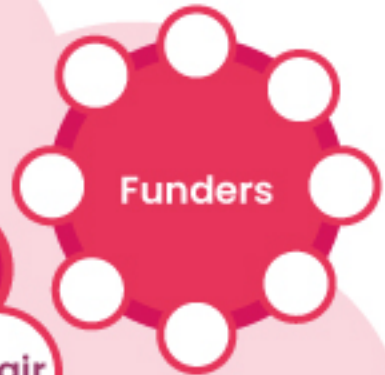
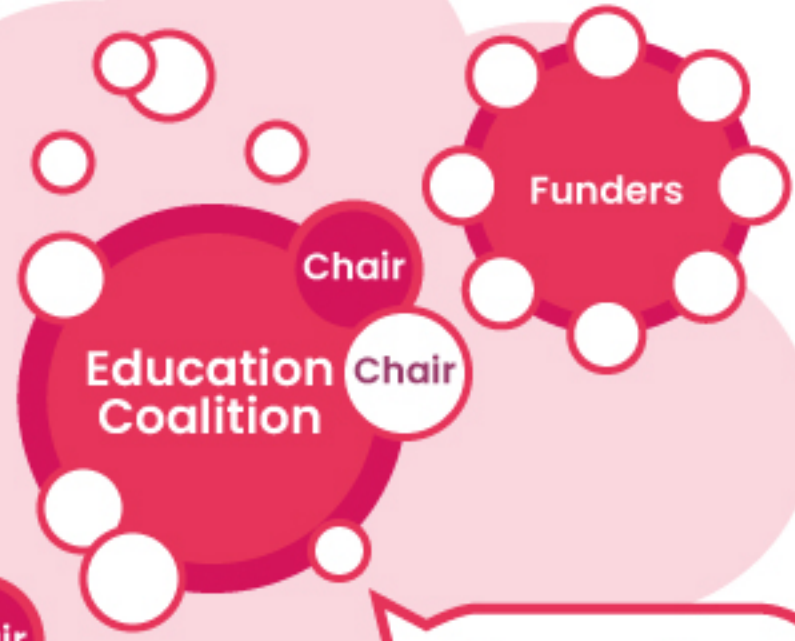


COLLECTIVE IMPACT FRAMEWORK

Shared Aspiration & Strategic Learning

Strategic Guidance

Partner-Driven Action



○ = community partner (e.g., nonprofit, data & research, business, public agency, resident)

Understanding **ONEROUGE** Coalitions

Watch the walk-through video here: youtu.be/INkOtE7vfBc





Our guiding drivers: 9 Drivers of Poverty

9 Drivers of Poverty

**Food Equity
Access**

**Social Mobility &
Transportation**

**Education
Access**

**Housing
Access**

**Teen
Families**

**Equal Pay
for All**

**Cultural & Language
Differences**

**Urban
Development**

**Childhood
Poverty**



9 Drivers
of Poverty

Collective
Impact 3.0

OneRouge
Coalitions

Our guiding process:
Collective Impact 3.0

The Leadership Paradigm

Movement Building

*“Act like an
organization,
but think like a
movement.”*

The Five Conditions

- Community Aspiration
- Strategic Learning
- High Leverage Activities
- Inclusive Community Engagement
- Containers for Change

9 Drivers
of Poverty

Collective
Impact 3.0


OneRough
Coalitions

Our guiding groups: OneRouge Coalitions



Shared aspiration:

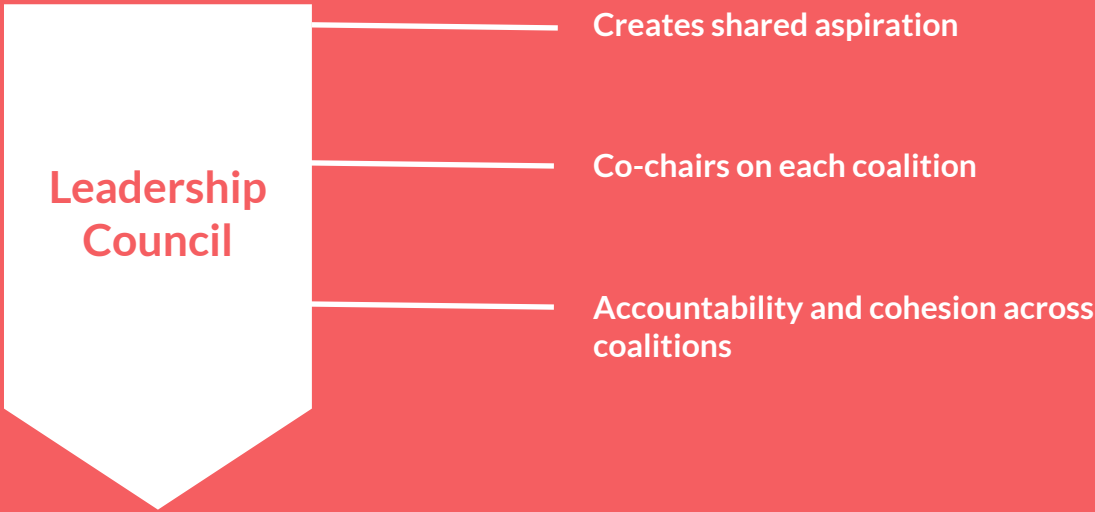
Foster an inclusive community culture in our city that leads to equitable opportunities for all.



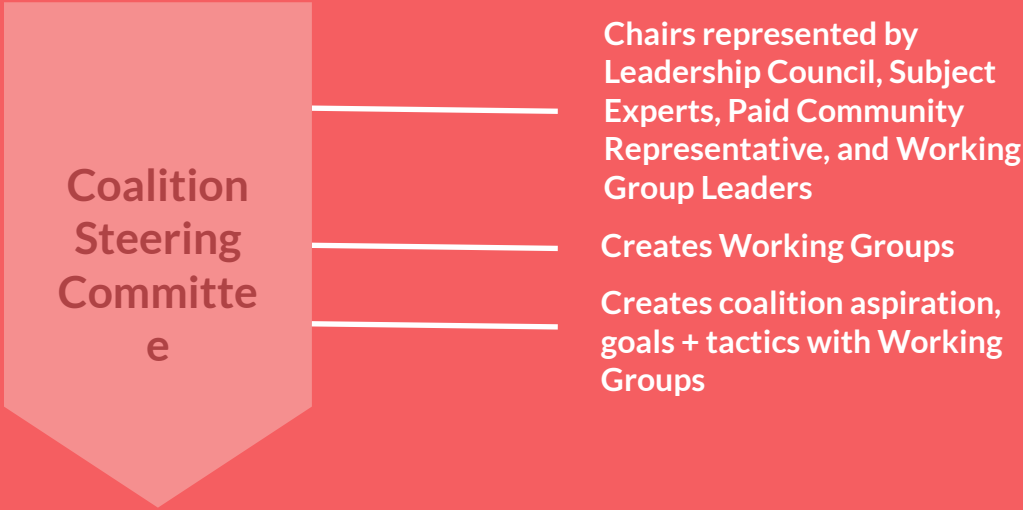
Framework for Action:



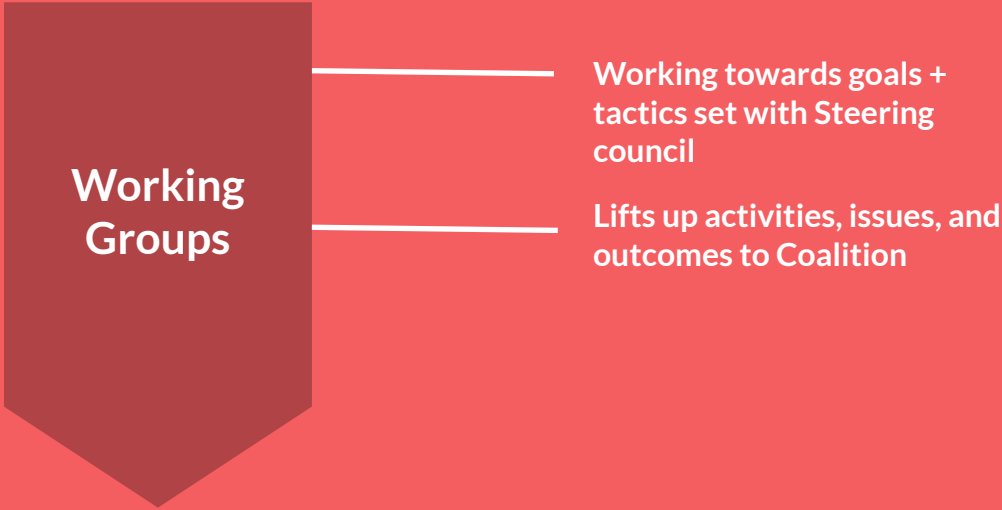
Framework for Action:

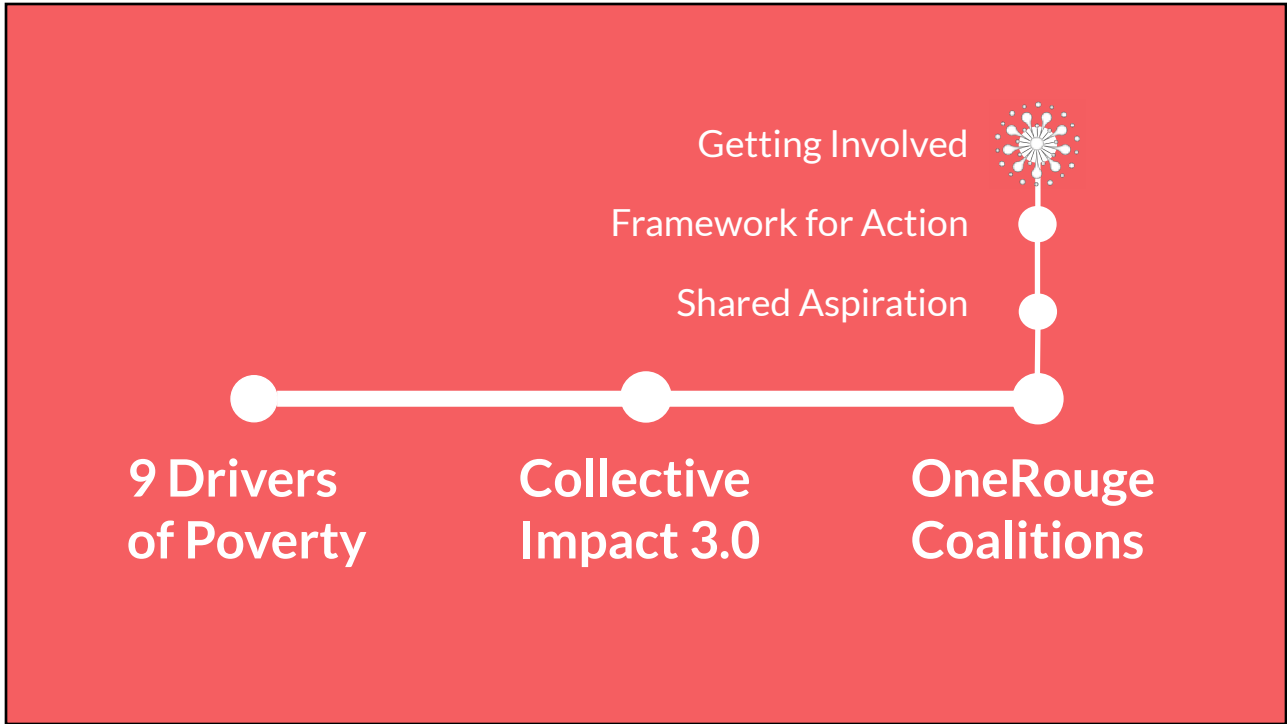


Framework for Action:



Framework for Action:





Getting involved:

- JOIN OUR WORKING GROUPS
- ATTEND COALITION MEETINGS



NINE DRIVERS OF POVERTY

Healthy food access in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty

Access to affordable transportation

Lack of home ownership & escalating rental cost

A growing number of neighborhoods in poverty

High number of households with children living in poverty

Lack of educational attainment

Limited English proficiency and cultural barriers

High teen birth rates

Low wages and high poverty rates for single mothers

These barriers were created in thought-partnership with the Mayor's Poverty Task Force of our sister-city, Dallas, TX, and HUD in order to assess, identify, and provide solutions towards ending poverty.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE DRIVERS

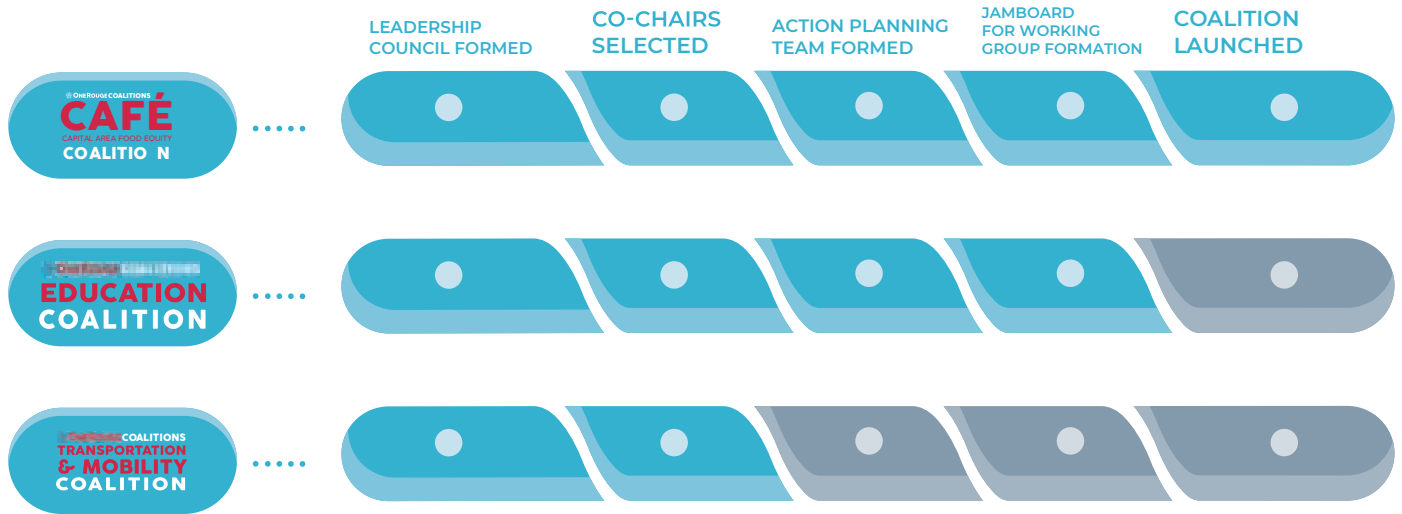
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ONEROUGE COALITIONS

Thus far, OneRouge has established coalition frameworks for food equity, education and transportation/mobility. Affordable housing is next.



Coalition	Coalition Leads	Current Status
CAFÉ (Capital Area Food Equity) Coalition	Jan Ross (Huey & Angelina Wilson Foundation) Dr. Caitlyn Scales (The Three O’Clock Project) Community Member (TBD)	Framework determined Case for Support written Funding secured Working groups are organizing Multiple public meetings have been conducted
Education Coalition	Adonica Pelichet Duggan (Baton Rouge Alliance for Students) Dustin LaFont (FrontYard Bikes) Community Member (TBD)	Preliminary planning meetings have been held No public meetings yet
Transportation & Mobility Coalition	Cheri Soileau (CATS) Rev. Alexis Anderson (PREACH) Community Member (TBD)	Preliminary planning meetings have been held No public meetings yet
Affordable Housing Coalition	No individuals have been identified for leadership roles	Subject Matter Experts have been interviewed for preliminary understanding of local market needs

Additional community partners identified by the coalition to work on the Nine Drivers of Poverty:

1. CAFE - Capital Area Food Equity Coalition

Aetna/CVS
American Heart Association
BASF
Baton Rouge Area Foundation
Baton Rouge Food Bank
Baton Rouge General
Blue Cross/Blue Shield Louisiana Foundation
BREADA
BREC
Build Baton Rouge
Capital Area United Way
Capital Region Planning Commission
Co-City Baton Rouge
Center for Planning Excellence
Department of Children & Family Services
EBR Schools
ExxonMobil
Feeding Louisiana
Focus Foods
Foundation for Louisiana
Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady
Geaux Get Healthy
Grief Recovery Center
Healthy Blue
Healthy BR
Huey & Angelina Wilson Foundation
Louisiana 4-H Foundation
Louisiana Budget Project
Louisiana Public Health Institute
LSU Ag Center
Lockett Farms
MetroMorphosis
New Schools for Baton Rouge
Ochsner

Pennington Family Foundation
Southern University Ag Center
Sweet Jones Farms
The Three O'Clock Project
Top Box Foods Louisiana
Urban Footprint
United States Department of Agriculture
Women, Infants and Children
YMCA

2. Education Coalition

100 Black Men of Metro Baton Rouge
Baton Rouge Alliance for Students
Baton Rouge Community College
Baton Rouge Youth Coalition
Big Buddy
Boys & Girls Club
Build Baton Rouge
Capital Area Finance Authority
Capital Area Promise
Co-City Baton Rouge
Cristo Rey Baton Rouge
Diocese of Baton Rouge Catholic Schools
East Baton Rouge Parish Schools
East Baton Rouge Parish Housing Authority
Empower 225
East Baton Rouge Parish School System
Front Yard Bikes
Futures Fund
Headstart
Humanities Amped
Kid Orchestra
Kimble Properties
New Schools for Baton Rouge + CHANGEMAKERS cohorts
Partners Southeast
Southern University
Louisiana 4-H Foundation
Louisianans for Prison Alternatives
Louisiana State University

ONEROUGE COALITIONS

Mayor-President Broome (Cradle-K)
MetroMorphosis
Mid City Redevelopment Alliance
National Coalition of 100 Black Women
NexusLA
Power Coalition
Scotlandville CDC
Southern Poverty Law Center
Step Up Louisiana
Teach for America
Urban Restoration and Enhancement Corporation
Young Entrepreneurs Academy
Goodwill

3. Transportation & Mobility Coalition

Bike Baton Rouge
Build Baton Rouge
Capital Area Transit System
Sierra Club
Together Baton Rouge

4. Affordable Housing Coalition

Kimble Properties
East Baton Rouge Parish Housing Authority
Partners Southeast
Habitat for Humanity

5. Neighborhoods of Concentrated Poverty Focus Area

Empower 225
Justice Act Consultant and My Community Cares Coordinator
Louisianans for Prison Alternatives
My Community Cares

Power Coalition
Step Up Louisiana
Southern Poverty Law Center
Youth Oasis

6. High Teen Birth Rates Focus Area

Aetna/CVS
Birth Equity
Care South
The Links Incorporated

7. Neighborhoods of Concentrated Poverty Focus Area

C.A.D.A.V.
Empower 225
Louisianans for Prison Alternatives
My Community Cares
Power Coalition
Project 70805
Southern Poverty Law Center
Step Up Louisiana

8. Equal Pay For All Focus Area

Empower 225
Louisianans for Prison Alternatives
LSU Women's Center
Planned Parenthood
Power Coalition
My Community Cares
Southern Poverty Law Center
Sexual Trauma Awareness and Response
Step Up Louisiana
YWCA

9. English Second Language Citizens, Immigration & Cultural Focus Area

The 821 Project
Baton Rouge International School

COLLECTIVE IMPACT 3.0

AN EVOLVING FRAMEWORK FOR COMMUNITY CHANGE

MARK CABAJ AND LIZ WEAVER

FROM THE IMPROBABLE TO THE POSSIBLE

In 2015, the leaders of Medicine Hat, a small city of 60,000 on the Canadian prairies, declared that they had eliminated chronic homelessness. While admitting their limited influence on many of the drivers that create homelessness – such as poor jobs, mental health, family breakdown, or high-priced housing – they had developed a system that can place someone in an affordable house, with an array of support services, within 10 days of being on the street. Emboldened by this success, Medicine Hat is now turning its attention to eliminating food insecurity and poverty.

The citizens of this prairie city are not alone in their efforts to “move the needle” on complex issues. Across Canada there are hundreds of community-wide initiatives to end homelessness, reduce poverty, improve early childhood development outcomes, increase high school graduation rates, and strengthen community safety. There are thousands more across the world.

Many of them are inspired and informed by the Collective Impact (CI) framework. CI was coined in 2011 by John Kania and Mark Kramer of FSG Consulting. Their Stanford Social Innovation Review article of the same name distills some of the key ingredients of successful community efforts to move “from fragmented action and results” to “collective action and deep and durable impact.” These ingredients (or “conditions”) are a common agenda, shared measurement, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication, and backbone support.ⁱ

The article’s effect on the field of community change has been electric. The innovators whose work the article described praised its distillation of the key elements of an approach to community change. Paul Born, a collective impact pioneer, said: “Kania and Kramer understood the work we were doing so well, and described it so effectively, that they essentially laid out a new operating system for community change.” Jay Connor, an early practitioner and coach for community-wide collaboration, noted: “I am grateful to FSG for what they have done. We have been trying in our own way to describe these ideas for so many years, trying in our own way to explain it clearly. We can spend more time doing the hard work on the ground.”

The article excited early adopters even more. Countless community organizations, government agencies, philanthropies, and socially minded businesses embraced CI in hopes that it might help them to make deep and durable changes in the social, economic, and even environmental challenges facing their communities. Tom Wolff, an experienced coalition builder (and vocal critic of CI), credited the response as a “revolution” in the way that governments and funders thought about and approached community change.ⁱⁱ

FSG and other CI advocates have done much to expand and elaborate the original five conditions described in that first article. They have laid out what they feel are the pre-conditions for CI, the phases of the approach, a variety of key practices (e.g., strategy, governance, funding, evaluation), and more recently, eight key principles of practice. The [Collective Impact Forum](#), an online community administered by FSG, is one of the world's most comprehensive resources on community change and a platform for practitioners to share and build knowledge, skills, and tools for the work. CI is now a permanent—even dominant—part of the landscape of community change.

AN EVOLUTION IN THE REVOLUTION

We believe that it's time for an evolution in the revolution. While the CEO of one philanthropic organization argues that support and buy-in for CI is now at "fever pitch," there are two compelling reasons for advocates to find ways to upgrade—not simply elaborate upon—the framework.ⁱⁱⁱ

First, there has been enough experimentation with CI, by diverse communities working on diverse issues in diverse settings, to shed light on its limitations. These include: insufficient attention to the role of community in the change effort; an excessive focus on short-term data; an understatement of the role of policy and systems change; and an over-investment in backbone support.^{iv} Our colleague Mark Holmgren warns that if these limitations are not taken seriously, the field may experience a "pendulum swing" away from collective change efforts.^v

The response of the FSG team to the feedback has been excellent. They have welcomed the critiques on the CI Forum, admitted the framework's shortcomings, and worked diligently with others to address them or expand on areas that deserve elaboration. Their recently released "principles of practice for collective impact," for example, address many concerns about the framework. As Karen Pittman, head of the Forum on Youth Investment, noted: "Kania, Kramer and the FSG team get high marks in my book for being consistently open to adapting their theory to better reflect practice."^{vi}

Yet the criticisms continue to roll in. And it is good that they do. Like all frameworks, CI reveals a great deal about how people tackle tough issues at scale, but is simply unable to capture the full complexity of the work. It is important for those who have devoted their lives to community change to point out where these gaps or weaknesses lie, because the stakes involved are so high.

Secondly, in the rush to embrace CI, many in the field have ignored the less well-packaged and promoted frameworks of community change developed by other organizations and practitioners. Some of these include the Bridgespan group's work on Needle Moving Collaboratives, the Aspen Institute's work on Comprehensive Community Initiatives and the grassroots Turning Outward model of the Harwood Institute.^{vii} Each of these approaches is based on solid experience and research, and offers (slightly) alternative perspectives on community change. They deserve to be taken seriously. Many of the observations and strategies in these community change approaches can be woven into effective CI implementation.

Are CI's limitations significant enough to warrant throwing it away? No. The framework has too much "roughly right" and is too successful in expanding the field of those who want to work together to build stronger communities.

The correct response is to move beyond simply fine-tuning the original framework and begin upgrading it to reflect important criticisms and limitations. Hardware and software developers relentlessly upgrade their operating systems to reach the next level of capability and performance. So too should we look to upgrade the design and implementation of the CI framework.

The task cannot be left to FSG alone. The organization and its leaders have been exemplary in incorporating new learnings. However, the framework's redevelopment is simply too much work for one organization—and it disempowers the rest of the field. If CI is going to get to the next level, community change practitioners and those who support them must step up and partner in building the framework's next iteration.



We are willing to do our share. This article is the first of a series which will lay out a number of upgrades to the CI framework.

We call it Collective Impact 3.0, a term that emerged during our annual CI summit in Vancouver in 2015. At that event, we described the evolution of CI in terms of three phases. The 1.0 phase refers to the days prior to 2011 when diverse groups spontaneously prototyped CI practices without reference to the patterns identified by FSG. The 2.0 phase spans the five years following Kania and Kramer’s article. Many communities adopted the CI framework laid out there, and FSG made diligent efforts to track, codify, and assess this second generation of CI initiatives. In the third phase, Collective Impact 3.0, the push is to deepen, broaden and adapt CI based on yet another generation of initiatives.

Who are we to offer Collective Impact 3.0? We at Tamarack have been knee-deep in community change initiatives for more than 20 years, including the sponsorship of Vibrant Communities, an evolving network of prototypical CI initiatives focused on poverty reduction. Tamarack made CI one of its top five themes. Our staff and associates have been involved in scores of CI efforts across North America and beyond.

We are committed to the basic structure of CI, which in our view has “good bones.” However, we want to reframe many of the basic ideas and practices due to the limitations of the original framework, the insights of other frameworks, our own experience, and FSG’s own work.

We do not believe that what we produce will be the only iteration of CI, or the best one. Like everyone else, we are prisoners of our own experience and limitations. We do hope, however, that our contribution adds to the next generation of the CI framework and encourages other practitioners to do the same. Our field needs diverse voices and perspectives moving forward.

FIRST THINGS FIRST: REVISITING THE FOUNDATIONS

This article, the first in our 3.0 series, revisits the foundational elements of the CI framework. This includes a new look at the Leadership Paradigm which underlies it, as well as CI’s five conditions.

From	To
The Leadership Paradigm	
Management	Movement Building
The Five Conditions	
Common Agenda	Community Aspiration
Shared Measurement	Strategic Learning
Mutually Reinforcing Activities	High Leverage Activities
Continuous Communication	Inclusive Community Engagement
Backbone	Containers for Change

Some of these shifts are significant and some are modest. All broaden the original elements laid out in Kania and Kramer’s 2011 article.

FROM A MANAGERIAL TO A MOVEMENT-BUILDING PARADIGM

Al Etmanski and Vickie Cammack, two of Canada’s most celebrated social innovators, have developed a simple philosophy to guide their efforts: “Act like an organization, but think like a movement.”^{viii} Would-be change-makers must tend to the day-to-day tasks of research, raising money, planning, and management. But the chances that their efforts will achieve scale improve dramatically if the work is undergirded with relationships based on a common vision and value – relationships that span diverse organizations, sectors, and political affiliations.

In a management approach, the leaders of institutions responsible for a domain – such as health, education, or criminal justice – come together to find ways to get better outcomes than they might achieve independently. While they may consult with the broader community on the nature of the problem and how it might be addressed, they perceive themselves to be primarily

responsible for developing and implementing new responses to an issue. As a result, CI participants employing a managerial approach typically (but not always) focus on improving existing systems through such measures as data-sharing, coordination of services, and joint action on policy or regulation barriers.

The management approach can generate results. In the case of Strive in Cincinnati (the example that FSG used to illustrate CI), educational institutions and community agencies agreed to organize their activities around a comprehensive “cradle to career” framework with 60 key measures. They have succeeded in getting dozens of organizations to align their efforts and produced a score of innovations. Cumulatively, these have resulted in improvements in reading and math scores, high school graduation rates, and post-secondary enrollment and completion.^{ix}

In a movement-building approach, by contrast, the emphasis is on reforming (even transforming) systems where improvements alone will not make a difference. Movement-building leaders bring together a diverse group of stakeholders, including those not in traditional institutions or seats of power, to build a vision of the future based on common values and narratives. Movements “open up peoples’ hearts and minds to new possibilities,” “create the receptive climate for new ideas to take hold,” and “embolden policymakers” and system leaders.^x Movements change the ground on which everyday political life and management occur.

Participants of the End Poverty Edmonton initiative state clearly that they are creating a movement to end – not reduce – local poverty within a generation.^{xi} To achieve this, one of their game-changing priorities is to eliminate racism, including a powerful six-point plan to support reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Racism, participants assert, is at the root of the difficulty that many residents experience when securing adequate housing, education, human services, and income. This bold commitment has cleared the way for the community to pursue some atypical initiatives. One is training local police and safety officials to improve their cultural literacy

and reduce the stigmatization of racialized groups. More importantly, this initiative also challenges all the city’s residents to become actively involved in dozens of little ways. It’s too early to judge whether their gamble will pay off. But their prospects for large-scale impact now seem so much greater, it’s hard not to be impressed.

This is not to say that a management orientation to CI is incapable of changing systems. Between 2010 and 2014, hundreds of organizations in New York state came together to reform its broken criminal justice system. Youth who committed even minor offences encountered an array of programs and regulations so disconnected and ill-designed as to increase, not decrease, the likelihood that the young person would re-offend or commit an even more serious crime. Through a variety of innovations (one being the requirement that young offenders are served in local day programs, not residential programs in another part of the state), the number of youth in custody fell by 45 percent without an increase in youth crime. Buoyed by these successes, state leaders are now working on a bill that will raise the criminal age of responsibility from 16 to 18, a key move to reduce the number of youth exposed to the harsher edges of the adult system.^{xii}

It’s possible to point to several other successful CI efforts led by mainstream institutions. Even so, we feel that the chances for impact are dramatically better if would-be changemakers explicitly bring to their work a movement-building orientation. Why? Because when people operate from a management paradigm, their emphasis tends to be on improving systems rather than changing them. As a consequence, participants typically are suspicious of bold measures. In some cases, they resist or block transformative ideas because their instinct is to preserve the systems they manage. As Eric Bonabeau, CEO of Icosystems, observes: “Managers would rather live with a problem they can’t solve than with a solution they can’t fully understand or control.”^{xiii}

Compare, for example, how the leaders of two major Canadian cities approached the challenge of ending poverty. In one western city, several

reputable non-profit leaders made the case that reducing wage inequity and introducing a guaranteed annual income should be key features of the poverty reduction plan. Key philanthropic leaders co-convening the plan's development vetoed the idea. It was alleged that such measures were unlikely to gain widespread support in a community that celebrates "pulling yourself up by your bootstraps." Moreover, they risked alienating several of the funder's generous conservative contributors. In Hamilton, on the other hand, the chair of the poverty roundtable declared that poverty was a public health crisis on the scale of SARS. A guaranteed annual income and living wage policies, he said, were as key to poverty reduction in the 21st century as the abolition of slavery and child labour were in the 19th century. Rather than alienate local leaders, the call to action has inspired them. The municipality, the Chamber of Commerce and local school board have signed on as living wage employers.^{xiv}

Mainstream leaders are right to heed the interests of the organization they are paid to operate. But we believe that broad, deep, and durable changes in communities are more likely when CI participants embrace a movement-building rather than a managerial approach to their work. By approaching CI in the same way you would a movement, we are far more likely to "shift boundaries for what is socially acceptable and politically expected."^{xv}

UPGRADING THE FIVE CONDITIONS

In their 2010 article, Kania and Kramer identify five conditions that communities must fulfill in order to get from isolated impact (where organizations operate independently and scale is achieved through the growth of individual organizations) to collective impact. These are: agreement on a common agenda; the development of a shared measurement approach; leveraging resources through mutually reinforcing activities; building continuous communications; and a backbone structure to mobilize the collective effort.

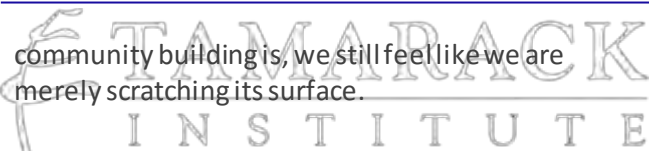
Although we reaffirm that these conditions are "roughly right," we believe they are too narrowly framed to capture how successful CI actually operates, particularly efforts that are explicitly embedded in a movement-building approach to community change. The following section describes how we would upgrade each of the five conditions and why.

FROM CONTINUOUS COMMUNICATION TO AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

One of the biggest critiques of the earlier version of the CI framework is its apparent failure to put community at the centre of the change process. While FSG in no way set out to diminish the role of community in the work, there appears to be a strong emphasis on "CEO-level cross-sector leaders" in some of the early articles.^{xvi}

The case for authentic and inclusive involvement of a broad spectrum of system stakeholders, particularly those most affected by complex issues, is overwhelming. It allows participants to draw on "360-degree insight" into the nature of the problems and how they might be addressed. It creates a broader constituency for change – so critical in any effort to disrupt and change systems. It cultivates broad ownership and long-term commitment to the change process which is essential when the initial excitement begins to flag and the going gets tough. Most importantly, the idea that those most affected by an issue should participate fully in attempts to address it (aka "Nothing about us without us!") is a fundamental democratic and moral principle.

Robust community engagement is back-breaking work. It takes time to map out which stakeholders to invite to the table, skill to create good opportunities to engage people at each stage of the change process, and confidence and humility to navigate the inevitable conflicts between participants who differ in their values, interests, and power. Tamarack has been working on the craft of community engagement for over a decade. Some of that experience is captured in Paul Born's books, *Community Conversations* (2012) and *Deepening Community* (2014). As central as



community building is, we still feel like we are merely scratching its surface.

The FSG team has since more than made up for this initial omission. In 2015, Kania and Kramer’s fourth article in the CI series focused on the importance of equity and argued that inclusion in the change process of the people most affected by an issue is “imperative.”^{xvii} More recently, of their Eight Collective Impact Principles of Practice, three concern equity, the inclusion of community members, and relationship, trust, and respect. FSG is working with organizations that have a long history in these issues to promote these principles to CI efforts across the world.

The original article on CI identified “continuous communication” as a condition for mobilizing stakeholders, building trust, and structuring meaningful meetings and work. Somehow, “continuous communication” hardly seems to convey all the work that is involved. Why not call a spade a spade? Authentic and inclusive community engagement is, without a doubt, a condition for transformational impact and therefore a condition for CI 3.0.

FROM COMMON AGENDA TO SHARED ASPIRATION

Jay Connor is fond of quoting an exchange between a journalist and Francis Ford Coppola, the movie director famed for *The Godfather* and other hits. When asked to explain the difference between what made a good movie versus a bad one, Coppola responded, “In a good movie, everyone is making the same movie.”^{xviii}

Kania and Kramer quite rightly point out that many participants who profess to be working on a common problem are in fact working with different perspectives on the nature and root causes of that problem and how it might be resolved. So the results they generate are likely to be fragmented, not collective. A true common agenda requires leadership to bring key stakeholders together; to review the key data which informs the problem or issue; to develop a shared vision for change; and to determine the

core pathways and strategies that will drive the change forward. This is more than a simple planning exercise. Indeed, it requires would-be collaborators to find (or create) common ground despite their very different values, interests, and positions.

As much as we believe this to be true, a focus on a community aspiration can have an even more powerful impact when creating a broader movement for change. This requires participants to develop outcomes that are based on community values sufficiently ambitious that they cannot be realized through business as usual. A solid community aspiration can also create the kind of “big tent” under which a wide range of participants can pursue the interdependent challenges underlying tough issues. (See sidebar on *Perverse Consequences*).

Take, for example, the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction. Formed in 2002, it drew members from the city’s business, government, and voluntary sectors, and community leaders with the lived experience of poverty. After extensive consultations in the broader community, Roundtable leaders concluded that “poverty reduction” would not mobilize the energies of a large and diverse network of people. Instead, they called for the effort to embrace a bolder aspiration: “Make Hamilton the Best Place to Raise a Child.” They consequently organized a framework around five critical points of investment (from early learning and parenting to employment) that engaged dozens of networks and organizations.

The aspiration was contagious. In October 2005, Hamilton’s major paper, the *Spectator*, announced that it would make poverty coverage a priority. It published a front page that was blank except for one statement: “The stories have been removed from this page to remind us that nearly 100,000 children, women and men live in poverty in Hamilton, people whose stories rarely make the front page. We’re going to change that.”^{xix} Soon afterwards, city council embedded the words “Best Place to Raise a Child” in Hamilton’s mission statement and a local marketing expert praised the

aspiration for its ability to inspire community-wide action.^{xx} By 2011, a Nanos survey reported that 80 percent of respondents felt that municipal investment in poverty reduction should be the city's number one priority. It was a result that startled the veteran pollster administering the survey. "There are very few issues that you get 80 percent of anybody to agree on," he remarked in surprise.^{xxi}

THE PERVERSE CONSEQUENCES OF NARROWLY FRAMED AGENDAS

Focusing on one slice of a complex problem may make the challenge less overwhelming and improve the chances of developing a shared agenda. It may also have some perverse consequences.

Take, for example, the efforts to reduce malaria and HIV, two leading causes of child mortality in the developing world. Spearheaded by the generous support and relentless leadership of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, international donors for the last decade have focused on developing and deploying high-impact vaccinations. While their efforts have saved millions of lives, they have created other problems. Funders, governments, and health organizations have diverted so many human and financial resources from other types of medical care, nutrition, and education that there has been a sharp jump in more common ailments, such as birth sepsis, diarrhoea, and asphyxia. One report described how some patients walked nine hours to clinics to get their HIV and malaria medications, only to vomit them back up due to hunger and fatigue. In some countries, malaria and HIV rates have begun to climb again.

In response, many international funders have adjusted their effort to focus on a bigger aspiration, "broader, integrated child survival," and have broadened their strategies to focus on prevention and treatment of diseases and on strengthening the entire health care delivery system.^{xxii}

on a common agenda is illusory without agreement on the ways success will be measured and reported. Collecting data and measuring results consistently on a short list of indicators at the community level and across all participating organizations not only ensures that all efforts remain aligned, it also enables the participants to hold each other accountable and learn from each other's successes and failures."^{xxiii}

This sums up one of the most popular conditions of CI. It has generated the greatest experimentation across CI initiatives.

Five years later, we've discovered a great deal about the mechanics of developing shared measurement systems, and have concluded we still have a long way to go.^{xxiv} One of the biggest of these insights is that CI participants have more success with shared measurement if they treat them as one part of a larger system of learning and evaluation.

Consider, for instance, the different measurement approaches taken by General Motors and Toyota in the 1980s and 1990s. General Motors was a data-heavy and report-heavy organization. It employed sophisticated systems to gather, analyze, and develop thick reports for senior managers. Toyota, on the other hand, emphasized management practices that were data-light and learning-heavy. It chose to focus on a few select measures, real-time feedback loops, and floor-level decision making.^{xxv} While the performance gap between the companies has recently closed (due in part to a worrisome decline in Toyota's once-vaunted quality control), researchers and business leaders credit the different evaluation and measurement processes for Toyota's consistently better outcomes in earlier years.

A robust learning and evaluation process is even more critical in community-wide change efforts. Unlike the relatively routinized nature of an automotive production line, social innovators are trying to change the dynamic and complex systems that underlie social problems. They want measurement systems that (a) provide real-time

FROM SHARED MEASUREMENT TO STRATEGIC LEARNING

"Developing a shared measurement system is essential to collective impact. Agreement

feedback on the multiple outcomes expressed in their theory of change or strategy; (b) are manageable; (c) have robust processes for sense-making and decision-making; and (d) can co-evolve with their ever-changing strategies. CI participants are known sometimes to rush right into shared measurement with the question, “What should and could we measure together?” Unfortunately, without first having laid the foundations for strategic learning, they find themselves wrapped up in messy, frustrating, tail-chasing processes with slim prospects for producing useful data.

The experiences of the many 10-year plans to end community homelessness illustrate the point. These initiatives are able to employ relatively sophisticated homelessness management information systems (HMIS). This is due in part to a well-developed “Housing First” philosophy that identifies the key outcomes whose measurement deserves extra attention. Most of the groups have also developed good processes for using the data to inform decisions about their overall strategy. Not only have these resulted in adaptations to the Housing First model, they have prompted many to recognize their need to develop entirely new models for the prevention of homelessness.^{xxvi} Community-based initiatives to end homelessness are exemplars in strategic learning and data use.

A formal shift to a strategic learning approach, which includes shared measurement as a component rather than a central feature of the process, should be straightforward. It will appeal to more experienced community builders to know that measures are only part of learning. It also will be welcomed by evaluators who want to build measures for outcomes that matter – social innovators will use the feedback, rather than consign it to the shelf.

Happily, much of the groundwork for adopting a strategic learning stance in CI initiatives has already been laid. The Atlantic Philanthropies and the Center for Evaluation Innovation, the pioneers of the approach, feature multiple tools and examples on their websites. FSG has produced a comprehensive, easy-to-use, and solid resource on building strategic learning systems. The next

generation of CI practitioners would do well to adopt and adapt these frameworks.

FROM MUTUALLY REINFORCING ACTIVITIES TO A FOCUS ON HIGH-LEVERAGE AND LOOSE/TIGHT WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

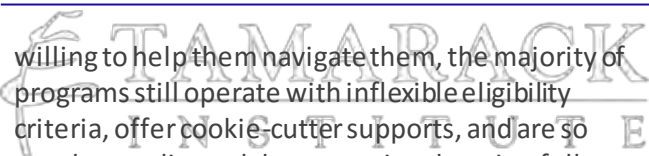
Of the five conditions, “mutually reinforcing activities” is our favourite. It so elegantly captures the need of CI to add up to more than the sum of its parts.

Yet, as elegant as it is, the focus on mutually reinforcing activities has two limitations. The first is that it may unintentionally encourage CI participants to focus on areas that offer great opportunities for cooperation rather than the greatest opportunities for results. This is nicely captured by two practitioners, Peter Boumgarden and John Branch. In their article, “Collective Impact or Collective Blindness,” they remark:

“While we do not doubt the benefits of collaboration, we argue that ‘collective impact’ over and above competition often results in coordinated but misdirected effort.”^{xxvii}

CI participants must see beyond collaboration and instead focus on strategies that focus on “high leverage” opportunities for change. They must commit to a systemic reading of the complex systems they are trying to change, and to making a realistic assessment of where local actors have the knowledge, networks, and resources to make a difference.^{xxviii} Finding this “sweet spot” where these two intersect is not easy.

Just ask the thousands of CI participants working hard to replace fragmented programs for vulnerable families with more holistic, coordinated, and accessible services. The two most typical strategies, co-locating of services and case management methods, offer excellent prospects for cooperation: they are relatively easy to implement and “don’t require co-locators to give up funds, authority or turf”.^{xxix} It turns out that they are also low leverage: while families benefit from having services in one place and an advocate


 willing to help them navigate them, the majority of programs still operate with inflexible eligibility criteria, offer cookie-cutter supports, and are so poorly coordinated that accessing them is a full-time job. With few exceptions, these strategies have not resulted in better outcomes for struggling families. The higher leverage strategy is for policy makers and funders to decentralize responsibility for program design to regional and local organizations and hold them accountable for broad – rather than discrete – outcomes. While these measures are more far more likely to lead to comprehensive, flexible, and quality services, along with better results for families, they consistently meet with resistance from people within the systems because they are messy and require shifts in power and resources. ^{xxx}

The second limitation of a strong emphasis on mutually reinforcing activities is that it seems to exclude the periodic necessity to allow participants to pursue independent – even competing – pathways to a common goal. In the case of Tillamook County, Oregon, for example, health organizations, education groups, and faith-based organizations settled on a common aspiration to eliminate teen pregnancy. But they could not agree on a common strategy. As a result, each pursued its own unique path. Public health advocates promoted safe sex. Educators focused on increasing literacy on sexuality. Faith-based organizations preached abstinence. The cumulative result of their efforts was a 75 percent reduction in teen pregnancy in 10 years. ^{xxxi} Why? Because different strategies triggered different outcomes for different groups of vulnerable families and teens.

Pursuing different pathways is particularly productive when social innovators are unclear about the nature of the problem they are trying to address. In these situations, it makes good sense for people to fan out and try different approaches. In the case of Opportunities 2000, a pioneering CI effort to reduce Waterloo Region’s poverty levels to the lowest in Canada, non-profit organizations worked together to advocate the creation of a fund to invest in innovative ways to reduce poverty. They then applied to access the fund

through competitive bidding, with many non-profits participating in multiple proposals. This not only resulted in a range of innovative responses, including Canada’s first head-hunting service for working poor immigrants and the country’s first Individual Development Accounts, but also an increase in the monthly income of nearly 1,600 low-income families. ^{xxxii}

The late Brenda Zimmerman, a world expert on managing complex systems, concluded that one of the key attributes of successful social innovators was their ability to know when and how to “mix cooperation with competition.” ^{xxxiii} This flies in the face of conventional wisdom, which suggests that collaboration is always the best response. So it may well be that conventional wisdom is a barrier to what appears to be a critical condition of Collective Impact 3.0: a focus on high-leverage strategies, and permission to participants that they work as loosely or as tightly as the situation requires.

FROM BACKBONE SUPPORT TO A CONTAINER FOR CHANGE

Backbone support, CI’s fifth condition, was warmly received by veteran community builders and changemakers.

“Creating and managing collective impact requires a separate organization and staff with a very specific set of skills to serve as the backbone for the entire initiative. Coordination takes time, and none of the participating organizations has any to spare. The expectation that collaboration can occur without a supporting infrastructure is one of the most frequent reasons why it fails.” ^{xxxiv}

This simple statement reaffirms what community builders have been saying since the 1960s: work on community change across organizational and sectoral boundaries must be placed firmly in the centre – rather than on the side – of participants’ desks. It warrants an investment of extra resources in an intermediary or coordinating body whose job it is to see to the day-to-day work of collaboration. Even CI’s outspoken critics acknowledge how the

framework has encouraged practitioners and funders to invest greater time, energy, and financial resources into ensuring this support is in place. ^{xxxv}

The renewed emphasis on backbone support has also led to a much better understanding of the infrastructure required for community change. This includes an elaboration of the various roles that the backbone group can play (e.g., guiding the creation of a vision and strategy, mobilizing funding, and advancing policy) as well as the governance structures, funding models, and leadership styles required to support them. ^{xxxvi} These insights represent significant steps forward in practice in five short years.

PLENTY OF MISTAKES, TOO

CI practitioners have made plenty of mistakes in our newfound exuberance for backbone supports.

In many instances, people have been confused by what backbone support involves. It simply means to appoint one or more organizations to fulfill various essential functions, sometimes with extra financial resources. Instead, the term has been taken for a recommendation to create specialized organizations from scratch. This may lead to investing substantial time and energy in creating and managing a new legal body. It also increases the risk that leading organizations feel less ownership and responsibility for the change effort. They let the “the new organization” run the show.

In other cases, well-meaning CI leaders working on different challenges (including poverty, homelessness and early childhood development) have created their own boutique backbone groups. This has spread thin what few human and financial resources are available for backbone work. It has also served to strengthen silos and impede joint action across the boundaries of such artificial domains.

Tamarack staff will explore these – and other – missteps in backbone practices in a future article on CI 3.0.

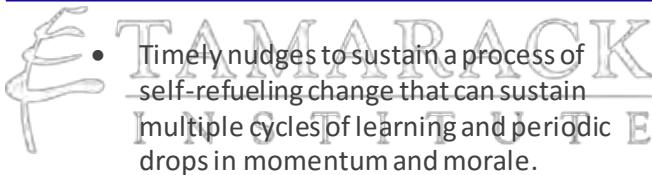
turn its attention to creating a “strong container” to assist CI participants with the inner game of personal change. Put simply, a strong container is where social innovators can:

“... transform their understandings [of the system they are trying to change], the relationships [with others in the systems] and their intentions [to act]. The boundaries of this container are set so that the participants feel enough protection and safety, as well as enough pressure and friction, to be able to do their challenging work.” ^{xxxvii}

Building a strong container requires paying attention to a variety of dimensions of backbone stewardship. Some of the more important ones are the following:

- The mobilization of a diverse group of funders, backbone sponsors, and stewardship arrangements that demonstrate cross-sectoral leadership on the issue.
- The facilitation of the participants’ inner journey of change, including the discovery and letting go of their own mental models and cultural/emotional biases, required for them to be open to fundamentally new ways of doing things.
- Processes to cultivate trust and empathy amongst participants so they can freely share perspectives, engage in fierce conversations, and navigate differences in power.
- Using the many dilemmas and paradoxes of community change – such as the need to achieve short-term wins while involved in the longer-term work of system change – as creative tensions to drive people to seek new approaches to vexing challenges without overwhelming them.

While these capture the “outer game” of change, the next generation of CI practitioners needs to



- Timely nudges to sustain a process of self-refueling change that can sustain multiple cycles of learning and periodic drops in momentum and morale.

It is difficult to overestimate the importance of creating a container for change. Some argue that it is more important than “charismatic leadership, technical expertise, or even funding.”^{xxxviii} Others argue that the critical “soft stuff” is more difficult to manage than the “hard stuff” of research, planning, and program design. Peter Senge notes:

You cannot force commitment. What you can do is nudge a little here, inspire a little there, and provide a role model. Your primary influence is the environment you create.^{xxxix}

The Energy Futures Lab in Alberta demonstrates the value of creating that kind of environment. It’s an effort to help actors in the province’s export-oriented, oil- and gas-dominated energy sector to “accelerate the transition to a carbon-constrained future” that is economically vibrant, socially equitable, and environmentally sustainable. The design team invested significant time and energy laying the effort’s foundations:

- A formal commitment to create a radical middle position in the polarized mainstream debate over the energy system (e.g., “economy versus the environment,” “resource development versus community well-being”).
- The creation of a backbone group comprising five diverse organizations – an energy company, a key government department, two well-respected environmental non-governmental organizations, and an outstanding leadership development institute with growing expertise in Aboriginal leadership.
- The recruitment of a “whole system team” of participants who are a microcosm of the diverse values,

interests, and perspectives of the energy system’s current stakeholders, and the engagement of their organizations, networks, and the broader public.

Having laid this groundwork, the backbone team worked diligently to create space for Lab participants to learn more about the energy system, themselves, and other participants. They carried out “deep interviews” with Fellows to surface their hopes, aspirations, and fears of energy transition; facilitated structured conversations about social and political narratives that shape people’s perspectives on tough issues and how to empathize with alternative viewpoints; sponsored learning journeys to explore different parts of the energy system from a worm’s-eye view, and systems-mapping sessions to look at the same systems from a bird’s-eye view; and facilitated methods for dialogue that allowed people to have unspeakable conversations (e.g., can Albertans really maintain this standard of living in a carbon constrained future?).^{xi}

The commitment to building a strong container has paid off. The participants signed their names to an op-ed piece in a major newspaper that advocated cross-sectoral leadership to shape – rather than endure – the energy transition already in progress. They crafted a vision document with 11 “pathways to energy system innovation” that they intend to upgrade once it has been tested with scores of networks and organizations across the province. There are nearly a dozen teams developing prototypes to test breakthrough technologies, policies, and business models that comprise the Lab’s portfolio of promising initiatives. As one veteran of sustainability activism commented: “The commitment and the progress of this diverse group have been simply remarkable.”^{xii}

Bill O’Brien, a well-regarded business leader, noted: “The success of an intervention depends on the inner conditions of the intervenor.”^{xiii} In the same vein, the success of the next generation of CI initiatives depends on the ability of backbone teams to create the strong containers for change that support participants to dig deep when tackling stubborn social challenges.

CONCLUSION TAMARACK

The jury is still out on the ability of CI efforts to generate deep, wide, and sustained impact on tough societal challenges. In their study of 20 years of comprehensive community initiatives, the top-drawer researchers of the Aspen Institute’s Roundtable on Community Change concluded that while there have been an impressive number of successful changes in policy and system changes, along with innovative programs, “few if any [initiatives] were able to demonstrate widespread changes in child and family well-being or reductions in the neighbourhood poverty rate.”^{xliii}

The CI framework has breathed new life into the weary efforts of many long-standing community change initiatives. It has also dramatically increased the number of new and aspiring changemakers. For all that, the exemplary stories of impact (like Medicine Hat’s success in eliminating homelessness, or the slow but steady improvement of academic outcomes in the environs of Cincinnati) are still the exception rather than the rule.

The success of this next generation of community change efforts depends, in part, on the willingness of CI participants not to settle for marginal improvements to the original version of the CI framework. Instead, they must take on the challenge to continually upgrade the approach based on ongoing learning of what it takes to transform communities. The CI approach is – and always will be – unfinished business.

In this article, we’ve laid out what we feel are foundational elements of a CI 3.0 framework. Our core argument is that CI efforts are more likely to be effective when their participants operate from a movement-building paradigm. It is impossible for a leadership table comprised of 20 to 40 leaders – no matter how committed and influential – to tackle issues and make deep and durable change on their own. It requires the engagement, commitment, and investment of an entire community striving to be the best it can be and willing to make whatever changes to community systems – and its own behaviours – that are

necessary to build safe, prosperous, inclusive, and sustainable communities.

This is only the beginning. In subsequent articles we plan to weigh in on other elements of the approach, namely:

- Preconditions for CI
- Phases of CI
- Principles of practice for CI
- A selection of key practices (e.g. governance, shared measurement).

We encourage others to do the same. While there is no sure-fire recipe for community change, there are patterns of effective ideas and practices that can improve the probabilities of success. In a world that seems a bit more fragile, disruptive, and anxious than normal, we need all hands on deck to uncover, frame, and share those patterns. It’ll make it easier to create newspaper headlines like those now appearing in the local papers of Medicine Hat.

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Mark is President of the consulting company From Here to There and is a Tamarack Institute Associate. Between 1997 – 2000, Mark was the Coordinator of the Waterloo Region’s Opportunities 2000 project, an initiative that won provincial, national and international awards for its multi-sector approach to poverty reduction. He served briefly as the Executive Director of the Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CCEDNet) and was the Executive Director of Vibrant Communities Canada (2002-2011). Mark’s current focus is on developing practical ways to understand, plan and evaluate efforts to address complex issues



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Canadian Urban Institute's David Crombie Leadership Award in 2009.

ABOUT TAMARACK INSTITUTE

Tamarack is a connected force for change. We believe that when we are effective in strengthening community capacity to engage citizens, lead collaboratively, deepen community, and innovate in place, our collective impact work contributes to building peace and a more equitable society. Learn more at www.tamarackcommunity.ca.

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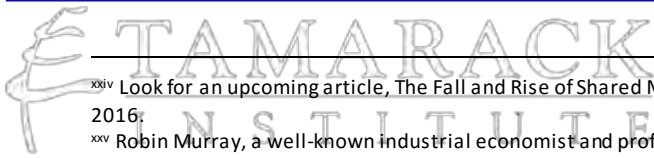
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- ^{xxiv} Look for an upcoming article, The Fall and Rise of Shared Measurement, that will be announced in Tamarack's *Engage!* newsletter in late 2016.
- ^{xxv} Robin Murray, a well-known industrial economist and professor at the University of Sussex, explored during his participation in a jury-assessment evaluation, facilitated by Mark Cabaj of the Community Opportunities Development Association, the organization that preceded the Tamarack Institute, in 1995.
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Weekly OneRouge Friday Calls



Edy Addison
Capital Area United Way
Director of Community Impact & Initiatives



Priscilla Allen
LSU
Professor in Aging and Geriatrics



Rev. Alexis Anderson
PREACH
Executive Director



Donald Andrews
Southern University
Dean of College of Business



Toni Bankston
Baton Rouge Children's Advocacy Center



Pama N. Barber
Edward Jones Financial Advisor + Past President of the Capital City Rotary Club



Dr. Sarah Barlow
BRCC
Vice Chancellor of Academic & Student Affairs



Dr. Erin Bendily
Propel America
Executive Director



Traci Birch, PhD
LSU
Assistant Professor



A. Barrie Black
Healthy Communities - LA Public Health Institute
Program Manager



Tekoah B. Boatner
Youth Oasis
Executive Director



Chelsea Borrivano
You Aren't Alone Project
Executive Director

2021: Speakers & Community Partnerships



David Brown
Coastal Cannabis Consulting
Attorney & Biologist



Vivian Broussard Guillory
AAUW of LA
Director



Amanda Brunson
LA DCFS
Child Welfare Special Projects Officer



Neva Butkus
Louisiana Budget Project
Researcher, policy advocate, activist



Aishala Burgess
TRUCE
Executive Director



Preston Castille
LA Board of Elementary & Secondary Education
District 8 Member



DeMetris Causer
Build Baton Rouge
Legal Extern



Gary Chambers
The Rouge Collection
Executive Director



Emily Chatelain
Three O'Clock Project
Executive Director



Edie Couvillion
Maddie's Footprints
Event Executive Director



Alfredo Cruz
Let's Fix It!



J. Daniels
EBR Housing Authority
CEO



Dave Dartez
ExxonMobil
Senior Labor Relations Advisor



Christian DeJesus
LSU
Office of Admissions



Alex Deiro Stubbs
Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady Health System
Director Of Public Relations



Thomas Donley
The Walls Project
Chief Financial Officer



Adonica Duggan
Baton Rouge Alliance for Students
CEO



Jason Dyke
Carson's Village
CEO and Founder



Heather Freeman
Southern University
Executive Director of Admissions and Recruitment



Andrew Fitzgerald
Baton Rouge Area Chamber
Sr. VP of Business Intelligence



Helen Frink
Office of Mayor-President Sharon Weston-Broome
Special Assistant



Sergio Garica
Big Thought - Dallas, TX
Sr. Manager of Learning Systems



Trey Godfrey
Baton Rouge Area Chamber
Senior Vice President of Policy



Carrie Griffin Monica
Stand for Children
Executive Director

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Dennis Grimes
East Baton Rouge Prison
Warden



Bea Gyimah
America, My Oyster Association
Founder



Derek Haigler
Yoga for All Humans
Founder



Gwen Hamilton
New Schools for Baton Rouge



Todd Hamilton
O'Brien House
Executive Director



Sarah Haneline
BASF
Workforce Development Manager



Sheretta Harrison
MetroMorphosis



Rodneya Hart
Louisiana State Museum - Baton Rouge, La
Division Director



Kendra Hendricks
Capital Region Planning Commission
Economic Development Manager



Whitney Hoffman Sayal
BREC
Asst. Director of Urban Trails



Jason Hughes
Unite Us
Community Engagement Manager



Kelly Hurtado
Louisiana Stormwater Coalition



Jared Hymowitz
*Office of Mayor-President
Sharon Weston-Broome*
HealthyBR Executive Director



Veneeth Iyengar
*Office of Mayor-President
Sharon Weston-Broome*
Assistant Chief Administrative Officer



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CPEX
Community Planner



Rinaldi Jacobs Sr.
Full Circle Development
CEO



Raymond A. Jetson
MetroMorphosis
Executive Director



Kaitlyn Joshua
*Power Coalition for
Equity and Justice*
Political Organizer



Craig Kaberline
*Capital Area Agency
on Aging*
Executive Director



Anthony Kimble
Kimble Properties
Owner



Pat LeDuff
City of Baton Rouge
Blight Remediation



Davante Lewis
*Louisiana Budget
Project*
Director of Public Affairs and
Outreach



Tyler Litt
New Schools of Baton Rouge
Sr. Director of Equity &
Community Investments



Anna C.J. Long
LSU School Psychology
Program Director

2021: Speakers & Community Partnerships



Charles Lussier
The Advocate
Writer



Kenny Lynch
Louisiana Workforce Commission
Director, Targeted Populations & Employer Outreach



Jahi Mackey
The 821 Project
Founding Director



Nadine Mann
EBR Parish School System
Child Nutrition Program Administrative Director



Lori Martin
LSU
Webmaster



Mark Martin
BikeBR
Vice Chair



Nolan Marshall, Jr.
Orleans Parish School Board
School Board Member, District 7



Jazzica Matthews
Safe Hopeful Healthy Board
Director of Operations



Geno McLaughlin
Build Baton Rouge
Community Engagement Specialist



Dr. Girard Melancon
BRCC
Executive Director for the Office of Workforce Education



Chris Meyer
New Schools for Baton Rouge
Executive Director



Tarani Merriweather
Pink Cornrows
Senior Researcher



Carmen Million
BBB of South Central Louisiana
President



Jan Moller
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Donald C. Monistere
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Hillar Moore D.A.
EBR District Attorney



Chelsea Morgan
American Heart Assoc.
Community Impact Director



Tonja Myles
Veteran Peer Specialist, Advocate
Speaker



Sito Narcisse
East Baton Rouge Parish School System
Superintendent



Manohar Patole
Co-City/NYU Marron Institute
Project Manager



Sooraz Patro
CRPC
Director of Transportation



Korey Patty
Feeding Louisiana
Executive Director



Marlee Pittman
City/Parish of Baton Rouge
Director of Community Revitalization



Katie Pritchett
Baton Rouge Health District
Operations Director

2021: Speakers & Community Partnerships



Dr. Pamela Ravare-Jones

*Office of Mayor-President
Sharon Weston-Broome*

Assistant Chief Administrative Officer



Judith Rhodes

LSU

Director of Social Research &
Evaluation Center



Theo Richard

CATS

Business Development Manager



Myra Richardson

Red Torch Consulting

Owner



Tracey Rizzuto

*Louisiana State
University*

Professor, Leadership & Human
Resource Development



Peter Robins-Brown

Louisiana Progress

Policy & Advocacy Director



Andrea Roberts

BREC

COO



Frankie Robertson

The Amandla Group

President



**Nathalia Rocha
Dickson**

Dickson Law Firm, LC

Immigration Attorney



Kelli Rogers

Geaux Get Healthy



Jan Ross

*Huey & Angelina
Wilson Foundation*

Executive Vice President



Lindi Rubin Spalatin

*McMains Children's
Developmental Center*

Director of Development.



Esther Sachse
Grief Recovery Center
Executive Director



Samuel Sanders
MCRA
Executive Director



Julie Schwam Harris
Louisiana Women's Policy and Research Commission
Advocate



Courtney Scott
Office of Mayor-President Sharon Weston-Broome
Assistant Chief Administrative Officer



Melissa Silva
Mental Health Assoc. for Greater Baton Rouge
Executive Director



Rev. Dr. Brian Sleeth
Christian Outreach Center
Executive Director



Brandon Smith
LSU Office of Community University Partnerships



Phil Smith
BRCC Foundation
Executive Director



Karen Stagg
Connections for Life



Summer Steib
LSU Women's Center
Director



David Summers
Partners Southeast
Chief Operating Officer



Sandy Summers
Southeastern Louisiana University
Technology Recruiting Manager

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Alfreda Tillman Bester
*Southern University Law
Office*



Mika Torkkola
BikeBR
Advocate, Former President



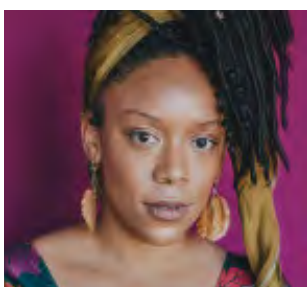
Christopher Tyson
LSU
Newman Trowbridge
Distinguished Professor of Law



Monica Vela-Vick
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Commercial Litigation Lawyer



Jackson Voss
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Janel Washington
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Roxson Welch
*Family and Youth
Service Center*
Executive Director



**Mayor-President
Sharon Weston-
Broome**
EBR Parish Mayor



Keisha Whaley
*Brass Tacks Collective &
BT Foundry*
CEO



Ann Zanders
*Career & Technical
Education*
Coordinator



**Jill Zimmerman
Pinsky**
Watershed Advisors
Managing Director

Meeting Minutes Guide

Topic	Title	Week	Speaker(s)
CAFE - Capital Area Food Equity Coalition	Data Driven Solutions for Food Access	50	Lyneisha Jackson Manny Patole Traci Birch
CAFE - Capital Area Food Equity Coalition	Food Insecurity Update	57	Jan Ross Chelsea Morgan Korey Patty Katie Pritchett Manny Patole Emily Chatelain Alfreda Tillman Bester Gwen Hamilton
CAFE - Capital Area Food Equity Coalition	Healthy Food Access For All	65	Kelli Rogers Katie Pritchett Edy Addison Jan Ross Mary Bergeron Korey Patty
CAFE - Capital Area Food Equity Coalition	Lack of access to foods to sustain a healthy life	74	Tarani Merriweather, PhD Korey Patty
CAFE - Capital Area Food Equity Coalition	Healthy Food Access For All	79	Yolanda Kinchen Myra Richardson Trey Godfrey Rinaldi Jacobs, Sr.
Education Coalition	The Education & Workforce Continuum	41	Phil Smith Sherry Wynn Dr. Pamela Ravara-Jones Brandon Smith
Education Coalition	Food Insecurity Coalition (EBRFIC) : Health Equity	43	Gary Chambers
Education Coalition	Future of Industry	44	Sarah Haneline Dave Dartez
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Education Coalition	Homeless & Reentry Workforce	53	Kenny Lynch Ann Zanders Kaitlyn Joshua Dr. Pamela Ravare-Jones Rev. Dr. Brian Sleeth Karen Stagg
Education Coalition	At-Risk Youth Pathways & Services	60	Roxson Welch Tekoah B. Boatner HS-BCP Aishala Burgess
Education Coalition	People with Disabilities Economic & Workforce Development, Part IV	61	Lindi Rubin Spalatin Dr. Girard Melancon
Education Coalition	Economic & Workforce Development	70	Andrew Fitzgerald Rinaldi Jacobs, Sr. Keith Sawyer
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Education Coalition	Lack of Educational Attainment	81	Dr. Erin Bendily Jill Pinsky Tyrin Johnson
Education Coalition	Economic and Workforce Development	83	Keisha Whaley Derek Haigler Rodneya Hart
Transportation & Mobility Coalition	Access to Transportation & Social Mobility, Part I'	47	Theo Richard Whitney Hoffman Sayal Thomas Donley Sooraz Patro
Transportation & Mobility Coalition	Access to Affordable & Reliable Transportation	73	Bill Deville Cheri Soileau Chris Tyson Rannah Gray Mark Martin
Transportation & Mobility Coalition	Access to Affordable & Reliable Transportation	82	Cheri L. Soileau Mika Torkkola John Spain
Affordable Housing Coalition	Economic Development & Community Health	39	Veneeth Iyengar Jared Hymowitz
Affordable Housing Coalition	Health & Housing Equity - Wrap Around Services & Opportunities for the Work Poor	40	Alfredo Cruz
Affordable Housing Coalition	Affordable Housing & Community Health	69	Alfredo Cruz Jackson Voss Barrie Black
Multiple Coalition Interests and Other Meeting Topics	The Louisiana Prison Industry, Part II	42	Reverend Alexis Anderson Hillar Moore Lieutenant Colonel Dennis Grimes

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Topic	Title	Week	Speaker(s)
Multiple Coalition Interests and Other Meeting Topics	Black Futures: A Sankofa Series	45	Raymond Jetson Dr. Lori Martin Chris Tyson
Multiple Coalition Interests and Other Meeting Topics	One Year Anniversary	52	Casey Phillips Helena Williams Raymond A. Jetson
Multiple Coalition Interests and Other Meeting Topics	Issues Facing Seniors	58	Tasha Clark-Amar Priscilla D. Allen Craig Kaberline
Multiple Coalition Interests and Other Meeting Topics	Mental Health in the Capital Region	62	Esther Sacshe Melissa Silva Chelsea Borruano
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Multiple Coalition Interests and Other Meeting Topics	Our Kids, Covid, and School Safety	66	Charles Lussier Dr. Sito Narcisse Alexandra Derio Stubbs Dr. Nadine Mann Chris Meyer Tyler Litt Dr. Sarah Barlow Dr. Girard Melancon Dean Donald Andrews
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Neighborhoods of Concentrated Poverty Focus Area	Resident-Led Community Development Public Housing + Community Health - Part III	59	Jazzika Matthews Marlee Pittman Geno McLaughlin Manny Patole DeMetris Causer

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Topic	Title	Week	Speaker(s)
Neighborhoods of Concentrated Poverty Focus Area	'Growing number of neighborhoods in poverty'	76	Dr. Tracey Rizzuto Derrick Green Donald Monistere
Neighborhoods of Concentrated Poverty Focus Area	Blight	86	Todd Hamilton Verna Jackson Pat LeDuff
High Teen Birth Rates Focus Area	High Teen Birth Rates - Part I	56	Frankie Robertson Angela Golden
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Children Living In Poverty Focus Area	Children Living in Poverty	48	Eric Horent Neva Butkus Jan Moller
Children Living In Poverty Focus Area	Children Living in Poverty	54	J. Daniels David Summers Courtney Scott Sam Sanders Christopher Tyson
Children Living In Poverty Focus Area	Our Youth, This Summer	55	Shanice Robinson Janel Washington Andrea Roberts Helen Frink
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Equal Pay For All Focus Area	Equal Pay For All - Part II	67	Vivian Broussard Guillory Julie Schwam Harris
English Second Language Citizens, Immigration & Cultural Focus Area	English Proficiency and Cultural Differences	63	Bea Gyimah Pama Barber Jahi Mackey
English Second Language Citizens, Immigration & Cultural Focus Area	English proficiency and cultural differences'	78	Nathalia Rocha Dickson, LL.M John Pierre Rosa Gómez-Herrin

2021 Meeting Minutes Catalog

Week 39 (1/15/21)

Economic Development & Community Health

MEETING NOTES:

Began working in January of 2018 with Mayor Broome - working on metrics and goals surrounding economic development

- As Mayor Broome described, a fluid situation - the best laid plans set in January or February will get thrown out when you have global challenges arise
- The original intent was building public/private partnerships that have not yet existed
- Build relationships with the business community to work with North BR
- Structure a fair share program that will help lock in the ability for disadvantaged enterprises
- Project in North BR - Howell Place is a 76,000 square foot hospital built with the best of intentions to provide health care in North BR but was starcrossed. Two years ago one of the mayor's priorities was health care growth in and around that entire region
- Howell Place took two years but in July of last year we put that building back into commerce - Ochsner moved in, hoping to see 10,000 patients this year alone, opening up in March hopefully
- Large behavioral health building also creating 85-90 jobs
- Importance of public/private partnerships with solving healthcare, community, and economic development needs
- Specific to last year with respect to COVID, we quickly brought together different segments of the economic development spectrum
- In the beginning with manufacturers and oil and gas, it was creating alcohol gel and hand sanitizers and PPE
- With restaurants, what can you do from an executive order perspective?

- That way we were able to create partnerships to help small businesses to the tune of over \$20 million
- Call to action: I often feel like I'm not spending enough time on the streets and on the ground level to understand at a granular level what the challenges are. Oftentimes people come to us - part of the clunkiness of last year was not being able to be out there and see what those challenges were. Technology has helped but as we roll into 2021. Let's spend as much time together to bring in relevant partners to address those problems and solutions

Jared Hymowitz, Coordinator, Mayor's Healthy City Initiative with the Office of the Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome

Director of the Mayor's Healthy City Initiative/Healthy BR

- We don't have local health departments, we go by region (we're Region 2 of the LDH)
- My role is to be that local policy person (housing, complete streets, economic development, jobs in different areas where health department would fit)
- When COVID hit, people understood that I connect people, coordinate efforts, and communicate them to the public
- We had relationships with hospitals and community partners that allowed for a stand up testing site in 6 days
- Also the executive director of non profit totally separate from the Mayor's office, Healthy BR
- 18 CEOs and execs on that board
- Communicate, collaborate, coordinate to make BR a healthy place for all
- The glue or road map that holds together the coalition is the Community Health Needs Assessment
- All non profit hospitals have to prove they can remain

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non profit under the Affordable Care Act

- 5 priorities over the next three years launching in 2021
- HIV/STIs are number one health concern outside of COVID in our community
- Behavioral health
- Violence prevention
- Health equity and racial disparity
- Maternal and infant health (engaging with Woman's Hospital and One BReath Project)
- All five hospitals have identified those as significant health needs - that does not happen! It's very progressive. We need people to engage because we're only as good as the partners at the table.
- We also have Geaux Get Healthy, Move with the Mayor...there's a large breadth of work we're working on. Reach out and engage!

Coalition Questions:

Casey Phillips: How thin is the line of going back to Phase 1?

Jared Hymowitz: It's about personal responsibility. We can shut down every restaurant, every bar, but people still have freedom of choice. People are still going to do things, hang out. There's a fine line between us affecting the economy and personal choice. Mayor Broome is serious - she has no problem taking the next step if we need to but there's the fine line of personal responsibility. If you choose to go to a restaurant with someone you don't live with, it's a chain reaction. What would happen if we shut down restaurants? People will still hang out at their homes. What we hope we got across to the community (in the press conference) was that Mama Bear...we're disappointed, time to step up.

Jen Tewell (Grief Recovery Center): How is poverty and systematic failure being addressed?

JH: Systemic changes don't get fixed overnight. 60% of the Geaux Get Healthy grants have gone to minority, women owned businesses in the zip codes we're trying to target. 5 CEOs and boards of hospitals have approved racial disparity as a health need. That wouldn't have happened

two years ago. Woman's Hospital brought on a national expert. These are the types of slow changes...the other piece is being intentional with programs. With Ochsner, there's an MA Now Program that partners with the city to help people become medical assistants and then nurses. How do we create pathways and internally lift people within our organization? OLOL worked with Metromorphosis to create a payday loan account to help people affected by predatory lending. There are all of these institutional initiatives happening that take time to grow.

Reverend Anderson (PREACH): Priority of violence...is that also going to address the issues we have with policing violence and the continuing crises of the deaths in the jails?

JH: You may have seen an article in the paper that talked about an RFP with the prison medical contract - that's an institutional change. The contract was in place before Mayor Broome took office but she wanted to go through an RFP process...we have medical experts, the warden, mental health professionals...We brought a coalition together to write the RFP and will be releasing it in the near future. From a systemic level, our initial attempt is to look at violence through the public health lense. There is a whole system with policing and Mayor Broome has created training through partnerships with Capital Area Services, body cams, rules and expectations...in terms of root causes, it's poverty. How do we uplift communities and provide opportunities? In terms of the prison specifically, reentry jail diversion and homelessness through a continuum lens will be addressed.

Pat LeDuff (CADAV): Where are we with Housing projects, the grocery store, street overlay in Scotlandville?

Veneeth Iyenger: Addressing grocery stores...there is a food gap in North BR. An A+++ priority for the Mayor and the community. One thing we quickly did with public/private partnerships a few years ago was to lean on dollar stores, particularly Dollar General, to sell fresh produce. The Mayor was pretty aggressive with Dollar General. On Scenic Highway across from Exxon they now sell fresh produce. That's not going to solve all the problems but

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is a very quick way to provide some amount of grocery items. We are confident we'll announce a partnership with one or two national grocers to set up a store in North BR this year. What's really important is..there's often this broad brush painted of North BR. The assumption and generalization is that the entire place is a wasteland. Yes there are challenging pockets to North BR but there is also enormous opportunity. The argument we're making for momentum is resonating with some of these grocers. Jared is also working another angle of the grocery piece he can maybe address

JH: I think there's a two pronged approach. A brick and mortar grocery store is both an economic and equity play. There's also the actual "how do we address food insecurity", and we think Geaux Get Healthy will help. Having access to a delivery service that can get to your house is more equitable than going to the grocery store. There's the culture shift where we have partners like AHA and OLOL addressing the culture of fresh food and that it's not something unattainable. How do we access fresh food now and look at the long term equitable factor? Here's my request. When, and Mayor Broome has announced it twice, we get the grocery store, we need the community to support it. There's a long game around being able to get produce in a grocery store and having it not spoil.

Casey Phillips: One part of Pat's question was about housing. Mr. Alfredo Cruz is going to be one of the speakers next week and we're going to talk about the correlation between housing and health outcomes. Do you want to give a precursor for next week?

Alfredo Cruz: Absolutely. Next week we will be talking about the intersection of housing and health, something this pandemic has raised as a critical issue for all of us. When the mayor asks everyone to stay in their homes, it's with the assumption that everyone has a healthy home to stay in. Housing First Alliance partnership with City of Baton Rouge, and Mid City Redevelopment

Dustin LaFont (Front Yard Bikes): We are seeing COVID is having a much longer duration, anybody with relationships

with youths, what are some ways we can deal with some of the challenges and help our students stay healthy mentally and behaviorally?

JH: There are some resources I would suggest - Capital Area Human Services District, specifically surrounds youth opioid use. ICARE is another great resource through the school system. Those are two really good resources I'd reach out to. We're looking to expand the knowledge of resources that exist. There's a lot of great work happening but people don't know because it's so siloed. In addition to that I would look into school resources.

CP: The Grief Recovery Center is another great resource
Kat McGraw (Empower 225): Because of the mental health situation, we brought on board three mental health counseling facilities, Peak Counseling, I Rise Counseling. They are in our facilities every single day taking shifts just to help us navigate and how can we help our youth...just bring them to the facility if you need any help! We are available and our doors are open to anyone in the community, even the parents. Mental health is a really big concern in our youths and our families.

Week 40 (1/22/21)

Health & Housing Equity - Wrap Around Services & Opportunities for the Work Poor

MEETING NOTES:

During this community check-in, we learned more about the state of affordable housing in East Baton Rouge Parish, and ways members can get involved to tackle housing instability in impoverished neighborhoods.

Anthony Kimball with Kimball Properties

- Development in South Baton Rouge
 - Develop communities from all walks of life
 - Education around housing and intergenerational wealth building
- Single-family homes, small
- Wants to have a positive impact on communities in neighborhoods he grew up in

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- In college, he considered being a teacher but became interested in housing issues
- Recently opened shared office space called Legacy on 14th Street
 - To give a spot for the ecosystem in that area
 - To help revitalize the community
- They sponsored a Walls Project mural that's on their office building.
- Says the goal is to bring people back into those communities and build up the business leaders in that area and expose the youth to other career fields
- Another project he's working on is putting crossings at Terrace and Government St. to make it a quiet zone
- Looking to launch Impact the Block, a program that aims to help elderly residents by fixing their homes
- Discusses "colonization" vs. gentrification
- Group economics
 - Owner financing, etc.

Casey: Share a little about the ethos and intention of what you do

Anthony: I'm a person that's truly walking in my purpose. Really I look at my purpose as bringing resources back into these communities. To help men and women who look like myself. Not just by building generational wealth, but also by attracting people to the neighborhood. I want to show there's value in these communities. Why did I sell grandma's house when I could've built up the wealth. They want to figure out how to get ownership to homeowners.

He talks about how it's important to build up the mindset of financial literacy, and learn how to build equity to help progress these communities.

Alfredo Cruz with Let's Fix It!

- Worked in philanthropy for 20 years
- Worked in Florida legislature while attending Florida State, studied urban planning
- Came to Louisiana 10 years ago to work for Foundation for Louisiana
- He's passionate about how philanthropy plays a role during times of disaster
- Left the world of philanthropy to work in communities in need, and became interested in learning about housing issues
- "For us to be healthy and safe, we need a home," Cruz said.
- But for some families, staying home was not the healthiest choice
- He says we need to work with communities when it comes to risk so residents can better understand it.
- He started a company with the initial purpose of helping his landlord and his 21 tenants
- But now the company has transitioned strives to develop a contract connecting communities with municipalities
- Some of the initiatives his company is involved with:
- Healthy Housing Initiative
- New Program to address hazards in North Baton Rouge homes
- They received a 3.4 million grant, and are still looking for funding.
- Housing first alliance- a group that cares about housing accessibility in East Baton Rouge Parish. Spent the last 10 months with the University of North Carolina in Greensboro working on a study that has housing data to help better understand housing gaps in the parish. Alfredo wants the study to be a tool that is owned by the community and includes community voices to negotiate what they need in their neighborhood. It involves developing a new social contract with the

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city and its residents.

- He needs help with launching a community survey to capture those voices. Needs host organizations to connect them with people to talk about their experiences. He also asked anyone in the group to join the alliance.
- Study will be released by the end of March

Q & A:

Erick Porter, Southern University Creative Sustainable Neighborhood Developers

8-week program to learn about development, secure property, etc.

Teaches the basic functions of acquiring blighted properties and how to put them into commerce

Program is in its 4th year and has an impact of 28 million of bringing back properties to new construction. Has over 200 students over the years.

He wanted to learn more about the study.

Alfredo in response to Porter: We were very intentional with how the impact sub-standard has on the community. The study will help the community become a party-ready to advocate more effectively for redevelopment.

David Summers, Chief Operating Officer at Partners Southeast, to all and Alfredo:

Offered to provide help to Alfredo

Porter said he'd love to learn more about that program. Says he's looking to expand the capacity and looks for talent from that program.

Question from Rev. Alexis Anderson with the EBR Prison Reform coalition:

In many of our areas that need the most work are still concentrated with high incarceration rates

Can the speakers talk about how those people who were formerly incarcerated can be helped?

Anthony: In my opinion, when you talk about mass incarceration, we need to give some of these same people opportunities. He says he hopes the current work will create opportunities for that demographic. "We need other people's perspective to make it work."

Casey: Community-based redevelopment is key to community sustainability.

Chelsey Morgan, American Heart Association:

Marginalized housing has health impacts, and unhealthy housing can lead to an unhealthy heart.

[Link to study](#)

Elizabeth Perry with Our Lady of the Lake/LSU Health:

Says patients are not concerned about health when they're worried about their home, or not having access to housing. She says they have had a recent increase in housing resources. Some have been staying with friends and family just to get off the streets. She says resources have been stretched thin due to the pandemic.

Alfredo: Wanted to address structural inequities in racism. Study with a university has a section that shines a light on lending practices and their impact on the formerly incarcerated population. In communities of color, there is a lot of housing instability and that's a major reason for covid spread, according to the CDC. Housing instability leads to stress, and the stress creates a greater risk of contracting the disease.

Lou Guthrie w/ LED FastStart:

Recommended Raj Chetty's work in social mobility. Does a lot of research about housing and how it impacts people's lives.

Pam Wall:

There are multiple follow up studies of “mobility projects” funded by HUD and the Zuckerbergs to move public housing families into zip codes with better opportunity stats. These make interesting reading for anyone looking to relocate these families into census tracts with better outcomes for families (per the 30-year study released in the last couple of years).

Geno McLaughlin with Build Baton Rouge:

Rolling out a resident leader program

Identify 25 people in specific neighborhoods around a number of different issues

Community building and organization training

Help them solve their neighborhood-specific issues

Says building better advocates is always the best tool

Casey: What is the role of philanthropy in housing issues?

Jan Ross with Huey & Angelina Wilson Foundation:

Says what we have learned over time, it has to be driven by the community and not driven by the funder who is in the arena, funding wise. It involves getting the community together, getting a plan, and soliciting a donation. It requires the buy-in of that local group.

Pat LeDuff with CADAV

Scotlandville is ready! And that the community is prepared and ready to jump into action.

Jeremy Pleasant with Grapevine Church:

What is the pathway for people struggling with housing instability? Any resources I can share with people now?

Alfredo: Think of this as your issue.

Week 41 (1/29/21)

The Education & Workforce Continuum

MEETING NOTES:

IBM Skills Build Announcement & Capital Area Promise Update

Philip Smith, Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement and Executive Director of the BRCC Foundation

- Refocused the mission at BRCC to be the preferred provider of talent for the global marketplace
- BRCC has done a phenomenal job - over 95% of graduates remain in the BR area
- Significant socially and economically
- Focus on high demand high wage programs (nursing, construction management, electrical, automotive training among others)
- Early career academy, in line with P-TECH (Pathways in Technology Early College High School) program at Tara High supported by IBM offers students the ability to move into the workforce immediately upon high school graduation or pursue two more years at a four year institution
- Students receive an Associate’s Degree from BRCC upon graduating high school through the program
- BRCC transfers over 2,000 students to 4 year institutions each year
- Well on the way to becoming the preferred provider of talent for a global marketplace, but there are gaps that exist in terms of individuals who are underemployed or unemployed
- BRCC Foundation and IBM have partnered for Skills Build, an adult learning program free of charge that covers areas of IT, customer service, soft skills, mindfulness, and a broad range of professional development opportunities
- Over 11,000 training modules in the portal
- Extends as well to an IBM badge that can be earned through the platform to be added to LinkedIn pages,

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resumes, etc.

- Easy registration provided through BRCC Foundation
- Baton Rouge is one of 12 cities that are part of the initial national rollout
- The City of BR will partner with us to introduce the program to the community in coming weeks
- Wanted to do a pre-announcement to this group - opportunity for your organization to become a part of this opportunity!
- There's a cost that IBM absorbs - it's an investment in BR. This opportunity can change the landscape in our community. It's incumbent on us to engage and get citizens to participate.

Sherry Wynn, IBM Corporate Social Responsibility Manager

- Work with four states in the South Central region (TX, LA, OK, AR)
- PTECH school
- Been in this role about a year, starting in February after years working in Public Affairs in the Air Force
- The core principles of IBM are "Be Essential" and "Innovation that matters"
- Aligns with business strategy - we want a diverse workforce with applicants prepared for the roles we have in the future
- Upscaled the platform that IBM uses, originally used for veterans, and reinvisioned it to be Skills Build
- IBM invests heavily in its programs. Austin, Dallas, and Baton Rouge have been chosen for the Skills Build program - Baton Rouge is a city with a strong IBM presence
- Skills Build helps folks who are under or unemployed or those interested in upscaling or rescaling to entry level tech positions
- Tech based but also includes professional digital skills that any job seeker in today's workforce needs (interview skills for example)

- Assessment when you log in (5 part test, 1 hour) that tests what you're good at (not what you know, but what your skills are) and what you enjoy doing and then recommends jobs for you
- Hoping to connect adult learners in this community with a curated path of job learning
- Feature tech job role learning paths, professional and digital job training
- This program is at no cost to the user! Go through BRCC Foundation link for a robust assortment of tools offered

Dr. Pamela Ravare-Jones, Assistant Chief Administrative Office, Office of Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome

- Skills Build is free - many companies, especially during hard times, lose professional development and training funding first
- Individuals who are dislocated workers or are seeking jobs due to COVID can get prep and certification in advance
- There is no one who is going to be hindered by cost
- Demographic of who you are trying to target - veterans, refugees, individuals seeking long term employment
- An advantage for anyone in the city in need of that boost, that focus, that preparation
- Sometimes individuals are not clear that some of their interests can be redirected into a new pathway for a career!
- Would love to see more communication going out about this into the community and the Mayor's office will work to pilot it with individuals in the city and make sure IBM is recognized for choosing Baton Rouge

Brandon Smith, MPA, LSU Office of Community-University Partnerships

- Phil and I met around 4 years ago with President King Alexander and had the idea to replicate the Long Beach

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College Promise

- Came back from visiting California intent on creating a promise that is reflective of our community, that fits perfectly into everything you just heard
- Our economy is not such that you have to tell people to go to a four year college, you can go to a two year school and get industry based credential
- Capital Area Promise focuses on five pillars: college access, affordability, teacher preparation, workforce credentials and job training, and parental engagement
- The beautiful thing about the promise is that its not necessarily a new initiative but an umbrella - a local business, a k-12, it gives different people opportunities to plug into the one of those five pillars they need
- Core team of LSU, SU, BRCC, EBR with many partners
- Keep building the method of the promise and make sure people understand that this is the message, the brand of Baton Rouge - What is our message, our common thing? Why is BR a great place to be?
- The intersection of education and economic development is the key
- Must be more intentional about showing our efforts are no longer siloed, something we all can belong to

Casey Phillips (The Walls Project)

- With the alignment between the workforce training and universities, one of the most frustrating things for young people and adults is knowing you want to move forward but not knowing how
- This allows people to come in and make their own pathway
- We just want to make sure that everyone who wants to move ahead can

Questions and Discussion:

Q: Reverend Anderson: How do we reach low or no income populations? We have digital access, transportation, and

cultural competency issues. Has that outside the box thinking been considered? If I'm a parent this would be great information but I might not be in the spaces where this information is passed on.

Philip Smith: Yes, one of the reasons I think that [IBM] engaged BRCC to participate in this had to do with our bandwidth of partnerships around the city. We have community partners that serve all segments of our population. The mayor's office and other institutions will be a part of getting this platform into the eyes of those individuals who need it the most. We can use your help in doing that.

Sherry Wynn: That is why we chose BRCC as a partner. IBM tends to not get into spaces where we aren't specialists. We are presenting this as a partnership because we need help getting to those individuals. Those individuals may need basic training to help them operate in a digital learning platform - we would love to work with your organizations to provide access to computers, etc. Would love to brainstorm ideas and bring our design thinking - we have people who's entire job is thinking outside of the box.

Casey Phillips: The Walls Project has committed to working with Skills Build and Open P-Tech platform as a training partner for our Futures Fund Coding Boot Camp and youth Tech Academy. Encourage you all to contact the BRCC and IBM team to get engaged!

Janel Washington (The Walls Project): Our partnerships with BRCC and IBM will allow for our trainees to upscale and be more equipped for the job industry. For our youth program we are developing a full program as they go into mentorship once they've completed their levels of coding or photography. They will then be exposed to these programs as far as their development goes. Income is determinant in qualifications for our programs and we are looking to put

these programs in the faces of those who need it.

Cat McGraw (Empower 225): We serve the community that Reverend Anderson was speaking of. We can come together to serve the youth but also their parents. I'm going to reach out to see how we can complete the virtual employment program. Even with a hybrid methodology, how can we bridge that gap with employment and employment skills? We serve youth from 13-24 years old but if we don't move their families as well there is nothing we have gained. I can't wait to come to the table to see how we can partner together.

Sarah Walsh (IBM): To clarify, Open P-TECH is a digital platform designed for students to begin as freshman with up to six years to finish (ages 14-20). Textbooks, transportation, and mentoring with IBMers are all available for free. We have 51 students currently enrolled. And we can take up to 60 new students this year! We also have 25 students participating in a paid internship at IBM this summer. Applications open this Monday.

Skills Build is for anyone 18+. As we get those students coming into P-TECH can we also engage parents in Skills Build and get the whole family engaged together?

Discussing the role of Skills Build for Small Business

Sherry Wynn: SkillsBuild does also include some trainings that are specifically designed for small businesses. For example, digital marketing, HR, COVID response, financial/budgeting and more

Manny Patole: Great to see community colleges being leveraged for their potential these days. I think that there is definitely synergy in the idea of small business and internships and leveraging the design thinking behind

these programs, having students who are more creative help think outside the box to improve user experience and interface and how to bring in more customers than beyond a ten block radius

SW: I love the idea of figuring out a way to connect someone with a design thinking badge with a small business. Current paths that result in IBM badges are foundational understanding in cyber security, web development, customer service, and we are constantly working on new ones. Adding in some green job training eventually.

Week 42 (2/05/21)

The Louisiana Prison Industry, Part II

MEETING NOTES:

Recap of "The Louisiana Prison Industry, Part I" discussion:

Jan Ross (HAWF):

Spoke to the Wilson Foundation's prison reentry initiative that started in 2016. HAWF committed to investing \$3 million over 3 years to reduce recidivism rate and the cost to the community due to successful reintegration. In 2017 the legislature passed the Justice Reinvestment package of ten bills approved to save millions for the state. By the end of 2018, Louisiana dropped the number of those incarcerated to 32,000 compared to 40,000 when we started, with savings of \$29 million over those 2 years. However, we are still #1 in incarceration rates in the world.

Reverend Anderson joined the conversation and spoke to mass incarceration being the largest industry in LA, that crime is rampant here and not a day goes by when EBR is not on the front page locally and internationally. She posed the question: how do we keep human capital out of the system? Prevention works better than restoration. It takes less than 24 hours of incarceration for a person to begin losing the assets that they might have spent a lifetime building. The system feeds on the poor, those struggling

with substance abuse and mental health. Less than 10% of the people coming in to jail get their time in court, often pleading guilty just to get out of jail. We need to think differently about this - how do we address this? Take the hat off of law enforcement and put it on the community.

In previous presentations that I have seen through Hillar, they are doing quite a bit of interagency collaboration with the sheriff's office, police, as well as victims and offenders using data to identify patterns of abuse and working from that angle. Also working with the jails to process people more quickly and working with TRUCE to address the youth and provide a safer environment for them to live and build productive lives

To Hillar and Warden: what are the facts of all the news reports we are hearing and what can be done? As you are working more collaboratively, what can these groups here do collectively to address this?

Hillar Moore (EBR District Attorney):

- Starting with 2020, obviously we had a pretty bad year - 118 homicides, 19 of which were domestic violence
- Mimicked the year after the flood (2016) where we predicted we'd have the social disorganization that we see now (103 homicides in that year, 14 of which were domestic violence homicides)
- In January we had 17 uniform crime report homicides plus 2 domestic violence related homicides
- Goes unnoticed a lot, but people addicted to drugs, it does come back if you don't treat it correctly. Last year we had 240 heroin/opioid overdose deaths. We always look at the murder rate but if you look to that rate (120 the year before, we doubled), we really have to be mindful
- In 2021 we're not positive yet what to do.

- The Chief and Mayor are doing a very good job of community outreach as we have never done before
- COVID has really affected how we do things
- Bringing back to the jail population, it's obviously better to prevent than come back and be rehabilitated again
- We met with LSU professors earlier this year looking at who's the victim and defendant in just homicide cases - we can't really look at 2020, so let's look at 2019. Looking at the parents and the folks that we work with, I'd like to study what is their educational background? Can we find out through triage where did the system fail? Where'd they get out of the school system? To me it seems like education drives everything, the way our public school system goes is how our city will go
- There are a lot of schools popping up that are privately funded but still our public school system is crucial - getting to those young kids early, talking about prevention, talking about people not going to jail
- Would like to see if we can get an honest look at where these people come from, did the system failed somewhere, how can we do a better job to serve them? That's part of being a citizen, we owe them that type of education
- Gwen [Hamilton] has studied truancy rates, the truancy rates are horrendous. If they're not in school, they're not getting breakfast or lunch because most of them are below the poverty line. And they have good reasons for not coming to school, shots fired all night long, mom or dad not there to help, no food, having to help raise siblings, etc.
- Talked about collaboration - we also work with the public defenders. Mike Mitchel (just left the public defenders here to take another job) has worked as the public defender or assistant public defender for around 28 years. We enjoyed our relationship with Mike and applying for grants together to get work done because

although we may face each other in court, the bottom line is people. The volume is so great - we'd love to see less people incarcerated. Can we stop that? Can we look at the education component? Why are people being arrested, why are they going to jail?

- For people that are in jail - Halved the Jail Population booklet. Last year we tried for 8 weeks to see if we could speed up the process of folks that are getting booked in the jail. How can we identify those that needed to get out early, didn't have to wait to get a report for them to see a judge. For those 8 weeks, extremely painful for all those involved because we're really not set up for it but were able to half the jail population by getting those people in court within 24/48 hours by identifying those who were only in jail because of money and that worked out very well, although we weren't set up for it and it caused the court a lot of disruption
- We applied for a grant that we thought we were going to get, we had already gotten the authorization from the Supreme Court to have one judge set as magistrate all day 7 days a week to see everybody very quickly to identify those that should stay in jail because of public safety and those that are not a public safety risk but we didn't receive that grant. We believe we can apply again, we have a judge already approved, we have public defenders and DAs and counselors to have them risk assessed, get them the help they need, help those with jobs to keep their jobs
- Coincidentally we are meeting today with Judge Crifasi - he wants to start that process again in a different fashion. Beginning Monday instead of having call out 7 or 8 am it will move to 1 pm, giving more time to get information to the judge regarding who can be safely released, have charges dismissed, etc. May begin that process in October/November/December. Not all judges are on board yet, but we started Monday as a

trial run. We hope the judges see the benefit we think we're going to see

- Juries having been tougher, we only had 6 juries last year, getting backed up with the number of murders we have to try (138 total)
- Trying to do different things as we move along, would like input from everybody
- A lot of people in jail who should be out quicker and money shouldn't stand in the way of that
- I think it gets oversimplified a lot when people say, "You're just housing folks in jail that shouldn't be there"...I wish you guys could see some of the probable causes and records and things we see in the background, saying this guy is dangerous, he's out on 2, 3, bonds...it's difficult making that determination. But again, money should not determine who stays and who shouldn't, it should be public risk
- We also published this paper called "The New Normal". We are trying to work remotely while also getting our cases through the system so the best thing for us is if the defendant receives benefits, generally the victim of the defendant is a family member or relative or somebody they know we're much better off if they get help, drug or alcohol problem or mental health, let's get them help, let's move along as fast as we can
- One thing we're seeing right now is about 1,800 cases a year where young kids are caught with guns and drugs. When you listen to these young men they're saying they need it just in case for protection. And that's probably true in a lot of areas where these young men live, but it is a gun case. What do you do as a DA when someone has a gun and cocaine on their person? We're going to try to mimic the things we learned from Trey, can we set up a program with mentors and a learning experience for these young men, get them the right training so they don't reoffend with a gun and make the

community safer? It's easier said than done because what if you take a chance to dismiss that charge, guy comes back and kills someone? You want the kids to earn that second chance and make the best decision they can.

- With the TRUCE Center, because we've had so many murders, Executive Director Aishala Burgess is asking kids 10-21 to submit a 1-3 min video explaining how gun violence affects them, when you live in that zip code that gets mentioned more than others which is unfair to the vast majority of people there. The #stoptheviolence challenge can be submitted by February 28, judging in March where top three winners will get a prize
 - Take all of those videos and put them in the community
 - If you are a mentor or have something you can devote to the TRUCE kids, they're a little different from the body of people working with 100 Black Men
 - Trying to find those that are potential trigger pullers or those likely to be killed
 - We really need specialized help for these kids
 - When you sit there and talk to them you find out how valuable, bright they are
 - If we could find them that new alternative, that new way, if anyone can assist with that
 - We know and get information about who is speaking with who, who may shoot each other next
- We do what's called custom notification with Chief Paul and the sheriff, we like to knock on that person's door with police safely, and say we understand you are beefing with so and so and there may be violence in the future, how can we help you prevent that from happening? Are any of you willing to come help, say I'm part of this community, I'm behind this, what can we do to help you put that gun down?
- Often not greeted very well by those who may be victims,

but we make the effort to let them, their grandmother, mother know if they don't want to listen to us

- That does seem to work in a lot of cases
- Looks like a lot of people on this call would serve well as mentors as well as coming with us on those pop up moments that are fairly quick notice
- We're here not to just be a traditional prosecutor but to try to help, listen as much as we can
- I really think that as a community historically we are failing people at a young age, families and neighborhoods have to do their part but we are failing them in education to make sure they stay in line first
- We fail at the beginning and at the end - those that have been incarcerated do their time and leave but I don't think we adequately serve them to not come back again
- Education should be the first
- Police, prosecutors and judges have legislative been tasked to fix drugs and mental health and we're not equipped for that

Lieutenant Dennis Grimes, Warden EBR Parish Prison

- What we're starting to experience now, mostly in our jail population we aren't having issues with COVID, it's mostly our arrestees and having to deal with those coming that have tested positive
- Majority that have come in already have a notification that they tested positive
- Make sure to have them isolated
- We are working on trying to bring some of our programs back to the jail on Zoom, trying to get TVs set up
- As the courts have moved to mostly Zoom, very few are going downtown for court
- Enhancing that even more making it even broader, all except jury trials
- Our population is tremendously down now - we try to keep it under 1,000 to promote social distancing

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with inmates washing their hands and wearing masks

- Majority of those we have to transfer out are being transferred to Department of Corrections
- Working on vaccinating inmates who want to be vaccinated, currently the 70+ population (only two inmates here and only one wants to be vaccinated), the rest of them will be shipped to DOC
- It is a challenge to vaccinate here at the jail because it's a two shot deal
- Hopefully they get this passed with the Johnson and Johnson vaccine because it's just one shot so it's easier
- With the two shot, if someone bonds out after one shot you have to find them and get them that second shot, so hopefully we can get the one shot vaccine
- What we're looking out now is trying to ramp up the resources out there
- Getting more individuals who are more violent and are homeless
- Working to try to find placement for these individuals when they get out, to find housing, transportation, get them into that arena doing the things they are supposed to do and not have them coming back
- Most of these guys getting ready to get out have nowhere to go, no family, we've worked diligently to find somewhere to place them, to get our partners back to get them help so they don't return to prison
- Biggest challenge with the majority right now, we have most of these individuals getting stimulus checks and it's a big thing to get everything lined up so individuals getting out receive their stimulus checks before leaving
- Transportation and housing are the biggest thing we continue to fight with
- We're hoping to reconnect with our partners to get Zoom classes for our inmates
- The prison was never designed or built to do the things it's doing right now but prisons are forced to do so because of the closure of all the mental health

hospitals in 2012

- Want to put resources in the prison - the local jail has been behind compared to the resources allocated to state prisons
- Get the community more involved with the individuals coming inside, trying to put some resources and we've been working hard to get things done
- People coming out trying to get Medicaid started, get Social Security stuff done, etc.
- Jail has taken on that responsibility but we're limited to what we can do
- Looking for partners within the community to help out with the things these individuals need
- We have BREC parks in every community in our parish. So what do we utilize the BREC park for? Is there a way to put resources in those BREC parks so people can get to them and utilize them...having resources downtown doesn't help if you can't get to them

Reverend Alexis Anderson (PREACH):

- I want to pull back a little bit because my understanding with this discussion and the one we had in December, I started with a basic thesis: This is an economic model and in order to change the trajectory and reimagine public safety, we have to take the hat off and stop thinking of everything as being a law enforcement issue.
- Last week we ended with a wonderful proverb about the three women who saw babies that had been thrown in the river and two of the women were trying to figure out what to do with the babies in the river and the third opted to go upstream and find out why they were throwing the babies in the river
- I want us to start asking why we're throwing the babies in the river, to put on a different hat and start thinking about this in terms of what is changing, why it's changing and how we can make it change.
- I can sum it up in three words: We the people.

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- I have a saying, that if you are not at the table you are on the menu
- We have to take a step back and say - we have a system that criminalizes poverty, addiction issues, mental health, targets people of color and LGBTQ+
- When you are wealthy the system looks completely different, when you are in a different category, if your zip code is different, crime looks different, how we name crime looks different
- Look at January 6 - it took to the blinders off for anybody who does not understand that race and policing are a challenge in this country that is not addressed
- When we the people continue to give up our collective power, nothing good happens
- Typically what happens is we put our focus in one place - on January 6 we didn't just have a terrorist attack on our capital. We also had an African American man and a Jewish man elected to the senate from what was previously a red state. That was powerful. There are powerful things going on that are not law enforcement centric. They are moving the needle in ways that are more powerful, more impactful, and quite frankly will take both the parish and the state to a place they've never been before
- Look at the concept of ACT. - Accountability, Confrontation, Transparency
- We have to accept that accountability is the first step in change
- Two examples of what's happening in Louisiana, specifically EBR making important strides:
- The room is becoming bigger. Groups are coming in who have never been part of the decision making. VOTE is an organization created, led, and managed by formerly incarcerated people. This organization sat at the table for all of the reform work, made changes that have changed us as a state. Because of their work, hundreds of thousands of people have been re-engaged in the community and can now vote, and because of this organization the anonymous jury system was broken. VOTE's ability to change the narrative is because they made room for themselves at the table. Look at the work of groups like the League of Women Voters - there are organization that are moving the needle that are not law enforcement
- When we talk about school discipline, we need to talk about youth development, coaches, and counselors
- Confrontation: We cannot change what we will not confront
- We have over 100,000 outstanding in Baton Rouge City Court (misdemeanor court). We have over 300,000 warrants outstanding in the 19th JDC traffic court. There are things happening right now that are changing the narrative
- EBR Prison Reform Coalition started a court watch program in a place that almost no other court watch program starts in: the traffic court at the 19th JDC
- Because of that intersection with the court, with the people who work in that program, there are literally programs that have been created that the community is part of that engage groups like Southeast Legal Services, like the Justice and Accountability Center, that help people resolve these issues so that they are not caught up in this system
- We also have to confront where taxpayer dollars are going and who they are going to
- In education as Hillar mentioned it is important that we stop throwing the baby in the river. Expulsion is not a disciplinary tool. I was an HR manager for 20 years and I told managers all the time, once you've terminated somebody, you've ended the relationship. Expulsions end the relationship. We have to work not just on discipline but on our environmental racism issues. We have to address how many of our young people have lead in their blood. How many of those

same young people who are coming out of our foster care systems that are coming out of our families... where are our systemic tools in our Department of Family Services, in different organizations that already exist outside of law enforcement. We have to take a step back and say are we funding those organizations correctly? What are we funding, things that change the paradigm or just recycling human beings in a system that has no good outcomes?

- Who is being locked out of our system? We know it is primarily African American young men of color. In some ways 2020 is an outlier, but in some ways it is typical. We have always been at the top of the bar when it comes to domestic violence in EBR and LA, groups like the East Baton Rouge Prison Reform Coalition, Capital Area Family Justice Center, the Clerk of Court, the Office on Women's Policy, have gathered on a co-convening event that try to work on this program holistically
- We can not talk about well meaning jobs if we have codified in law that people who come through this criminal justice system cannot get license, cannot get into the workforce
- How do we get some of these things off the books and make this world restorative? Putting somebody in a cage is not restorative. What is restorative is taking some of these rules and regulations off the books at a state and municipal level, so that once people have done their time they can get back on track and get a good wage paying job that helps their family
- School to prison pipeline - we cannot continue putting people who do not have a background or knowledge of the mental health, academic, physical stages of children in charge of how we mentor children, who sometimes make childlike mistakes!
- We have a system here that treats an African American 17 year old child completely different from a 24 year old white male at LSU and we have to confront that issue
- We have fines and fees that are debilitating low and working class families
- We have to have that discussion about ending cash bail, ending bond monitoring fees, ending prohibitive probation and parole fees
- We cannot continue to have a separate conversation as if the people paying them are the people locked up
- As the Warden pointed out, there's a disproportionate number of people who are homeless yet we have criminalized the housing problem that fully belongs in the housing realm, not the law enforcement realm
- We have criminalized substance abuse instead of putting a system together, not for a 3 day detox or short term, but for an issue that the state of Louisiana is currently under a consent decree from the federal government because we don't have enough providers
- We also have to talk about context: where are all these traffic stops coming from? Why are they being picked? Let's use the data, not just who is being arrested but where
- Affidavits of probable cause: intersection of poverty - it is very easy to stop a car that has an expired inspection sticker or license plate because odds are that person is poor.
- Can't pay a traffic ticket, can't come to court, etc.
- We have to think about what we have to do with resources. With the issue of bail and bond, in Baton Rouge we have two phenomenal community bail funds, the Bail Project and the YWCA Community Fund
- When I talk about we the people, we have to have transparency
- Public servants work for us not the other way around
- We've got to lift up the important work of having citizens engage from beginning to end, have citizens put in their input, show up at the pools, candidate forums, legislature, the metro council meetings, and more importantly we have to define the parameters of

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where we want this parish and this state to go

- This is literally the largest industry in Louisiana and because of that, it is locking us out of opportunities, it is making some of our children vote with their feet, taking away our future, and we can and will do better

Raymond Jetson (MetroMorphosis)

- One of the things we say often at Metromorphosis is moment or movement: so very often we try to address these critical issues in our communities based on a momentary flash in the pan, something excites us, something aggravates us and we get riled up until the next moment happens
- The things Reverend Anderson articulated require movements, sustained action over time
- The issues at the heart of our predicament cannot be solved by programs alone - they are interrelated and tied to other realities in people's lives and you can't go in and address a single aspect of it
- Think in terms of systemic change rather than what's another program we can start, we will stay mired in these situations
- These are systems and structures that require change - far too often we see young black boys as individual cases to be fixed rather than recognizing they are a part of an ecosystem, that they are living and thriving in an environment
- To actually address the kind of issues that are at the heart of prison reform, reentry, and reducing recidivism requires collective action
- There is no organization that is equipped to unravel these issues alone
- They are all inextricably bound together and we are going to have to start thinking holistically and systemically or a year from now we will be having this conversation again

Sherie Thomas

- In regards to systemic change, we've identified issues in EBR parish prison that are not just issues here but also in prisons and jails statewide
- We - the Mayor's office, the EBR Prison Reform Coalition, Justice Accountability - are working on a movement independently as well as coming together comprehensively
- However there are moments such as the deaths in the prisons sparking additional change that we have seen. The deaths are what we are attempting with EBR Prison Reform Medical task force to prevent by having those systemic changes
- Establishing resources, support groups is great, however, without a call to action it's going to be just another moment that we're going to be talking about instead of creating a movement
- Our call to action is to engage not just individuals on the phone but individuals who have been incarcerated and the families, establishing those resources and support groups, those post-conviction deficiencies that they have to have those individuals know we do not what to see you again
- Establishing correctional help and resources for them
- There is not one place that we can all come together. Judges, sheriff's office, education, training, terminology... information helps but a lot of times individuals don't make changes because they're not privy to the information, to know there are people out there who can help
- Reach out further and establish calls to action within your individual organizations
- Spark change, don't just talk about it

Renee Craft, Capital Area Family Justice Center:

- All of these topics are also interwoven with the issues the survivors and victims that we're serving are dealing with as well
- I spent over an hour this week with a young lady who came in and we touched on everything from the reason

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why she came to a need for mental health, child care, equipment, education.

- Glad to be included in this group and see again that all of these issues we are tackling here, if we tackle all those we can absolutely make an impact on the bigger issues impacting our prison population

Coalition Questions and Discussion

Casey Phillips: Do you think detainees with mental health issues should be detained in the EBR parish system and do you keep them safely monitored?

Hillar Moore: Hopefully the Bridge Center is opening up next week, the problem is when you get someone with mental health issues, oftentimes it's the family member that's the victim, that person is easy to deal with, to divert to Bridge and not jail because that person knows the history and want to have a good night's sleep to know the child's not going to hurt them or someone else. The problem is if it's someone else's property and someone gets hurt, you have a victim on the other side it makes it a little more difficult.

To the Warden's point, our prison is not set up to segregate those with mental health issues out of the regular prison population and that's by design, we really need to look at a better design. Surely they should be hospitalized but when the hospitals are shut down where do you send them?

Warden Grimes: You look at the aspect of somebody calling the police because they have somebody at their home acting out, they haven't been on their medicine, whatever, we hope they'd take those people to the hospital but when they get there and that person hasn't really done anything then the family member wants them out, they end up being at the prison and the prison is really not equipped to deal with those individuals. To me I think that trying to do all that we can with what we have through a private provider or city

parish is trying to figure out with psychiatrists. I think the jail needs more psychiatrists and social workers in there because when you look at the people that come in, 1 out of 5 persons arrested is going on suicide watch. That's tied up everybody in the situation, there's some that may come in where it's not really a suicide watch but we have to take every one of them seriously. It's a challenge to deal with without having the resources. At the end of the day people are going to be in jail so we need to do something different than what we're doing.

Reginald Johnson: I think when the government signed the Justice Reinvestment Act, we were having a discussion about requiring at least high set classes at the juvenile detention center and in the prison. Can you give me an update on whether or not we are doing that?

WG: We already have a high set program at the prison for males and females, at the juvenile center they have one they're working on but we have not seen what's supposed to be funded yet because ours is actually being done by the city through the EBR Department of Education.

RJ: Is it required or is it optional?

WG: Optional. Some of the judges require those under 17 to get a high set while they're incarcerated.

Reverend Anderson: I wanted to thank Hillar, we are partnering on a couple things that are extremely valuable to me, including the 72 hour expedited arraignment. I was very excited to hear that process is going to at least in some form be reconstituted. One of the questions I have concerns data - one of the areas that's a real challenge is the siloing of data. I just wanted to ask you if you could elaborate on whether or not there is additional work being done to resolve some of these big issues around multitudes of systems not talking to each other?

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HM: Data has always been an issue in BR but we're moving to a point now where we have not been able to receive grants in the past due to lack of data, now we're kinda data rich. The problem now is developing programs to pull data items such as how many African Americans are arrested vs national averages. For the first time ever all the systems are working together with 365 Labs. It's a brand new system so there's lots of kinks we're trying to work out but it will hopefully yield better data. Oftentimes in our own office we don't know how much we have and we want to know as badly as you do. We're desperately working on it but it does come with a cost and no one wants to give us money for data, they want to give us money for other things. So we're trying to find that solution now.

RA: One of the issues we identified yesterday is the sheer issue of having people not identified by their identifying race. We do have a 287 G in effect in this parish, not being able to have those numbers expelly as it relates to immigrant populations. The state itself is under investigation because of calculations on the out dates for individuals. Very happy to know the work is moving forward

Casey Phillips: Let's say, the Bridge Center is open. Who makes the call on whether someone's going to the airport or the Bridge Center on Florida, what agency is doing that?

Hillar: First of all, the Bridge Center will not solve all of the problems immediately. The way I understand it is that the emergency rooms will be sending as many as they can to the Bridge Center, but they have to start slow to make sure things are safe and working. Give them time to get started. Each of the agencies, the sheriff and the police, have protocol in place for who they will take to Bridge vs. the prison depending on the crime itself, the history they know or don't know about the defendant, and what they have in their systems. The idea is to lean towards taking as many to the Bridge without making it a dumping center.

We also want to be careful about other agencies bringing their folks here.

Gwen Hamilton, New Schools for Baton Rouge:

Thank you to all of the presenters. There are three words today, Jan Ross continuously keeps us focused on "collective" and "collaborative" and Reverend Jetson so very much said "systemic". I believe as all of you know that education, starting at the earliest possible point, is the system that we know can help us reduce the prison population. It is systemic. On the Bridge Center, it took three times to get parish residents to pass the tax for the Bridge Center. At this point, it is very well researched and set up but is not going to solve the multitude of problems that have been presented today. But collectively we should support the Bridge Center and use the data that results from this endeavor to determine what the expansion looks like to help those in our parish with mental illness. Right now there are 16 beds I believe for addiction, 16 for mental health, and 16 for respite. Although the center is not open, there was a statistic the other day that there are over 100 people in the queue that are eligible for Bridge. We started this as a parish paying for it with parish taxes, let's use that information and data to talk about how we build that system to address the issues brought forth today

Dean Andrews, SU Dean of College of Business:

Building on what Gwen just said, I think we need to look at spending in the public sector as investments that are going to make society better. We want to attract jobs and individuals to BR but if they look at dysfunctional school systems, lack of public transportation, all these things more or less, how do we treat people who are in poverty and help get them out...It's going to take more resources. Nobody wants to mention that, nobody wants to mention the word "TAX", but we're in a situation where you pay me now or pay me later and that later price is going to be much higher. If we can intervene in the beginning in terms of D and F schools, in terms of individuals who have been

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incarcerated initially for small crimes and we don't want them to be educated in prison to commit large crimes. We as a society really need to think about how to improve the quality of life in Baton Rouge.

Pat LeDuff: I'm still concerned about the Bond system - I know Hillar did discuss it's not financially attached but it is, because the money that's being paid is being paid by family members not the person that's actually in jail. So, being in housing, when we're already dealing with families not doing cessations and trying to get them into the first time home, the property is so tied up because of the delay with the court system. The longer you're in jail the longer the property is tied up because sometimes they put property up to get them out of jail and sometimes don't even have property put up. Basically if you have the money you can get out of jail. All of this is tied together. Also there was a conversation about the stimulus check, I want to hear a little bit more about that system and how that's being done to make sure individuals get their money. Also I think we need to take another look at the function of our system, what is your idea of what the prison should be doing? What is that mission? Now that so many things have changed and we have a lack of resources, what is the new mission? What does your prison system look like ideally?

WG: Most inmate's checks are actually being mailed here and put in their accounts here and the inmates decide what they want to do with it. Some are brought in by family members. Most of them use them to help them get out of prison, to pay their bond or help with the finances of the family. That is actually controlled by the inmate deciding what they want to do as far the stimulus check is concerned. What I look at with everything happening around us is trying to reimagine what we're doing as a prison system. A local jail is always seen as a place where somebody comes and are in prison for a couple days, get bonded, get released by judges. Those times are long gone...inmates are staying longer than they were actually designed to do. As far as the

prison system, we're trying to flood these individuals with as much educational programming and resources to let them know what's out there that can help them. Trying to partner with all of our partners to get information to our inmates whether it's on monitors or on flyers to let them know these are the resources that are out there and here's how you access them. It's not so much locking an inmate up, we're trying to flood them with as much programming and resources as we can give as opposed to this lock and feed deal.

Casey Phillips: Ending thought - there's the short, medium, long term work we can do together

Short: Hillar has put out an open call to gage and get involved starting right now, hitting the ground, bringing resources, mentorship and compassion to help alleviate crime

Medium: all the coalition work either directly around prison reform or wrap around services

Long: interconnected approach looking at all these systematic issues and creating an outcome of an over institutionalized populous, what's causing that, getting down to the source. That's what we can really do. We can work on those conditions in the community. It's going to take a generation to undo this mess.

Tristi Charpentier, HAWF: There was a question in the chat about businesses that hire the formerly incarcerated. While the LA Workforce Commission does have some businesses self-identified in their hire system, there's still a stigma so a lot businesses don't want to put it out there that they hire the formerly incarcerated. There are lots of nonprofits trying to find and implement solutions and have their own list. If you are interested in getting involved, I recommend the Christian Outlook Center, Goodwill Industries, and UpLIFTD. Employ BR has an internal list that they will also work with.

Week 43 (2/12/21)

Food Insecurity Coalition: Health Equity

MEETING NOTES:

Gary Chambers U.S. Congressional Candidate / The Rouge Collection

- When we talk about health equity, the first name that came to mind for me is Ms Alma Stewart and all the work she's been doing with Louisiana Health Equity as a group and the summit they have every year
- LA ranks #45 in healthcare - on every list of things that are good we're at the bottom and bad we're at the top
- So many opportunities to address it - food insecurity, minimum wage, maternal death and child care all impact healthy equity
- We have a host of issues that exist, but what are we going to do about it?
- Look at mental health and teen suicide - there's an alarming rate of more young black men committing suicide, deeply personal subject for me because my biological mother committed suicide when I was 2 months old and to think 35 years later we still haven't figured out how do we help people better navigate through life...that's not the option, we need to be focused on a more just system
- How much does a family have in resources to provide the level of healthcare, encompassing all the things I just discussed, they need? Our state has consistently lagged behind
- Organized to fight for an emergency room in North EBR, proud to say we were successful, since Mayor Broome was elected now there is a plan for Howell Place, the development that sat vacant for 10 or 15 years and now there's going to be primary care there, services for elderly people, there's always been an eye doctor there...but in the river parishes, how long does it take those folks to get to an ER? I asked what do people do if someone has a stroke or heart attack? And they said they die. That's unacceptable.
- From a policy perspective I've been supportive of Medicare for all
- People say how do you pay for Medicare for all? We spend \$700 billion on the US military and we couldn't protect the US Capitol. Telling me we don't have the money isn't true, we just need to prioritize differently. No one ever has an issue moving money from education or health care, it's only when we talk about guns and weapons that it becomes an issue.
- We have to rethink where we put our money
- I'm an openly liberal person, I don't apologize for that
- There doesn't have to be a war of ideology all the time, it's a simple answer - is this right or wrong?
- People should have access to health care, women should have complete autonomy over their bodies, black women specifically shouldn't be discriminated against when they go to the hospital - I told a story a few months ago of a Vice Principal here in BR who, basically her baby died because they didn't believe she had the health insurance needed to transfer her baby to a hospital to get the care she needed and her social worker at the hospital was under the impression that she had Medicaid. Why are we discriminating against people when they go and get care?
- Who takes care of the working poor? We talk all the time about people pulling up their bootstraps, but LA ranks last in the nation, the only way we right that is to be honest about our issues and strategically apply resources
- We have to find the funding which we know is out there
- Make sure every American citizen specifically in LA has access to healthcare and insurance
- There's this talk in the health community about people using the Emergency Room instead of a primary care physician, but people are going to the ER because they can't afford to go to the doctor and they know they can't be turned away at the ER

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- The problem is not the people going to the wrong place but people not being able to afford the care they need
- I'll say it again - in the richest country on earth, it is unacceptable that people don't have access to care

EBR Food Insecurity Coalition Update

We continue to move forward, work groups A, B and C have galvanized their short, medium, and long term goals at about 85% with room for new ideas

Group A - funders

Group B - practitioners with three subgroups

Group C - data and policy work

Jan Ross, HAWF

Group A

Focusing on seeking outside funders

Created a list of "capacity building", that is documents that would be needed on grant applications as well as questions that may be asked in applications to give anyone in the FIC or OneRouge some advance notice so to speak of what kind of infrastructure is needed to participate or be a partner in a grant

Going forward, what is the process for those to be included, whether it be a grant application or a partnership?

There are some small wins within the coalition but we look forward to really making some headway with funding for the group

Manny Patole, (Co-City/BBR Community Land Bank)

Group B

The largest collective of the folks within FIC (urban farmers, distributors, providers, food literacy, folks working within the system itself)

Subgroup focused on meeting the immediate need and filling the gaps in service through distribution and partnerships with other organizations on the ground (faith-based, medical, parks, grocery stores)

The subcommittee is currently working to reorganize, to

understand the who and the what of what folks are doing in EBR as it relates to food insecurity and make connections to all the organizations within the issue to coordinate and better solve the immediate need for food right now while also looking forward with how to supplement coordination with Groups A and C, the future gaps in service, as well as how to improve distribution

Korey Patty, Feeding Louisiana

Group C

Largely responsible for data and policy work and that includes creating a picture of what is happening across the provider landscape, the work all of the organizations participating in Group B are providing, who and where they're serving, their challenges, etc.

Compare that to the landscape and the situation on the ground for food insecure people

We have a lot of good data from Feeding America and our partner Urban Footprint who is doing some real time tracking across the state that we can zoom in on a city, parish, census tract level

Largely putting together that comparison, what is the need and what resources are available

On the other side, talking about the policy and programs that exist to address FI

Our providers are doing a lot of really good work across the city but we need these federal programs to address food insecurity holistically

Mostly talking about SNAP - had DCFS come in to talk about SNAP administration, how people can get in the program

Liz Perry spoke about the assistance LSU Health Baton Rouge North Clinic is providing to clients coming in needing nutrition education, connecting them with SNAP benefits
Connect with us to gain an understanding of how clients can be better served by these programs

A lot of our work is increasing the education around these programs and working with state agencies to make sure programs operate as effectively and efficiently as possible
Casey Phillips, The Walls Project

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Next week Katie Pritchett (CAUW) will be circulating the EBRFIC Case for Support presenting the long term work of the coalition as a whole

There's a lot of room to get involved, a lot of room for input Between everything Healthy BR and Geaux Get Healthy is doing with the FIC, the Health District, it's about interconnecting all these efforts together

Doesn't happen overnight - those short term goals are for people who are very action orientated, ready to hit the ground running

Medium and long really about creating continuums, eliminating redundancies, sharing resources and knowledge, moving towards better policy that serves a broader range of people Elizabeth Perry, LSU Health Baton Rouge

Recently had a discussion about disparities with COVID19 vaccines

There's a lot out there on national and local news, especially this week with Mayor Broome

There is racial disparity...The great news is we haven't seen that disparity at our clinic in North Baton Rouge. We have people coming from all over the parish to our clinic which was very much unnoticed before, it's been great to see different backgrounds coming together as one and seeing what we offer in North Baton Rouge

One thing we struggle with is health care and communication Communicating need and availability of health care to individuals in lower income areas especially if they don't have access to cell phones, internet, or social media

Tre Nelson, Baton Rouge Area General (Mid City)

Spot on about the struggles health care has across LA, it's a nationwide issue really

One of the admins at BR General, and I echo what Elizabeth said about the issues surrounding communication

The disparities in healthcare have been spotlighted because of COVID but these have grown over decades and decades

When we're getting these vaccine supplies we need to make sure that we are distributing them equitably to as many corners of the community as possible

Specifically we need to make sure that we're working with organizations, we talk to a large amount of churches in the area, and even with some of the troubles we've run into getting sustainable supplies we want to meet people where they're at

If we focus on education, registration, transportation, and then eventually getting people vaccinated I think we'll have a successful run over the next couple months

Reginald Johnson, SVDP

Focus Foods has free home-delivered frozen meal and snack boxes to all children within the parish for the duration of the spring school semester

Households that are interested in receiving these free meals just need to complete the short enrollment form and Focus Foods will deliver these meals directly to their home: https://focusfoods.formstack.com/forms/east_baton_rouge_form Emily Chatelain, Three O' Clock Project

EBR is doing their delivery right now targeting kids who aren't in school on the weekends and for virtual kids. It is available to any EBR child, not just students

We have partnered with the EBR Housing Authority, launching direct home meal deliveries...Hopefully have a bigger project with Baton Roots and Boy Scouts and others entities partnering with the Housing Authority to make sure no child goes hungry

Mary Wilkinson, EBRP

Providing food for our virtual students seven days a week They do have to sign up for it...One of our biggest problems is parents signing up and someone has to be at home to receive the food and sometimes they're not there

Children 18 and under are eligible and children with special needs are eligible up to 21

Coalition Questions and Discussion

Georquel Goodwin, Department of Education: I've seen a great disparity when it comes to the transition of COVID and the allocation of food for those in public schools and those

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not going to in-class settings. Do you have any solution or feedback for that, anything federally you would like to see allocated in the community?

Gary Chambers: Our children are really struggling through this. We don't realize how many children...that's their meal when they go to school, that's when they're guaranteed to eat breakfast, lunch, a snack. It's important from a federal level to make sure with the COVID relief packages that there is funding in our local school district because it is no fault to these children or their parents that this pandemic is here. Because of the mismanagement of the government in addressing this pandemic, I believe the government has an obligation and responsibility to take care of its citizens. Local municipalities are strapped for cash, states even...the money just isn't there. The federal government is sending money but is it enough to meet that need? What are our plans on a state and local level to build that out and ensure students are getting the food they need?

We don't know how long this is going to go on, but we've got to figure out how to make sure people have what they need.

Reverend Anderson, P.R.E.A.C.H.: With the tracking of health disparities - because our system is so privatized and segregated, do you have any plans or have thought about where the federal government could help by requiring standardized data reporting as a requirement to receive funding?

GC: My policy moving forward, I'm going to always talk to the people on the ground fighting for reforms and find out what are the policies they want to see happen. Too often elected officials try to act like they are subject matter experts on things they've never even read a white paper on. I always say "In God We Trust, everybody else bring data" - the more data we have the better we understand what we're dealing with. Can't really address the problem if we don't have the scope of it.

Casey Phillips: Korey, what are some federal policies that you

feel need to shift in order to get resources on the ground? Korey Patty: I think it comes back to our conversation about SNAP, lots of adjustments have been made particularly in response to the pandemic. All of them have sunsets attached to them...so the most recent change we've seen from the COVID relief packages extends and maximizes SNAP through the end of June. The economic effects of the pandemic, people losing wages, jobs, hours, is not going to be over by the middle of this summer. We're pushing for language that extends these policies through the end of the public health crisis and economic downturn. There are a number of other programs that are important to the work of the anti-hunger space: Department of Agriculture, emergency food assistance program, food banks...Our focus has been food, funds and flexibility. Make more food available by allocating dollars and make them easier for people to gain access to

GC: I echo what he's saying about the need to consider beyond the pandemic. If you lose your job and get a new job, you don't automatically recover, you need a few checks under your belt before you can rightside your family. We need to consider three months after the pandemic making sure people have all the safety nets we can put in place

Emily Chatelain, Three O' Clock Project: Korey are you seeing anything from that level being pushed for local foods? Dollars to be spent to support local farmers and our local economy?

KP: I don't have great insight on that but can certainly circle back.

Reginald Johnson: I get referrals from Unite Us, the online portal to SVDP, for food from various times. Most come from Humana healthcare workers and other insurance companies where the client would come in and say I don't have any food/food stamps so they'll put it in the Unite Us platform and then we'll get a box of food for them. Are you guys connected through that platform where you get

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more referrals? They also do financial and job assistance

Katie Pritchett: United Way is definitely engaged with Unite US! John Hutson, our staff member in charge of our 211 resource line, is the lead for that with us. On a statewide level the United Ways are figuring out the best way to leverage Unite Us to help connect more service providers and people through that system. I don't know that we've talked about that specifically in the FIC, but it's a great tool. We have talked about getting more food pantries and referrals involved in the coalition. Great way to lend to the coalition what are your needs, what are you seeing in terms of people requesting food...How can we supplement what a lot of food pantries are already doing...We know a lot of food pantries have way more requests for that resource or are only able to provide non perishable food items. One of the goals of subgroup B is how do we supplement those with fresh food or fresh food resources?

Jan Ross: As we have seen with advances in science, there is greater and greater need and awareness in the healthcare community. In serving the patient for medical reasons, it doesn't end there, there's need for serving the whole patient. With that recognition, there's needs in connecting the healthcare system to outside services and that's how Unite Us came about. 211 has been a huge resource for those in the healthcare system that recognize when patients are discharged they might not have everything they need to remain healthy. Baton Rouge General is working on creating capacity to ensure that when patients are discharged, they are connecting with services out in the community. As Reginald has brought attention to Unite Us, you may see it more and more as we go forward because there is more recognition of serving the whole patient and recognizing it will take connection within the community to help with doing that

Tre Nelson: We did realize that there are specific patient populations that are doubled down on expenses and barriers, specifically transportation and copays. We started

realizing that certain populations in the community who have different treatments that are recurring, some of those same patients are the ones who pay the most in copays. They also are running into issues with transportation. We are leveraging more options, working with Lyft Health Care... Really focusing on how to drop those copays so people aren't coming out of these treatments paying more money that they don't have

Manny Patole: I know many folks are probably wondering how you can participate, and I know many people on this call and in all these coalitions, this is maybe your 4th, 5th, 10th job on top of everything else you're getting paid for. As we're moving forward, some of our short term goals specifically with Group B is to make these connections with those groups in this sphere and understand what they're doing, how we can fill those gaps specifically with faith- and community-based organizations, the medical community, BREC and recreational groups, schools, grocery stores. We want to understand what have been your issues, how can we work with you. If there are certain topics within the FIC that you are really passionate about, we're developing action groups to deal with some of these items

Reverend Anderson: Hope Ministries used to have a client selection of food banks but there are families that have cultural diet norms as well as individuals with specialty medical need diets and allergies, my question was in this new situation we find ourselves in, how are those families being identified and serviced?

Kelli Rogers, Healthy BR: Having run the Hope Ministries food pantry for a while, it is a client choice model. We did have screening questions about allergies and preferences. The community members could make their selections. We did try to provide nutrition education...there's an onsite garden there that Baton Roots runs, trying to meet all of those needs. A lot of the food pantries are stocked with food that's not necessarily the most nutritious and may

not meet cultural requirements

Pat LeDuff: Experienced a food trolley at Harvest Grocery Store in Missouri City, TX...The grocery store actually has a trolley, fills it, delivers your order or you can go out like an ice cream truck and purchase what you want. Has anybody seen anything like that or is anyone working on something like that? I think a partnership like that in Scotlandville to convince people to buy and give extension to food access.

Casey Phillips: We've definitely looked into the idea of a community food truck in the FIC

Gwen Hamilton: Mobile food units have never been brought to fruition. I think Healthy BR has information on attempts on doing that, Main Street Market tried to address the issue by bringing the market into the various communities so that families could purchase fresh foods. But I'm not aware that I've seen anything like Pat just described

Alfredo Cruz: I grew up in Nicaragua and that's all we had - they're very common in Latin America and the Caribbean. I think in this country it's a policy barrier, regulatory issues

Kelli Rogers: We have found it is a heavy lift with a lot of regulatory barriers/ It's a whole different conversation if you can get a grocery store to be responsible for that type of distribution, it's a whole other thing from starting it from scratch

Casey Phillips: That's why with the FIC we have the data and policy group so they know what to go after when policy gets in the way.

Week 44 (2/19/21)

Future of Industry

MEETING NOTES:

Sarah Haneline, Workforce Development Manager, BASF Corporation

- Work for BASF in Louisiana, we are the leading chemical company in the world
- One of our sites here in Louisiana is the largest manufacturing sites in North America

- Create a lot of different products that go into products you use every day like cleaning wipes, laundry detergent, tennis shoes, lots of things that impact your life on a daily basis
- What I want to talk about today is generally what we think about when we think about workforce development
- Long term continuum, from when a child starts school to when they retire and everything in between
- As we think about the future, we're doing a lot of work to prepare students for future jobs and training employees as things change
- Operators specifically (link) and how that role has evolved over the last several decades, really good example of how STEM has shifted a role that everyone is familiar with...operators are what keep our plants going, they're the ones making the products and without them we wouldn't be able to operate
- We have people at BASF who, when they started 30,40 years ago, what they did as an operator looked like a completely different job from what they do today all because of technology
- As technology has shifted, the skill sets we look for have shifted as well
- As we look to the future, the technical skills like using technology, understanding how chemical processes work, the stuff you learn in school is very important but the skills you learn in a less formal way are equally important: essential skills, soft skills, foundational skills you need for any job - communication, team work, troubleshooting, people willing to fail and try something new
- Can't tell you what jobs will look like in the future, but we will always need people. But what those people are capable of doing, or what we need to train them to do, will evolve.

David Dartez, Senior Labor Advisor, ExxonMobil

- Been with Exxon 34 years, from Louisiana, educated at SU
- For ExxonMobil, most of you probably know our history, how long we've been here
- 5 facilities here, primarily in north Baton Rouge and Port Allen, that includes our refinery the 5th largest in the US
- We've got approximately 6,000 contractors here in Baton Rouge, have been mostly able to maintain that number over 2020
- In the world of chemicals, there's lots of things we don't always realize comes from processing oil and natural gas - fuel, plasticizers (produce plastic for Hasbro, frisbees and hula hoops)
- COVID-19 had a big impact on our industry - oil and gas is very depressed but we still need it
- This past week illustrates the need for power - we generate power by burning oil and natural gas
- That bottom line says we're still going to need jobs to process these things needed to maintain the quality of life we have
- Outlook for Energy: A perspective to 2040: the outlook for energy, no matter what side of the fence you are on about moving to modern methods of energy production - solar, wind, electric - by 2040 the statistics still say oil and gas will supply more than 50% of power (today it's about 55%, so there's a slight decline but not much)
- Despite loss of jobs in the refinery sector over the past decade, in Baton Rouge we've consistently maintained the job force here, largely unimpacted, very fortunate and really proud to say we are still hiring
- As the role of technology changes, It's important we find the right people to capitalize the technology and run these plants in a safe and efficient way
- Great news, capital investment is key to sustaining our organization, huge investment we need to keep our refinery competitive and employing people here

in Baton Rouge, we really appreciate the support we need from the school board last night

- North Baton Rouge Industrial Training Initiative - partnership with BRCC, since 2012, we've graduated 330 students in that program. Even in 2020 we hired six students from the program, for the first time brought them in as interns and then ultimately flipped those to permanent positions for the individuals that qualified
- Do want to shout out our industry partners like Turner Industries, ISC, Triad, Jacobs - they've been partners with us since the program was initiated, brought the lion's share of individuals from the program into their organizations
- Minority owned businesses are needed to help us with this refinery and competitive industry project. There was a forum we hosted yesterday, Kelly Welch mentioned we're going to try to do that again in May
- We do want to engage and bring in more minority suppliers to help with these investments
- Apply for jobs at Exxon - actively hiring (great jobs, annually a little over \$90k a year)

Coalition Questions

Casey Phillips: In 2025 to 2050, is technology replacing or changing jobs?

Dave Dartez: Probably a little bit of both, primarily changing jobs. If you look at the evolution of technology just in the past thirty years, highly computerized, automated type facilities, that drives an ability for maintaining that structure. We talk about it all the time, safety is paramount. It probably will long term replace some jobs, but over the next several years it's changing the way jobs are performed.

Casey Phillips: Being that BASF is located in Geismar and we saw the ripple effect of what happened with the Shell refinery in Convent and the hit that that's had in St. James Parish, can you maybe speak to the outdated facilities and

the issues that can pose in the capital region?

Sarah Haneline: All of our companies want to invest and bring investments here. There is a competitive environment we all operate in. I think it's very important for the community to understand what it takes for our companies to make the decision to bring investments here, to upgrade the facilities. That decision is larger than just our companies alone. We are part of the community and it's important for the community to be part of it with us. I'm definitely not the expert to go into all the details on that, but community effort is the bottom line.

Casey Phillips: Outside of your companies' response, obviously the Biden administration represents a serious shift in the trajectory. How is that going to change the trajectory of the industries we're talking about over the next 25 years, for good and for bad?

Sarah Haneline: From a positive perspective, the Biden administration will have an impact on diversity and inclusion efforts. For our industry, it's very important that we have diverse people, backgrounds, and perspectives...we need that for innovation, for us to be successful as a company. I think it's aligned with a lot of the work we're already doing so it's good to see government and industry coming together on that topic.

Dave Dartez: We're going to have to continue to fuel the economy with gasoline based products...we understand that's the direction we're heading, looking at renewable resources and energy, but in the interim people still have to have transportation, we've got to be prepared and our competitors have to be prepared to sustain that for the majority of people. Power plants are going to convert, look at wind turbines...we're learning some things that will continue to develop. We'll start to see power sources being replaced over time. Ongoing demand across the globe for petrochemical products ([link](#)). We have to be here, we have to invest in our facilities to sustain the quality of life we have.

Casey Phillips: When you refer to 55% of the world's energy

currently is with oil, what is that in contrast to the US consumption? What is that in the US especially with GM announcing until 2035 they're going all electric with their car production, what is the energy trend for the US?

Dave Dartez: I don't have it on hand, but US demand is going to change and the demand for oil and gas is going to outpace the rest of the world...it's going to go down at a faster pace than the rest of the world. That's the trend we're going to see. I wanted to add, there was a question about alternative sources of energy and whether Exxon is investing in those. We've invested a lot in biofuels, but when you talk about electric automobiles, there's a ton of plastic being used. The lighter the vehicle, the more compatible with electricity. We have to be prepared for the chemical products that are also supporting this new alternative of energy.

Dr. Narcisse (EBR Superintendent): We've been trying to think about what type of certifications and degrees and experiences kids are going to need. What specific areas should we think about having them focus on? We have Fast Forward where kids can get an Associate's Degree while they get their high school degree, what are the pathways we should be thinking about for those kinds of jobs?

Dave Dartez: Process technicians, operators, operating technicians, process technology certification is a huge area, there's been tremendous advances at BRCC and RPCC offering certification programs. Great way to develop our future operators. Back in the day we had trade schools - welders, pipe fitters, electricians. That is still a great way to get great jobs. The need for those skills has not gone away. North Baton Rouge Training Initiative is one way students can develop those skills and get into the industry. CTEC is a great facility off of Lobdell where students in their junior and senior year can go to learn and develop these skills, to graduate high school with trade certification.

Sarah Haneline: I've been fortunate to be on the calls with Fast Forward as the state is preparing to get that

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started. Operators, process technicians who run the plants, instrument technicians who repair instruments used... we look for either a certificate or a certificate with some experience. Building in some job shadowing...it's difficult for companies like us to hire high school students but if we could go into the classrooms, talk about the jobs, do simulations, show what it's like to do these jobs, whether its a trainer plant or virtual reality, is a great way to show these students what it's like. Skill crafts are great jobs - we are seeing less people going into those jobs. We need to educate students on what those jobs are, the opportunities, how you can support your family and community with those jobs that we have here in our region.

Jennifer Carwile (TogetherBR): Is ExxonMobil and BASF working with Apprenti?

Jacquelin Craddock: Apprenti is an IT apprenticeship, we operate in tech-centric roles and operate across the country. Currently we are not working with Exxon or BASF.

Pat LeDuff: Over 100 years ago when you first came, you did have the community in mind when you first came, yet here we are today struggling with the same issue. Are there any initiatives in place to assist north Baton Rouge?

Dave Dartez: There's a lot of opportunity in north Baton Rouge for improvement. I'm not aware of anything we're directly involved in, but I can say Istrouma now has a process technology program. We've had a historically great relationship with Istrouma. The PTEC program there is a perfect opportunity for us to stay involved and help develop the Istrouma program to help bring those students to our facilities. Can't speak to a grocery store, but Kelly may have more comments.

Kelly Welch: Whenever we bring projects into our refinery sites, we look for wraparound opportunities. We opened a community center where nonprofit organizations are housed. We're presenting opportunities for organizations to come, not have to pay rent, just spend money and energy on other things. Our Baton Rouge Refinery project, when it originally started, included a brand new office building that was going

to be outside of the gates so it could house local restaurants, retail space and a grocery store. Unfortunately because of COVID that was one of the aspects of the projects that had to be put on hold. We're not letting it go. I know that there are other projects that I can't speak about yet that we are hoping will bring those benefits. We have not given up on bringing those opportunities and direct community impacts, it's just not happening as soon as any of us want. Judith Rhodes (LSU): I was asking about the entry requirements like ACT, reading levels for some of these programs. Excellent programs especially though BRCC are trying to bridge that with high schools. When I work in schools I find so many students who have aspirations to do that work but are not prepared. Those reading and literacy issues are something industry has to address with education.

Dave Dartez: I don't know the absolute score for ACT but I can say for our direct hiring at ExxonMobil there is no ACT requirement, we just require a high school diploma and 18 years of age.

Sarah Haneline: Thinking about operators and instrument technicians, we do look for associate degrees for those candidates. You do have to pass college algebra, basic chemistry, ACT is tied to that. There are students who have aptitude but maybe aren't good test takers. What we try to do is engage with them through a different way, a robotics program, external partners. It's a much bigger issue than passing a test.

Judith Rhodes: Good attendance, discipline records follow you. As we encourage kids to have good school habits it will help build into that workforce community.

Dustin LaFont (Front Yard Bikes): One of my thoughts from seeing kids in middle school trying to get into high school, we see a high dropout rate and not enough of our kids are accessing CTEC and BRCC opportunities and are dropping out to go to the workforce. How can we make those access opportunities a lot higher and retain more kids in our school systems to the end, how do we prove

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there's a light at the end of the tunnel?

Dr. Sito Narcisse: In the cities I've been in, I've seen the way the pathway works well for the kids is when you build it out from the high school level with internships as they're actually in schools to connect the work. They try to start the pipeline in middle school, and it takes a lot of community work. From a whole scale approach, what are the pathways we are creating to work in that way to teach kids hard and soft skills? As much as they need to know how to read, they also need to know project management, how to create power points, collaboration, problem solving. They build that as a process with the school district. That actually keeps kids off the streets. We used a program called YouScience to see what kids' strengths are, to help them look at what professions they might be interested in in the future. I'm trying to learn how we have thought about that from a larger scale and is there a way we could connect those pipelines?

Sara Haneline: For us, middle school is the area we are most interested in getting involved in. From a STEM perspective there's great programming for K-5 and high school, but we see a gap in that middle piece. We don't want to lose people and for us to think about diversity and inclusion, middle school is where we lose girls who are interested in STEM.

Lou Guthrie: Fast Start has the manufacturing training program at high schools and community colleges that train entry level positions, they're working on improving that and during COVID it went completely online. Difficult for that type of program. Trying to get that back out. Also working on C2C which is Campus to Career, addressing communication skills, leadership skills, ethics, and career management. We will be giving this program out to the colleges to use for their tech students to increase their professional skills. They're coming out with technical skills but not those life skills that they need to work. The recruiters tell me they can teach tech skills but it's really hard to teach those personal skills. In terms of outlook, LED keeps bringing in new companies, we've seen an emphasis

on technology jobs because every job these days seems to be a technology job.

Patrick Tuck (4H): With soft skills, I don't think that we codify those skills and I think that's an issue when after school programs are looking for ways to acknowledge that we can measure how well we do that part of what we do. That could make us much more attractive as partners for these kinds of certifications. You're talking about a program that consistently reports back to local, state, and federal agencies on data collected over several years. Helpful to measure the things we learn when we work with kids. The other part is engaging the agents and the staff and the kids in the schools to make sure they're part of the ongoing work. Doing great work to get Exxon in the room, takes it from the theoretical to intentional collaborative programming.

Lindi Spalatin: I have a general question, we've been talking a lot about access and equity and diversity. I work at McMains Children's Development Center and I haven't heard a lot about how the access will work for that community because these kids will age up into that workforce. I'm just curious what the game plan is so these communities also have access.

Dave Dartez: We have a number of employees who have had children come through McMains as well. I think that's an area for us to explore, what are the best opportunities for them? There are tons, we just have to find ways to get them involved and engaged and given access.

Sarah Haneline: I would agree, we love McMains too, we are involved as much as we can be. I think we have a lot of work to do in this area. Internally we've just launched an employee resource group for employees with disabilities because many of them are hidden. We have to start inside to build up a culture and awareness of what the gaps are and how we can address them. We've seen over the last year that a lot of roles can be done from home, from a computer. I think that could potentially change and open up more access.

Gwen Hamilton (New Schools for Baton Rouge): I think we have a lot of work to do, there's been very little conversation about the special needs population. We should look very very hard at how we provide services or don't provide services to children with special needs and that is a very broad category. I do think there's an opportunity to elevate that conversation as to how we as a community are providing appropriate services for children with special needs.

Lindi Spalatin: I'm the director of development so I don't work directly with the kids but part of my responsibility is advocacy with our donors. If you are interested please reach out to me, I would love to give you a tour and show you the technology we use here at the center. Kids deserve to have access to everything regardless of financial income and capabilities. I encourage everyone to keep that in mind when we talk about diversity and inclusion.

Reverend Anderson (PREACH): Because we have such a large incarceration impacted population, what leading employers are doing actively to break down those barriers? We are continually leaving out such a large percentage of people in moving forward in our community. It's time for employers to start thinking about this proactively. What are companies doing specifically to try to address inclusion of these populations?

Dave Dartez: All I can tell you is that I agree with you, there's more we could do. Small steps but we're making progress. I've had conversations with James Windom, who used to work with Exxon, I know the work he's done with the Reentry Coalition. We gotta continue to look for the ways to do that.

Sarah Haneline: I was just going to say I agree with what Dave said. There are things within our control and out of our control, there are things we can do but outside of that we have to work with our government officials, Department of Homeland Security, groups that help certify us for safety and security purposes.

Dr. Donald Andrews (SU): There's a lot of discussion in terms of moving to a hydrogen economy, is ExxonMobil

involved in that kind of research?

Dave Dartez: I'm not aware that we're directly involved but we have a huge research and development arm that's always looking into new opportunities.

Kelly Welch: We are very heavily invested in carbon recapture technology and have been since the 70s. We've dedicated resources to create an arm of our company that's solely focused on carbon recapture, putting money on making it more efficient and cost effective so that others can do it.

Final Thoughts

Sarah Haneline: I think that it's important for everyone to know we're with you, we're concerned about the same things you are. The things that impact our community impact us. We're all in this together. If BASF can be a part of future conversations, we're happy to do that. Our employees come from all over this region and we impact this region, we're

Dave Dartez: Echo that, appreciate the opportunity to talk with you guys this morning. I know we don't have all the answers but our organizations are committed to being in this community in whatever way we can. We have a tremendous network of employees here, we've got a ton of employees with a ton of energy. Great to know there's resources out here that we can connect them with.

Week 45 (2/27/21)

Black Futures: A Sankofa Series

MEETING NOTES:

Raymond Jetson, Chief Executive Catalyst, MetroMorphosis

We sought to situate Black history in a different way this year. We started the conversation around creating a document focused on Black History in Baton Rouge titled "Black Baton Rouge: Yesterday and Today". The motivation behind creating the document was to create a "Sankofa" moment. Sankofa, with roots in Ghanaian culture, is at its heart a careful investigation of the past in order to understand the present and gain knowledge for the future. We believe that any meaningful effort and positive impact, particularly in the inner city neighborhoods, has to be rooted in knowledge

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of the course of events that led to the current state

This document is not intended to be a complete and exhausted retelling of the history of Black people in Baton Rouge, rather a broad slice that could be multiplied many times over. It is not a finished document: we put it out in hopes that people will take it and add to it, that community members, history buffs, educational and religious and community based organizations will take it and add to it where there are gaps and engage with it - it is not just for reading. The back of the document has engagement guides for families, churches, schools, businesses, community based organizations to stimulate engagement and interaction with the document

The great pleasure of this is that I got to connect with Dr. Lori Martin (Professor of Sociology & African and African American Studies, LSU) and Chris Tyson (CEO at Build Baton Rouge/Newman Trowbridge Distinguished Professor of Law, LSU), two wonderful individuals engaged in the work because of past experience.

In 2016 when MetroMorphosis prepared to begin the urban congress on African American males we thought that the experiences of black boys and men needed to be situated in history and Chris wrote a brief document for us on Black history. I had the opportunity to partner with Dr. Lori Martin on a book on South Baton Rouge. I'd like to welcome her to the conversation. I want to ask, what is it about this work that caused you to give it your time, to bring it to life?

Dr. Lori Martin: I think it's really important for people to understand the history of a place and for individuals and families and communities to understand their place in the world. This document provides us with opportunities to fill in the gaps and share some information about the history of Black people and Baton Rouge that some people who

are new to Baton Rouge or who have lived here their entire lives and didn't have any knowledge of. The educational system is not necessarily as diverse as we'd like it to be. This info may not be found contemporarily or historically within the curriculum throughout Baton Rouge and the state. It's an important service and reminder that education happens in so many places. It's our hope that this document will be used by community based organizations including faith based institutions and community centers as well as schools and afterschool programs and within families to share the rich history of Black people in Baton Rouge and to imagine what the future can look like based on the triumphs and tragedies of those before us.

Raymond Jetson: To that end, it's been an interesting month with this document. We've had a community conversation in Scotlandville, a community conversation in South Baton Rouge, the NAACP did a conversation on activism in the community around the document, we've had more than 20 churches within the community use the document to support their Black history programming. Over the course of the month, you, Chris and I had the opportunity last weekend to do a library streamed event, and as I was walking outside this morning on the news they were talking about the EBR parish school system doing their virtual Black history program today for all 6-12 schools using this document as a motivation for it. When you look at the activity around this document, what do you think?

Lori Martin: I think it's wonderful and I hope it will serve as a model for other school districts in and outside of Louisiana to see the merit and significance of including Black history through the year, not just in February. It's important for Black students and other students to see themselves in the material and to make connections to what they are learning in the classroom and how it might impact the broader society. It's really wonderful that the EBR school districts are recognizing the Black history in

the area and more broadly. I really hope it challenges more people to do the same and not just at the elementary schools. We were advocating this even at LSU, and LSU is not the only place where people have tried to get Black history required or to at least have enrichment activities. I hope it creates a firestorm of interest in Black history both locally and nationally.

Raymond Jetson: Before I dive into some of the elements of the work with you, I want to ask a perspective question. You and Chris come from different views. Dr. Martin, you came to Baton Rouge to work at LSU. It was new to you. Chris was born here, went off and came back...I want to ask you Dr. Martin, as someone who came to this community, what did you learn looking into the history of Black people in Baton Rouge. What stood out to you? And Chris, after Dr. Martin, as someone who grew up here?

Lori Martin: I came to Baton Rouge in 2013 and one of the first things I did was go to the museums to get an understanding about the history of this place I'd be calling home. Recognized an underrepresentation of Black people in a lot of the exhibits. I would say some of the things that stood out to me were the creation of Brooks Park, to look at the way that Black people throughout the area tried to declare that Black lives matter by calling for the integration of swimming pools here, paying for the pools but couldn't enjoy them. Points to Black people being able to support each other even when not in agreement, some people wanted to create their own pools, some said let's integrate, and ultimately despite the differences settled on creating their own pool but decided to support one another.

The Baton Rouge Bus Boycott really stood out to me and I tried to raise awareness around that. We know the Montgomery boycott is credited with transforming modern civil rights in the United States and beyond. The Baton Rouge Boycott happened years before the one in Montgomery and helped

make Montgomery successful, it's a story that should be told more widely.

Chris Tyson: First of all, I think it's important to recognize that this is Black history month and we've created something to celebrate and uplift Baton Rouge's Black history - nationally we know there's no worthwhile retelling of American history without understanding of race. We see the issues and conflict across all areas driven by our history of racism, white supremacy, slavery, all of that. When we look at Baton Rouge or any city, we know that these frames of analysis, understanding how race is operating, are often marginal narratives. Finding ways to center those not only tells us about the achievements of Black Americans, or the role of Black history, it tells us everything about this place, our shared history across race and class and geography. Growing up here and thinking about this history, and seeing the city through adult eyes and realizing so much of this history is unfolding around me and when I think of the school desegregation case, one of the longest running school desegregation cases in the nation, forced bussing starts in 1981, the year I start first grade. The spatial reordering of this city begins over the subsequent decades - suburbanization, the division of north and south baton rouge and the urban core of the city, the ways we have racialized space in this city. That is tied to this history of desegregation, that is taking up a significant chunk of this city's modern history. I look at my own life and how much has happened in that time and how that continues to have implications on the community we live in.

Raymond Jetson: Chris you raised the issue of education and that is certainly a rich subject for this #OneRouge coalition, but I would position it and like to hear your thoughts...one of the consistent things I see in "Black Baton Rouge: Yesterday and Today" is a consistent pattern of resilience, innovation, initiative, creative ways to respond

to the challenges faced by people in this city. No place is that richer than education. The deseg suit is one glimpse of that but then you go back even further to the Hickory School which ultimately became McKinley...when you think about education in Baton Rouge through the eyes of Black people, what is it that folks on this call should be mindful of?

Lori Martin: When we think about education we hear people say education is the great equalizer, the key to success. Education is also responsible for perpetuating social and racial inequalities. Studies show that especially during time periods where Black people didn't have a lot of options and were segregated into certain schools, they also had the benefit of Black educators committed to their success. People in their community, who knew their parents, attended the same types of social organizations and believed every child deserves an excellent education. Scholars argue those things were lost in integration along with resources. As we think about how do we reimagine education today, we don't want to blame individuals exclusively and say that parents are not interested and kids are not motivated, we need to look at the ways systems are structured, how we finance education, and how to make that more equitable and look at issues that center race. I recognize that it's not popular, some people get real sensitive and try to use fear and intimidation to shut down important conversations. We have to continue to speak truth to power and work in the best interest of all our children.

Chris Tyson: I think we sometimes take for granted that we belong to a community that has had such rich and impactful educational institutions as Baton Rouge has had. Leland College, Southern University, McKinley, Capitol High...These are institutions that are led by Black professionals at a time where that is not common in the Deep South. They are producing teachers and educated

people to then go and participate in the economy and society, that is not happening widely in the Deep South. Baton Rouge is a special place in having claim to that kind of history. When we think about community institutions in Black communities, we're talking largely about churches and schools. We should be proud that we are home to the legacy of Southern University and we should want to know more about Leland College. That's an area we should pursue more, my grandmother attended Leland so I've known about it through her, but there are so many in this community who don't know that there were two HBCU in Baton Rouge at one time. Celebrating those institutions underscores the agency, creativity, self determination and innovation of Black folks against unspeakable and unimaginable odds.

Raymond Jetson: The racial impact around space in this community can be pointed back directly to the 1981 Forced Busing and some other decisions that were made. One of the things we really hope that's rooted in this Sankofa concept is understanding present realities based upon things that have happened in the past. Looking at neighborhoods where Black people have lived in Baton Rouge over generations, there are these events that lead to some of the things we see today. The interstate system being brought into the community, other decisions around education and busing...what are some of those moments that you believe help people understand the reality that is lingering today?

Chris Tyson: As you mentioned in most communities of any size in Mid Century America, the interstate system, a federal highway project financed 90% by the federal government with all the decision making on siting and location devolved to the local level. In the 1950s that meant we designed this with the goal of perpetuating white supremacy and Jim Crow, marginalizing Black people. Where Black people

reside is the lowest value property...that continues today and you can trace former Black communities in virtually every city that benefited from Eisenhower's Highway Act by following the path of their interstates and Baton Rouge is no exception. When construction begins, and it begins before Eisenhower's Act and is accelerated by the bridge to College Drive as that first major phase, we spliced through Valley Park. If you read the articles from the 60s when the bulk of construction was underway, they talked about kids having to hopscotch across the new interstate crossing the Valley Park interstate because it bisected the neighborhood. We know that home ownership is the path to middle class status in this country because of government design. The federal creation of a national system of housing was racially exclusive by design. 98% of loans underwritten to borrowers between 1934-1960 went to white borrowers, people who get to build wealth and families, transfer that wealth to future generations and we know that black skin is a devaluing factor in real estate value. When we look at all of these things and understand their intergenerational impact to today we have to understand that history in order to comprehend what's going on around us lest we make flawed prescriptions based on the wrong conclusions, that somehow what we see in the modern metropolis is the result of people's pathological poor decision making. As Dr. Martin has said, there's no "urban crisis", these things are logical results from what we could expect from previous policy and legal regimes that have given us the city we have. That's what we have to work to repair. Certainly with interstates, we understand it with housing as well. We see those impacts today.

Lori Martin: When I was working on my Masters at Buffalo one of the best exercises we did at the Center for Urban Studies was to literally walk around different communities and notice different examples of the impact of industrialization, where public transport was located, to think critically about

why public buses weren't allowed on certain sides of the highway, why a woman lost her life trying to get across six lanes of highway to get to work in the winter in Buffalo... Members of the dominant racial group didn't want Black people in "their space" and a lot of that is happening in Baton Rouge as well. When I teach at LSU, the environment around the campus provides very teachable moments. When you walk around south Baton Rouge you can see where streets literally end and there's I10. What does that mean? What did the community look like before? What might the community look like if that didn't happen? Why was this community particularly vulnerable to that and why does this idea of "not in my back yard" only apply to some people? I love studying racial inequality and wealth, not only looking at the role of public policies like lending but also looking at private practices. Community groups got together and said don't sell your house to Black people. That was the agreement and we need to recognize that and the legacy of racial wealth inequality. To go back further than the 1930s, Black people literally went from being assets to becoming asset owners. There are few groups who have had to make that leap. You have to center race because people are not impacted in the same way which is why I've expressed concerns about programs that are universal in nature, such as baby bonds...that's nice but it's not going to narrow the racial wealth gap in Baton Rouge.

Raymond Jetson: In the Akan tribe in Ghana, at the heart of Sankofa, there is a translation that it is not taboo to fetch what is at risk of being left behind. For me, one of the things I am most proud of in this document is there are some memories of some really important people that otherwise would be at risk of being left behind. One, Gus Young was my great uncle. We have Gus Young Avenue, Gus Young Park...If you were to ask 10 people in the Eden Park neighborhood I grew up in "Who was Gus Young" you'd probably get 10 different answers. In 1932 being one

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of three black people to register to vote, the NAACP...so much other rich work is at risk of being left behind. Horatio Thompson, the first Black millionaire in this community, tremendous businessman and philanthropist. These are the important pillars in this community that we risk leaving behind if we don't do moments like this. Dr. Martin, any names stand out for you?

Lori Martin: Johnnie Jones and Eddie Robinson are two that come to mind. Johnny Jones is a local legend for his role in a number of protests. He graduated from law school and was immediately thrust into all these historic battles. He dedicated his life to trying to make this a more just society. Eddie Robinson is a legendary coach from South Baton Rouge. I had a conversation with one of the teams at LSU and most of them did not know who that was. Sometimes we assume that people don't know about it because institutions aren't teaching them but there's also a generational challenge. We have a responsibility to continue lifting up these names.

Chris Tyson: In addition to names, I really want to have stories that are known. I want people to know the story of the Southern University students and the sit-ins and the cost and consequences of that. I want people to know the story of Brooks Park, to sit with what it meant that local government removed an amenity from the entire community lest you have to share it with those you don't want to. There are other stories that I want us to tell, and for everyone to tell. That information lies in the places and spaces and structures that make up who we are today. When communities know their stories they have great pride in their community.

Raymond Jetson: On the first of February we kicked off the Black Futures - notice we called it that instead of Black history because we believe what's important is learning

from our history to shape our future. We kicked it off with a Zoom call with Jason Roberts at the Baton Rouge African American History Museum and we dedicated the first paper copy of this document to the museum in honor of our dear sister Sadie Roberts Joseph. Sankofa was Sadie's way of life. She had made the comment "you need to step back into your past in order to leap into your future". We dedicate this effort and moment to Sadie Roberts Joseph who gave her life calling us to understand our history.

Rinaldi Jacobs: There will be a new African American Museum that will come about here in Baton Rouge - Mayor Broome has donated a building allowing the family of Sadie Roberts Joseph to move the museum to a new spot right on St. Louis St. I think Miss Sadie is smiling down on us from heaven but is also saying get to work. We will certainly make an effort to make it a jewel of downtown.

Reverend Anderson: I wanted to point out that this highlights why street naming is so important. There is a legacy that can be established. I had hoped that all the names submitted for the renaming of Lee High School, the stories would also be released to be a teaching moment and that didn't really pan out. One of the things about having the conversation about street names is that the stories have to go along with why names are being put out there. I had a question as well specifically about what Chris talked about with the interstate highway history, if he might talk about connecting the dots of what that means to us in today's world of redistricting and particularly prison gerrymandering

Chris Tyson: The connection between the interstate system and redistricting, how neighborhoods are defined, how we map over the political district lines...one the issues is that it reflects segregation. You tend to have clusters of Black people and other POC spatially concentrated. Still is an issue although we see emerging conversations concerned

about this clustering. Backing away from super majority districts is a way to ensure that all candidates have to vie for those folks.

Reverend Anderson: When you were talking about the methodology of the interstates and the limited thinking that went into those developments and huge consequences, in Louisiana as we get to redistricting, we have a huge problem with prison gerrymandering which is the intersection of our mass incarceration system with taking Black bodies and turning them back into assets. They are counted in communities they do not live in. Are there lessons to be learned from the experience with the interstate that we should be putting toward this work now?

Raymond Jetson: What you just mentioned is the mindfulness we need to have. When we look at the geography of Louisiana and many of the rural prisons where you have overwhelmingly African American bodies taken from urban communities and relocated to prisons in rural areas, they are counted and representation is attached to those communities and lost in the communities where they were removed from. That is the mindfulness necessary in this moment.

Lori Martin: In the early 1990s in northeastern New York, we used to say that there were more cows than people in some of those counties near the Canadian border. But there were also a lot of prisons. Many of the people living with HIV/AIDS were being housed in rural communities and being counted in those places and resources were being funneled to those places. Demands for prisons to be built in rural communities as a source of economic development. It's important to have this information about how this is functioning in Baton Rouge but also to connect it historically with other communities. People think you're "pulling the race card" when in actuality you're stating the fact and you have to continue to do that even when people

don't want to hear it.

Gerri Hobdy: It's important as we celebrate, recognize, rediscover these historic sites that we pursue listing on the National Register McKinley, Eddie Robinson historical districts, etc...to be sure the protections of the Federal Historic Preservation Act of 106 are at play and that sites that are of significant for architectural or historical significance really do need to be listed. The historic preservation officer, Nicole Hobson-Morris, is African American and lives in Mid City so I'm sure she would welcome nominations that come forward. When you try to get something on the national register, you have to have a bit of money or hire a preservationist to do that, but our state is one that wisely has allowed staff to assist in the preparation of nominations. I encourage everyone to visit the ethnic listings on the national database to see what is listed and what is missing. I also want to mention that the Power Coalition is offering workshops - three day trainings - in redistricting. Train others as we begin to understand some of the more complex issues like Raymond and Chris discussed. The next one will be in May. There are a limited number of seats but visit the Power Coalition's website if you are interested.

Trey Godfrey: Quick message to affirm the work of MetroMorphosis. 100 Black Men National has about 100,000 mentees nationwide. In 1995, my dad who was on the National Board at the time, said our kids need to know our history and it's our responsibility to make sure that they do. So the 100 National created the National African American History Challenge which pits mentees from each of the 102 chapters against each other in a national competition that surrounds Black history. I've been in conversation with our national chair this week because the National board just voted to rename that competition the Brace B. Godfrey, Jr. African American History Competition. In that process he sent me a document that my father wrote in 1995 about

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the creation of this program. I wanted to share a couple quotes because it really gets at the heart of what you have created in this effort:

“One great writer has observed, never in history has a deprived people gone to those in power and said please teach my children my history. It is a responsibility of family, community, and culture to teach it’s history and keep it alive. To emphasize the fact that it is not taught or deemed important elsewhere is a fruitless venture. To expend the same energy and zeal in an effort to ensure that our children know who they are and from whence they come is evidence of our wisdom.”

Raymond Jetson: I’m thrilled to hear of the naming of the program after my dear friend Brace, and thank you for the work you do with young people and men in our community.

Chris Tyson: Thank you to MetroMorphosis for creating this space and taking on this charge, for corralling us. I’ve been with MetroMorphosis since its founding and I’m very proud of it. Thank you Casey for making space for this as well.

Lori Martin: I just want to say to continue to support each other to transform communities from within. Oftentimes there are folks working against you. Those texts and emails that say I see what you’re doing and I support you...that encouragement means a lot more than people think.

Raymond Jetson: I will just wrap up by saying a couple of weekends ago there was a conversation at the McKinley Alumni Center with a group of people from south Baton Rouge talking about this document. Watching the Zoom call was my dear friend Byron Washington and some people from Scotlandville who had kicked off their conversation. While listening to the conversation of south Baton Rouge,

Byron Washington put in the chat “We from Scotlandville need to sit and talk with the folks in North Baton Rouge and look at ways we can support one another.” That moment made this entire month worth it for me because the document became a platform for people connecting to shape a more vibrant future in Baton Rouge.

Casey Phillips: Before I turn it over to Mr. Goodwin, I wanted to talk about some action steps that individuals on this call that run organizations or are in leadership positions... the document has been referenced several times as an education piece and I don’t want people to get the thought in their head that it’s a K-12 education piece. At the Walls, we’re making this document essential reading for our Board of Directors and all our staff next month. There’s also a gentleman named Robert Blue who will come to your organization for cultural competency training. I did put the link in the chat to buy books...you cannot move to a more equitable future if you do not read your history. Another good way to continue this momentum is to economically support African American creators and businesses. Mr. Jonathon Brown aka Skinny Dope did the mural behind me. I encourage everybody to go to Scotlandville for the Scotlandville Saturday’s. Go and observe the Scenic Highway open public art museum that we did in 2018 in partnership with CADAV and Scotlandville CDC. We did over 45 murals down Scenic Highway that document the history of Baton Rouge.

Georquel Goodwin: Thank you for the history of Baton Rouge, it was a breath of fresh air as a transplant not really understanding the history. I’m a 2020 Govern for American fellow and I work at the Dept. of Education and recently had the pleasure of attending the CROWN Academy and it was a remarkable experience in terms of how the census is going to apply to redistricting and how Louisiana is going to play a very big role as far as this Southern political

revolution that's beginning. I recommend reaching out to Ashley Shelton with the Power Coalition. They just talked about the Prison Pipeline and how that has an effect in that manner. Political awareness and advocacy they push as well with how to maneuver on social media and set up these grass root meetings with communities. If you have questions after, I'll drop my email so you can reach out.

Gwen Hamilton: New Schools for Baton Rouge will be at Southern Cofe on Saturday from 10-noon and then at Scotlandville Saturday from 1-4 at the Scotlandville Plaza.

Rodneya Hart: We've got the Smithsonian's Negro Motorist Green Book exhibition coming to the Capitol Park Museum in the fall. I would love to have as many community partners as possible. We just received from the curator of the exhibition all the historic Green Book sites that were in any of the books and we want to make a souvenir catalog that chronicles these different locations. We're working with a couple different people right now looking at GeoTags, we are looking for ways to make this not a passive experience but something active and meaningful that grows and emphasizes our history. We don't want to do anything in a silo. That museum should be inspirational, aspirational, and most of all relevant. If it's not relevant, we need to know that. I'm going to put all my information in the chat and thank you for this platform and opportunity.

Luke St. John: In real time we're still supporting Humanities Amped. They've taken part by holding several intergenerational conversations from elders who have and are still serving as Civil Rights leaders in the community. We just finished a conversation with Myra Richardson and Maxine Crump... that is still happening in real time. The stream is happening live on YouTube as well. Afterwards is going to be a space for some of the Humanities Amped Youth Artists to share poetry after the conversations and what the document

meant to them. That's going to be happening today. On March 4th, the Mayor's office under Safe Hopeful Healthy Initiative is launching the My Brother's Keeper campaign with the focus of identifying structural gaps that negatively impact the opportunities of black boys and men here in Baton Rouge. There is a national alliance the Mayor's office is tapping into that we would like to bring locally to Baton Rouge.

Kelli Rogers: We have an intern who has been working this month on a dating violence campaign for us and has created a survey. Here is the link if any of you work with youth so she can collect that data for her project

Additional Resources

'Scotlandville (Images of America)' by Dr. Rachel L. Emanuel
'South Baton Rouge (Images of America)' by Dr. Lori Latrice Martin & Raymond Jetson

How racial gerrymandering deprives black people of political power

Here are final recommendations to rename 37 New Orleans streets, parks

How Segregation Caused Your Traffic Jam

The Role of Highways in American Poverty

Housing Segregation In Everything

Week 46 (3/05/21)

Education As A Civil Right

MEETING NOTES:

Kevin Gutterrez, Governance Director, LAPCS

- Career educator, been doing this for 25 years, half with St Charles Parish and the other half a combination of working with the Louisiana Department of education, running charter schools here in New Orleans, and now as Governance Director for the Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools
- Working specifically with leaders and board members

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- Our purpose at LAPCS is around actions to support the mission and vision of our organization through inclusivity, bringing awareness to folks intentionally and collaboratively
- One of our key actions in terms of boards is our Charter Board Leadership Academy
- Want to bring decision making as close to students as possible at every level from governance to teaching and learning
- In the governance space by law in Louisiana every charter school is rooted and governed by a nonprofit organization made up of board members
- Take that work very seriously as far as training current and potential board members
- Expanded the Charter Board Leadership Academy across Baton Rouge and across Louisiana areas
- You can get involved by engaging your teams and answering the call to serve on boards
- As many of you are touching schools whether it's traditional public schools or charter schools, we're here to help tell your story. Our communication director Zoey Reed can help lift up those stories of support you all are providing.
- About three years ago the board of directors decided to build on some of that success
- If you pass by the building you'll notice in addition to the great artwork from the Walls Project, you'll also see we partner with the SU Law Center
- I served as an adjunct professor there for about 17 years
- Southern began teaching evening classes downtown presenting a great opportunity for collaboration with high school students
- As a lawyer, we were looking at how we can expand the presence of mentorship, leading to the creation of two wonderful schools we intend to launch in the fall
- Many talk about workforce and pipeline and developing innovative pathways
- Because of our partnership with SU we wanted to introduce legal professional opportunities as early as we can, hence the creation of Helix Legal Academy, a middle school that feeds into the high school starting with the 6th grade class this coming fall
- We also looked at another great economic driver in Baton Rouge: we have the only air force junior ROTC program at Mentorship in this region of the state
- Led us to realize with the nearby airport we have the beginnings of an aviation program. Will be launching Helix Aviation Academy for the 6th grade class located on the BR Metropolitan airport
- Students will have the opportunity to learn about the limitless world of aviation and cyber technology
- The only K-12 school located on an airport!

Preston Castille, BESE + President, Helix Community Schools

- Whirlwind of a year to take over and serve on BESE. John White stepped down after serving as the longest serving superintendent in the United States the week of March 13th right before the Governor issued his proclamation closing schools across Louisiana. Quite the year in education in Louisiana with lots of challenges as all of you know
- I did want to talk about Helix Community Schools and the schools we serve
- One school is Mentorship Steam Academy in downtown Baton Rouge, been in operation 10 years, enjoyed lots of success

Chris Meyer (CEO, New Schools for Baton Rouge)

- Product of an awesome selective admissions magnet high school in Shreveport - my life trajectory changed fundamentally because of the experience...tons of advanced placement classes, college tours, adults pushing us to think of opportunities beyond what we had seen before

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- That experience led me to want to teach in New Orleans, going through the disruption of Hurricane Katrina and the experience of watching in education the impact of moving to a transformation of their governance model where they said as a city that we're no longer going to run things from the top down but empower schools
- Ten years ago with people like Preston and others on the line here we recognized that in Baton Rouge not all of our kids were getting the same opportunity to go to a great school or have life changing potential because of the education they received
- Unfortunately some of these realities still persist today... where kids grow up in this city can have an impact on the kind of education they get access to
- Our organization started ten years ago with the focus of growing the number of high quality schools
- Thinking about the power of the individual schools and the kids they serve and the communities that exist in and around it
- Identify schools that are getting awesome outcomes and understand what the secret sauce is, help our schools replicate those
- Where we sit now in Baton Rouge, last night there was a transition report released by the school board...it's a brutally honest document on the realities of where we are in the community
- I really praise the board and our new Superintendent for sharing the challenges as well as opportunities to move forward
- We have a chance to fix and improve schools across the community
- To date we have helped create almost two dozen schools in the city, we have 10,000 students, 25% of all kids in public schools today go to a school that we've partnered with
- We are on track as a community to where we will see about 50% of the kids in BR enrolled in a public charter

school in less than a decade

- These are schools that have been authorized and approved by our local school board and some cases by the state
- We're working everyday to make sure families understand they have a choice and make the best one for them
- We see a really encouraging sign that when families are given the option are leaving schools historically rated as underperforming
- Lots of dynamism in that, as well as challenges

Carrie Griffin Monica, Executive Director, Stand for Children

- Been in LA for 10 years next year, a part of Stand Louisiana
- Working with parents, educators, and stakeholders who want to improve outcomes for all kids
- Team of about 500 organizers in Baton Rouge who work with families, providing workshops to help understand and navigate the system their kids are in
- Parent work is not the only thing that has to happen... you also need solid policies in place
- Have a C4 that allows us to do legislative work with local school boards and the state board of education
- You've got to put the right people in place to make the decisions that are right for kids
- Helped support to elect over 40 leaders - local school boards, state board of education, legislature - focused on passing student-centered policies
- Super excited about the transition report that came out yesterday that allows a deep dive into the local system
- There is a lot of good, honest, fair assessment that really engages with educators and principals
- Only 42% of kids today are reading at grade level by third grade and by eighth grade that percentage is even lower
- While we have done good things, we have a long way to go to improve outcomes for every single kid

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- From working with parents over the last ten years and being a parent myself, we don't have parents that come to us and say "I am looking for X type or model of school". They come saying "My kid can't read and they're in the 4th grade, how can you help me figure out where to get my child so they have a better chance of getting on grade level so they have a better chance at life?"
- Unfortunately we've had these conversations about the model we should be promoting. We should be less focused on model and type and more focused on making sure every single child is set up for success in their career and life
- We recognize the important role charters have played in that
- Looking at schools that have been underperforming for 30 years across the state we have to start thinking what are the innovations we can use to help improve outcomes for kids? The battle lines shouldn't be around the model or type

Nolan Marshall, Jr., Vice President, Orleans Parish School Board

- Not an educator but spent my entire life working in school
- Had an opportunity to observe education for a very long time
- I believe education impacts all aspects of our lives, crime, economic development, etc.
- Worked with a number of people prominent in the education movement
- I've seen forays into site-based management
- We tried that and it didn't work so we are now at the level where we have charter school management
- I formed some opinions working with all these educators, teachers, and parents over 43 years and now serving on the school board for 8 years that you speak in terms

of quality education but there's no true definition of a quality education

- I believe until we do that as a community we won't ever achieve success
- Part of the problem is we've narrowed the focus of what we do for children
- I remain aspirational in what I want to do in schools, to change the narrative from strictly academic or career pursuit to human development and how do we prepare the neighbors we want, the citizens we want
- One thing I can say about the charter school movement is it has more people engaged in education than ever before
- The fact that we have boards at every school means citizens are actively involved in learning what it takes to educate kids
- Some inefficiencies and redundancies in every school having to manage every aspect of education...we can move more towards a model where we have some back office things done by the school district

Adonica Duggan, Public Education Advocate

- Currently transitioning to lead a new organization but continuing to work around public education
- Excited to continue some of the work we started at NSBR through our Changemakers Program and our Education as a Civil Right event
- Echo a couple important things: the transition report offers a real opportunity to dig into how we can improve outcomes for kids
- Parents do not care about governance type. They are focused on how we deliver to their students an education that prepares them for the life they want for them
- We need to continue focusing on having leaders in this community that get a diverse tapestry of schools in BR to get kids where they want to be
- If our students don't get what they need we can't move

forward as a community.

Week 47 (3/12/21)

Access to Transportation & Social Mobility, Pt. I

MEETING NOTES:

Theo Richard, Business Development, CATS

- At CATS we realize that transportation is a barrier for access. In research I found an article on the US Dept. of Transportation website about equity and barriers to transportation:
- 'Negative health effects related to the transportation system can fall hardest on vulnerable members of the community, such as low-income residents, minorities, children, persons with disabilities, and older adults. Households in low-income areas typically own fewer vehicles, have longer commutes, and have higher transportation costs.
- Inadequate or substandard infrastructure in low-income and minority communities can prevent people from using active transportation. It can also make walking and bicycling unsafe for those who do rely on these modes to get around, leading to higher incidences of collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists.
- Low-income and minority communities are more likely to be located near highways and other transportation facilities that produce local reduced air quality, and to suffer from negative health effects such as asthma. These communities are also less likely to have convenient access to parks, healthcare, and healthy food.'
- The article ended with five steps trying to address those issues and the role transportation plays with removing that barrier, and I want to tie those back with the work we're doing with CATS:
- Improving pedestrian infrastructure or increasing public transportation service in low-income and minority communities to improve connectivity.
- Some of you may be familiar with the BRT (Bus Rapid Transit). Back in March 2019 we were awarded a \$15 million grant from the FTA partnership with CATS, the city of Baton Rouge and Build Baton Rouge to construct and open a nine mile corridor that will link North Baton Rouge starting at the Emergency Facility on Airline to LSU. This will be a 9 mile stretch, \$40 million project that will include 22 stops with headways typically between 10 and 15 minutes. Enhances connectivity on the stations as well as pedestrian safety and ADA compliance.
- Using roadside barriers, vegetation, or bottleneck removal to reduce the impacts of pollution on communities located near high-volume roads.
- Every inch of roadscape we touch needs to be safe for our communities. Using roadside barriers slows traffic down, add curb cuts
- Offering reduced public transportation fares for students or youth and working with employers to extend public transportation benefits to employees.
- In 2019 we reduced the bus fare from \$1.75 to \$0.35 for kids ages 5-18 (free for 0-5). Barrier for getting school-aged kids to school. The goal is to have free bus fare for all kids 0-18. Working with local businesses, health care facilities, our frontline employees.
- Targeting demand response service toward communities with high concentrations of older adults and poor access to shops and services.
- Targeting older adults with a micro transit program. I'm sure you're familiar with Uber and Lyft, however the realization is that equity isn't spread through the community - it's harder to access in North Baton Rouge and underserved communities. It takes on the elements of the agency to provide this on demand response at a much lower cost than Uber or Lyft. Looking to do two pilot programs, Southern Airport Earl K Long corridor and the city of Baker
- Basically you can go within that bubble for a low fare

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and if you need to get outside that bubble we'll take you to the closest bus stop (First Mile/Last Mile)

- Addressing housing affordability in a regional strategy for promoting a variety of housing options at different price points for people of all stages and walks of life. Improving pedestrian infrastructure and increasing public transportation service in low income and minority communities to improve connectivity.
- Considering that transit is just connecting you from one place to the other, we all have a role to play and our role is to ensure that, working with Jay Daniel and the Housing Authority, that facilities being built not only with the capacity for our vehicles to pull in but also to have the capacity necessary to ensure they can connect to where they need to go
- Our motto at CATS is "Connecting you to what matters" - if we can't do that safely and on time, we're not doing our job. Please continue to follow and support CATS - we've come a long way and we have a lot to go.

Whitney Hoffman Sayal, Assistant Director of Urban Trails, BREC

- Been with BREC for the last 6 months
- One of my projects with the DDD was the Downtown Greenway. Wanted to take a second to acknowledge the loss of Davis, a long time advocate of bicycle pedestrian facilities.
- Giving some background on BREC and how we got to where we are today, every 10 years we do a Imagine Your Parks plan to get some feedback from the community about their priorities
- One of the projects we've completed over the last 10/15 years is the Health Loop along Ward Creek and Dawson Creek, connects all health facilities in that area
- Ward Creek spans a couple miles starting at the Mall of Louisiana trail head, goes all the way to Siegen Lane Marketplace, working to continue that west. Right

now ends around Bluebonnet, will extend to Essen to eventually make a loop

- In the 70s and 80s we completed the Scotlandville Parkway which spans from Monte Sano to Harding to Scenic Highway
- Worked with DOTD and community stakeholders to create a bicycle and pedestrian master plan in 2020, approved by the BREC commission as well as the Metro Council
- Identifies priorities for off and on road trails
- Recognizes equity and how it weights priorities for implementation
- Other projects we have underway: Development of Dawson and Ward Creek loop, project in the works connecting downtown to Scotlandville Parkway, dedicated bicycle and pedestrian trails, master planning on Scotlandville Parkway, extending the trail that along Greenwood Park
- You can help by supporting the implementation of the master plan which identifies many hundred miles of off and on road facilities. We need help supporting that plan, getting funding resources dedicated to it. Attend public meetings and provide input to make sure what we're doing is what the community wants.
- Go out and utilize our current systems! Tell us what you think, enjoy them, the more we are able to show the success of our systems the more power we have to advocate for more of them

Thomas Donley, Community Transportation Advocate

- During the six years my family and I lived in Belgium, I only drove four times. Rewired my brain on what is possible and how freeing it is to not have a car to rely upon to get you to work, the ability to connect closer to the community, to your children, to your partner, to friends...my lived experience coincides with the voices of people that work with datasets that try to implement a more connected city of Baton Rouge on

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a day to day basis

- I can almost prove and show you how necessary it is to live a less car-influenced life
- Car culture in and of itself perpetuates inequality throughout the community
- The framework of Place Flagey: every Saturday and Sunday had two markets, Saturday food based with fresh food from local farmers just outside of town, Sundays everything was closed so you relied on the Place Flagey to see friends
- During the work week it completely transformed - a tram system allowed access to the metro, buses, trains, etc
- Everything you needed in the Place - a whole community that could survive simply because of its connection to different pockets of the city
- Coming back to the US was a dramatic culture shock, once again having to rely on cars and living with the anxiety that that produces
- Made it my mission to go to a country where I can now vote, I wouldn't be silent on something so destructive to communities, to our neighbors and neighborhoods
- Push for more connection, more community

Sooraz Patro, Director of Transportation, Capital Region Planning Commission

- Transportation is based on three principals: accessibility, mobility, and connectivity
- At CRPC simultaneously have 6 projects on the go
- Long Range Transportation Plan is a 25 year plan reaching across EBR, Livingston, Ascension and Iberville, covers about 90% of the metropolitan planning area
- We want to have resilient transportation
- We have everything in the making to be a really great state - it's just that things are slow, it takes time to get our infrastructure on track
- The other theme of our long range plan is making sure it's comprehensive : How buses connect to cars,

households, parks

- With our Regional Plan - one thing to keep in mind our population is aging, in the next 25 years at least 10-15% of population will be 65+, that means less reliance on cars, wanting to walk and planning for that
- Working with Whitney and everybody else, we want it to be a complimentary plan. Complimenting plans in Denham Springs and Baker, make sure DOTD and EBR are in sync with us
- Can be used for people trying to access jobs, attract more tourists to our state, etc
- The third plan is the very feasible, about 15 years ago there was a ferry which for some reason stopped so we are now trying to find out other possible landing spots, looking at locations across the Mississippi
- One of the good things the pandemic has done is people are working from home, corporations know it's more cost effective to have people working from home with a lot less stress on transportation
- The help I need from y'all is finding datasets for park locations in a single file specifically datasets beyond EBR - Ascension, Iberville, etc
- We are trying to do a lot with areas which are food deserts, access to grocery stores, employment, means of transportation...we need to identify hot spots and work with other transportation agencies, transit side or nonprofit, to make sure we have a design guideline to help mitigate poverty.

Week 48 (3/19/21)

Children Living in Poverty

MEETING NOTES:

Eric Horent, Ph.D, Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services

- Changes in the Federal stimulus program and lifting children out of poverty
- Affects agencies in 3 ways:

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- Food insecurity
- Child support payments decrease due to employment/unemployment
- Child welfare - less contact for children in schools and health care providers, so reporting is decreased
- SNAP Funding for lunch
- \$5/day per lunch \$285 per child affecting 280,000 families in LA
- Supplemental SNAP - 30 months get the maximum allotment for household size
- \$.5 billion in benefits
- 70,000 children in BR area - 10% increase
- 5x more applications for SNAP
- 1 million SNAP benefits, 2 million of benefits issued, mainly with children
- Foster Care Visits
- Ipad, virtual visits w/ foster families
- Web-based training for parents
- CARES act to PPE/childcare when schools closed/emergency need
- Child Support
- Child support decreased 50% dues, down to 50% or less now
- Est. child support during pandemic

Neva Butkus + Jan Moller, Louisiana Budget Project

- Child Tax Credit
- Child poverty 2nd highest 28% in nation every year
- (43%) 1 in 3 black children are growing up below poverty line
- 2019 report Roadmap to Reducing child poverty
- Experts from different disciplines to cut child poverty in half
- Child poverty is extremely expensive and charges interest \$800B - \$1 T/ year
- Lost earnings, increased incarceration, high healthcare costs

- Less expensive to mitigate upfront (\$100B/y nationally)
- Most effective ways is through Govt transfer programs/tax credit programs
- Earned income credit and child tax credit expansions
- Invited to New Orleans to present
- In LA can we do something at the state level to put money in the hands of low-income families
- Neva: State earned income tax credit (only few states have this expanded)
- Why state level one if fed is expanding?
- It is temporary - credit left out a lot of low and moderate-income households
- Making under \$30K/y
- \$1400-1600 refundability, paying taxes you get isn't coming to full amount
- State child tax credit a crucial program to break up the poverty and address specific needs
- 2 income brackets/2 age brackets
- Bracket Income: \$0-50K, \$50-100K
- Under \$50, 5 or under \$500 per child extra credit
- More in attachments
- Bracket Age: 0-5, 6-18
- Costs to do under \$165(m) for state less to spend to subsidize the film tax credit (an example of a program we do)
- 94% benefits to households making under \$55K/y
- 888,000 children would benefit from this
- 250,000 children in black led households

Week 49 (3/26/21)

Equal Pay in Louisiana

MEETING NOTES:

Amanda Brunson, Director of Women's Policy at Office of Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards

- We are a one woman show with the task of keeping a pulse on the issues impacting women in Louisiana and focusing on solutions

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- Equal pay is important to the Governor, been a champion for since he was a state legislator
- Equal Pay Day was Wednesday of this week, how long it took for women across the country to make the same amount of money that men did in 2020
- New stats showing we've made some improvement in Louisiana - now women make about \$0.72 to the dollar compared to men
- Last year Black women made \$0.49 and Latina women made \$0.53 to the dollar
- Economic stability is a struggle for families in Louisiana and EBR is no different
- The ALICE Report tells us the impact of poverty on families, especially the working poor
- Equal pay and minimum wage are a big part of the conversation - 2/3 of our minimum wage workers are women, many running single women-led households
- Solutions to equal pay exist across a bunch of levels
- At the individual level women can pursue careers typically held by men
- Can negotiate for higher salaries, do research and push employers
- Employers can set pay ranges, do internal audits, set workplace policies that are family friendly
- Government is uniquely positioned to set policies impacting a wide range of people
- One of our solutions at the legislative level was filed by Rep Barbara Carpenter last year- "Equal Pay Bill" - good for all workers not just women, bans the use of salary history, prohibit employers from retaliating against someone for discussing wages with coworkers
- When women start behind, they stay behind
- Two bills have been pre-filed about raising minimum wage
- Other bills on workplace policies that impact families - women bare most of the brunt of caregiving

Summer Steib, Director, LSU Women's Center

- Echo everything Amanda said, spot on as we start looking at the wage gap, causes, impacts, solutions
- Want to focus on a few things that impact the wage gap that we don't often talk about and operate in hidden ways: when you don't know something exists, you don't know to look there for causes and solutions
- Sex segregation - When men seem to saturate a particular field, the pay and prestige of that field increases. When women saturate the field, pay and prestige decreases
- Traditionally dominated by men: construction, oil field, engineering.
- Traditionally dominated by women: childcare, hospital support
- As women begin to flood traditionally male dominated jobs, the pay and prestige decreases
- Look at vet/med: 50 years ago completely men, very agricultural based. As that has shifted, women outnumber men. Pay for vets has continually decreased over time. Same thing with the law profession.
- Sex stratification - Men occupy the higher level positions within a company/org/field while women tend to be in the entry level/middle management positions
- Look at the field of education: from preschool to middle, women dominate
- High school evens out
- In Higher Ed you see more and more men
- Within each one when you look at leadership you'll see the pyramid shifting
- I just saw a company who, for Equal Pay Day, was excited that 23% of their board were women...women are 51-52% of the population...we have a hell of a long way to go
- Glass cliff phenomenon - Women are often barred from top levels of leadership within organizations except when there's a crisis
- Woman and POC are brought on when the deck is

stacked against them to be the saviors

- Chances of success are very small because the men before you have failed and dug the crater you're about to jump into even deeper so you have more to lose
- When women and other folks get into those leadership positions and aren't successful, the narrative continues that women are incapable
- We all know what's been going on at LSU. We are starting a new office of Civil Rights and Title IX - I have tremendous respect for Dr. Jane Cassidy who's being brought in to lead that, but again, she's being advanced in a time of crisis
- The unpaid work women do as part of their job - women are overwhelmingly tasked with "office housework"
- Not things part of your job, not considered in annual evaluations and promotions but things that align with traditional gender roles - planning the office holiday party, making sure that when a client has a death in the family that flowers get sent, those types of things women are expected to do that take them away from duties they are paid to do
- Thirty minutes, an hour here and there can add up to 2-6 months of pay sometimes with this extra work you're doing that adds nothing to your job and personal advancement

Monica Vela-Vick, Community Advocate)

- What Summer says touches me on a very deep level - when she talks about the 2-6 months of pay you lose that you don't get back, that's time away from my children for me too, have to fill those lost hours somewhere somehow
- I do not work in this space currently, I previously worked at the Women's Law Project, the Women Against Abuse Legal Center, and care deeply about women's issues
- The National Women's Law Center is my go to for all stats and information - they advocate, litigate, and

participate

- Nationally Black women working full time year round make \$0.63, in Louisiana its \$0.49 cents for every dollar a man earns. Nationally Latina women make \$0.55 and in Louisiana \$0.53 cents.
- Piggy backing on the complex issue of job segregation during COVID:
- Women and women of color in particular are more likely to work in these field such as childcare, home health aids, grocery cashiers, restaurant workers, etc.
- In the COVID context we learned that that work was downright dangerous
- I want to emphasize the impact on single mothers who lead 23% of households with children under 18 and comprise 50% of working mothers with children under 18 (PEW)
- We should really care about single mothers and the wages they're making...the ability to earn a fair wage impacts the ability to care for children, get health care, and so forth
- We have minimum wage of \$7.25 and \$2.13 for tip wage...this is not a living wage.
- MIT runs a site incorporating different factors to calculate living wage across different parishes
- There are a couple of laws that have been set forth on a federal level
- Implications and policy reasons why those are important
- Some are not intuitive, the impact isn't clear

Amanda

- Women's Policy and Research Commission is one that I staff and they created the Status of Women in Louisiana Report that came out last year
- Women's Commission also launched a webinar series to educate the public. The one on economic stability was last week.
- Monday will be a session on caring for children and families: early childhood in Louisiana, opportunities for

investing in early childhood, paid family and medical leave, workplace accommodations for pregnant women, caring for aging adults, caring for family members with disabilities

- Also an opportunity to talk about the power of education, things like Go Grants, the Compete Louisiana program, Reboot Your Career, etc.
- There's a report from the Institute for Women's Policy and Research that single mom's in Louisiana are 43% less likely to live in poverty if they have at least an associate's degree
- So many young women or women back in college are trying to care for children and we know how difficult it is to juggle caring for children, trying to work, and being in school.

Week 50 (4/02/21)

Data Driven Solutions for Food Access

MEETING NOTES:

Casey Phillips, The Walls Project

- Quick update for March as a proxy for Katie Pritchett with the Capital Area United Way.
- As of March, EBRFIC hovering at 80 organizations, about to start a second wave of outreach to get into triple digits as we get into summer/fall
- The coalition meets twice a month:
- Meeting #1 is on the first Thursday of month and is a macro meeting with everybody all together: featured speaker, breakout rooms, speed networking
- Meeting #2 is on the third Thursday, with quick introductions then immediate breakout into work groups (A - Funders, B - Practitioners, C - Data, Evaluation, and Policy) each with their own short, medium, and long term goals
- Jan Ross (HAWF) and George Bell (United Way) have really been driving forward the Funders Circle and driving Work Group A forward

- Put together a checklist that is masterful - if you're a non profit/NGO, all the things you need to have in place to apply for a grant and be involved in a collaborative grant (Tier 1 and Tier 2 items)...incredible document that Mary Bergeron and the members of the Funders Circle put together
- Work Group B - everything from urban farmers to people working in food literacy and education, food banks, distribution, etc. Came up with ten different grant themes to submit together - Group A will do national outreach to some of the larger foundations from outside the city and state to bring those resources into Baton Rouge. Some of those opportunities go hand in hand with Healthy BR and Geaux Get Healthy, some more non profit collaboration together
- Work Group C - came together in March to get clarity... Lyneisha with Urban Footprint platform, Manny will also be speaking on that
- If you would like to join, see resources in chat. Open door for anyone

Lyneisha Jackson, Community Planner, CPEX

- Our mission is to improve quality of life in LA communities
- Sustainability and community resilience
- Long standing relationship with Urban Footprint
- Wanted to do our part to develop a COVID-19 recovery platform
- Both at state agency level and local food banks to help with resource allocation
- Use data to drive outcomes
- First version of this platform showed risk level of persons to food insecurity based on a composite list of risk factors within the state at varying geographic levels
- Showed where risk was highest down to the block group level
- Able to incorporate additional data, allowing us to conduct further analysis which revealed the numbers

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and locations around food insecurity and insufficiency

- Food insecurity is the lack of financial resources for food at the household level and food insufficiency is of those food insecure households that don't have enough to eat in a week even with relief resources
- Results from this additional analysis show that too many LA residents live on the edge of hunger
- Some of the data points:
- Since the beginning of the pandemic, the number of food insecure households increased 44% statewide and 69% of those households are food insufficient
- 1/5 urban households are food insecure and 1/7 are food insufficient (include EBR, Jefferson, Orleans Parish each with 32,000 food insecure households)
- Rural parishes are much more dire, 1/3 households are food insecure and 1/5 are food insufficient
- Communities of color and low income neighborhoods are disproportionately affected
- 28% of Black households in LA reported not having enough food in last week compared to 10% of white households
- In households earning less than \$50,000 a year, 30% reported being food insecure, compared to 12% of households earning between \$50-\$100,000
- Households earning over \$100,000 a year, 11% were food insecure
- 16% of households are food insecure and 10% are food insufficient nationally
- 21% of households are food insecure and 15% are food insufficient in LA
- 17,000 households in Baton Rouge are food insecure, an increase of 35% over the past year and 11,000 are food insufficient
- Most of these households are located in North Baton Rouge, long identified as a food desert
- Before the pandemic, 20-30% of households in North Baton Rouge were food insecure compared to 8-10%

in South Baton Rouge

- Action items you can take:
- Understand that food insecure is the result of long term disinvestment
- Working to equalize community investments can have significant impact in improving community health and wellbeing
- Understand and use data to address needs
- Collect data in a meaningful way to quantify our efforts
- If organizations don't share data, there can be a resource gap or duplication of efforts
- Urban Footprint blog post that highlights some of these data points

Manny Patole, Co-City Project Manager, NYU Marron Institute of Urban Management

- Group B as the practitioners...we were kind of naive as to understanding what that would entail
- Shortly after the first few meetings we realized that Group B is the largest and most nebulous
- Led to the question of collecting data...but to do what exactly? As Lyneisha highlighted, you can collect a lot of data but can have a lot of redundancy
- Also the idea of competition between different organizations working in the same space (idea of thinking in scarcity instead of abundance)
- Differences of qualitative and quantitative data
- Over the last couple weeks there's been a slight reorganization of Group B: the Working Group B Grant Team and the Group B subcommittee structures
- People working within different areas in certain parts of EBR or across the city but in specific part of the supply chain
- Try to connect those folks
- Helps with data collection and production
- Use this data to help obtain grants for our projects
- Also trying to figure out where the gaps are within

the overall landscape in EBR as it comes to food maldistribution

- We are at the point where we know who's doing what and who we need at the table
- I want to celebrate our progress with STIR Labs in developing a systemic view of the food supply chain to better identify gaps...A glorified way of doing a gap analysis to understand where we need to go and how can we help with our ultimate goal of policy interventions that will lead to long term structural changes
- Research question is to understand the most appropriate ways to increase food security and sufficiency in neighborhoods...how are we getting more food to people now, how are we getting people registered for services?
- EBR is not perfect but we're starting to become a guide post for a lot of other places
- Been selected to be part of the Association for the study of Food In Society, presenting a round table discussion of how we've come to where we are now (landed on the name Cultivating a Food Insecurity Coalition in COVID-19: A Case Study in Baton Rouge)
- Having a conversation the week of June 8
- Very large international audience

Traci Birch, Interim Managing Director, LSU Coastal Sustainability Studio

- Professor in the School of Architecture (not an architect, actually an urban planner)
- Also involved with the Coastal Sustainability Studio, a multidisciplinary research institute at LSU bringing together designers, natural scientists, and engineers to work on issues related to community sustainability within South Louisiana and across the Gulf Coast
- Recognize that working outside of the university system

(and even inside), working with LSU is not always easy to manage or figure out

- We are conveners - we have an outward face and can bring university resources together to face pressing issues in the community
- We can do it on a 12 month schedule instead of the typical academic schedule, which doesn't usually work for most endeavors
- In the last 4 years we've worked in and around the region on issues related to community resilience and well being
- Most recently partnered with The Walls Project on an NEA Grant for the expansion of the Baton Roots farm at Howell Park
- We can add research and bring people together
- Currently have one civil engineering course and three design studios working on Landscape Architecture and Advanced Comprehensive Architecture Studios
- I also teach a class on community design, teach designer how to do outreach with the community and get feedback on designs before going out in the world
- Currently working with them on the broader issues of food insecurity
- Many in this call participated in the design charrette we did where we really dove into the issue and had students work with professionals in both the food insecurity realm and designers that came together
- Diving into the issue more broadly
- Understanding the role designers play in the urban fabric
- Across the board looking to be done by the end of April
- Give that info back to the FIC, Mayor's office, anyone who needs it and can use it
- We have done this work with regards for storm water management, other problems, too
- Our goal is to bring these groups together and provide

capacity and man power that the university can bring and make it easier to work with LSU

Kelli Rogers, Geaux Get Healthy

- Jan and I have talked a little bit about some of the food landscape work we did early on
- Our research was just in the 70805 in the first year
- Looked at where food was available through nutrition and emergency sites and where food was available for purchase
- Looked where the gaps were there
- Fill in with making changes to the food system
- Casey came on board with Baton Roots and The Walls Project in the very beginning and the writing of the grant, then TopBox Foods with their service joined
- Year 2 of Geaux Get Healthy expanded and interviewed about 2,000 community members surveying them for food insecurity, general health using CDC survey, fruit and vegetable consumption, SNAP eligibility, etc.
- Found that the demographics and needs in the six adjacent zip codes were similar to the work we were doing in 70805 so we expanded to those zip codes
- Year 3 did an RFP to bring in emerging and grassroots organizations also doing food insecurity work
- In the final process of onboarding some of those partners
- GGH works in four primary areas: food production, distribution, education, and a clinical program used to measure participant change through OLOL LSU Health North Clinic

Lauren Hebert, HealthyBR, City of Baton Rouge

- Mayor Broome is big on being adequately equal across all parts of the city with food consumption and healthy food options

Jan Ross, Huey and Angelina Wilson Foundation

- When it comes to Group A (funders), one of the greatest things that we see, experience, and are loving is the collaboration
- There has been sprinklings of that throughout the community over the years but with COVID you see it in so many directions and it's so good to see people realizing they need each other to provide solutions
- Kudos to everyone for working so hard and diligently together
- We can't do it alone if we want to go further and deeper
- The funders group comes with a bit of funding and have been able to put together some resources including the listing of documents and sample questions often requested by grant applications
- Looking at opportunities of building capacity of some of the organizations
- There are individuals coming into the space as well as grassroots and well seasoned organizations
- We really have to look at the levels partners are coming in and work to build their capacity
- Using the data collected from the other two work groups to see how we can construct opportunities to bring collective funding towards some of the opportunities we have with providers
- When it comes to looking for funding we're looking for funds that will benefit the greater group

Chelsea Morgan, American Heart Association

- Wanted to share community curriculum that we utilize in Geaux Get Healthy work - Healthy For Life
- American Heart Association partnered with Aramark in 2015 to create this evidence based nutrition program and curriculum
- Lots of great data around the success across the country

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- No longer have to have a food background to be a dietician or chef - could be in your church, with participants in your programs, etc
- AHA is here to help! We have Chef Traci who can come do demonstrations in your facility if needed.
- If you want to become a program facilitator reach out to me
- New resource called AMAVA - a way for you to directly connect with our Healthy For Life registered dietician and leader
- Upcoming webinar where you can connect live - Integrating Healthy for Life in SNAP Education April 28

Emily Chatelain, Three O' Clock Project

- In the middle of our afterschool meals program right now, delivering healthy meals to kids coming to programs after school
- Heavy into summer planning
- Working with Department of Education to identify areas this summer that do not have meal distribution plans
- USDA wavers extended to September 30 - schools/ nonprofits can continue to do meal distribution this entire summer (not the case in past summers)
- Hoping to continue that effort, partner with school districts, rural areas where there is not as much access and transportation to food
- So thankful to be a part of this bigger group - made so many connections with places like BREC, YMCA, Walls, TopBox
- Working on a project right now to feed the whole family, not just kids 18 and younger

Connor Deloach, TopBox Foods

TopBox is a free home delivery service of affordable groceries

- Accept SNAP and all other forms of payment
- Goal is to have all families get the healthy food they need with a tight budget

- Making a significant effort to make sure we're incorporating as much local food as possible into our boxes
- We are actively looking for local farmers and distributors!

Manny Patole

- Great to work with this coalition - one of the things we're always asking about data, it's hard to understand what is and isn't useful
- Trying to understand who's not being served where and when
- The long term goal is the policy change to make structural improvements within society

Shivonne Marshall, Baton Roots Community Farm

- Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator at Baton Roots, currently have a lot of different projects going on
- As we continue to expand with the farm we're doing weekly volunteer events to get the farm ready for spring
- Volunteer to help!
- Building out six EBRHA sites with garden beds where we will start doing monthly educational workshops for the residents
- Hustle and Grow has three satellite sites where we teach high school students about urban agriculture and sustainable practices at Glen Oaks, Scotlandville and Capitol High
- All produce donated, sell to TopBox and a few restaurants

Luke St. John McKnight, MetroMorphosis

- Innovations Catalyst with MetroMorphosis
- Very recently the city parish and Mayor Broome have decided to relaunch My Brother's Keeper, an initiative under the Obama Foundation which gives best practices to close opportunities especially for young men of color
- Press conference April 8 to announce publicly
- Steering committee will lead several working groups around solving systemic and structural challenges

around workforce and education

Dean Donald Andrews (College of Business, Southern University)

- March employment report showed that the US Economy created 900,000 jobs, the economy is getting ready to take off
- Business and Entrepreneurship Program starting June 8
- Eight week course
- Hoping to help business persons understand how to advance in a digital economy
- IBM Skills Academy, a plethora of professors from the law schools, all the things you need more or less to understand how to do business in a digital format

Derrick Warren, Executive Director, SUS Alumni Federation and Alumni Affairs

- Really excited about the BEAP Program and helping BR upscale and rescale
- Encourage everyone to consider registering or sharing it with respective focus groups and organizations

Casey Phillips

- In Work Group B there is a focused subcommittee around college kids who are hungry
- With college food pantry programs ramping back up there's a lot of work to do together
- People keep pointing the finger at universities, but the community needs to support the kids living on very minimal amount of money in need of access to fresh food

David Summers, Partners Southeast/EBRPHA

- We've got two projects we're getting ready to close soon one on April 9, it's a 99 unit senior deal
- Help transition some of our seniors from another one of the EBRHA communities over

- Supportive service programs to help them have access to additional healthy food options
- Excited about the partnerships between the Housing Authority and partners are helping to create more affordable housing in areas that will sit right in great ecosystems that will improve the lives of all our residents

Alfredo Cruz, Let's Fix It

- Housing Insecurity is so correlated to the issue of food insecurity
- EBRP Housing Survey

Reginald Brown, Gardere Initiative

Gardere Initiative 15 Year Anniversary events starting with our June summer program, then August back to school, trick or treating in October, thanksgiving in November, December love fest, christmas break activities...great activities for the kids! January MLK Day, April or March EBR Spring Break activities then back to June

Week 51 (4/09/21)

Pathways to Higher Ed in Louisiana

MEETING NOTES:

Heather Freeman, Executive Director of Admissions, Southern University

- Brief overview of SU:
- Our history - we are the largest HBCU in LA
- Only HBCU system, meaning our campuses are made of 5 different institutions: Main campus in Baton Rouge Southern University and A&M College (SU), Southern University at New Orleans (SUNO), Southern University Shreveport (SUSLA), Southern University Law Center (SULC) & Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center (SUAREC)
- Led by Dr. Ray Belton, President Chancellor
- Known for our nursing school (consistently ranked #1 for HBCU), our law program is #1 in Louisiana with the

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most affordable tuition cost, we have partnerships with DXC Technology and Entergy and have a combined \$3.5 million in scholarship funds giving to students, STEAM majors, and classrooms

- Computer science has cyber security partnerships with Quantico and the FBI
- College of Business has amazing programs with concentrations in finance, accounting, management
- Only HBCU to offer degree in philanthropy
- Students interested in attending SU - Fall '21 still test optional due to some issues students have had taking ACT and SAT, students can gain access with a 12th grade schedule and high school transcript and be administered our test for placement
- Access program for students below our 2.0 GPA required for admission
- Can gain access through SUBR SUSLA Connect Program - Take classes on main campus but would be a student of our Shreveport campus before transferring to our main campus after meeting requirements
- Have something for everyone, committed to help students reach their goals
- Christian DeJesus (Office of Admissions, LSU)
- Asst. Director of Multicultural Recruitment
- We are a flagship institution
- One of 24 institutions that has a Land Sea and Space Grant Institution (professors come from around the world to teach here, mainly because of research)
- Students involved in research, some have even won Nobel Peace Prizes
- Professors teach concept, curriculum, and prepare you for the real road ahead of you
- 330+ academic programs
- Popular programs include Pre-Med, Pre-Nursing, Engineering, Business, Psychology and Kinesiology
- Completely different culture over the last 5 years
- New administration over the last 3 years have brought in

record breaking classes, the most diverse in LSU history

- I always tell students and parents that once you step foot on this campus you start to feel the atmosphere, have that tiger pride

Sandy Summers, Technology Recruiting Manager, Southeastern Louisiana University

- Part of a new program called the Workforce Talent Initiative, a grant program funded through LED
- Connect our students with companies in the region looking for tech talent
- Two years ago we decided we wanted to leverage some of our grant dollars to provide scholarships to our students, specifically the Computer Science and Information Technology students in a meaningful way
- Gaps - wanted to provide opportunities for students who might otherwise not have access to higher ed
- Scholarship programs rolled out a couple semesters ago taking a close look at students' financial situations and reaching those with the greatest need:
- Underserved Populations in Technology (females, low income, racial, socioeconomic, minorities, first gen college students)
- Readmit for Veterans, includes veterans and their dependents
- Transfer students - may be coming from a community college, coming from another four year institution and tire kicking about which university to choose
- Graduate Students - ISAT program (Integrated Science and Technology Grad level degree)...good fit for those working professionally wanting to take their skills to the next level
- Be very intentional about who these funds are for...not a scholarship for those with TOPS, really looking for students looking for emergency funds

Casey Phillips, The Walls Project

You can't have a conversation about the Capital Area Promise or pathways to higher ed without talking about our

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friends at BRCC, wanted to hold up the cup for Phil Smith, one of the biggest champions of our program with the Futures Fund

Girard, would you like to share anything about BRCC's admissions process and who the coalition can reach out to?

Girard Melancon, BRCC

- Moving forward for fall semester - visit mybrcc.edu for classes
- Doing face to face and virtual classes
- New high flex technology implementation across the board
- Automotive training, process technology, IT and STEM have grown, transfer classes, virtual counseling (face to face available to schedule), workforce classes (not offering too many summer sessions but will have evening classes in the fall)
- Reach out to Girard or Dr. Barlow for more information

Scott Burke, LOSFA - Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance

- LOSFA has a deep menu of resources beyond just TOPS
- Partnerships with all these universities - FAFSA completion events, preview days, Gear Up programs where students going on campus earning certificate credits
- Promote and provide college access across the board
- Work with students, let them know how important it is to submit FAFSA, but the main goal is to cover all our bases of financial aid, get that cost down as close to zero as possible
- State programs through FAFSA, Go Grant - \$300 to \$3,000 each year depending on FAFSA numbers
- Chafee voucher for those aging out of foster care
- Start Saving Program, 529 with tax incentive and free money matching

- Darius Spurlock with GEAR UP program, the mentoring aspect really helps
- Just finished our FLY tour (Financial Literacy for You), typically have students go to college campuses and put on a theatrical production where it relates them to different college aspects, they can go on tours, connect with faculty and staff (virtual this year)

Casey Phillips

- Private scholarships - all these "hidden" scholarship opportunities are difficult for ALL to access.
- Guidance counselors can really work more with individualizing when there aren't hundreds of students to one counselor
- A barrier to equity and access - that should be open source information
- Start Saving Program, a 529 savings account is the key - parents and guardians starting at 1st - 6th grade...you can get up to 15,000 a year and it's tax deductible saving for students' futures and investing in a fund giving the state operating capital to continue moving forward

Week 52 (4/16/21)

One Year Anniversary

MEETING NOTES:

Helena Williams, Director of Operations, The Walls Project

- OneRouge 2020 Report
- Broken down into two segments: the report and the meeting notes addendum
- These calls began as a reaction to the disruption of normal life because of the pandemic. Community stakeholders and nonprofits wanted to know what we could do, started these meetings to share resources
- In Louisiana specifically we have an awesome response to disasters, we've done it many times

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with hurricanes so it's kind of in our DNA to come together

- Really challenged and changed what it meant to collaborate
- Each week we had a topic of discussion and had one or more speakers - somewhere between 40 and 50 speakers
- Saw that these topics followed the cadence of the Nine Drivers of Poverty
- As we continued with these meetings we saw this larger need for more focused coalition work
- We organically piloted the East Baton Rouge Food Insecurity Coalition (EBRFIC) partnering with Capital Area United Way to lead the coalition
- Through that partnership we were able to build a structure for future coalitions
- Really allowed us to launch the #OneRouge Coalition concept
- Completely open and collaborative every step of the way
- Main goal is to propel the work forward - not about who is handling the mantle but about getting the work done
- Meeting notes are available as well as any resources shared during these meetings - there is no hoarding of information

Casey Phillips, Executive Director, The Walls Project

- To tie a bow on what Helena just said, so many things have happened in this last year together. I have learned so much from each of you, not just our speakers, but everyone on this call. Together we have a much deeper understanding of the work we all do on a day to day and systematic basis. The openness to share these resources and information has been inspiring. We've tackled some subjects that usually result in screaming matches. People are calm, deliberate and respectful. During Covid our purposes together has been of finding that middle ground solutions and escape ideological

battling.

- But today we're talking about the future.
- The Nine Drivers of Poverty are interconnected and systemic, preventing people from accelerating their lives and communities, not something they can take on alone
- As of today I'm very excited to announce that MetroMorphosis and The Walls Project have come together in a formal partnership to launch over the next two years 9 coalitions around the Nine Drivers of Poverty. We are two non-profit organizations who share common goals, constituencies, and purpose in Louisiana's capital region.
- The OneRouge Coalition : Building Communities that Empower People to Accelerate Their Own Lives. A collaborative initiative of MetroMorphosis and The Walls Project that will foster systemic change.
- OneRouge seeks to rebuild communities into places of safety, security, and prosperity by disrupting the drivers of poverty and replacing old notions of society (Haves v. Have Nots; Makers v. Takers, etc.) that fuel the dehumanization of people of color and the poor.
- Fundamentally, OneRouge convenes stakeholders, identifies best practices, and builds collective action to disrupt contributors to or the drivers of poverty by:
 - 1. Envision the future and its possibilities
 - 2. Convene key stakeholders
 - 3. Take action
 - 4. Evaluate, adjust, and revise when necessary
 - 5. Curate and share
- There was never a question that The Walls would go at this alone. Along with our partners we had to figure out how to come together, allow people/organizations to find their lane, and create a continuum model in place.
- With our partners at the Capital Area United Way, Wilson Foundation, Feeding Louisiana, and Co-City BR a steering committee and coalition action council

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framework was created to remediate Food Insecurity in Baton Rouge. This coalition model is (Group A) Funders Circle, (Group B) Practitioners, (Group C) Data/Evaluation/Policy to work separately but together to create short, medium, and long term goals together around each Driver of Poverty.

- In closing, OneRouge envisions a community where residents can chart a course of action and exercise reasonable control over the outcomes of their lives. Facilitating this requires creating programs and refining systems that will disrupt current debilitating conditions and take down barriers that deny access to paths of opportunity.

Raymond Jetson (Chief Executive Catalyst, MetroMorphosis)

- I must begin by commending you and the team at The Walls Project for initiating this work and sustaining it for 52 weeks
- Kept the energy, created a safe space, a container where people can come and connect with other folks, share their thoughts without being criticized or shut down
- As you say, that is the past and I am excited about what is ahead
- Time to amplify the work people on this call are doing on a daily basis
- Build some cartilage between work that is happening in the community around these drivers of poverty and how do we connect and build containers that coordinate their efforts in ways that create greater impact
- I want to put you on the spot: you talk about the emotions you've experienced, what does it feel like for you to be sitting in this seat a year later when you think back on what has transpired and what it has positioned this group of people to be?

Casey Phillips

- The thing that comes up to me is that this is part of the reason why I've committed to continuing the work

in Baton Rouge.

- When I started the Walls Project in 2012 we discussed a ten year plan and moving back out west after my son graduated high school
- Truth is I've fallen back in love with my hometown and look forward to continuing the work here together over the next 5 years.
- I don't feel the weight of the work anymore because it feels like the flow - as we sit here at the end of this year of COVID, I keep those who are no longer with us in my heart but I'm excited to continue the Walls Project but to me now the opportunity to work on the systematic work shoulder to shoulder with you on things also outside the purview of the Walls...I'm bursting with excitement

Raymond Jetson

- So if our work connects, if the efforts we have committed ourselves to work, what does that look like five years from now?

Casey Phillips

- One of the big Annual drop in the number of people in our city living in poverty, envisioning solutions together, convening stakeholders and bringing cohesion with the short, medium and long term goals...the "take action area" is where I like to thrive. When you take action it's not always going to be perfect. Constantly have to evaluate, adjust. Just like Mayor Broome says: our goal is safe, healthy, hopeful. Want to see the indicators that matter drastically improve. Sharing that with other communities across our state, across the country. If we find something that works, share it.

Raymond Jetson

- The reality is you have been the energy that has called people to this space week after week. What would you ask them to do for the next year? What's next?

Casey Phillips

- Without hitting everybody with a broad brush, this ask is easier for some than others...I would ask people to

do what Jan has done with HAWF and Adonica has done with BR Alliance, to step out of just the work of your organization and be a community leader working on issues beyond your immediate focus. What I need from everybody is your time and your talents. Not just be present but lead, even if you're not used to it. We need to find which of those nine coalitions you are passionate about and throw everything you've got into. You need to realize that our city needs you.

Raymond Jetson

- Manny, I love "from safe space to brave space" and I want to agree again with Reverend Anderson that what you've put before us is a powerful ask. Anything other than a powerful ask perpetuates the status quo. The reason people keep coming back to this space is that the work we've done apart from each other has been wholly insufficient to enact change. Anything less that transformative change isn't really worth our time and our effort. I want to share that what Metromorphosis does is designing engagements and collaborative working strategies that allow people to do what they do in partnership with others and in ways that are beyond their individual efforts to do it. We are excited to lift up these coalitions and begin to collectively make this place what we know it can be.
- One statement I will make that may borrow some folks is that there is not a single system in Baton Rouge that is broken. Everything is performing exactly as it should for those who benefit. There will be resistance. There will be difficulties. But I believe in the people I have seen and heard on this call...that which is necessary to begin change is present.

Week 53 (4/23/21)

Homeless & Reentry Workforce

MEETING NOTES:

Courtney Scott, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer,

Mayor Broome's Office

- BR Vaccine rollout...We are asking you to be ambassadors
- Sitting between 26-27% of community vaccination
- Launched the Geaux Get Vaccinated campaign April 16
- Effort in partnership with Louisiana Dept of Health, FEMA, and GOHSEP. We are one of 12 sites in our country selected to be a FEMA site at Bon Carre Business Center
- Set up there with a full free vaccination site with Pfizer. No insurance requirements, no appointment needed. Make it as easy as possible to drive/walk/bike through. Goal was 3,000 per day, but also doing community outreach vaccination sites to meet the people where they are.
- We need help! Partner or share with events, set up a site yourself through your organization. We come out to you, set up promotion, provide radio, and any audience/entity you serve can get vaccinated. Workplace, church, outside or inside, we are set up to support and encourage everyone to go get vaccinated.

Gwen Hamilton, New Schools for Baton Rouge

- Has there been any research or information getting to the bottom of why people are hesitant so that strategies can be developed around those issues?
- Courtney Scott
- Canvassing and collecting data to bring together and hopefully get a report on LPHI
- We are seeing:
- - Hesitation due to what's considered lack of research/the fact that this is a new vaccination. While it's something that was publicized and rolled out quickly, we know this has been in the works over time and has been tested on other variations of SARS. But not everyone receives that well.
- - Maternal health and concerns around fertility. Recently had an IG Live on Mayor Broome's page with a female African American doctor trying to get out as much

information as possible. No formal studies I know about but trying to collect that data real time and share that education.

Kenny Lynch, Director of Target Populations Employer Outreach, Louisiana Workforce Commission

- Statewide reentry program - Caddo, Orleans, Jefferson, Baton Rouge, St. Tammany
- Case managers working to assist people upon release
- Currently working on statewide program initiative with the Dept of Corrections to pay for training prior to release, a statewide pilot where they get a CBA (industry based credential) in welding, ASW within auto mechanics
- Starting with two prisons, one in Caddo and one in the LaSalle area
- April is Second Chance Month: partnering with DOC and Urban League for a statewide virtual Job Fair on April 28. Anyone can log on. 70 employers involved right now.

Ann Zanders, Board Member, Reentry Alliance for Louisiana

- Volunteering for the last 9 years with Reentry Alliance for Louisiana
- Very clear we needed a mechanism to communicate and connect people doing reentry across the state
- 'Reentry' - had been just a word without real collective substance - everybody was doing things within their own pockets
- Homelessness and employment are two of the biggest challenges for currently incarcerated persons and formerly incarcerated persons
- We're finding inreach is one of the biggest strategies to help deal with that
- Women are the largest population that cannot find housing once they get out unless they have family infrastructure to go to
- A bill passed out of the House Judiciary Committee yesterday and the DOC is hopefully going to have the first women's transitional housing in Baton Rouge

- This is big that DOC understands the challenges women have
- In addition to employment I'm excited to hear what Kenny just said - we had our symposium Tuesday and our now trying to work with the next generation of reentry leaders
- Even today, formerly incarcerated persons are having trouble accessing employment
- Lots of FIPs don't like the word 'felon' but these companies are open to hiring formerly incarcerated persons
- Currently incarcerated people have to have a plan to come out, but how do we as a reentry community provide the resources to them?
- These are some of the challenge we have: we've got to get the information to them
- Verna Bradley Jackson of One Touch Ministry is a housing specialist in Baton Rouge, in business for 23 years. Started housing sex offenders: understanding the reality of the charges...there are levels but not many people know what those levels are.
- Across the southern region there are over 400 men in DOC right now who can't get out because they are sex offenders although they have completed their time, just some of the realities we hear
- Another new ministry called Heavenly Hope Ministries. They're doing employment preparation, housing...but they're a new group so not many people know about them. I think housing and employment...we have a lot going on but we've got to get the information out.
- Going back to the Reentry Alliance, that's our purpose. We want to make those connections.

Kaitlyn Joshua, Community Organizer, Power Coalition

- We are a statewide civic engagement table. We operate from the people's agenda that folks should always have the opportunity to participate in equitable and fair elections, people closest to the problem are closest to the solution, and we need to hold our elected officials

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accountable.

- Serve as the faith organizer
- Knee-deep in legislative session, doing lots of work on the local level for Fair Chance in Hiring
- Continuing to build out coalitions across the state because not all of our parishes have this
- Excited to say that Matt Willard out of New Orleans is sponsoring HB 480, making it a requirement of city government and private sector jobs to ban the box
- In terms of events, doing a lot around Fair Chance - Shiloh Baptist has an event tomorrow to get the word out
- I invite everyone on this call to do that work with us. We have flyers, petitions...give them the support they need to find great jobs and livable wages.
- City council member Shawna Banks of District II is going to sponsor a resolution for us to ban the box, require contract jobs that allow formerly incarcerated persons to get that contract with them city
- In terms of housing we organize from a proactive perspective. Try to work with the local housing authority to advocate for moratoriums, especially during the pandemic. Our job during COVID has been organizing from a sense of urgency. Talking to the mayors, talking to the governor
- The COVID Relief Package we are currently discussing with Governor Edwards includes a component of rental assistance.
- Bill tracker on our Power Coalition website. Able to update in real time. Power Coalition is active with the Bring Back Louisiana campaign - have people volunteering to do that canvassing. Lastly we are looking to build out that Fair Chance Committee in Baton Rouge

Dr. Pamela Ravare-Jones, ACAO, Mayor Broome's Homelessness Prevention Coalition

- The coalition started back in July of last year
- Come together to educate and bring awareness
- Working with over 85 different constituent groups,

about 22 coalition members, nearly 65 nonprofits throughout the city

- Siloes have been broken and we're truly coming together to eradicate homelessness
- The work groups came together as a result of identifying all the different constituent groups
- We also work with law enforcement, both BRPD and the sheriff's office serve on the HPC
- 10 Work Groups developed with 8 core goals
- Capacity database and inventory to understand how many homeless reside in BR - 359, likely increased to a little over 400 now because of hurricanes, COVID, etc. Talking about prisons, formerly incarcerated individuals.
- Outreach and case management
- Transitional and permanent affordable housing
- Community homeless education campaign
- Addressing formerly incarcerated individuals and working with reentry groups
- Behavioral health training
- Panhandling task force
- Peer to peer mentoring group
- Meet once a month
- One of the things I'm most proud of is partnering with great organizations to do investigative work
- Mayor's Recast Program did a pilot program assessing the level of behavioral health and trauma that homeless folks encounter and what actually brought them to the point of being on the street
- Partnered with CARP for a pilot program with our panhandling population. Who's out there, what are their needs and struggles, how do we navigate them back into society.
- Went further into looking at best practices across the state and into other states. The sheriffs office along with BRPD have allowed us to do 72 hour touch points along with our faith based groups. We will not clean up and clear out an area without giving them forewarning

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and sharing resources.

- Put partners in place, partner with CAUW in our signage to help educate the community to help with public safety as well as littering
- Developed our website - www.brhelp.org - to steer individuals to help give contributions to our nonprofit partners
- Program called Housing Heroes - landlords with safe affordable housing for homeless individuals to move into
- Help us spread awareness and education and compassion to the needs of homeless people. Helping individuals get off the street, get into society with lucrative jobs. The city will be hosting a job fair in the coming month in collaboration with St. Vincent de Paul and One Stop to offer employment through the city with our maintenance department and seasonal work. Our next meeting is April 30.

Rev. Dr. Brian Sleeth, Executive Director, The Christian Outreach Center of Baton Rouge

- 30th anniversary of COC, been with the organization since 2013
- All about the partnerships
- Started out as a ministry of St. Joseph Cathedral with volunteer work and overtime churches downtown got together to provide a centralized place to send people in need of basic services
- Provide triage services for the homeless - bus passes and IDs have been the biggest thing in addition to food, hygiene, etc.
- CATS is going to start charging again in May. Nonprofits should still be able to get a discount on bus passes.
- Working on a referral system so that more and more churches and organizations can refer people directly to us through a coordinated system so that we can share what we were able to do to help
- Had to pivot during COVID - restructured ourselves staff wise

- Now have an employment case manager, been doing job training classes for the past six years
- Working with think tank Chalmers Center. How do we approach poverty from a biblical perspective? What is poverty? When you ask people worldwide, the answer is different. I myself was homeless in a fashion, basically couch surfing with relatives back in 2009. Poverty means anxiety, depression, isolation, lack of community. The impact of poverty is vast and significant. This think tank also produces materials. We are switching over to their new curriculum in the fall which will include exciting things like a greater emphasis on prison reentry, trauma response, and a strong push towards trades.
- Grant from United Way for providing employment training for people in the ALICE population

Karen Stagg, Director, Connections For Life

- Work with formerly incarcerated women - guide them through a 12 month intense training program including housing, training, job readiness and placement, reconnecting with families, financial management, etc.
- Look under the rocks and take care of old issues so that when they complete their year with us they can live independently
- When someone is released from prison, if they don't have a place to go they are at very high risk of being homeless
- We seek to serve women most in need, meaning they don't have a stable support system to return to
- Small but mighty nonprofit, work closely with lots of other providers. OneRouge, Reentry, Ann's team...we all work closely together to do the wraparound services they need.
- We take the holistic approach - getting women counseling, mental health care, medical assistance
- 22nd year, looking to strategically expand. Always looking for partners - housing providers, employers
- Our experience that once we have an opportunity with

an employer, that's all we need. The ladies work so hard.

- When our clients leave us, we stay very connected to them.
- We fund our program through a little thrift store over by LSU.

Week 54 (4/31/21)

Children Living in Poverty

MEETING NOTES:

J. Daniels, Partners Southeast + EBRPHA

- Redefine how we view and capture "public housing"
- Public housing has a stigma - we want to change the vernacular
- We are redefining it, talking about affordable housing
- When I talk to our partners they say, "What do you do about your tenants?" I say, we don't have tenants, we have families
- They ask "Are you building new projects or facilities?" No, we're building new communities
- As we talk about the path to homeownership, rebuilding communities, we have to rethink affordable housing
- David Summers is really helping us execute our existing portfolio as well as the affordable communities
- We promote the Housing Choice Voucher Program for home ownership - EBRPHA invests \$30 million per year in the Baton Rouge region through this program. You may know it as Section VIII, but at the end of the day it's a housing choice. We work with different partners to help in city redevelopment
- Subsidizing the mortgage, allowing them to secure the home
- LHC launched a program that allows us to offer low interest and forgivable loans
- Outside of that program, we have the Family Self Sufficiency Program
- Target up to 25 families to position them to change the wealth factor in their lives (financial literacy, workforce

development, job opportunities and training, etc.)

- Approach it different ways
- Everybody congratulate David, he just closed a \$26 million deal, 99 units, senior development within Baton Rouge. Huge opportunity to reposition affordable housing inventory.

David Summers, Partners Southeast/EBRPHA

- Partners Southeast is the development arm of the EBRPHA
- Works to ensure safe and affordable housing for all our families who need it
- The development arm helps reposition those communities that have aged out or aren't surrounded by support services and amenities they need to do better
- Dual function of repositioning and repurposing
- Direct correlation between families having to pay more than 30% of their income on rent every month, tremendous amount of renters in BR
- Doesn't allow them to be in a position to save money, set them up for home ownership
- Really trying to take an aggressive stance to help out families transition from longterm generational renters into homeowners
- To the community that J just mentioned, this is a 99 unit senior community
- Specifically for seniors 65+ there's a tremendous lack of affordable housing in Baton Rouge but we will still be capturing less than 2% of the market. The demand is tremendous. Huge supply gap that we will very intentionally be working on as part of our Choice Neighborhood Program
- Other areas in the city that that are amenity rich, near health care facilities...we think will be great opportunities to provide affordable housing to our seniors.
- One other thing...less about directly driving to home ownership and more the importance of being intentional

about how we develop and what we communicate is the name change...The name of this project was originally Cypress at Gardere. As we got closer to closing we started being intentional about the history of Gardere. It was named for François Gardere, a Frenchman who came to Louisiana. One of the largest plantation owners in the state. Long and heavy history associated with François Gardere and the neighborhood. Rather than move forward with that name, we positioned ourselves to name it Cypress Pinchback. P.B.S. Pinchback was the first Black governor of Louisiana. We're excited to be able to reposition this project in a way that honors his legacy and makes a statement about how we intend to move forward with our projects.

Courtney Scott, ACAO, City of Baton Rouge

- Representing City Parish today, we're a conduit to many of the people speaking today
- Housing First Alliance - many of the folks speaking today are the brain trust behind it - Sam Sanders, J. Daniels, Chris Tyson, Alfredo Cruz
- These folks have been doing work over the last few years to build a social contract with the EBR Parish community around a healthy housing network
- On behalf of the Mayor's office, we were excited to be able to join the conversation to navigate where we will allocate resources, how we build healthy housing, engage with stakeholders and prioritize affordable housing, nurturing those partnerships necessary to create these opportunities for all
- We will be using two main strategies to inform the public about gaps in place
- We know that stable housing, a roof over your head, a community, a family of people are necessary for us to thrive...it's part of our fundamental foundation
- The use of collective impact - everyone working together to leverage those local resources for healthy housing

sustainability

- A lot of that starts with our Office of Community Development which is administered and managed by Build Baton Rouge, we look at a lot of those pieces and parts to say how do we continue to rebuild/evolve to work well?
- Two key things we've done over the last year - made a very conscious decision to rapidly evolve and start this work in a collective
- Didn't want to just be City Parish, wanted many minds there
- Awarded a \$3.4 million grant for lead hazard
- Also had to respond rapidly to COVID-19 and the financial impact on our families with rental assistance and facing losing their homes
- Responded by standing up our Rental Emergency Assistance program
- Also made sure to put sustainable partners in place to sit at the table with us - Mid City Redevelopment, UREC, Habitat for Humanity, Project 70805 as case managers
- Case-worthy system connected to our department for human services
- Respond to the needs of our families right now and keep them connected to resources in the future
- Case managers are set to respond to folks facing evictions or financial burdens due to COVID-19 at this time, but we can now look to the future to keep them connected to more resources
- Also putting a legal support system in place offering immediate assistance to folks in danger of losing their housing
- Want to champion Alfredo Cruz again...he always stands in as an advocate making sure we are not only solving a quick need but putting long term solutions in place
- In the chat, Ms. Pat LeDuff said the case management model has been very successful, and we're excited because we finally have a system in City Parish where

pieces can speak together...it becomes our job to look at how we can build a system to get people from poverty to stability

- We don't need to do quick fixes anymore, we have to build systems
- We'll be sharing more information about our lead positive program , again groups like Mid City Redevelopment and Build Baton Rouge will be at the table putting infrastructure together and working with the National League of Cities to make sure we're looking at best practices across the country
- See questions about data and homelessness in Scotlandville...I will continue to answer questions in the chat.

Sam Sanders, Executive Director, Mid City Redevelopment Alliance

- For those of you interested in housing, reach out to Casey and he can connect you to me and Alfredo and plug you in
- As to my topic, barriers to home ownership, I'm going to start with controversy...homeownership is not for everyone.
- When I first started this work I believed in was. I now realize it's not necessarily for everyone. Key things to remember are it costs to get a house, maintain one, protect the investment in its lifetime, and you really have to be able to navigate these expectations.
- First barrier is about the prospective buyer and their understanding and ability to manage the long term commitment of home ownership
- Other barriers are affordability, credit, and closing the gap
- Affordability has definitely been misused over the years - we are talking about it being affordable to specific someones. Those having a harder time reaching that achievement. 80% and AMI. If you make \$62,800 as a family of four or less, that's who we're talking about.

We are not talking about mini mansions. Developers will build those and call it affordable housing.

- We want to normalize what we're talking about. Typically when people hear public housing they go with the worst of images, calling people leeches and lazy. That's not what we're doing. We're talking about those who need and deserve an opportunity to thrive. What can we do to help get them there?
- We have to remind people there are qualifications.
- Credit is one of the most important things we have to talk about.
- Lenders want a 620 credit score. They want perfect clients, easy loans to process that are comfortable and consistent. Not who we're talking about. Credit can be a huge barrier because time is the only thing that can really fix that. Life challenges produce credit issues. The series of issues people come up with over time can be a huge driver to poverty. One mistake can cause a seven year impact that gives them a long, long road getting back.
- Buyers need forgiveness and fairness - we need the credit scoring model to be revised. It forces people to become traditional credit users instead of taking into account where people are.
- They need lenders to embrace the tenants of CRA - we have legislation on the books that banks and credit unions have to do things to help even though they don't necessarily want to help.
- Lenders need to embrace the concept of community lending. Community lenders must have a special skill set, understanding that people have lives and may have been through a whole lot before walking into the bank. The right person on the other side of that table can make a huge difference. We don't always see that.
- Baton Rouge struggles today with lenders. We need to hire caring people who really care about the opportunities they're providing. We need lenders who don't mind

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doing a little extra - what's the definition of equity? Just giving someone a little extra if that's what's required.

- Buyers need assistance: Gap assistance. Down payment assistance. Closing cost assistance. A fair shot is equity. All of those are needed to help someone get to the finish line.
- We are creating home ownership opportunities but it's equity work.
- There's a lot of work to be done, there's a lot of angles we can go about this. The administration today is focused on equity and housing is at the top...we're excited about the promise and will do the best we can with what comes.

Christopher Tyson (CEO, Build Baton Rouge)

- The most important thing I think deserves repeating is, as Sam said, home ownership is not for everybody. What's really important is having safe, habitable, humane housing in our community.
- We've fetishized home ownerships at the detriment of having a robust system that includes tenants rights, protections, and enforcement; holistic community planning beyond units; and understanding the interdisciplinary work required to sustainably and equitably turn around communities that have been systematically distressed over decades
- How do we create whole communities? We need to increase production of affordable housing units, make sure affordability addresses people at risk of homelessness, people that are on the bottom of the economic ladder. We have an economy that provides very few protections for people who do low work
- Stitching together a thicker safety net
- Housing First Alliance is vitally important work - unearthing data that Baton Rouge has never captured, that we don't even know about ourselves. We're late to the game.

- Can't have a meaningful conversation about moving housing forward in this community without the level of rigor and analysis that's happening right now
- Recap of the work of Build Baton Rouge - we've been around for over a decade and always try to tie all of our work together because it is long cycle collaborative work
- As you know our legacy project has been the Ardendale Master Plan, the Choice Neighborhoods Project, which we are working on alongside J. Daniels and the City that is an outgrowth of a decade of planning we were able to use to compel HUD to make a \$30 million award to this community
- Also focused in the Mid City area - in 2018 we completed the Rail Station Master Plan tied to the Electric Depot development, which revolves around housing development and transit oriented development
- We have to think holistically about creating neighborhoods... that's what makes a city vibrant, healthy, durable, and attractive
- We can't just drop a few units. All of our city deserves high quality planning
- Another thing about equitable housing, is that it doesn't just occur in North Baton Rouge. Particularly if we're interested in desegregating our community, we have to look at the entire region as an opportunity and ensure that when also thinking about transit, affordable commercial development, other supports that families need to live all over the city
- Lastly, the Plank Road Master Plan continues to advance across a number of projects including affordable housing, urban infill development, mixed use development, a grocery anchored mixed use development with housing on the same site as grocery connected to transit and the BRT project
- Number of partners including CATS, EBRPHA, Mid City Redevelopment Alliance and City Parish
- At the end of this year the Capital Area Transit System

will have a vote to renew their tax. Lets' be clear - as a community if we want to advance housing and we aren't talking about transit-oriented development, we kneecapped our competitiveness for national grants to do the kind of work we want to do here. When we received the Advancing Cities Grant \$5 million award from JP Morgan Chase, one of their final questions was what's up with the BRT plan? That most caught their attention. We don't get BRT without a dedicated funding source for transit. There are other housing related developments we can do with a robust, well funded transit system. If you care about this work, you need to care about transit.

Week 55 (5/07/21)

Our Youth, This Summer

MEETING NOTES:

Shanice Robinson, Program Director, BRidge Agency

- The BRidge Agency is turning five years old August 23
- Exist to address the social drivers of crime - why are the kids doing what they're doing and how do we address trauma
- Service, empowerment, advocacy
- Have served over 6,500 families to date
- 10 unique programs to address drivers of crime in our city including mental health and counseling
- Mostly serve ages 6-13
- Announcing summer enrichment programs today on social media
- All about empowering youth and giving them a voice in their community, providing therapy and counseling if need be
- Bridging the gap to make a better Baton Rouge

Janel Washington, Senior Program Coordinator, The Futures Fund

- Senior Program Coordinator for the Futures Fund - the Tech Academy (youth) and Coding Boot Camp (adults)
- Youth programing this summer starts June 7 with our

partnership with MyWe servicing their youth as training and certification providers in coding and programming

- 8 week programming workshop with beginning skills of what it takes to get into coding, new technologies, and gauging interest to potentially continue into the full 18 month program with the possibility of future work study, mentorship, and certification (CIW IBC)
- Fostering relationships with higher ed, job pipelines, and things of that nature
- Adult coding program is offered to those graduating high school as well as out of school youth (OOSY) who don't really know where they want to go next
- Luckily an industry like coding is wide open - getting certifications help move you immediately into jobs
- Next CBC cohort starts July 6, three different relays - Level I, Level II, Level III
- Just like our youth program, they then get the IBC CIW certifications upon completion with access to those higher ed and job industry connections as well as internship, apprenticeship opportunities available
- The main thing is assisting and driving down the unemployment number
- Targeting the 10 parish region, North Baton Rouge, and specific areas proven to have a large digital gap caused by accessibility

Andrea Roberts, COO, BREC

- BREC summer camp will be back in full swing this summer
- Regular recreation camps that go on at least three field trips every week, place throughout and outside the parish
- Amazing opportunity for kids who may not otherwise have the chance to visit places like TopGolf, the Audubon Aquarium, etc.
- Specialty summer camps at Bluebonnet Nature Swamp, Farr Park Equestrian Center, Independence Theater, and so on

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- Find out more here: playbook.brec.org

Helen Frink, Mayor-President Broome's Office

- Worked with the Mayor's Youth Workforce Experience (MyWe) program for the past three going on four summers
- Impact on individuals is amazing - we have someone getting hired into City Parish for a full time job after being with us for several years...brought him on as AmeriCorp and he's now launching a full time career. We see that kind of thing a lot
- Work very hard to bring in, train, and pay young people and continue following them into the workforce
- Working to build a database of every young person we engage and make sure we are serving both them and their families with wraparound services to prepare them for the future
- Lifting up and preparing young people is a major priority of Mayor Broome
- Today (Friday May 7) is the last day we're taking applications for our summer cohort but we do have year long opportunities for workforce development
- We are placing 11th and 12th graders into host sites this summer. We're prioritizing safety during the pandemic so our middle and 9th/10th graders are on a virtual training program. 11th and 12th grade host sites can do just about anything - identify a workplace mentor to have them doing anything from answering phones, filing, etc. Just reach out to hfrink@brla.gov and I can connect to Big Buddy

Week 56 (5/14/21)

High Teen Birth Rates - Part I

MEETING NOTES:

Frankie Robertson, MPA (President, The Amandla Group)

- Founder of the Amandla Group, a social justice consulting firm focused on the social and political determinants of health that impact Black and Brown birthing people

- Worked for March of Dimes for about 12 years, a national organization dedicated to improving maternal and infant health outcomes. One of the leading organizations for maternal and infant health. Served as state director for 7 years leading all aspects of the organization here in LA with some national responsibility as well then 5 years as multi-state regional and advocacy director before forming Amandla Group last March
- Still represent March of Dimes today as well the National Birth Equity Collaborative
- Really pleased to be a part of the MetroMorphosis team by way of Project Management services
- My passion is maternal and infant health - there are alarming disparities not just specifically for teens but for birthing people in general in our state
- Louisiana has the highest rate of maternal deaths, very high maternal morbidity
- There's a lot to be desired as far as what can be done to protect moms
- Just wanted to share a few things about teen births:
- In terms of resources there are a few resources March of Dimes has made available publicly through partnerships with organizations like the Greek Divine Nine: Project Alpha, a public awareness campaign between Alpha Phi Alpha and March of Dimes working with young people (particularly aimed at male-male mentorship) discussing sex education, teen pregnancy prevention, societal issues and stressors, a full curriculum
- Zeta Phi Beta has a women-led organization that follows a similar curriculum - talk about reproductive and sexual health
- Here to discuss rates of teen pregnancy, but I want to bring attention to the added risk for health concerns for both mom and baby, things people may not automatically relate to that issue - lots of talk about maternal mental health, Postpartum Depression and Anxiety
- Look at social support and lack of support, economic support, that teens have

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- Preconception health is very important
- Lots of talk about what happens when someone gets pregnant but there's so much to do before you get pregnant - most pregnancies are unintended so we have to make sure that we focus on women's health overall because the health of the baby is tied to the health of the mother
- Teenagers have about an 11% premature birth rate (before 37 week gestation)
- Focus on educating young people publicly about reproductive, sexual, and preconception health
- Your birth outcomes are somewhat shaped by your experiences in the womb
- For teen pregnancy or even teenage sexual activity, there are long term consequences to your reproductive self: infectious diseases, STIs, HIV/AIDS can actually impact birthing and ability to reproduce later
- Education is very, very important at this point in a young person's life
- Understanding and knowledge of boundaries creates that power and leads to the prevention of sexual violence for teens
- Have this Healthy Sexuality Resource gives which gives some information about communication, equity, consent...we have "The Talk with Big Bro Dreaux" which is a guided interactive talk for teens and young adults that guides you through conversations you need to have with your dating partner about contraception, other dating partners, contraception, what might happen with pregnancy or STDs
- Have a sex timeline which is a step-by-step guide to talk over with your dating partner when you decide to have sex: are we exclusive, are we using protection, what happens when things don't go right during intercourse
- Very important for us to share this information - a lot of people think that by talking and encouraging people or teens to have sex but that is not the case. Even in our work with Gardere Initiative, every summer we do a training and the questions teens have are things we didn't think we had to explain...simple questions of anatomy, how does a baby form...questions that teens have that help to prevent unintended pregnancy, discussing utilizing condoms and contraceptives

Angela Golden, Community Education Director, Sexual Trauma Awareness & Response

- Started in child abuse prevention as an AmeriCorp intern at Baton Rouge Children's Advocacy for about about 7 years before working with STAR
- Now we are able to offer community education which is so important when we talk about prevention and healthy outcomes
- Office in Baton Rouge, New Orleans, and Alexandria
- Education is something we are pushing now more than ever as we see there's a lot of attention on social media that support claims and beliefs that aren't factual
- STAR is trying to bring awareness to the idea of healthy sexuality
- One of the things we offer is our teenage dating website called STARt Here: things to think about before even thinking about engaging in sexual activities
- It's not just "Don't do it" without any explanation - the more knowledge and information we are able to give our youth and community the more inclined they are to make educated decisions
- Sexual health talk is not forcing young people into having sex, it's actually helping them make wise decisions for themselves and their bodies

Week 57 (5/21/21)

EBR Food Insecurity Coalition (FIC) Updates

MEETING NOTES:

Jan Ross, Huey and Angelina Wilson Foundation

- Work Group A: Funders

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- Currently made up of mainly local funders - one of our objectives is to bring in or inform national and outside funders and of what food insecurity is like
- Unless a funder has specific focus on food insecurity they don't really realize the impact it has on other areas of focus they may have in their practice (such as workforce development)
- Bring in funding that builds the capacity of the coalition as a whole - build up the producers as well as the groups providing data gathering
- Finding that supporter/funder is a bit of a challenge so we are coming at it from different directions
- Yesterday (5/20/21) we brought in JP Morgan Chase who just made a large grant to Build Baton Rouge and the focus on Plank Road corridor...we're taking small steps as we bring in national funders to educate them

Chelsea Morgan, AHA

- Work Group B (Producers)
 - Immediate goals are understanding what's already happening in our community and how we can bridge those gaps: food shares, coordinating partnerships with the work already happening with Geaux Get Healthy and the extension the Mayor's office (such as the two Dollar Generals outfitted with fresh produce in 70805)
 - Really new innovative comprehensive food outlets
 - Wellness Wednesday at the YMCA: Top Box, BREADA, AHA, nutrition educators come together to provide an actual understanding of how to cook these foods in a healthy way
 - Medium goals: Understanding how we can add to the existing disaster plan the city has in place especially as we approach hurricane season
 - Partnerships in place already like churches with pantries (which are typically only nonperishable, seeking to connect them with our partners to get supplies of fresh produce)
- Get the Food Bank, United Way, and distributors engaged in what's already happening to expand capacity for all our organizations
 - Long term goal: working together to reimagine how food is grown
 - Growers, distributors, educators, and farmers in the group help see the long term need of action based opportunities in place to understand creating equity around food and the health and wellness part of what we do
 - From the AHA: we talk a lot about food insecurity and how so much of our parish is just one natural disaster or medical bill away from being food insecure
 - We talk a lot about the ALICE population
 - Understanding that immediate need and how we can further have conversations around food insecurity and nutrition security
 - Access to food that is healthy, nutritious, and affordable that they know how to prepare
 - Empower ourselves and community members to do things like what AHA does with GGH using the Healthy For Life curriculum created by AHA and Aramark
 - Educational experiences that provide people the understanding of how to make better choices - not just about cooking demos and classes, it's connected to the farm and community work there, how to continue to make culturally relevant recipes
 - Grant work: how this collective can come together in a variety of ways when we speak with Jan's group and our funder opportunities. Outlined ten potential "asks" through grant themes. After yesterday's call it seems like we're narrowing it down to five through some further collaboration on wording and combining some of the ideas. Looking at technology solutions, food education, equitable access in food deserts as well as conservation through the production of fresh food and edible food forests

ONEROUGE COALITIONS

- HB 132 Water Access in Schools is being led by the AHA with Rep. Vincent Pierre out of Lafayette - not just about produce and nonperishable foods but also water being a basic human need that kids in particular really can't live without...water fountains are the germiest place in schools so we are looking to outfit refill stations. Essential to their growth. LA is sixth in the nation for childhood obesity (ages 10-17) and having the opportunity to drink enough water will help reduce that unhealthy weight. Schools nearly triple water intake with stations versus fountains.

Korey Patty, Feeding Louisiana

- Work Group C (Data and Policy)
- Our time yesterday was largely spent discussing the things happening around this issue at the legislature currently
- Focused on programs and policies managed and ministered by various state agencies and USDA programs that operate at scale and are able to serve the most people across this community
- SNAP program is something we want to focus on - understanding the value to those experiencing food insecurity and the value to the state overall putting upwards of \$1.6 billion into the state economy
- Flexible, efficient system that allows people to buy the things they know they and their families will need
- Our role with Feeding Louisiana representing the food banks across the state is looking at the response to food insecurity holistically
- How do we add to the fantastic work on the ground with strong state and federal programs that compliment the work to remove barriers that exist for people to access these benefits and leverage the resources they really need
- At the legislative level, you have HB 322, a pandemic

EBT bill - SNAP benefits for children eligible for free and reduced price meals. Passed out of the Senate, has one more step to get through. We are definitely in support of that bill with the recognition that the school format has been a challenge for a lot of people, especially those students eligible for free and reduced price bills. But good news, it's sailing through the process.

- Sen. Fred Mills, Chairman of the House Health and Welfare Committee, authored a resolution urging and requesting the Dept. of Health to host a convening around the issues of food insecurity and hunger in our state.
- Dept. of Health manages a couple nutrition programs: CSFP for seniors, WIC for women and children...There's a great opportunity to connect with other state agencies to understand those connections Chelsea mentioned to health and nutrition
- Have to consider how hunger and food insecurity tie into all these outcomes - what's the impact for children going to school who don't have the nutrition they need to sit and learn? Negative health outcomes for adults? The impacts on economic and health well being for seniors?
- Our driving principle is community education around issues and resources that exist, what the barriers are, how we can work with state agencies or policy makers to decrease those barriers and then communicate to people that could use these resources - dispelling myths, putting good resources and information in place so folks can get the things they and their families need to thrive

Katie Pritchett, CAUW

- We're looking at how to leverage what other people are doing around the state to expand our work so we aren't working in a silo but together
- Excited to have Korey in that group so we have first hand knowledge, Danny with Louisiana Budget Project

as well...we've been able to keep a really good pulse on what's going on at the Capitol. It's a really exciting group if you're interested in policy. We've really narrowed in our focus and we're going to accomplish some great things.

Manny Patole, Co-City Baton Rouge

- We've all reached across these silos towards this goal of moving the metric of food insecurity to zero
- Wanted to highlight two things that have been breaking down these barriers and the work being done here:
- First, the STIR Labs, a national research program funded by the National Science Foundation connecting governments with academic teams. Want to shout out Traci Birch and John Lewis who have been very vital in understanding the pulse of what's going on on the ground.
- Our research challenge over all for this specific item is to develop a systemic view of the food supply chain to better identify the gaps in food insecurity issues. Our research question as we hone in on certain things is how to increase food security and sufficiency at the neighborhood scale
- International conference is called Just Food, a combined conference from June 9-15 of four international organizations (Association for the Study of Food and Society, Agriculture Food and Human Values Society, the Society for the Anthropology of Food and Nutrition)
- Having a round table discussion talking about how we have cultivated this food insecurity coalition in the time of COVID19, bringing the work everyone has done since August of 2020 to an international platform
- For those interested, the STIR Lab is a free registration, day-long seminar and our presentation in conjunction with Chris Tyson of Build Baton Rouge will be at 3 PM Central time June 8th. The round table discussion with myself, Casey, Katie, Korey, and Shane will be June 12th

at 8 AM Central. You do have to pay for registration but you can register as a community member for a lower cost. The conference is a week long if you want to attend any other events virtually.

- Emily Chatelain (Three O'Clock Project)
- Pretty robust summer feeding program between several different entities
- If you know of a program that has kids on site who are not getting healthy meals, let me know so we can figure that out
- Delivering daily meals to YMCA, BREC, and several other tutoring programs and summer camps
- EBR is having lots of summer schools and camps and they are doing a sign up for home delivery
- Knee deep in health permits, but everything launches either this Monday or the next, June 1

Alfreda Tillman Bester, Dept. of Children and Family Services

- Thanks to Korey and the people at Feeding Louisiana for all you do for our Food Banks. We really appreciate the way you supplement those in poverty and those who are food insecure.
- I think most of you know I'm the Assistant Secretary for the Dept. of Children and Family Services and had responsibility for the Office of Family Support that administered the SNAP program
- One of the things that's the most aggravating for me is that we were supplemental, assuming that people had the ability to pay for a portion of their food. I wonder if there is any discussion aside from the work we are doing at the Vulnerable Communities and Peoples Initiative at the Law Center if there's any discussion about the fragmentation of feeding people. For instance, people having to go to different places over the summer to feed their children because they don't have enough resources. I've always wanted to see more in terms of people paying people enough in benefits so that they

didn't have to go to all of these places, many of them without transportation, too. We are more than capable of assessing a family's actual need and giving them the resources they need to purchase their own food. We shouldn't make it more difficult for people who are already food and transportation insecure to get food

Gwen Hamilton (NSBR)

- One of the things presented to the coalition and has been an active participant in the committee has been the participation of the Dept. of Children and Family Services and what they said to us was a specific way to help families and on the ground needs that Ms. Bester put out is to make sure that nonprofits, churches, and others with resources understand the once in a lifetime opportunity we have for lots of dollars included in the CARES Act and EBT expansion to really reach out to those in our networks and help guide them to access, to de-stigmatize EBT. The rules and regulations have been relaxed substantially and far more people qualify but don't participate because of the stigma. It's up to nonprofits, churches and other organizations to create some portal or some way to engage families when they come in for other services and encourage them to apply for benefits

Korey Patty: I think that's the holistic approach, understanding there's so many resources out there, how do we connect people with what they need....instead of having to go from Point A to B to C, how do we appropriately staff and resources these organizations and inform these organization of what's out there because we're all in this together. There are no organizations that have come to the table and said no, I won't do that or help the people I'm serving in a particular way.

Alfreda Tillman Bester: People can be taken care of through the Dept. of Children and Family services and what we're calling supplemental nutrition assistance now could be called the Nutrition Assistance Program and we give people enough money to feed their families...just a thought.

Reverend Anderson (PREACH): Can the speakers discuss the issue of infrastructure challenges around healthy eating and food preparation? For instance those who are exposed to dirty water but this is what they have available to cook with or lead tainted old pots and pans etc.

Chelsea Morgan: It definitely is something being addressed in our community. When Chef Traci and I are out in the community, we bring a gallon of water and a bus pan to make sure food is properly clean and as a precaution that we may not have access to clean water. This is being addressed on a larger scale by the NEA Our Town Grant and what is happening at Howell Park with all the work LSU students are doing to further outfit the Baton Roots farm, where down the line a teaching kitchen or infrastructure is in place so there is access to water. It's built in with BREC understanding the flood sheds already built...it truly is a comprehensive approach and need to have clean access. In the interim, we are ensuring safety and having those conversations. We talk a lot about food storage, but again, what do you do if you don't have access? We also try to educate people on the basic kitchen tools you can need. So understanding what people have and meeting them where they are is most important to us.

Manny Patole: Just to put it in perspective, water is the actual stuff I am pedagogically educated on. I work with Water Management on the law and policy management side specifically in slums in Eastern/Southern Africa and Southeastern Brazil

One of the quotes that comes to mind is from a Nigerian journalist who says the USA is a third world country with a Gucci belt. There's this perspective that everything here is going well but we have this lack of infrastructure across the board.

How do you reframe the problem? How do you frame it as an economic incentive vs. a social cost? When you're looking at water infrastructure it's the idea of clean jobs, clean tech. We're looking at this for our kids and everyone

else. It really differs from state to state, and east and west of the Mississippi.

There's an economic multiplier involved in that every \$1 invested in water infrastructure provides \$8 of economic return, especially the impact for children and women. Invest in water!

Reverend Anderson: One of my concerns is always the most impacted people - if I live somewhere where our water is dirty, everything I'm preparing comes with that issue. If I am in a lead based environment or have a lot of things that are literally picked up out of garbage cans... that's one of my concerns. But also the fact that food is such a foundational tool to get people into a place where they can get access to other services. We have a lot of low and no wealth children on multiple medications. When you're on medications, nutrition is an important piece of that pie. It's important to use those food banks not just for putting food in a box...We have a way to benchmark what people need, to use sort of a no wrong door policy where we're actually engaging all of our partners and their work - if a child is going to school are we asking about food insecurity, medication issues and then partnering with all the resources? Are we working with our Medicaid providers to do the same thing? Are we working with our faith based communities to frame them...even as simple as putting a poster in the bathroom with a 1-800 number?

In this particular community we're moving to a more digitized resource system in a community where we have lots of seniors who are not computer literate and they are one of the high groups of food insecurity...We have people who don't speak the language most of the materials are produced in. We have lots and lots of people who are either non banked at all, under banked or predatory banked. I just wanted to put that out there because I think one of the solutions is that we can find out what people really need holistically and then put those things together by empowering partners to know what's available to them.

Jan Moller, LA Budget Project:

Korey covered a lot of what we're working on, particularly the EBT bill that luckily seems to be moving along quite easily. It's really a data sharing bill that makes it easier to get benefits to people so they don't have to go and apply, they can automatically issue the benefits

We have three more weeks at the Capital. The budget is in pretty good shape this year so not looking at a whole lot of budget cuts. The big question is there's a lot of stimulus dollars and lots of questions about how to spend it in the best possible way

Want to make sure it goes to the communities most affected by COVID19 and help them not just once

Katie Pritchett:

If you're interested in being a part of the coalition, our next general membership meeting will be Thursday June 3rd at 2 PM. Our topic is Child Hunger and Summer Feeding. We'll have a panel of experts discussing that followed by breakouts to discuss that topic.

Email katiep@cauw.org for the calendar invite

Visit the FIC Work Doc to add organizations that could help.

Week 58 (5/21/21)

EBR Food Insecurity Coalition (FIC) Updates

MEETING NOTES:

Tasha Clark-Amar, Executive Director, Council on Aging

- Council est. May 13, 1973 (48 years old)
- Created in Congress by the 1965 Older American Act
- Specifies a couple of objectives: afford certain traditional American concepts of inherent dignity for individuals to assist our older people to secure equal opportunity, adequate income at retirement, best possible physical and mental health, afford and maintain suitable housing with reference to special needs available at cost, comprehensive array of community based services, opportunity for employment without discrimination,

ONEROUGE COALITIONS

efficient community services and social service assistant

- Team EBRCOA has 141 employees, 23 locations, 25 programs many of which are federally funded and state matched, lots of grant funds
- 5 Pillars:
- One: Access to healthy, nutritious meals. Everyone knows we do Meals on Wheels but it's more than meals - created by nutritionists, Chef Celeste is our chef. As of last year, even during COVID, we provided 1.8 million meals across the parish in 23 locations and to our homebound seniors. We're charged with reducing hunger for seniors, attacking food insecurity and malnutrition among seniors.
- Two: Breaking of social isolation. According to the National Institute on Aging, social isolation and loneliness pose higher health risks to older folks such as physical and mental conditions, high blood pressure, heart disease, anxiety, depression, cognitive decline, and is a driver for Alzheimers. We gather our seniors and do activities that promote cognitive strength - we sew, knit, do tai chi and yoga, have Senior Prom, crawfish boils, Bingo
- Three: Access to decent, affordable housing. There's 86,000+ seniors in EBRP. Of those, 42,000 seniors in this parish live on social security alone, which averages about \$1300. Over half of our seniors live at 50% below the poverty line, which means their monthly social security check averages between \$5-650 leaving less than \$300 a month they can use for housing. A lot of our seniors live in deplorable conditions. We own one apartment complex called Dumas House, a 64 unit apartment. Just started construction on a \$22 million project called Lotus Village. It will be the first senior village concept in Louisiana. 116 one bedroom age-in-place units with 56 buildings. Will have the first ever geriatric healthcare facility within the village. Will address everything they need from medical, dental, physical therapy, behavioral therapy, drug addiction

therapy, any issue a senior may have, they can go to the clinic. They will have all the amenities they need...a smart home where you come in independent and leave in glory. We are planning a similar property in Baker.

- Four: Access to senior transportation. 600,000 seniors stop driving every year. When you're stuck in your home, you're isolated. We started a free bus system with 11 buses called Lotus Drives. Pick seniors up and take them where they need to go. And we take them on activities...the senior playground (the casino with \$20 each!) after the museum of course!
- Five: Disaster agency for seniors. Have a seat at the Governor's Office Homeland and Emergency Preparedness. We have a list of high risk seniors on oxygen, coordinate activities relative to their safety in any disaster, get sandbags, help evacuate, etc.
- We have an onsite food pantry, open air market/grocery store/farmers market/deli...Opened the first ever intergenerational center where the youth and seniors come together. We were just awarded with a new program from IBM, Volunteers with Public Schools, and Tara and Capitol High called the CITECH Program where the seniors and youth teach each other. This summer they will meet three times a week and do activities where each young person has a senior mentor.

Priscilla D. Allen PhD, LMSW, Professor in Aging and Geriatrics, LSU

- Representing the LSU School of Social Work, been a faculty member for 20 years after coming from Connecticut
- Started as a Meals on Wheels coordinator then moved to a nursing home as a designee with 120 residents. Served as a social worker then opened a nursing home before realizing I wanted to do more to advocate for residents rights
- I'm talking about the intersect of ageism and the fatality

ONEROUGE COALITIONS

- of COVID deaths in nursing homes
- 0.06% of the population resides in nursing homes. In terms of large data, it's a very small part of the population. But upwards of 40% of COVID deaths occurred in nursing homes
- The data are showing not just the reality that COVID was so deadly for our nursing home residents but that it exposed a problem already there
- Nursing homes are rated on a scale of 1-5 stars - the health departments come in for inspections. No surprise, the most at risk nursing homes had the highest number of people of color, lower staff ratios, higher turnover of staff...social isolation is one of the most predictive features of studies of quality of life, mortality rates
- Ageism was really unearthed because nursing homes already at risk had the highest rates of death. In LA we have 277 nursing homes. LA was not in the top 5 in the nation (broken down by number of deaths per 100,000) but we were something like seventh. There were states with very high reported COVID deaths in nursing homes, some 50%
- There's a dashboard in LA and reporting rates were very irregular...the data say that the residents who died of COVID died because of staff bringing COVID to the facilities, without PPE and proper hygiene and infection control
- We worked nationwide and when they could show up the calls were ghastly...they were waiting to move people out, there were refrigerated trucks outside the nursing homes...so we must do something continually to provide more advocacy for our nursing home residents, more knowledge of what goes on, and focusing on those with highest risk

Craig Kaberline, Executive Director, Capital Area Agency on Aging

- Been with the CAAA for the last year, been dealing with

aging issues for about 16 years

- Also worked in residential with people with developmental disabilities and dealt with mental health in schools
- We cover Older Americans Act basic programs as well as employment programs across 13 parishes
- COVID brought a lot of challenges across our program
- We have resources and information to hook seniors up with programs around the area
- Health and wellness programs have also been a challenge during the pandemic but it's key to keep our seniors outdoors, healthy, and socially involved
- Talking about social isolation and transportation, it's a big part - giving up a vehicle is one of those last pieces of independence
- It plays in to the other big issues of our senior population such as access to food, healthcare, other community resources

Raymond Jetson, MetroMorphosis

- Please recognize how the things we heard from Tasha, Priscilla, and Craig were interrelated with every other area we've talked about. None of these issues exist in isolation, which is why this collaborative effort is so important.
- The other thing I'd like to emphasize is the connection and the deeply entrenched impact of poverty on seniors. We often think of poverty, its consequences and impact on families and children but we must see the impact on seniors.
- One of the special things about this work is that we ultimately find our community. It's not about the specific issue, but it is people concerned about making this community better.
- Tasha lifted up the notion of intergenerational activities. I would suggest that that is a critical driver in all of our work. Those who are aging in our community do not exist separate and apart from younger folks. There is value in connecting those generations.

- Finally, a critical element of this work is rooting this in data - what we feel and see is important but if we are going to make a difference it has to be grounded in data.

Week 59 (6/04/21)

'Resident-Led Community Development' Public Housing + Community Health - Part III

MEETING NOTES:

Jazzika Matthews, Director of Operations, Safe Hopeful Healthy

- Violence is one of the largest issues we are dealing with
- Safe, Hopeful, Healthy strives to address violence specifically through a framework of community based public safety programming
- One of our flagship projects is the Baton Rouge Community Street Team - folks from the community utilizing their relationships as credible messengers to interrupt violence
- Hired nine individuals within 70802 and 70805 who will serve in two roles: High Risk Interventionists and Community Navigators
- Interventionists are like first responders - they are on the ground right away utilizing relationships they already have and are building as HRI, offer support to families
- Community Navigators are supports to the families of our high risk mentees, come in and offer services and infiltrate those high risk individuals' families to create an ecosystem of support
- School based intervention social workers are being placed within the schools of Istrouma, Glen Oaks, Scotlandville, Capitol High, and McKinnley
- We are charging them with working outside the four walls of the schools in partnership with Our Lady of the Lake Health Care Centers and Schools
- Must be folks from the community who know the area, the families
- Also starting the Public Safety Round Table - bringing everyone together in one room who have an interest in

public safety. Experts along with community members who can really talk about what's going on and get answers from both sides

- Resident Leaders is our final flagship

Marlee Pittman, Mid City Redevelopment Alliance

- Wanted to talk about the strategy around training residents and how that connects to housing
- Brief history of housing: early 20th century American cities saw housing next to factories and shops, dense tenements with immigrants living in close proximity. The plague of the early 20th century changed people's perspectives, that this was a bad way to live as plague spread among people living close together. The movement to spread people out was born out of that. All of the federal subsidizing after WWII led to the suburbs being born. Federal government owned public housing prior to this - apartment complexes with both white and black families, middle class, well kept up, didn't have the present stigma. Abandoned those out of the belief they were unsafe - that is, white families moved out to the suburbs and spread out. It was actually illegal to integrate federal housing. There was a compromise made at the US Congress - no integration if you want federal dollars
- All that to say, it is not an accident how Baton Rouge is - it was federal policy
- Policy made without residents at the table giving input - our belief is that you will never have equity without those residents being a part of those conversations and decisions
- Courtney Scott, Geno and I brainstormed what we can do to change the face of development in our city...that's where resident-led development came out
- How do we get resources to them, empower residents to lead that change
- That's where Safe, Hopeful Neighborhoods came in
- Give residents the connections to power to help them

ONEROUGE COALITIONS

achieve their goals

Geno McLaughlin, Build Baton Rouge

- About the Resident Leader Academy:
- Serves EBR residents in low to moderate income neighborhoods expressing an interest in becoming more involved in the community
- Resident-led is what we were thinking about in trying to design this program
- Oftentimes things take a top-down approach but we wanted take a grassroots approach, to look at who has power, who has the opportunity to affect change - it should be the residents that live there
- Targeted five specific neighborhoods to empower those residents to make positive developments in their own neighborhoods
- Educate on best practices and how to utilize city parish resources and improve quality of life for the community
- Seven sessions starting Saturday June 5 - July 31
- Skills Covered: Leadership, Community Organizing, Building Coalitions, Marketing and Communication, Project Planning and Evaluation, Managing Project Budget & Grant Writing
- Panel topics: City-Parish and You!, Community Development, Blight, and Housing, Community Organizing for Your Neighborhood, The History of Community Revitalization and the Color of Law, Neighborhood Strategies for Crime, Community Stabilization and Creative Placemaking
- The goal is for these residents to be able to organize together, start Civic Associations, and have the resources to fund these organizations, to plug in to areas beyond housing like violence prevention, race and equity, healthcare, whatever it is in their neighborhoods

Manny Patole, Co-City Baton Rouge

- Work with Professor Clayton Gillette, Sheila Foster, Krystle Okafor, and Demetris Causer

- We're trying to build on the concept of navigational capacity of residents along with community economic development
- Our idea is a community land bank - hybrid of a community land trust and a land bank
- Land banks are government-entities that have something called disposition problem, able to acquire properties but not put them into activity for public use
- Land trusts have acquisition problems, meaning they have difficulty acquiring land
- What happens after they return to private ownership is typically out of land bank's purview
- Affordability is left to the whim of the marketplace, upkeep is left to the new owners and occupancy is dependent on the owners' ability to make mortgage payments
- We're looking at building one of these new community land banks to meet community needs
- Krystle's research goes a bit more into the bylaws and governance, board structure, decision making processes
- Demetris Causer (Build Baton Rouge)
- Research and gather internal documents from community land trusts and land banks throughout the nation, which included contacting COTs and speaking to executive presidents to understand how they function, how they've grown, how they've dealt with issues, etc. Those include the Maggie Walker Community Land Trust in Richmond, VA, Fruit Belt Community Land Trust in Buffalo, NY, and the Guadalupe Development Corporation in Austin, TX
- Gather Articles of Incorporation, by laws, Memorandum of Understanding
- Define state compliance requirements, research Louisiana law specifically, understanding and outlining requirements for creating a nonprofit entity which is what this entity will become to pass that off to Manny and the team

Week 60 (6/11/21)

At-Risk Youth Pathways & Services

MEETING NOTES:

Roxson Welch (Executive Director, FYSC)

- Family Youth Service Center has so many partners on site and across the city growing on a regular basis:
- TRUCE, DARE, BRPD Missing Persons, Truancy partnership, TASC, EBR Crimes Victim Assistance, Capitol Area Family Justice Center, Southeast Louisiana Legal Service, IRIS Domestic Violence Center, Baton Rouge Advocacy Center, Project Impact, AKCCL, Empower 225, Solutions for Families, EBRPSS Drug Task Force, LA Organization for Refugees and Immigrants, FYB
- Justice Center deals with all areas of domestic violence including counseling for children
- If you talk to a kid and ask them who is it they don't want to disappoint and find out who it is, you can work with that child - there's somebody they're looking up to
- If there's no one - you know there's a serious problem
- In Baton Rouge we have a large number of children impacted through violent crime
- Project Impact is hands-on intensive assistance with families and children through social workers. They get referred by schools, law enforcement, neighbors, etc. If they are interested, the whole world wraps around them at that point. Provides critical one-on-one tutoring, community outreach officers do welfare checks, give the children and families whatever they need - beds, anything they need to stay stable.

Tekoah B. Boatner HS-BCP (Executive Director, Youth Oasis)

- Been around since 1998, then known as the BR Alliance for Transitional Living now Youth Oasis
- Joined in 2017 with the goal of focusing on our mission and impact on the city

- As of now full spectrum youth services agency
- Serve ages 16+, "transition aging" - aging through different phases, primarily exiting foster care or stepping down from secure care with the Office of Juvenile Justice
- This year we expanded services to the 18-24 population to provide extra support
- Majority of our population has had instability, trauma... need lots of time to build that village
- Consistency breeds trust - lacking consistency leads to lack of trust
- Most of our kids come through the school system, the best place for intervention
- Our main priority is to give kids as many chances to fail and not be labeled as outcasts because of that failure - what happened before they came to us has no bearing on how we treat them. Our people here are very skilled in Trauma Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) and other positive youth development frameworks
- Everyone else has decided who these kids are and we want the kids to decide who they are, to give them the time and help to do that
- 18-24 services consist of emergency shelter, transitional housing, drop in center, rapid rehousing, parenting and trafficking in the fall
- My biggest ask to the BR community is to look through the cracks - look for the kids who are not A students, not "Exceeding despite..." - that's a well of potential, of citizens we're ignoring. The kids we ignore sit like a dormant virus and pop up based on triggers - our goal is to diminish those triggers. Look for those kids and understand that all adult services are youth services. There's a difference between offering services to kids underage and offering specifically tailored services to youth. You are dealing with a developing brain, which is a privileged position to be in and should be handled with care. Most of the ills we are working to address start with family dynamics and healthy relationships.

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- If the children are not okay, Baton Rouge is not okay.

Aishala Burgess (Executive Director, TRUCE)

- Help people ages 14-24 that may be involved in groups or gangs in our city, may be on probation or parole, or may have dropped out of school and are interested in finding a way back to a successful life
- We have two full time social workers who work directly with each client
- Make sure they receive any referrals for mental health and substance abuse treatment, make sure there's an educational plan, Uber them to and from any medical appointments to remove the transportation barrier, pay for anything the child may need (TWIC cards, books, drivers license, OSHA certifications, so on)
- Serve not only the child but the entire family
- Pre-COVID we were in neighborhoods plagued by violence every month - went directly to the community and asked how we could help instead of assuming what the residents may need, instead of waiting for them to come to us
- "Beat the Heat" was our weekly summer program where we would break up hot spots of violence where they popped up
- "Hoop Fest" closed out the summer, which will be back as soon as we can safely bring it back. Law enforcement served as referees and coaches for kids without coaches which was another opportunity letting kids see them in a different light
- The non profit board members consist of government, business owners, faith based in the community
- The community picked our name, our kids picked our colors (charcoal grey and lime green)
- Our goal is to reach the kids who are violent kids, those likely to kill or be killed
- Receive referrals from the court system, schools, neighborhoods, parents reaching out for intervention

- Also go to the Department of Corrections to see who's returning to Baton Rouge and what we can do to keep them from returning to prison
- Goal is to keep our kids safe, free, and alive
- We have call ins and we offer them services and a way out, we beg them to put down their guns
- The kids hear from law enforcement, mothers that have lost their kids
- Everything we offer is free - we just want them to leave that life alone
- If we hear of any feuds we have Custom Notifications where we go to the home, school to prevent shootings - we plead with them to let law enforcement handle this for you
- Try to go through as many shootings with law enforcement as we can to see if there's a way we can intervene
- Tara High was one of our schools where we did One Lunch Wednesday - a voluntary mentoring series with kids mostly on the verge of dropping out, in the criminal justice system - 7 of the 15 graduated. We provided speakers, asked them what their needs and interests were. For instance, took them to see the Saints play in Dallas a few years ago
- They receive a lot of love and hope from us
- The crime rate is high right now - we would love as we get ready to kick off the summer and fall for our community members to get involved. If you want to get involved with Custom Notifications, reach out. We are on pace to be on our worst year as it relates to homicide and non-fatal shootings. Our kids need us more than ever. This is a time for collaboration so we can save our kids. If you're a business owner, open your doors and give these kids a second chance with gainful employment, the opportunity to do better.

Roxson Welch: Baton Rouge as a whole is amazing. When I ask for something for the kids and families, I get it. But what we have to understand is every single act and moment we

have is a chance to change the day of a person. Kindness matters. People forget how to be kind to children. If I could change one thing it would be for people to treat children - and each other - with kindness. We all have struggles and kids have struggles we can't even imagine. The struggles I had so many years ago, we didn't have the same kinds of things...now the problems are so much bigger than just smoking cigarettes. Every chance you get to create a relationship with a child just by being kind matters.

Tekoah Boatner: I was going to talk about some of the other things we do as an agency because part of our way of working with kids is to focus on our staff. It's my mission to make sure that everybody here is paid a living wage including my direct care workers. You're asking people - many of our employees are former foster youth - to sit with someone in a vulnerable state and not have their own needs at the top of their mind. I want to echo what Roxson said and talk about the kids again, reminding everyone that over time as we become adults we forget a lot. We forget that fear, hurt, and anger all manifest as different behaviors. We learn to treat people based on their behavior and not our shared humanity. Our kids get the brunt of that. Keep that top of mind that what you're seeing is hurt people, hurt children. We need to have more safe spaces so that we can wrap that hurt in security and comfort and community so they feel confident and trust that they can rejoin the community. If there is nothing in the community for them, there's no reason to participate in it. Every interaction is an opportunity to change someone's perspective of their environment.

Week 61 (6/18/21)

'People with Disabilities'

Economic & Workforce Development, Pt IV

MEETING NOTES:

Lindi Rubin Spalatin (Director of Development, McMains Children's Developmental Center)

- Born and raised in BR
- The center was started 67 years ago by a group of parents and physicians who were not finding the resources they need specifically for kids with cerebral palsy
- Current location is on College Drive
- Renamed in honor of Dr. Frank McMains, a pediatric orthopedic who volunteered his services for over thirty years
- Now service kids regardless of diagnosis and financial situation
- Offer a wide range of therapies
- I'm not a specialist or an expert but it's a core value of mine, with my background in arts, that the only way to find equity and justice is through access to services, to art, to the world around us and that starts for me with kids
- Example: We have a child who struggles with balance. When you struggle with balance, you can't carry your lunch plate in the cafeteria. If you can work with a therapist for something simple like this, that type of skill can carry on and help in places like job placement. It sounds small but these are small skills that we take for granted when it comes to us naturally.
- We're a Medicaid state - clinical diagnoses are covered but educational therapy is not because it isn't considered a medical diagnosis although most people who require educational therapy are there because of a diagnosis. If you have a child who has been diagnosed with autism that requires educational therapy that is not covered by Medicaid.
- One of the main things we do is offer scholarships. Regardless of financial situation, every child deserves to have the therapy services they need to become as independent as possible
- The difference between tutoring and educational therapy: tutoring deals with academics, educational therapy helps with the tools needed to succeed in an academic or work environment

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- If you aren't given tools or the knowledge to deal with say sensory deficits, you might be looked upon as a "bad student" when in reality, you're not a bad student. You have needs that aren't being addressed by the school. The goal is to give kids, parents, and educators those tools to recognize that "bad students" often don't have the resources they need in order to succeed. Because of the services cliff that happens between high school and college, a lot of the kids who need that help don't receive services after high school
- We offer a program called Capable Play - works with kids with significant and multiple physical disabilities, the kids who may be nonverbal, don't have full function of their body, the kids who are ignored in the classroom. This program uses adaptive technology to open the world around them. For instance, taking a water pick that you use for your teeth could be used for a child to water plants or do the dishes with a button - maybe they can only move their head, move their feet but now they have access to that technology... The technology is not expensive or complicated.
- We have a full time social worker and a full time patient care coordinator
- If McMains can't help you, we'll find you the services you need
- We have a growing wait list
- We are one of the only clinics in Baton Rouge that does not cap Medicaid, we work with you no matter what
- Work in 14 parishes and counting so chances are we probably work in your community

Dr. Girard Melancon (Vice Chancellor, BRCC, Program for Successful Employment)

- Back six years ago there was a paper that came out from BRAF dealing with individuals on the spectrum or with disabilities showing significant need for the young adult, 18-28 year olds, transitioning into independent living
- Led to the creation of PSE: Program for Successful

Employment

- Takes a lot of love and care - we don't take more than 12 people per cohort
- Currently recruiting for Spring 22, Fall 21 is filled
- 18-28 years of age, read above a fourth grade level, can they express themselves verbally or written, can commit to a two year model, have some kind of family/mentor support
- First semester go through all day 8 AM - 4 PM schedule
- Second semester go on an externship - things from working in print shops, radio studios, etc.
- Have two job developers who visit the students and their supervisors through the whole two years they're with us (one of whom is thanks to the Wilson Foundation)
- Housed at the Acadian/Winbourne campus
- Work closely with vocational rehab to make the program affordable: if you're a family of 4 making less than \$135k/year we can get you a scholarship, really help to make the program affordable
- Otherwise self paid
- Looking to make sure the young adult is ready for independent living and not being pushed by family
- Inclusive program - we do independent work but also try to include them with activities here at BRCC like student government, anything they're interested in
- Can go into workforce or credit/audit bearing classes after their two years

* Michael Thomas (Executive Director, My Possibilities) could not be present due to an executive emergency, but please find below information on their offered programming. Mr. Thomas will join us for Part II of the conversation along with members from LATAN.

My Possibilities is a 501(c)(3) for cause organization serving adults with disabilities such as Down Syndrome, Autism, Asperger's, Prader-Willi, head injuries and more. My Possibilities is the first full-day, full-year educational program of its kind in Collin County.

My Possibilities is designed to provide people with cognitive disabilities the chance to continue their education. We provide vocational skills, socialization opportunities, trade skills, and independent living skills to HIPsters that give them the chance to live the life they deserve. <https://mypossibilities.org/about/>

Week 62 (6/25/21)

Mental Health in the Capital Region

MEETING NOTES:

Esther Sacshe (Executive Director, Grief Recovery Center)

- Feeling, like many of us, overwhelmed by the amount of work needed in the community right now. After COVID hit, the amount of work has been overwhelming. Went from doing 20, 25 sessions a week to trying to squeeze in 40 and working Saturdays and Sundays because there is such a demand at this time.
- One of the challenges is that we don't have the same resources - a lot of our clients who once had insurance no longer do due to job changes or loss
- Many of you know what we do, but we are a non profit agency, been around since 1991, provide counseling services, individual counseling, support groups, crisis intervention, educational programs in the community
- Looking at some of the challenges we have faced or seen our clients facing, we start with our children. We always have a lot of demands for services for children - not a lot of service providers for Medicaid children, especially the younger children. We have a lot of children on Medicaid who have experienced tremendous trauma - lots of instances of violence and horrible things our families have gone through. There are not a lot of child therapists who provide that type of service.
- Try to provide a model that brings in the parents as well...that takes even more in demand of staff but it's so much more successful
- Working with the children one of the things that's crucial for them is a lot have not been developing social skills as we traditionally would. The change in their normal activities mean their needs aren't met as far as developing socially
- With the adolescent population, more and more are coping with pretty severe depression. I've never had so many I've actually referred for hospitalization, and I do not like referring for hospitalization if I can work with my kids in house but there have been so many in critical situations that we've done more referrals than ever.
- We started an unofficial IOP (Intensive Outpatient Program) program because I could not get services for my teens on Medicaid
- We initiated a support group for teens with suicidal ideations so they have safe place once a week to come and share their concerns
- The demand has been so dramatic that we've actually had to hire someone to be our adolescent program coordinator because it was just overwhelming
- A lot of our adolescents are coping with academic issues - many who were good students have been struggling and it has affected their self image of always doing well. COVID and the changes in schools has really changed their attitudes and images of themselves
- A lot of adults are thinking they're going to return to a normal world post-COVID...there is no normal world, even now. Everything has and will change.
- A lot of adults coping with career changes, going back to work, retiring, adjustment issues related to that
- More of a demand than ever for services to go out into the community because of the amount of violence.
- What we need more than anything from the coalition, first referrals - please let people know what we have available. We are constantly adding services.
- Second, any ability to coordinate information and services together...We just started a new support group for people coping with general mental health issues. We would love to have partners in this coalition to help get people into the program. There are not a lot

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of groups that allow someone with general mental health conditions the ability to have a place to talk and share, so partnering is an important thing

- Anyone who is aware of available resources to help provide programs and funding for the huge increase in clients who no longer have funding...it's a big hit financially. We don't turn anyone down because of inability to pay.
- Also going to be partnering more and more in terms of providing educational programs and resources in the community. We really want to provide education at the top so it can filter down through the community.

Melissa Silva (Executive Director, Mental Health Association for Greater Baton Rouge)

- Executive Director for 23 years, have seen how mental health is one of the issues with our legislature for example that can really be cut at any time so that it's sometimes difficult to provide these services
- One of the things we do is continually advocate and educate community members, legislators, and funders in regards to what mental health means to this community
- Serve anywhere from 1000-1200 people a year
- 50% of our dollars come from fundraising as well as state dollars
- None of the services we provide are at a fee for our clients. We pride ourselves in providing services to populations that do not always have Medicaid or private insurance
- Target Health is one of our peer run programs. Mental health is about peer support. We believe in people helping us provide services with lived experiences that folks can connect with.
- Also one of the things that MHA prides itself in during the pandemic is supporting the first responder. During the pandemic many of our therapists and counselors were deep, deep in the ditches providing services to those folks most in crisis. We just recently became the

Louisiana Affiliate of Mental Health of America. We got this report that they did during COVID - they took the results of about 726,000 depression screenings, and it was amazing to see what happened. 38% of those people that responded reported self harm thoughts within a period for at least two weeks at a time. Of that 38% the top age groups reporting was 11-17 18-24 was second.

- We started The Fisher Project, a suicide prevention program staffed by peer case managers and clinical psychologists. It's case management for a period of six months at a minimum. Folks that have either chronic suicidal thoughts or have an unsuccessful completion of suicide can enroll in this free program to work with case managers to ensure safety planning which is a big big issue with these folks. We've seen that depression and anxiety are the two biggest increases in diagnosis in COVID. We've also seen a connection in domestic violence and suicide. So part of our Fisher Project works with those folks with domestic violence histories.
- It's been a great, great program supported through our partnership with OBH (Office of Behavioral Health). Working to extend to go past the end of this coming fiscal year. It's been a terrific program with over 100 referrals. It's a voluntary program.
- The key component is keeping those people safe and out of the hospital. We do not want people in a more restrictive level of care.
- We've also seen a lot of direct responses to how poverty relates to mental health. There is a direct correlation. Research and studies have said people with mental health issues often have lower incomes, lower economic status, unemployment...sometimes that is all wrapped up in compounding the effects of mental health. They've recently started calling this the Triple Disaster - Mental Health, COVID, Economics working together

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- Is this a social issue and how does this relate to poverty? They are all wrapped together in this sense.
- OBH is about to roll out this new crisis plan in 2022. In terms of that they'll be rolling out mobile crisis teams, urgent care centers, short term stabilization, all to keep clients out of the hospital in a home-base setting
- Louisiana ranks 45th in mental health care. We've got to do a better job.
- We can help that by continuing to partner, by continuing to educate our legislature because policy makes change and we need change systematically.
- We talk about mental health, we talk about the stigma, and we make it okay to talk about it. The stigma is a big issue in how people do not access mental health care.
- Just wanted to say that 41% of Louisianians during COVID reported increased depression and anxiety in an October report.
- Big issues. Take care of you. There's no health without mental health.

Chelsea Borrano (Executive Director, You Aren't Alone Project)

- The project is about changing the conversation on mental health
- Started in 2019 with a live art event that allowed local artists to interpret their mental health journeys through both visual and performance art
- The goal of the non profit is to continue providing spaces where people can connect with each other so that no one feels alone in what they've been going through
- We are launching the second live art event October 15th at Gallery 14
- Putting out calls for artists, looking for supports and partners for the project
- A lot of the mental health providers, we would love for you to come out and provide resources so that we can provide a platform for these artists and continue changing these conversations around mental health making it easier for people to talk about it however

they're comfortable doing it

- Art is a really powerful way to do that
- We're giving people the space to do that, to let people see there's others out there, there's hope, there's help
- Want to bring in an audience too that maybe doesn't understand what some people have gone through, to give them a space to see that through art allowing them to go back to the people they care about who are dealing with these things with empathy and understanding and resources to share
- I'm also in graduate school for mental health counseling with a background in marketing so I'm figuring out how to merge the two to continue erasing that stigma
- We are building this active and engaged audience that can then have these larger conversations through their own platforms providing educational programs so that they can do trainings and then give back to the community by making mental health more accessible
- It's about mental health equity, how do we make sure people who need it the most get what they need?
- You can support by spreading the word about what we do. If you have opportunities for partnerships, we want to collaborate within the community, to support people like MHA, like the Grief Recovery Center
- We plan to provide more in addition to the live art event such as first aid training, providing people with the resources to support their communities and their own networks.
- As far as the event goes, we're looking to get artists, get resources, if you have people within your network interested in being an advocate or receiving these trainings send them our way

Melissa Silva: I want to give a couple facts that are eye-opening to where we are in our community. Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death: 50 million Americans complete suicide every year. Right now it's the second leading cause in our youth. Part of what MHA is doing is trying to address those needs. Traditionally we haven't worked much with

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youth and teens out we are developing strategies to include youth, teens, and college age students in the services we provide. It's very important to get to these younger kids. We're seeing more and more mental health problems. In EBRP alone in 2020 we had 50 suicides. We have 700-750 suicides every year in Louisiana. More women attempt, but more men are successful and that's because of our firearms. Firearms are the most deadly method of suicide in our state. The goal for us is to start to identify the biggest need in our communities in terms of mental health support. Collaboration and partnerships are important to best serve those in our communities with mental health, addiction and behavioral health struggles. Talking to our legislature, they were able to give OBH these additional dollars to roll out this crisis plan. There will be dollars available for mobile teams, staff for crisis centers. It's very important. We have the Bridge Center that our tax dollars pay for working hard to take the extra work off our local ERs because it's so easy for a person to vocalize being in crisis and send them to an ER. A big thing this committee can work on is keeping folks well and out of the hospitals. We want to really start bringing down that immediate need where hospitalization is needed. That's the great work of our peer professional staff. Support those folks, keep those folks employed, they're your best providers in that lived experience. In terms of MHA we love volunteers, we have policy summits and we are responsible for Behavioral Health Day which will happen next May 2022. We host an awesome Policy Summit that actually gives you guys information on how you can affect policy and therefore affect services for mental health, addiction, and behavioral health needs in our community.

Coalition Questions and Discussion

Pat LeDuff (CADAV): Great presentation, well needed. A lot of the ills and the needs, the things causing stress...just doing a better job in continuing to build on having resources available when individuals come to you. Are there current intentional efforts that can immediately satisfy some of

that stress?

Melissa Silva: We work directly as a referral and resource organization as well so if we can't handle the issues that someone presents, we have partners and other collaborators we work with directly. One of the key services we have is our Day Program for Chronically Mentally Ill where folks are in our programs all day long where they are provided therapies and interventions to keep them well and healthy. We work closely with all the community mental health centers so that we can get intervention as soon as it is needed. One of the things we see in this community is many people not having financial means to get therapy. We pride ourselves in providing all our services free to the client. Not all the clients who attend our programs have any types of financial means even in regards to Medicaid. We are very able to handle a crisis or quickly get our partners to intervene.

Jen Tewell (Grief Recovery Center): I am a counselor with Grief Recovery Center and therapist with Red Stick Mental Health. We're hosting a documentary screening on the Wisdom of Trauma with Dr. Gabor Mate, free and open to the community. The support groups we have are free and hybrid with several locations across the Greater Baton Rouge Area and virtually. I put a link in the chat that has a list of our groups - we have groups for teens that are closed and screened, our general grief groups for adults are open and you can drop in, no commitment, just show up. Just want to highlight we've been doing a lot of critical incident debriefing so if somebody passes away on site or there's violence, working with the people directly involved and the staff as a whole as needed and grief education. How do we reach the most marginalized populations in Louisiana with access, stigma, intersecting identities, socio economic issues...how do we scale this? For all the food access stuff, that's how mental health needs to be. Personally, my work with the LGBTQIA+ communities is really important. And there is a program in Portland, OR called CAHOOTS, a community crisis response model not necessarily in place of the police going out but maybe

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with them to de-escalate the situation and get appropriate resources instead of sending people off to jail. A lot of the time it's a trauma issue.

Raymond Jetson (Metromorphosis): We did host a series of webinars around the framing Mental Health Matters. The audience was largely African American. There are few takeaways I would offer for the group. First and foremost, as the professionals recognize, I believe this is going to be the long term remnant of COVID and its impact on communities. Especially as people are now being forced to resume life like everything is well, as if they have not endured all kinds of things from personal loss to death in families that they never had the opportunity to fully grieve over to children and family issues...this will be the long term impact, especially as we are so driven with returning to some new sense of normalcy. The second thing I'll say is that there is a great risk in understanding trauma as a strictly individual experience. For so many people, what we understand to be trauma is based upon a persistent set of conditions faced in their communities just navigating life. Unless and until we understand the persistent trauma that is on communities and begin to understand how we dismantle those, we will keep picking the baby out of the river instead of figuring out why they were thrown in in the first place. The last two things I'll say that emerged from our series of webinars is that one, people were thrilled in embracing a safe space where they could come and share with others. For our last two webinars, probably the most embraced part was when we allowed people to go into breakout rooms with a prompt and no facilitator just to allow them to talk and share with one another. Lastly, people expressed a concern that it was challenging for them to find professionals of color who understood their plight and experiences in an experiential way rather than a clinical framework.

Edy Addison (CAUW): 211 is available for information and referrals. We also have live crisis counselors available 24/7 by phone, chat, and text. What we're seeing is an increase

in callers this year. We're one month shy of having a full year of data that includes COVID but just in looking at the 11 months of data it's really interesting because about a third of the callers are frequent or repeat callers, majority 55-64 years old, of our 2500 callers almost 700 identified as having disabilities, most callers are white and male or don't identify. We're also seeing not as many direct suicide prevention calls, though we do have them, and the majority are emotional support. We're seeing a big uptick in veteran callers, not always the easiest population to reach. About 25% of our callers have identified as veterans. For them to even identify themselves is a huge win. There's a lot that goes into somebody reaching out for help. When you talk about clients that come in your door...if you don't have a crisis counselor available, if you have a cell phone or a phone in your lobby, have a space that person can sit down, there are trained professionals available that can work with that client. We get walk-ins and we often sit down and call 211 with them so they can identify the best resources available. To shift gears to UniteUs and UniteLouisiana, we did a lot of outreach and sit on a coordinating council for UnitesUs and are hoping to see more and more providers on the platform. I'm unaware how often it's used in the mental health space for referrals.

Melissa Silva: Edy was talking about our 911 system being so overloaded with crisis calls. There's a 988 coalition in the works which will be a national suicide prevention hotline. The state is working to create funding for that. We're working on marketing, the transition plan to get that information out. That will be effective June or July of 2022.

Jennifer Dobies (LCCR): I work with kids who are court involved through the Public Defender's Office and so many of them come to me with trauma and clinically significant PTSD but are unwilling or unable to engage in treatment. Many of them come to me with a history of treatment from MHRs, wonderful resources but not always the best way to treat complex trauma in kids. If y'all have ideas for how to get kids access to counseling that is appropriate when

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there are barriers such as lack of transportation, lack of commitment to therapy or distrust of systems I would love to hear that.

Chelsea Borruano: To answer Pam Wall's question for best practices for locating mental health providers, that is something that the Healthy BR Mayor's Initiative is working towards, bringing in mental health providers into the primary care system and making sure it's a seamless process of working together.

Jan Ross (HAWF): When it comes to mental health, MHA and Grief Recovery are organizations we fund and are very competent in the services they provide especially in their ability to make adjustments based on community needs. When it comes to youth, Grief Recovery does serve the youth. A lot of the organizations that are more youth residential programs are what we're seeing and they'll provide their level of mental health services within their programs. Lois, are there programs you've seen that are direct services for youth you can think of?

Lois Smyth (BRAf): When there is a need, Melissa Silva is my go to person.

Jan Ross: I see that Edy put in Family Services and Catholic Charities...Liz Smith put THRIVE Academy. They've become qualified to get Medicaid reimbursement for mental health services and that has provided great benefit for the students. There are some organizations helping schools create that model. If it can happen at the schools, let's see if we can get it done...One other thing we've collaborated with Pennington and BRAf to fund is the Center for Mind Body and Medicine Trainings. Today they're on the second day of four day training. If you're interested, please contact me. This is a four day training and they will have additional trainings this year all about learning to use the techniques for you as a person and to use those techniques to help anyone you come across, be it professionally or in working with other individuals whether it be youth or adults. Anything to help that person work through their moment of stress, of anxiety. Using different techniques.

Lois Smyth: One other organization is the BR Children's Advocacy Center if there's abuse involved. They also provide therapy to children and youth.

Pam Wall: One of my issues...three years ago I went to two days of training where they brought in a lot of people from Massachusetts. In Massachusetts, for three or four years, every public school is a trauma informed school. We have wonderful resources here, and you hear about more and more all the time. I keep saying housing, transportation, and child care are some of the biggest barriers. I don't know what the solutions are but hopefully people are thinking about that. I hear a lot about counseling, and I know that ICARE for instance is a rush in if there's something traumatic that happens in a school or neighborhood. But...the CDC and OJJDP have researched and posted for public information these research based trauma programs for schools and for children evaluated and published by race, age, income... One thing I would like to see...the new superintendent has said he wants to have trauma resources. A lot of providers are doing social emotional learning of high quality that does impact children who are traumatized in a positive way but the concept of a counselor and a child or young adult experiencing stress...we seem to have a lot of resources. The issue seems to be connecting people who need them with the resources that are there. Another thing I would really like to see is entire schools where everyone is on the same page and practicing the same strategies. If we could only start with alternative schools, because when a five year old goes ballistic and gets in a fight then gets kicked out of school... this isn't fixing or helping anything. But if every adult and every child at the school understood how they could be of help...there are these group sessions. Kids who keep getting in trouble are in a group and develop a camaraderie about these things that have happened to you. It's not your fault. But you can't let this shape the rest of your life. So we're going to sit here, work together, and talk through it. The kids in the school that are in these groups can call on each other for support. Intense at first but as time goes on and the kids

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and teachers learn different strategies to diffuse situations, they don't have to meet as often anymore.

Casey Phillips: First, imagine if detention in schools wasn't with a PE coach and was actually with a mental health specialist...Number two, my favorite director has the David Lynch Foundation that spreads transcendental meditation to schools around the world. The idea that we could stop repeating this ineffective negative and positive reinforcement disciplinary approach with young people and actually try to elevate their mind, body and souls to dive deep within for answers is something we don't teach young people yet we wonder why they continue to repeat the pattern of bad behavior.

Reverend Anderson (PREACH): One of my real concerns here, just like we know Florida Blvd is the dividing line racially here, I feel like one of the things we're missing is that racially we get treated differently. We have a lot of families in crisis who are also low-literacy, low or no wealth communities...They don't get these sources. They get police. They get terror and terrorizing. When there's a shooting in their communities, they don't get a sea of counselors. They get police coming in and treating them like they are co-conspirators. We have to acknowledge that there is trauma based on some of our very racialized policies and implementations and if we don't address them they are going to be a big problem.

Dean Andrews (SU): When you send the police, they don't have the right training. They escalate a mental issue into a prison issue, a criminal issue. So we've got to find a way to de-escalate this whole process.

Alfreda Tillman Bester (Dept. of Children and Family Services): We're doing a de brief of the legislative session and as a very important part of that, we're going to be looking at redistricting. All of the issues we are talking about today boil down to public policy and we have to rethink the people we are electing. We keep electing the same horrible people thinking we are going to get a different answer at the LA legislature and we're not. We have to get involved in the

voting process. I know I'm speaking to the choir here. But we have to encourage others in our community to be a part. The hardest thing is to get someone in trauma, who is housing insecure, food insecure, who really needs to be involved but is just treading water trying to get through life... We have to get people in office who care about people. We talk about it to the legislature, we tell them over and over and we bring our babies and we show them how they are suffering...they don't care. So we have to start electing people who do. This austerity crap we're doing does not work. We don't resource any one thing enough to do it well. We have to start thinking about putting people in place who care.

Pat LeDuff: I posted in the chat about the \$5 million we have for housing, rental, and mortgage assistance. Some of this mental stuff...we're about to do the cut off and that's just going to add to the stress of life so there are funds available. Just want to push that resources out, that they can apply and get up to \$15,000 per person for two or three months to hopefully at least keep them in the place they're in.

Melissa Silva: There's so much we discussed, so many more topics that can be linked to the services in our communities... what we need to do is identify where individuals are currently in need and target those communities. A lot of what we heard today is the difference between our African American communities and getting those folks the help they need in those communities. So identifying and providing support to the resources that already exist and growing from that, to create a systematic policy change to prevent future mental health concerns.

Chelsea Borruano: I will just echo that. This was my first meeting with this group, and it's overwhelming but encouraging. Being siloed from a group like this, you wonder what your impact can be, but it's bringing all these resources together and addressing these issues. Commit to doing that.

Week 63 (7/02/21)

English Proficiency and Cultural Differences

MEETING NOTES:

Jahi Mackey (The 821 Project)

- Baton Rouge native, founder of The 821
- The 821 Project is very rooted in my upbringing - 821 was actually the house number of my birth place in North Baton Rouge
- I felt a sense of empowerment from my family and my small circle to take advantage of all that the world offered - its culture, history, traditions, to see the world as my oyster, as a place where I could make a difference
- Very significant because for a lot of people who grow up in working class and working poor communities, you're often made to feel like your world is smaller and there's not much you can do with your life because you're dealing with levels of trauma and marginalization
- To be told as a young Black child that the world was mine to explore and make a difference in was very pivotal in me growing up and becoming an adult
- Created the 821 Project about 5 years ago in an effort to promote global citizenship and social justice education in the Baton Rouge community and later expanding to Southeast LA and the rest of the country
- Our organization works to decrease polarization in our community by way of dialogue and authentic conversations about the issues that impact us across cultures to be a part of a movement to dismantle institutional racism and other forms of systemic oppression; trying to confront a narrative that LA is not a diverse, globally connected place in which people care about the community by expanding our virtual interview series interviewing activists that focuses on everything from people of different countries (38 people so far from nine countries); and looking to promote global citizenship and social justice and foster community collaboration through fairs and community events
- Hosted 50+ events virtually and in-person, presented at

3 national conferences, won 2 awards from the community and been on federal grants as well

- It's important for us to acknowledge that this is the Fourth of July weekend and in many different ways, people have different opinions about the Fourth, how and if they celebrate...I think it's important to acknowledge as we celebrate the establishment of this country by way of the Declaration of Independence, whether you think of this country as founded on stolen land or a country that was founded on land that was previously occupied, it's important for us to acknowledge that this land was not ours when we established it. It was in many ways built through the exclusion and oppression of Native people and Black people
- Highlighting that to acknowledge that we have a deep history of exclusion, discrimination, and oppression. We have to confront that history while envisioning a future for our country that is inclusive.
- There is a lot of tension and backlash against any form of education that forces us to acknowledge our past. But as the saying goes, those who do not know their history are doomed to repeat it. And in many ways, if we don't know where we've been, we don't know where we're going.
- To connect back to the Nine Drivers of Poverty, one of them being Cultural Differences and English Proficiency, it's important to also note poverty is intercultural which means our solutions need to be intercultural. One of the ways to eradicate poverty as it relates to addressing cultural differences and English proficiency is to acknowledge the diversity of our community, that we have these problematic elements of our history but can work past that by acknowledging that we are globally connected, by working to address systemic racism and injustice, and working to empower people in our community who are helping us to expand the reach of the work
- The guest speakers we have today all in their own unique way work to foster global citizenship, multicultural education, community service, global service, and entrepreneurship

rooted in authenticity both culturally and personally

**Bea Gyimah, Founder of the America, My Oyster Association
+ Professor of English, BRCC**

- Seek to preserve the diverse histories, recognize the various struggles, and celebrate the victories of all individuals residing in America both those born here and those who immigrate here as well
- Our very basis is established in promoting multicultural awareness and education as a means to eliminate, combat, and address racism, prejudice, and discrimination to create a more culturally inclusive America
- AMOA wanted to figure out how to honor the class of May 2020 who were now completing their education during a pandemic and weren't able to have the traditional commencement ceremony. So we decided to celebrate these graduates from all levels from Pre-K and Head Start all the way to Medical School graduates. The reason I'm going back to tell you this is because we wanted to have small salutes to them, to invest in these young people in a way that lets them know that America, that the world is their oyster and they are the magnificent pearl. They can obtain those educations to make their families' lives better as well those in their community in terms of their daily interactions. We wanted to do something even greater to show the investment we had in their diverse experiences which is why we decided to do a documentary series on the class of 2020 to let them know they have the power within themselves to make America more culturally inclusive in hopes of allowing America to one day be the country it professes to be but has yet to become. The future is within our youth. We wanted to capture their unique sources and experiences in a two part series which will debut in Fall 2021. First part deals with pursuing their education during the pandemic and the stress, tension and trauma for those who contracted the virus, those who may have lost loved one, family or

friends, or felt the emotional and economic burden. The second part deals with race in America and how the students were actively able to pursue their educations while witnessing police brutality and racial injustice as well as gender discrimination and how they are wanting America within this next decade to be the America they were taught that it could become.

- Leads to our current program which happens to be Building A Better America Today with AMOA. Partnered with the EBRP Library System to promote their professional development resources in their digital library that specialize in diversity, equity and inclusion. Three part process to first acknowledge the graduates for graduating during a global pandemic and the racial injustice and public outcry against it, celebrating these grads by documenting their stories, and then introducing them in a greater way to the fundamentals of diversity, equity and inclusion. From May 1 - June 17 we hosted these professional development class where they received certificates with participation at different levels - middle school all the way up to young professionals.
- I'm proud to say that on Juneteenth we had our AMOA graduating DEI class of 2021 where we were able to have 21 graduates celebrated and honored for their efforts.
- One of the mandatory courses was on Empathy. We believe at the AMOA that empathy is the source for it all - a sense of understanding, appreciation, being compassionate to each other, and having a listening ear to what we all face. We all face things that are unique but that doesn't mean that our voices shouldn't be heard and acknowledged.
- As you all know, you have the power to either build someone's world up or take someone's world down. You can uplift and you can destroy based on your interactions with others.
- Through empathy, we can come together to create something greater, the ability to let all people know

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they have value and matter. That all people and cultures have greatly impact American life and culture for the better. Each and every one of us has to continue that legacy to contribute meaningful work to eliminate some of the social and racial disparities and injustices that plague this country.

- With our DEI program, we are still accepting students who want to be a part of it until August 1st. Started the first half at the Goodwood Library. Continuing with the goal of increasing enrollment and graduates. Let me know if you know someone who wants to be an advocate and AMOA champion.
- We want individuals to recognize that cultural differences do exist but our differences are often not nearly as great as our similarities, and we are all in pursuit of life, liberty, and justice for us all.
- There are different societal systems, barriers, and obstacles that often get in the way of that. We want individuals to be aware that as these different systems were created, these different systems can also be dismantled so that we can a truer representation of America and it's different ideologies, beliefs, and values

Pama Barber, Edward Jones Financial Advisor + Past President of the Capital City Rotary Club

- We are a "small but mighty club" of about twenty members
- The Rotary International is a global organization that has its areas of service, which our local chapter works to promote: peace, fighting disease, providing clean water, saving mothers and children, supporting education, and growing local economies.
- We do that through global and district grants. Globally, we've partnered with other Rotary chapters in places like Haiti or the Congo to provide resources and services (for example, building desks, providing generators, providing cooking supplies, etc.)
- Each year we do at least two grants to support our local

community. Recently worked with The Safety Place, which does bicycle and car seat safety. We provide them with helmets but also work as a service project and become volunteers in those organizations. Some of our other grants include the Food Bank - again we go and support them with our hands. The model of Rotary is service above self. All of our grants include us going out, not just donating money.

- Also partnered with the Council on Aging, St. Vincent de Paul, provide backpacks and uniforms for students, Choices Program to educate teens to stay in school
- One of the big things we do every year is Global Community Day every fall, usually in October, at BREC on Highland Road. We come together partnering with local citizens from outside of the United States. We have communities from Haiti, China, South Africa, all over that come and set up booths so people here can learn about other cultures that live in Baton Rouge. Usually there are about 20-25 booths.
- This year's Global Community Day will be October 17, 2021. If you know anyone here who wants to help others learn about their country, notify us. There's space for everyone.
- Coalition Questions and Discussion

Casey Phillips (The Walls Project): Thank you both for the work you do relentlessly and with such empathy. You're not going to bring people into the future and amore equitable mindset by beating them over the head. It's going to be through kindness and opportunity to learn from one another. Bea Gyimah, the work you're doing to build young people's confidence..I think people underestimate how powerful that is, to have that genuine hope that others are in it with you. What I'm really hearing from this conversation is this globalism mentally. Does anyone have any perspectives on how the city could benefit from a more global mindset be it from education, workforce development, any of those sides?

Pat LeDuff (CADAV): I think this should be a city initiative. I believe Bea Gyimah is on the right track. The Rotary Club is on the right track. The more of this training we get, I think this will be the thing that will bring us together. We all want the same thing. How do we push this through the school system? It should really be a part of the curriculum across the city in any way we can make that happen.

Reginald Brown (Gardere Initiative): Just wanted to make sure you saw my comment to connect with LORI. They did the World Refugee Day on the 27th. I think that would be a great opportunity there.

Manny Patole (Co-City): Thank you, Jahi for a great session. As an outsider from New York, it's interesting these stories I've heard about exclusion, whether it's from Uber drivers or small business owners. It's not always a conversation that's black and white. In conversations I've had, yes, you may be inviting folks but it's how you're inviting that may prohibit them from participating. It's not just about ethnicity, you're also looking at religious backgrounds, also looking at gender and sexual orientation which I've seen as a huge stumbling block. How are those communities' voices being heard? Just keep in mind that you can have all the DEI you want but if no one feels like they belong, it's useless.

Morgan Udoh (The Walls Project): Will there be another DEI cohort for the adults this year?

Bea Gyimah: Yes, we had a wonderful response from the community in terms of the graduates that completed the program that ended on Juneteenth. The library was very receptive and is ready to do this again in 2022. We want to challenge you all to see if you want your children, siblings, friends, interns, or any recent graduates to take part so that we can increase our enrollment and graduation rate. Young people are tired of online classes. You have to let people know that they're welcome, that this is a welcoming community that cultivates them.

Monica Guient: I'm from the Ag Center, so I'm representing 4-H right now. Bea I'd like to hear more about how to have these conversations in spaces where people want to do

better but don't know how. And because of the online component, is it restricted to people who live in EBR or is it open to people in other areas of the city?

Bea Gyimah: All they need is a library card to participate. If they have a library card for a different parish, they can still participate. They just have to fill out a form at their library and bring it to an EBRP library. Just have to have an active library card with no fines over \$35.

Reverend Anderson (PREACH): The East Baton Rouge Parish Prison Reform Coalition partners with the Baton Rouge Immigrants Rights Coalition and one of their biggest issue is the fact that the Sheriff has signed a 287G agreement which we believe has a chilling effect particularly on the safety of immigrants, legal and undocumented. Do any of the presenters want to speak to this issue?

Jahi Mackey: In regards to the question about the number of people in our parish that are foreign born, according to the most recent census 5.7% of the parish population is foreign born. Of course that may not be completely accurate because the census doesn't count all folks including undocumented folks. In regards to other questions I'm seeing in the chat regarding different actions, the EBRP Sheriff's agreements with ICE, actions for undocumented people...the organizations on this call focus more on the education and service side, so most of our work does include understanding those social issues. For The 821 Project, a lot of our work involves elevating stories from immigrants and refugees, both documented and undocumented. The 821 is supporting the humanization of undocumented people and actions calling out the xenophobia in our legislature and community.

Pama Barber: One of the biggest ways you can help is to get the word out about our Global Community Day. We are a small group of about 20. A lot of the members in our group are not technically savvy. So help us get the word out. One of the things we do with our club is having presentations - having other community members come speak at our weekly meetings, we would be interested in

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having other organizations come speak to us. Every year we do a grant so if there's an opportunity to partner, that would be awesome.

Jahi Mackey: I wanted to answer a lot of the questions in the chat...I want to respond to all of them at once in bulk, and if anyone wants to reach out individually please do so. I'm seeing a lot of questions in regards to addressing persuasion with regards to talking about social justice issues because there is a big push against that particularly from some politically advantageous groups who are critical of things like Critical Race Theory. I want to point out that Critical Race Theory is not taught in K-12 schools or even undergrad. It's a unique focus in the law profession. You're seeing a lot of disinformation right now. With regards to institutional racism and social justice, the best way to support these organizations is to show up for them, to donate and amplify their work. And to focus on the people who don't have a voice. We just need enough people for a tipping mass. Simply having backlash to the backlash is the best way to support that. I am not advocating for violence or anything illegal. What I'm advocating for in terms of backlash is showing up for these organizations. Also, there a lot of questions addressing the rise of anti-Asian violence and the marginalization of other community groups. As far as The 821 Project goes, we are expanding our interview series and platform to people from marginalized backgrounds including ethnicity, sexuality, and gender identity. We believe amplification is very important as it relates to confronting this backlash because oftentimes when people don't have a voice and feel voiceless, they forget their own power.

John Lewis: The key thing about it is we still have institutions that need their funding and get it by having prisoners in there, right? We still have the issue of them trying to keep those institutions afloat. When they're cleared and released, they're just dumped outside these facilities. What people have been doing, local churches and organizations are stepping in, providing transportation, so they can get different things

they need especially if they have been separated from their families or speak English as a second language.

Reverend Anderson: One of the things I often think gets confusing is the dual narrative around immigrants, the idea that they're so successful they don't need any help and the other piece which is not understanding the culture or legacy that brought people into this country. One of the things for instance that we do with Court Watch, a non-English speaker will end up in jail longer because there aren't interpreters available. Oftentimes when we are talking about inclusion, we're not looking at what invitations are we offering? How multi-lingual are our public safety officials? How much of our community is reflective in our education communities around not demonizing or criminalizing cultural legacies that they simply do not understand? Mass incarceration is the largest industry in Louisiana and specifically in EBRP. It's an economic decision that literally puts bodies into ICE facilities. When we talk about not having public safety officials who are not multilingual, who don't have any training at all in cultural nuance...what cultures do we have here? Is there something I need to know about those cultures? We have different nuances in every community and yet we're asking people to come here, especially employers, to bring a global workforce in to a community that either spends a huge amount of time demonizing, criminalizing, and saying you're fine for these few occasional days where you can wear your native dress but in terms of the actual running of the community, how engaged are we in building that? On the criminal justice side, it's reflective of what our values are. Whatever we do to the least of them, that's what everyone else is getting.

Bea Gyimah: With the AMOA, we invite you to subscribe to our YouTube channel where we have some of the footage of our dynamic speakers who congratulated our DEI grads on June 19th. One of the comments in the chat that really fascinated me was the issue of double consciousness. I'm a professor at BRCC and one of the prevalent themes of my courses is the issue of double consciousness and

how Dr. WEB Dubois first coined this phrase, that you have an understanding of who you are as an individual but then an understanding how others seek to define you and what definitions you'll allow to dictate your existence. In 2013 and 2015 published in a nationally recognized journal and some of the students had been incarcerated previously. They talked about their upbringing, how certain things were conducive to their choices and that by later realizing there was a different way by recognizing they had talent and potential. The same energy they had used to partake in criminal activities could be used in an even greater way to contribute to society. It's key we understand how people process and view themselves and even more so the rhetoric they have heard throughout their life and how that will condition them to become those definitions, particularly if those are disparaging. We all have the power to look at individuals as individuals and not to attach preconceived notions to them as we would want others to do that to us which then creates a better America. If not, it creates the same cycles that have plagued this country.

Pama Barber: I would like to invite you and anyone interested in finding out more about the Rotary to contact me...If you're interested in what we do, if you want to learn more about Global Community Day, it's a lot of fun. It's just one piece of what we can do to help increase the knowledge of our community and the people in it. The more that each of us is doing a little bit, the more we can continue to have an impact. Things are not the way they were 100 years ago. Let's hope the change we're doing can happen a little bit quicker. And I think we can with this group.

Jahi Mackey: Before we transition to our community announcements, I want to take the time to synthesize everything that has been shared because one of the Drivers of Poverty is Cultural Differences and English Proficiency. Baton Rouge is becoming more globally connected. In order for us to rise to the occasion of eradicating poverty and imitational racism, we have to work to become more globally connected and socially conscious. Poverty is isolating

and disconnecting. We need to support organizations that bring our community together, to put a spotlight on the different cultures often underrepresented and ignored in our communities. Everything is connected because systemic exclusion and oppression is multilayered which means our approaches have to be multilayered. In order for us to address poverty and any form of systemic oppression, we have to be willing to empower, educate, and enlighten. We have to make sure America is fully living up to the values on paper. Our country was established as a democracy, even though it is extremely fragile and imperfect. To fully strength our democracy, we have to acknowledge all the people in it and their experiences, and pay special attention to the fact that in this country there are many groups of people who have not had their stories told or expressed in the greater narrative of America.

Reverend Anderson: I know that when I first came here, it was very apparent that Florida Blvd is the dividing line racially here. Is that also true as it relates to immigrant populations? Are there dividing lines, places where they are welcome and places where they are not?

Bea Gyimah: There's definitely dividing lines. When I was an undergraduate taking a course in African American literature, and I mentioned how one end of LSU is very affluent and one is more impoverished. There's key markers in Baton Rouge where there's a racial divide and as a result there are economic disparities where you see growth, affluence, and development in one area but not too far from that area you see a decline in interest to develop certain areas so they can also have that same level of growth and success and opportunities and resources. Part of the reason why we named it the AMOA is the old adage "the world is your oyster". Despite the disparities and inequalities and challenges in America, it's still the land of opportunity. There are certain strategic limitations placed on individuals to make it even that much harder for them to achieve what they seek to do. We also named it after the great Zora Neale Hurston in her essay "How it Feels to be Colored Me" where she

addresses that she does not have an inferiority complex despite the limitations placed on her, that she is too busy sharpening her oyster knife. One of my African American male students said, "Professor Bea, no matter what I must always remember to sharpen my oyster knife." And I said... yes. But even if you don't have the proper utensils to pry open that oyster, you can pry it open with your bare hands. So for those areas in Baton Rouge that have those apparent disparities, it is up to us to let individuals know they're just as deserving of the pearl.

Jahi Mackey: That dividing line is a manifestation of intentional systemic racism and the racial narrative we talk about in this country, the idea that there are more immigrant communities visibly popping up...that's not a part of the narrative that we talk about as a city government or parish. The issue is to talk about how this dividing line is no longer a binary black and white but is also a line of whites and non-whites. These dividing lines are ugly scars of Jim Crow. My hope is that the government as an entity can find ways to integrate more services and initiatives that fully embrace the growing globalization of our community whether it's by providing more multilingual services, by collaborating with immigrant communities be it hurricane evacuations, poverty programs, mentorship programs...Also embrace your discomfort. We have to fully embrace that we live a global existence and seeing how these things are connecting to the existing racial narrative that often disenfranchises Black people, the global/local binary is a false binary. Everything is intercultural, everything is intersectional.

Liz Smith: One of the things I always heard when I was at the Chamber of Congress is that companies are looking for our city to demonstrate its inclusiveness...we were in favor twice of moving a Fairness Ordinance and were unsuccessful doing that. Demonstrating that inclusiveness is really important. Companies are always trying to bring people here or persuade them to say here. The more inclusive your city is, the easier it is for your companies to do that. We went up to Cincinnati

back in 2017 and one of the things that struck me there was they had an Immigrant Welcome Center put together by their municipal government. They had a Visitor Center as well but the Immigrant Welcome Center where they could provide information, connect you to people in the city who would welcome you and help you acclimate. They also had community conversation around something funny we do in Baton Rouge where people always ask you what high school you went to and make assumptions about you. In Cincinnati they do the same thing. They were having a conversation about...maybe we should stop that. Maybe we should come up with something else that doesn't try to fit you into a box.

Gwen Hamilton (NSBR): In Week 63, I think we are called to remember that education does not just occur within the walls of a school building. We are constant learners. Our children should be constant learners, not just reading writing and arithmetic. But all of the services each of you provides and the experiences and opportunities you provide beyond those walls make us all richer every day.

Reginald Brown: The Gardere Initiative summer program is going very well. In previous years, we had adults come in to teach K-5 kids with teenagers through MYWE and Big Buddy as assistants. This year, no adults - the high school students are the teachers, they have to plan their lessons, complete their lessons, and then they teach MTW two topics for two hours and on Thursday we assess the kids. The group with the most right answers gets \$100... and they split that amount. There are challenges, obviously, because they are teenagers. But they're learning. We're planting some seeds. In August we'll have our 'Back to School' event August 7 at 9:00. We're doing it all year long.

Jan Ross (HAWF): The Out of School Provider Coalition which has now become named the Baton Rouge Area Youth Network (BRAYN) came together in January to address youth engagement and quality of services, recruiting students, and focusing on the field altogether to build organizational

capacity. It built great momentum in reaching out and working with the superintendent this spring and working towards coming up with a collaborative means of providing resources this summer. There's always somebody who says, I'm in this or that field but I didn't know about BRAYN. If you work with youth in any type of way, please reach out and we'll get you connected.

Dr. Alfreda Tillman Bester: I want to announce that after a COVID-hiatus Perspective is returning to the air this coming Tuesday. If you are not local or are traveling, you can listen to us at www.wtqt.org. This Tuesday from 5:30-6:30 PM. We are not a legal show per se, we are an interactive community interest program. The things you do are the things we cover. Call in, join the conversation, we're trying to integrate more technology into the show.

Reverend Anderson: EBRP is going to have a new Chief Public Defender for the first time in 30 years. Attorney Lisa Parker out of St. John the Baptist will be starting next week. The coalition did a wonderful community forum where the candidates got to talk about their vision for the parish. You can go to the EBRPRC Facebook page if you want to learn more. I want to make an invitation specifically to organizations working with any type of services for those who involved with the jails or prisons. Transportation is a huge problem here. We're looking for a way to host an event once a month to get people resources they need. Everybody from people who help get drivers licenses restored, people who help with expungements, youth development, anybody in that area.

Week 64 (7/09/21)

Data & Evaluation

MEETING NOTES:

Edy Addison, Director of Community Impact & Initiatives, Capital Area United Way

- I look at data and think how it tells a story
- At United Way we have access to a lot of data - that's

always the challenge, figuring out how to use the data to tell the story of our partners and have it resonate with donors

- The two data sets I want to talk about today are 211 and our community conversation data
- We just recently wrapped the analysis of the community conversation data. Every few years United Way goes out into each of our 10 parishes and attempts to have in person conversations with the people our partners are serving (as well as donors and board members)
- This year was a challenge with having to do those conversations virtually - the data is a little different, but it's more straightforward. People come forward with what they need now, what they're struggling with now.
- When asked what people thought was working well in their communities, more than 50% of people said safe recreation spaces. Shoutout to BREC!
- Following that was access to healthcare, K-12 ed, and access to healthy foods and transportation. Which was kind of shocking because those are things that always come forward as the biggest struggles. But what we're learning is that the way it's working for people who have access to money and these resources, it is working well. But it's not working well for those we intend to serve.
- When we think about what families need to reach their full potential, the biggest thing that came across was jobs, job training, and specifically higher minimum wage followed by transportation. After that was affordable housing, education, and healthcare.
- Top three struggles families/households face: affordable housing, access to jobs and job training, and transportation
- The top solutions: Job training, higher wages, and job placement followed by housing and transportation
- We also talk a lot about the ALICE Report - that's something we want potential grantees to use when applying for funding from us. We ask families what monthly costs are difficult for your family to afford

and we listed those out according to the Household Survival Budget with ALICE. Coming in at #1 was housing followed by healthcare, childcare and food, technology, and transportation

- First time seeing technology in this report - people have to have access to technology in order to do their jobs, continue education, virtual trainings that lead to higher paying salary
- Monthly costs families struggle to meet: utilities, education, child cost
- Who do you trust to take action on these issues: 63% said community led groups following by United Way and faith based groups
- We've been working to do more outreach to organizations and faith based groups who already have trust in their communities
- We want to plant the programs and projects that work into faith based communities
- All that to say, we have access to a lot of data and I encourage you to reach out to us if you want copies of this report or analyze our 211 data in a way that's meaningful to your organization
- When organizations apply to us for funding, the ALICE report, 211 data, and community conversation data is what we use to drive our funding priorities. If you can tie into that, you've set the stage for yourself.

Jason Hughes, Community Engagement Manager, Unite Us

- In social services, there are a lot of great resources but the key challenge is getting clients connected to resources and organizations successfully
- Unite Us is a virtual network composed of community based organizations, healthcare providers, 501-c's, non profits, human service providers, non profit service providers and all of these organizations are connected and able to interact with each by making and receiving referrals to each other while documenting the client's

progress until they get connected to that service they're looking for

- We've created that closed loop referral system. If a client is in need of a service an organization doesn't provide we don't want to just give them some information and send them on their way and hope for the best. That's proven to be ineffective. We tend to lose sight of clients once they leave our door and unless we do a follow up, we don't know if that client has gotten connected, gotten additional resources if needed, we don't know what happened
- Through Unite Us you can track your clients journey from start to finish through case notes and documentation. We ultimately want achieve two things: get clients connected to services easier with fewer barriers and strengthen the relationships organizations have with each other
- Our backstory: founded in 2013 by our two founders, two veterans transitioning out of the armed forces in need of resources. They quickly found out how difficult it was to get connected to the resources they needed. So they turned to technology. Unite Us is the technology behind powering those organizations that need to work together. Today Unite Us is live in 45 states or so, with the goal of being in all 50 states next year. The Louisiana network is called Unite Louisiana with roughly 325 providers throughout the state.
- One of the features I like is that we try to keep clients from falling through the cracks. We have quite a few different methods.
- Let's say an organization receives a referral but doesn't act on it in a certain amount of time. Someone from our organization is monitoring that and will reach out to an organization that has the referral to see if it's someone they can assist with, will monitor client journeys, a few of the techniques we take on our end to keep things going smoothly
- Automatically tracks data which shines a light on which

areas in our community have the most needs, what the most sought after resources are, which areas may need improvement all broken down by demographics and such

- Talking about grant writing, what some of our providers have done is exporting data for clients which they attach to grant proposals to justify funding increases
- It is free, all you have to do is fill out a partner form with some information about your organization, what you do, eligibility criteria, etc.

Coalition Questions and Discussion

Casey Phillips (The Walls Project): What organizations are using the platform well, and what are some steps grassroots organizations are doing to be good partners in this network?

Jason Hughes: United Way is one of our big users as well as Louisiana 211. They serve as our coordination center. If there's any organizations in need of additional training, we have several materials on our site including webinars covering the ins and outs of the platform done every Tuesday at 1 PM as well as feature-specific webinars on Thursdays.

Juliette Frazier (Unite Us): What we find with the grassroots is that when they are sending referrals out and meeting with these residents they find they only have capacity to serve what they have the funding for. When they utilize us, what they get back in return is realizing they can help their community further without expending more of their energy. Organizations have the ability to do more of the work but on the back end can see the data piece, what is actually happening in our community. If we can't connect residents to the services they want, why is that? As a whole of Baton Rouge, as a whole of New Orleans, do we lack say housing funds? We know we do but now we have the data for the whole beyond one organization.

Tyler Litt (NSBR): Ann Zanders mentioned something about BRCC and the resources that have been made

available through their partnership with Unite Us. I would love to hear what other initiatives within education - K-12, Early Childhood - are in the works

Jason Hughes: We actually onboarded Vermillion Parishes Early Childhood network as well as the Early Childhood network in Lafayette. They're using that to connect clients with daycares, to connect parents with resources. We don't limit it to just higher education. We are still building out Baton Rouge and I'd love to connect with anyone who has more insight on that so we can get that process rolling.

Dean Andrews (SU): My question was in terms of the data set, some of these results you're finding. In a lot of cases, low income individuals and others may not be fully represented in the data sets. Do you oversample in those areas to make sure you have a representative sample?

Edy Addison: For our 211 data set, that's only composed of those who call, text, or chat the call center. We're not reaching out for that data, it's coming to us. For our community conversation data, yes, that is something we attempt to get more of those low income individuals or underrepresented communities. This year was even more of a struggle because of the technology. We offered to do smaller in person conversations that were COVID-safe but no one took us up on it understandably. This year, the percentage representing low income individuals was less than in years past so for that reason we're overlaying it with 211 and census data that's recently come out so that it's not a smaller sample size of higher income individuals. We recognize that it is definitely a fault in our data.

Dean Andrews: I'm sort of surprised at some of these because, everyone wants higher minimum wage but you have to have job training to justify higher minimum wage in terms of your productivity. Looks like we may have to do more job training. A lot of opportunities are available in the Baton Rouge area in terms of job training but maybe individuals aren't aware of it.

Casey Phillips: It sounds like housing is at the top of the list

as far as the 211 and UniteUs data. The coalition has several members who work in that space. How do we connect the need of the people to the resources out there and close that opportunity gap?

Edy Addison: I notice that the calls we get...of course there are people in a homeless situation looking for a safe place to stay that night or longer term and I would say there's actually more access to resources that can take care of them in that situation, but where we have nowhere to refer to is a family that has income, that can afford a place to live, but can't afford to live in Baton Rouge, in their community in which their children go to school. It's because there's not enough middle affordable housing. That ALICE population...they're not homeless, they have income, they're working, but there's no affordable housing. They'll call 211 and ask us to refer them to a low income apartment complex. We don't typically refer to for profit places of business or organizations unless it's a specialized care like a hospital system or there's no other resource available for that service. We can't just say go down to this apartment complex because we can't vet that. Having a group that can vet those resources would be awesome, if we could securely refer people to safe housing that is affordable and may not be nonprofit is where I personally see the biggest gap.

Alfredo Cruz (Foundation for Louisiana): The issue really is about the availability of housing for that population reflected in the ALICE population. We know from a report published by the NLIHC that in Louisiana we have less than 50% of housing available for that population. What's happened during COVID is that the housing developed for people 50% AMI or below was taken up by those who lost income who were probably at 80% AMI. So if you were doing well before COVID and lost a job or income...many families have to see lower priced housing, and that contributed to a depletion of the number of units available for people really struggling the most. It's hard to refer families when there isn't any affordable housing available. That's where I think we as a

collective need to work together in advocating for more production of housing. That's where the Housing First Alliance is working, using the data we also got from 211 and other data to make the case for more production of affordable housing.

David Summers (Partners Southeast): I wish I had an easy answer I could lay down. What we're working on in partnership with the HA is just that. We're working hard to solve the problem of that 50-80% AMI income and mixed income community, the best way to get those units delivered to Baton Rouge. Both at the state level and the various programs EBRPHA has, we're submitting applications with deadlines right now for new projects that will fit some of that. Right now I'd say the work we're doing as a developer isn't going to respond to those immediate needs. On the EBRPHA side, the challenge is that the wait lists are extremely long and as soon as we have openings, stuff is filled pretty much immediately. It's a well known problem. There is another side to this which is being able to have the infrastructure in Baton Rouge to get money out the door that is already there, even if that means rehabbing substandard housing that with relatively low investment could be improved and meet some of these needs.

Pat LeDuff (CADAV): This rental assistance is not going well and I want to know...I saw in the chat about calling in to 211 but the link...you say folk can't read, you say we don't have computers but then we come up with \$5 million that's a process that's online only through a link that requires attachments that have to be scanned in to start the process. We're working with folk having issues with that. Have you considered that? Are you dealing with people trying to get rental assistance?

Alfredo Cruz: I know the city has subcontracted different community based organizations (Mid City Redevelopment Alliance, UREC, Habitat for Humanity, YWCA-BR, and Project 70805) to do case management. The intention is that folks struggling with their application can have somebody on the

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phone, guide them, even submit the applications in person if necessary. It's not perfect yet. They're still working through a lot of kinks because they implemented this very quickly but the intention is to solve for what Pat has described as the technology barrier, particularly trying to scan documents.

Edy Addison: If someone calls 211 and doesn't have access to the technology they need for a resource we can refer them to a local library system but the 211 specialist can't sit there and help them upload the documents. There's specific circumstances where a state agency may contract with 211 to help people complete forms like after the winter storm and the floods in May. It's something we have to be contracted to provide that service.

Allison Tohme (BREADA): This is all new to me, but it's very intriguing. With our food access and incentive programs we offer through Red Stick Farmers Market like SNAP Match and our Little Sprouts program where kids can come get a couple dollars to spend at the market, these food access programs are tremendous resources but they're not well known and utilized to their full extent. One thing we've been talking about internally is doing a better job reaching the right population and increasing usage. I am very excited to hear about the 211 network to help get the word out.

Darlene Rowland (BREADA): The good news is, although the SNAP programs are relatively unknown, they are increasing. We had our highest month ever in June. We're excited to see more people utilizing it. Word of mouth is growing which also means a need for securing more funding for the match. They also have the dual benefit for us of increasing that access for fresh, healthy food and the core of our mission which is putting money in the pockets of small family farmers.

Reverend Anderson (PREACH): I'm going to start with some good news. One of the benefits of this call is finding new networks I can use. I got a call this weekend from someone who needed something very simple - his bike got stolen and it's how he gets to work. My wonderful neighbor Dustin accepted my ridiculously early phone call in the morning and made that happen. I give that story as a point of...one of the things

these capacity building opportunities like 211, like Unite Us, provide is a place for people who don't necessarily don't know where to go with other things. I'm also struggling with the fact that the world I work in, just like Pat...these systems that are top down are not working. There are local faith based organizations on every corner not being utilized, there are groups like the Baton Rouge Immigrants Organization, VOTE, the Capital Area Reentry Coalition, Southeast Legal, that are not being utilized that specialize in some of these most at risk communities. They are not being brought in at the base level of either planning, implementation, or utilization. In a low technology community, our libraries are really one of our more fundamental resources. They have open space for people to come and learn, whether it is small organizations or recipients themselves. One of the things I and a number of people on the call are struggling with, we have people whose house was on fire way before the pandemic. The schools knew even before they were out what families needed certain services. Our libraries are one of our baseline resources for homelessness, for our low literacy community. I've been excited about what I've been able to do this last year with Unite Way. Kudos to Dolores Hearst and work we've done moving the tax program into communities it previously did not serve. The take away is not just having great ideals and giving them to people who can write grants. The purpose is inclusion and always asking who is not at the table and recognizing this is Baton Rouge - we have low literacy. We have a disproportionate amount of people impacted by mass incarceration. Which means by statute they are actually eliminated from a lot of programming and resources that would otherwise come to them because of income, etc. We have hidden in plain sight an immigrant population where language is a challenge. Oftentimes because the conversation doesn't include as Edy pointed out...when you have to depend on technology you're going to get a certain response. I want to see more pushback purposely going to those entities who are not

normally first of mind for people.

Rinaldi Jacobs (Scotlandville CDC): The Louisiana Housing Corporation is setting aside 10% of their funding for people who were previously incarcerated so I'm going to dig into that a little bit more. That could be a boost in terms of the housing necessary for folks. Got a lot of programs, but sometimes don't have a lot of results.

Jan Ross (HAWF): To bring us back to the importance of data, the Wilson Foundation is about to begin implementation of a strategic plan. It's taken us quite a while to put that together but it's most definitely based off all of not only what we have heard in the community but also data just as what is being discussed here that drives the services and grant writing, the decisions we make every day. We are in search of data, just as you all are, and are very reliant on it. It's very important to be able to use data to help show the need for whatever services you are requesting funding for. As we have heard all throughout these conversations, data drives decisions. On a different note, we are just beginning the announcements for 225 Gives which will be November 30th this year. The Wilson Foundation is a supporter financially and with staff and we encourage all non profits that are active on these calls to participate.

Edy Addison: We have training next week - registration opens on the 15th. If you did not participate in 225 Gives last year I encourage you to do so. It's \$75 for early bird registration and then goes up to \$100. There's a lot of value in trainings not just how to participate in 225 Gives but fundraising and marketing for your organization as a whole. Additionally we are fundraising for the Challenge Fund, and there's a huge prize pool available. We have some organizations we'll present and share who were really successful last year.

David Beach (HAWF): Our goal is having over 250 501-c3's participate this year. We raised about \$2.8 million collectively last year and we want to exceed that this year. We have a hard road ahead of us between now and November 30. There will be a two week giving window before so you can strategize with your groups. We will be working to build that

Challenge Fund as large as possible to incentivize nonprofits in our area.

Week 65 (7/16/21)

Healthy Food Access For All

MEETING NOTES:

Kelli Rogers, Geaux Get Healthy

- Now in the 3rd funded year (jointly funded by Humana Foundation/Louisiana Foundation/Blue Cross Blue Shield)
- A project of HealthyBR using a collective impact model to provide backbone support and funding for 13 organizations working to improve food security through production distribution and education around growing and eating fresh food
- Current partners: American Heart Association, Baton Roots Community Farm, Our Lady of the Lake North Clinic, Top Box Foods, Scotlandville CBC, A Kingdom Connection Changing Lives, Baton Rouge Garden Alliance, Southern Cofe, Front Yard Bikes, Perfectly Suited, Scotland Saturdays, Sweet Jones Farms, YMCA of the Capital Area ExxonMobil Branch
- The work our partners are doing is really at the forefront of addressing food insecurity
- We work to drive everyone towards a common agenda and measure the impact collectively vs individually
- GGH is focused on 7 of the highest needs zip codes: 70802, 70805, 70806, 70807, 70811, 70812, 70815
- Within those zip codes we're measuring our impact within 16 specific neighborhoods and 23 census tracts
- My job is to make sure I take the info I get from our partners and the work they're doing and being sure we're addressing those highest needs areas in our city
- All those zip codes are low income, low access, and low transportation access as defined by the USDA
- We think about the six A's of food insecurity: access, affordability, availability, awareness, appeal, autonomy
- Can I get to fresh food, can I afford it? Is it available? How does fresh food impact chronic health conditions?

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Is the food and the information we're providing culturally relevant?

- Collective impact - the broader work of the FIC to use that same model across the whole city/region.
- Five important things in collective impact:
- Common agenda: do all the people working in that space have a shared vision for changes? Are they working towards shared goals?
- Shared measurements: how are we evaluating the programs and their impact?
- Mutually reinforcing activities: GGH partners do events together, support each other in the work they do
- Continuous communication: our five core partners meet once a week to discuss progress and impact, and the nine new partners meet once a month
- Backbone support: that's where I come in! It's important to have structure in place to manage and coordinate the activities of those organizations. That's one of the most important things we've learned in the last few years doing collective impact work: it has a tendency to get unwieldy if each individual organization continues to work in a silo
- HealthyBR is a 501(c)(3) under the Mayor's Office (also called the Healthy City Initiative)
- Jared Hymowitz, Executive Director, is responsible for the vision and strategy of that organization and figuring out how that aligns with community health priorities
- Lauren Hebert helps align GGH programming with HealthyBR
- I do project management specifically related to wrangling partners, measuring outcomes, grant compliance, and partner relationships
- Some statistics through the end of March (some of which have changed pretty significantly because spring is the time some of our partners are growing and distributing more)
- Since starting this we have collectively grown over 15,000 lbs of food with over 25,000 lbs for this year

- Distributed more than 150,000 lbs of fresh food
- Asked about 4,000 community members about their lived experience with food insufficiency and insecurity and talk to stakeholders about what they think the important areas are to focus on
- Delivered 200 educational experiences
- Impacted the food security of 33,000 people in our community.

Katie Pritchett, CAUW

- The EBRFIC meets twice a month with a general membership meeting the 1st Thursday of the month and subcommittee working meetings the 3rd Thursday of the month
- The last topic we explored was a presentation from Mike Manning with the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank to learn a little more about their partnership with the food pantries and also their senior feeding programs, backpack programs, etc. Exploring other topics for August such as food prescriptions
- The working subcommittee working meetings have three subcommittees
- Great conversation between the funders group and the providers/distributors to look at how we utilize tools from funders to create specific research and information needed for collaborative grant funding opportunities. Policy is continuing to dig deep on what that looks like, what we can advocate for and educate people around as it relates to food insecurity

Jan Ross, HAWF

- I represent the funders group also known as Group A of the subcommittee
- The work we've been doing is building out the infrastructure that will be needed as Group B (producers/distributors) come up with ideas and solidify projects that we can take out to other funders, whether it be local or national, and solicit for some of those projects
- Some of the things we've been working on is creating infrastructure and tools:

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- Basic Grant Applications Document - what are some of the documents you need to attach? Is it financials, policies, approvals, and what does that look like? Some organizations do their financials on Excel - we really want organizations to work towards having some formal accounting system. To be a part of a collaborative project we really need to work to getting each of the partners to a similar level - not the same, but similar
- Application Scoring Tool - it allows an organization to see how their project fits into that opportunity. Do they have the capacity to do the work that the funding requires? Is it worth their time? Is it a really good fit or are you stretching it to fit the requirements of the funding source?
- Quad Chart - the basic visionary information on the EBRFIC; can be used kind of as a Case for Support. Allows you to go in front of the public - funders, supporters, general public - to open the door, pique their interest, and then go forward with detail
- List of Funders - local and national; whether we have a relationship with them or know they have interest in feeding insecurity
- On a monthly basis, we schedule with other donors who aren't directly connected with feeding insecurity but maybe fund a population where it's one of the challenges they face. We're interested in learning what they are seeing as the complexity of those barriers and how they are helping their grantees to address that.

Mary Bergeron, LSU Coastal Sustainability Studio/The Walls Project

- The one thing I would add is that the origin or purpose of developing these documents resides in the fact that people who do this good work do it because they want to do the work, not because they want to go chase down money. We're trying to create tools that have a broad vision but are also available to individual organizations who may not have realized they needed to come up with a Disaster Preparedness Plan, a Diversity Plan, etc. In each checklist there are guides and "to-do's". It's meant

to be a dynamic document, never a finished document. Use these as resources in your own organizations! Jan and company, the CAUW, have been really good about sharing those resources.

Korey Patty, Feeding Louisiana

- Feeding Louisiana works at a state level largely around advocacy and policy work in the anti-hunger space
- One of the things we've tried to communicate within our small group and across the FIC is that these programs that exist largely at a federal (or state) level are able to impact folks dealing with hunger and food insecurity at such a significant scale that the work on the ground being done by providers would be best maximized if we find ways to connect with our state partners. We've spent a lot of time talking about SNAP, P-EBT benefits
- Got a good update yesterday from Monica Brown from Department of Children and Family Services
- Updates to the SNAP application process - typically there's an interview that's required. The department would set that up under normal circumstances but there were some issues and barriers. Now, just as soon as somebody submits an electronic application, they're able to then call into the department's help line, go through some prompts, speak immediately with somebody who can conduct that interview and move them through the process faster
- Much of our conversation within the Policy Group (Group C) is trying to identify those barriers and communicate that across the rest of the coalition, find those champions and points of contact that we see as useful and able to impact change on those fronts
- The question was posed to Monica yesterday of what can the organizations in this space do to assist DCFS in their work to get SNAP benefits out to communities that need them? She said all of these organizations hopefully having a better understanding of what the requirements are, having and allocating time to providing information on the program...she reported

they are seeing a positive uptick in the reach of SNAP benefits. Some of that may be organic but some may be attributed to the local group as well.

- A couple other things on the horizon: Department of Revenue is going to be rolling out a federal fund allocated through the American Relief Plan budgeted by the legislature \$10 million statewide fund for not for profits working in the food education and employment space and small businesses that could use funding up to \$25,000 per entity for workforce development
- Secretary Lewis has an ambitious timeline to get that out August 1st, but it's something to keep in mind for organizations on this call to expand into a new avenue as you're understanding the needs of the people you're serving
- On the legislation front, another resolution passed by Senator Mills from the Lafayette area requires the Department of Health to host an anti-hunger summit bringing together all the state agencies that have responsibilities and programs around food insecurity and the response to hunger across our state, organizations doing the work on the ground, and other stakeholders to discuss the work, discuss the barriers, and put together some overarching goals and an approach to try to move the needle where the state has typically been 48th, 49th, 50th
- Save the date: anti-hunger summit September 29th

Casey Phillips, The Walls Project

- In Work Group B we have narrowed down our collaborative grants to ten themes that we're going to be working on over the next five years, but for now we're focusing on the top three. The next step is to use all these great tools that the Funders Circle put together and collaborate with Group C Data, Evaluation & Policy around being a part of these multi-year grants. Goal is to start submitting more grants as we move to August and September. It's been a lengthy process but we are moving forward together as a collective.

Week 66 (7/23/21)

Our Kids, Covid, and School Safety

MEETING NOTES:

Charles Lussier, The Advocate

- Covering schools in EBR for about 20 years
- Article I wrote last fall on the history of EBR schools going back to the days of integration in the late 60s/ early 70s: 50 years after desegregation order, Baton Rouge schools look nothing like what was intended
- Gives context for how we got to where we are today
- To summarize, East Baton Rouge was a growing community after WWII with a massive influx of people into the area. But as with all the south we had separate schools for Black and white children. That started to change incrementally in the 60s with a massive integration shift in September 1970, at least on paper. Just because you tell people you're going to school together doesn't mean you do. Baton Rouge High is an example - all white, quickly became majority Black, then the community turned it into a Magnet and it became mostly white again. This started the movement of families to private schools. The state actually funded segregation academies that were all white. We had a pre-existing parochial system. The fragmentation started then and has continued. We had a desegregation order in 1981, the cross town busing, further fragmentation with suburban movement, and then the charter school movement in the 90s. School accountability, schools closing...that's about the time I came in. I spent most of my early days in federal court trying to figure out what was going on. After federal control of the school district left, we saw a lot of changes. That's when those charter schools really kicked into gear. We also saw with the Jindal administration the arrival of vouchers, we've seen a major movement towards virtual schooling even before the pandemic...choice has become the thing. You go to suburban areas and you don't see choice like

you do in the city. Baton Rouge has a traditional school district but layered on top is a whole variety of choices that didn't use to exist. And now with the pandemic we have even more choices that have popped up. It's a long way from 1970 when there was one school district and not too many private schools.

- We're seeing a lot of the same shifts as other metropolitan areas.
- Everyone's trying to find good educational choices for their children, they're trying to find a workplace, something that brings the community together and uplift the community
- It's a massively more complex than it was
- You have a whole lot of independent schools, online schools, etc.

East Baton Rouge School Updates

Superintendent Narcisse, East Baton Rouge School System

- Three major areas we're going to focus on moving forward:
- All schools are our schools - it doesn't matter where you are, what type. We're trying to make sure we unify our school systems.
- Pushing hard on early childhood across the system. Pushing hard on our literacy work. Started meeting with our school leaders trying to get our folks into a mind set to understand it's important to expand our partnerships.
- Pushing into the space of Associates Degree and industry based credentials, working hard with our partners on that and making an announcement later in the year about dual enrollment
- Also put positions adding spaces in our community work, working with Out of School providers, trying to gear up in a way that we can start getting the system closer to communities, getting partners connected in the work we're doing regardless of the school
- Huge Back to School bash coming up at the Raising Cane's River Center from 10:00 - 4:00. If you are interested in being a part of that let us know! Trying to get a lot of community services and things in that space. Super excited to have sponsors like ExxonMobil and other

great sponsors

- Some of the major things I know on the mind of our community would be COVID - the Governor's actually going to say something today to help guide it but we're going to announce the full COVID rules August 3 with our Health Advisory Committee.
- Once we're clear on that I'll make sure we have specific things we're going to do - there's some pieces we're not going to change like frequent hand washing and additional cleaning. I know people really want to know what the spacing is going to look like, if kids are going to wear masks or not wear masks. We're going to talk through that.
- The Strategic Plan was approved yesterday. We have some data/test scores...we wanted to try to show the road map for the next five years. I hope everybody sees that every school that's a part of EBR - whether traditional, magnet, charter, whatever - all these kids are our kids. It's important we're pushing them to have clear performance metrics so that performance is happening in a way that families and communities can feel we are getting progress in our system
- We want our partners to see where they fit in the plan - we're using the plan as a platform around how we do everything. I've seen a lot of aspirational but not performance driven plans so we're going to make sure we're monitoring and updating what our performance is for every child, and moving towards a growth metric. It's important we have kids measure themselves and not this school vs. school. And as many of you already know, we've broken the city up into five regions and within those five regions look at how we allocate resources, support and work with partners
- We are working with Social Emotional Learning, we're going to have a Fair Assessment of the School system in that way, talk about what our next moves will be in terms of that work...we've added additional social workers across the system

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- It's going to feel a little different - we have to have a quality of standard and then we work with community and school leaders to get to that standard
- Last night also gave a Facilities Review, started working with a facilities master plan...Going to have board members go out to communities to get feedback on what we should be doing with land and be more efficient
- One ask to the group: continue to make our conversations about children, and not about other stuff. I'm excited that this group keeps that focus and that work. I've been trying to make sure I get to every space to talk to people and get engaged in our work every day. We can't do this work without all of you.
- Finally, I'm pushing to create the first Performing Arts 6-12 in the city - we want to engage the communities a little more for the next month or two, take some board members to see some around the country. We want to keep folks engaged in that process.

Chris Meyer, New Schools for Baton Rouge

- For decades, as Charles pointed out, we've seen opportunities for really the wealthy and well informed in our communities. And nobody begrudges any family for doing what they've got to do to get their kids access to the most quality education they can but the reality here in BR is that many of our students and families have been left behind
- Particularly with what we've seen over the last year with the pandemic, nationally I think a reckoning is coming. There are polls that public school enrollment may be down 15% come this fall, you've seen a rise in new school opportunities across the country that families taking advantage of
- Here in BR we've been fortunate that we've had a city that, while many have exercised by moving to the suburbs, taking advantage of private schools, enrolling in magnet schools, we're finally a city that over the last decade has begun to open up and proven quality options

- We've scoured the community and the country to find the best school options we can to help those schools grow
- This fall we're opening four new schools which are already fully enrolled - specifically BASIS in Mid City, Helix which operates the mentorships school and are starting two new middle schools to ultimately grow to high school models, really innovative aviation and legal academy, and then IDEA is opening its third campus and taking on a formerly struggling charter school that it's adopting
- Excited about these opportunities to continue and grow in partnership with the school district and the state
- Ultimately Baton Rouge will be a leader offering families that have typically not been able to either navigate those processes or don't have the ability to write a tuition check
- We want all kids, all families to have access to great schools and not be defined by where you live and how much money is in your bank account
- I'm really proud that some of the schools we've been fortunate to work with have shown the fastest growth in the state
- One thing Tyler and I wanted to highlight today is that we've been deepening our schools partnerships with families

Tyler Litt (New Schools for Baton Rouge)

- Families, Schools, and Communities Connect has expanded from a pilot that Mrs. Gwen has lead
- Started off with three schools - Basis, Emerge, and Redesign - in 2019 where we were able to support 125 families to a truncated spring session this past spring where we supported 1,000 students and their families
- Hoping to gain new partnerships with our schools and the community
- OneRouge has really shown us the power of working groups - we want to have whole group sessions but also breakout sessions that focus just on affinity groups like ELL students, students with exceptionalities, etc.
- Unleashing our community asset resource map this

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year to support school liaisons with access to social services and other resources

- Genius is evenly distributed but opportunity is not
- As part of my shameless plug, if you impact children, if there's anything you can do to support the betterment of our community, contact me.

Dr. Sarah Barlow (Baton Rouge Community College)

- One of the most exciting things for us is that we've sought and gained approval from the nursing board to admit our largest and most diverse nursing cohort for the Fall of 21 (90 students)
- Game changer for the college and region in terms of ability to respond to the current need
- This is something we hope to continue to grow upon
- Going to begin building a new nursing building at the Mid City site...Great opportunity to grow the RN and LPN program
- Also had a couple additional programs in our Computer Science field with Cybersecurity and Application Software Developer
- Working every day to respond to workforce need
- For the fall, right now we're continuing to offer courses in multiple modalities: we have high flex, hybrid, face-to-face
- Plans A, B, C, etc in place to pivot as our daily monitoring impacts the look of the fall
- Another exciting component that has come out is that students now have the ability to go in and make modifications to their stated income for financial aid, so if you have a student who submitted their 21/22 FAFSA but have experienced an alteration in income you can go in and change that
- We've combined Division of Adult Education with Technical Education
- Provides more access to those pursuing their high set equivalency to earn IBCs to complete the high school classes and get credentials needed to enter the workforce
- We're very excited for the Glen Oaks opportunity that

will begin this fall - students entering the ninth grade will begin their first college class in pursuit of ending high school with an associate's degree

Dr. Girard Melancon (Baton Rouge Community College)

- Average age of our students is around 28/29, previous years 30-40% of our students had some experience of college and are looking to re pivot or accelerate their careers
- 60-70% are disconnected young adults
- Now in our 8th month piloting the Snap 50/50 training program
- Also dealing with disconnected populations with our ExxonMobil partnerships since 2012
- That has grown into the Baton Rouge Healthcare training initiative focusing on pathways with very competitive hospitals working with commonalities in allied healthcares
- Three new programs:
- CDL launching in September. Nationwide there's a driver shortage. The average wage is \$61k. In Baton Rouge alone there's been a shortage of about 1,200.
- Civil Infrastructure Training Program
- Enhanced our Electrical program with the Green Energy Sector - solar installation paneling in the fall, HVAC program
- Tuition incentives and resources to help offset costs as well

Dean Donald Andrews, Southern University and A&M College

- Dean of the College of Business
- Learned to be flexible over the last year
- People are looking for talent - that's the key factor driving the new economy
- We have positioned our students through various programs - accounting, management, finance, marketing, etc.
- We have to show that we are engaged, innovative and having an impact
- Positioning the school to be involved in the community

ONEROUGE COALITIONS

- We've run various programs out into the community, many of which are now virtual...It's been a major pivot for us
- We have to more or less build trust in the community
- I think the OneRouge program is moving us in that way in terms of helping us to all realize we have the same problems. Education, as Mandela said, is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world. I think we all want to see Baton Rouge change and be successful and this coalition is one way to do that
- We have to realize the opportunities we have and the ability to move the community forward

Brandon Smith (Louisiana State University)

- Update on some COVID protocols: Still doing our daily symptom checker as well as vaccination survey
- We expect a decision to be made in the next two weeks for specific social distancing protocols but we are looking forward as Dean Andrews stated to getting back in person as much as we possibly can
- In general, moving forward you'll hear more about us enhancing our research portfolio
- We want to grow our graduate student population
- That also involved increasing opportunities for postdocs
- We realize at LSU we have the most diverse freshmen class and that is because we had an enrollment management team come in to say we need to do a better job of introducing LSU to schools and districts and places we typically haven't gone or sent recruiters. There's been a total shift in the last three years. You get a more diverse student population when you start trying different things.

Week 67 (7/30/21)

Equal Pay For All - Part II

MEETING NOTES:

Vivian Broussard Guillory, Director, AAUW of LA

- Been a member AAUW for about 20 years (nationwide organization in LA for 100+ years)
- Mission is advancing equity for women and girls through

education, advocacy, research, and philanthropy

- Defining equal pay/the gender pay gap: comparison of the median salaries of workers (men and women) working full time all year long; sometimes measured yearly, sometimes weekly
- According to the Bureau of Labor statistics women earned a median income of \$42k while men earned \$52k in 2020
- Median earnings for all Louisiana women in 2020 was \$37k and \$51k for men
- That's a pay gap in LA of 28%
- We have one of the largest pay gaps in the country and it has dire effects for women - it's one of the most persistent issues affecting women today
- Going through the pandemic, compare \$51k vs. \$37k... how much easier would that make your life? One of the first things we have to do is convince people how important this number really is
- We can use these numbers to identify how it's impacting different ethnicities - it affects women of color and different ethnicities more
- It's important to understand the persistence of this problem and that it affects each one of us
- The pay gap has gotten smaller over time, from 1960 to 2000, due to gains women have made over pay gap causes (for example, occupational segregation, work patterns, childcare and family care)
- This pay gap may change with the pandemic because the whole way we work is changing but women have always needed accommodations and many times employers have not been willing to do that
- Discrimination is another aspect of the pay gap - AAUW did a study looking at males and females one year after college comparing for college major, part of the country, age, etc. and there was already a 7% pay gap one year after graduation
- Julie Schwam Harris (Advocate, Louisiana Women's

Policy and Research Commission)

- We know that women don't make as much as men for doing similar work and there are a lot of things that contribute to it
- Not having a family friendly workplace - women are the predominant family caregivers. They need paid sick leave and we do not as a country mandate paid maternity or family leave...We don't have affordable, quality childcare
- Women are overrepresented in the lower wage jobs - they have historically been in service jobs and we don't pay anyone in service jobs enough
- Girls may or may not be pulled into STEM work which is higher pay - there's room for growth there but that's not the be all end all
- One of the items we've talked about is salary history - when you start a new job, what's the first thing they ask you? What were you making at your old job? Instead of paying you what you're worth, they're already calculating how much less they can pay you because you'll be glad to make anything
- Violence against women and harassment are other factors - there's a climate of if you complain, you're going to get fired
- One of the aspects we work on the most legislatively is pay secrecy and fighting retaliation for discussing wages
- You're told you're supposed to negotiate for higher wages but you don't know what's acceptable. You're taught by society to not be too brash, too forceful, otherwise you'll be criticized
- Many businesses are finding out that it pays to have a more open workplace where people are not afraid to talk about their wages and are not retaliated against if they do ask
- We often talk about this as male/female but it's also a race issue - for example, there's something called a Mommy Penalty and a Daddy Bump. Men are respected and sometimes paid better because they are fathers

whereas women having kids is seen as a penalty

- It's beneficial for businesses to be more transparent and have better policies on all these issues. There's less turnover, there's more productivity, there's a climate of honesty

Action items:

- If you are a working person or have a business, look at the policies you are working under. Make sure they don't automatically say you can't talk about wages in the workplace. The United Way found that they repressed speaking about wages and they're one of the most progressive organizations working for well being. They changed their policy and their workplace is better for it.
- Do a self audit. Add it up. Are there differences that can't really be attributed to productivity?
- Speak up. Get to know the legislators. Get to know the people who are influencing your work.

Vivian Broussard Guillory

- According to business.org's research in 2020, 6 Louisiana metro areas were among the 15 metro areas with the largest wage gap in the nation
- Houma and Thibodeaux had the largest in the nation with women making \$0.59 on the dollar. Lake Charles was fourth with \$0.64 on the dollar. Lafayette was fifth with \$0.65, Hammond 11th, Baton Rouge 12th, Monroe 14th
- Large race and gender gaps remain in the US
- Between Black women wage earners and Black men, there is a pay gap. Between hispanic women and men there is a pay gap. The largest gap is actually in white women and white men. White men and Asian males have the largest earnings.
- So how do we continue to narrow the gap?
- Things that have been obstacles do have to do with the fact that the minimum wage is \$7.25 and Louisiana has defaulted to it
- We need to convince people to give others a living wage

ONEROUGE COALITIONS

- August 3 is Black Women's Equal Pay Day - that means that last year compared to white male earnings, it took a Black woman all of last year and all the way up to August of this year to earn what comparable male workers were earning
- There was a union organizer on a story I heard talking about organizing for construction workers - a lot of us have stereotypes about this. We have to open up our minds that women are going into fields that are more male dominated. And the truth is that the more women are in the field the lower the salaries are. That goes to the value of work. Why are we not valuing service work? During this pandemic, some of this will be shifting. People out to be able to make a living wage.
- There is a lack of support for women who may not have the education or training to go into a field because they need quality childcare. They need paid medical leave. They need to be able to take off some time and still be able to get back to their jobs
- In terms of takeaways...regarding the gender gap, one way is for women to learn and work and research to pull themselves out of this. Go to salary.com and you can research your job, how much you should be making. AAUW does this research and provides free salary negotiating training. Go to AAUW.org. I urge everyone to take the training whether you're in college and starting off, changing jobs...all these problems impact our ability to go to our employer and say "I am not making what my peers are making".
- There is federal legislation trying to address some of these issues. If you're not going to use money to enforce these laws and make corporations and states submit required reports, we need to fully implement these. We need more legislation.
- In 2013 Louisiana did pass a Pay Equity Act but it only applied to state employees. State and federal employees have a smaller pay gap because of the transparency.

Every year since 2000 legislation has been introduced to bring businesses into more transparency and to attack pay secrecy and none of that has really stuck to the wall

- We need equal pay to apply to the businesses, policies that apply equal pay to contractors, to keep chipping away at it, and we need to raise the minimum wage.

Week 68 (8/06/21)

Get Proactive Baton Rouge

MEETING NOTES:

Pat LeDuff, Neighborhood Revitalization, City of Baton Rouge

- Mayor Broome is passionate about revitalizing our neighborhoods.
- Everything is falling into place except the people trashing our city!
- Trash/junk/debris - items on a private lot
- Call through 311 to identify different sites
- Allow for 30 days to react
- Sometimes in the same day the trash is reset
- Finding those who are litterbugs, abandoning property
- Abandoned buildings must be boarded
- If not you get a notice, go to blight court, get a fine
- 12 people are enforcing
- 8 people outreach to identify sites
- Maintenance - Reginald Broomfield
389-3092, 311callcenter@brla.gov
- Mosquito Abatement
356-3287
- Great need due to shortage of housing
- Occupied condemned houses with typically elderly people
- Someone to work on rehousing program
- Sometimes no utilities
- Already living in substandard housing conditions
- Exxon is working w/ BRPD w/ cameras to identify the locations that are many dumps to catch the offenders
- August is beautification month

ONEROUGE COALITIONS

- Key in on maintenance, ex: signs down, etc
- Restore, Revise, Reignite
- Action, commitment, vigilance, time, effort = cleaner city
- Not a moment, it's a movement
- Working w/ Keep Baton Rouge Beautiful
- 3rd Saturday in September cleanup event
- Kelly Hurtado (Louisiana Stormwater Coalition)
- 2 prong approach
- Taking on the litter offenders
- Fully functional stormwater management programs
- Florida has many of these programs
- Louisianastormwater.com
- Marie Constantine spent time cleaning up Capitol lakes
- Research on how do other people do it
- Cleaned it twice, 200 bags of trash, 2 couches, etc. and then it comes right back
- Louisiana is #1 in rainfall in US consistently
- Only state that has our rainfall and doesn't have permanent rain management programs
- Declaring stormwater a utility and putting a line item on the utility bill
- Trash on the street = massive problem in the watersheds and floatables float into these watersheds
- One of the largest is on Burden property 3-4 feet deep in Wards Creek
- No regular maintenance of the litter catching equipment
- Education: do not enough tell people to bag their items tight
- Garbage trucks are an inexpensive contract and the garbage flies off the truck
- Most of it falls off garbage trucks
- Watershed trash affects everyone from BR to Ascension, etc. We're all connected.
- Courtney Scott (ACAO, City of Baton Rouge)
- We hear about all the items that need mitigation
- Whole community approach to hazard or emergency that's happened
- 2020 alone shows you there's a million hazards/emergencies
- FEMA has changed their resiliency plan and are looking what are the things on the ground
- All Hazard's Recovery Plan
- Whole community approach in the way we recover and respond to things
- Each of your entities and groups are impacted by the emergency
- If emergency of any time occurs there's a plan to recover each facet of community
- Nonprofits, faith-based, schools, etc.
- Recovery support functions
- More people to join the day-to-day work
- Connect w/ Courtney and Helen to help with this plan's continuum
- When an emergency happens we pull in the recovery support functions
- 95 days MOSEP activated for COVID in 2020
- Severe weather, hazmat incidents, COVID, hurricanes
- Building sustainable systems to respond in real time
- Icestorm turned into an electrical issue in our city
- Access to heat during this time
- Rented hotel rooms (125 families in the rooms)
- Communicate, transport, feed, clothed these residents
- Emergencies change everyday, so we need the partnership to help the change continue
- If you want to plug into this work, please email Courtney or Helen
- We are in 2021 Hurricane Season
- Remind everyone to stay "Red Stick Ready", informed, and resilient. Check on your neighbors
- Preventative side - Ambassador
- Programs, Boot Camps, etc available to train, but need your help to ambassadorship
- Resident-leader program
- How to be preventive, how to wrap your pipes, safeguard your house to weather, etc.

Week 69 (8/13/21)

Get Proactive Baton Rouge

MEETING NOTES:

Alfredo Cruz, Director, Housing 1st Alliance

- Why this housing crisis is important to address now
- It's a health crisis, not just housing crisis
- Housing is not just a commodity
- Pandemic is showing how those who aren't housed create a health risk
- Multi-layer issue
- Resources we have available
- Federal resources to create opportunity to chip away at this issue
- Study underway on the condition of housing in Baton Rouge
- Review, how to get involved
- Address strategies and funding

Barrie Black, Program Manager, Healthy Communities - LPHI

- Healthy Homes Regional Convening
- Gathering of people in New Orleans to address the housing crisis
- Started before COVID, but pivoted as issues became more aware
- Healthy Homes Committee to connect the impact of home renovations to healthy homes
- Needed to be a combination of health providers, researchers, planning
- Social determinants of health
- Employment, housing, living location
- Intersection of health and housing
- Physical conditions of home
- Conditions of neighborhood
- Housing affordability
- Physical conditions of how homes affect health
- 90% of americans spend most of their time indoors
- High percentages 18% + of needing housing upgrades

- Old pipes, lead pipes
- Dirty carpets, insulations
- Ramps, accessibility
- Mites, allergens
- 40% of asthma is related in children of black and latino families
- Crowding in home
- Health cannot improve unless we address these larger factors
- Homelessness is not new
- Are ways to that we can improve and move forward
- Coordination and alignment
- Health & Housing champions alignment
- Studies happening alignment
- Focus and doing it more sustainably

Jackson Voss, Policy Analyst, Louisiana Budget Project

- American Rescue Plan Act
- \$1.8T emergency stimulus package to sure up economy and boost the public response to COVID
- Different housing funds distributed
- Most went to state/local government
- Some sent to state/local that connects to housing
- Housing Money
- State government \$250M in emergency rental assistance ERAP
- \$147M Homeowner assistance (mortgages)
- Two different funds for landlords
- Recouping losses for landlord
- EBR \$6 m for rental assistance
- \$5m for those in homelessness or close to
- Not going well, policy problem
- You as a renter go to your landlord and they agree you qualify for it
- Tension where if landlord doesn't want to help you they can do that
- Eviction moratorium holds up protects you, but it still creates issues

ONEROUGE COALITIONS

- People losing their homes regardless
- Money from previous COVID packages as well
- In June, 319 behind on rent or not able to pay
- \$10M of \$550M has been dispersed to 975 renters and landlords
- Has upped to \$20M and 2K people
- Spend state and local dollars on housing
- What kind of infrastructure you can spend this money on
- Not road repairs
- General infrastructure does not always relate to health
- Delivery of vaccines
- Building of housing
- Opportunities for all of us to be involved in these discussions
- Invitation to discussions are not very robust, public (though they need to be)
- Decisions on spending happens before the money even arrives
- Guidance the treasury has provided state on how to use the funds
- Research that there is no community with affordable housing making 50% below Poverty
- Elected officials choosing to use the funds on other projects (repairs, special projects)
- If it doesnt change we will continue to have these conversations on housing crisis
- We need a plan to propose
- They've been developing these plans for a long time
- increase affordable housing given market conditions
- Racial segregation inequality, poverty, and demographic changes
- Hispanic population is up 135%
- 2020 census coincides with that growth
- Parts of parish 97% white residents
- 5 census tracts 100% white population
- Parts of parish 97-100% African American population
- Economic segregation that has happened
- Index to demonstrate poverty concentration
- 70% living in 70% poverty or lower
- 1.5x unemployment rate
- Concentrated in specific census tract
- Not widespread poverty
- Map shows the poverty indicators on these tracts
- Race/ethnic concentration specific census tracts
- Social vulnerability
- High poverty/ low vehicle access
- Overcrowded households
- Food deserts and where they are
- 11 census tracts
- Medically underserved populations
- Life expectancy and health
- EBR 76.4 years
- Versus US at 79.3 years
- Range in parish is almost 20 years
- Greatest is 85.7 years
- Lowest 66 years
- Old South Baton Rouge has shortest life expectancy

Alfredo Cruz (Housing 1st Alliance)

- Housing Market segmentation Study
- Univ NC Center for Housing Study to conduct on its behalf
- Funded by philanthropic and support from BBR, Mid City BR, Healthy BR,
- Addresses all these quality of life issues that lead to this housing crisis
- Study will be public in a couple of weeks
- Recommends around the parish what we can do to
- 211 calls
- Majority about housing needs
- This is from data over many years
- Lending/Mortgage activity
- EBR disparity: 72.8% (white) and 54% (black) approved for loans
- Across all lending institutions
- Probability of loan approval
- 36.3% lower for black to white applicants

ONEROUGE COALITIONS

- These factors determine the level of the market in these areas
- Life expectancy lower, less economical stability, less lending
- In higher market areas there are recommendations
- Inclusionary housing development (developing affordable housing)
- More involved in developing plan, recommendations, and funding

Week 70 (8/20/21)

Economic & Workforce Development

MEETING NOTES:

Andrew Fitzgerald, SVP of Business, BRAC

- Short-term training guide sent during the pandemic
- With enhanced federal benefits upskilling
- Resilient careers
- Coding, healthcare, etc.
- 12 weeks or less of training
- Online or hybrid courses
- Incomplete list (200-300, but there's at least 1200 out there)
- Releasing BRWorks late September
- Most comprehensive job board in the region
- AI skills pulling from uploaded resumes and match with jobs on the board
- Upskilling guide
- BRCC, LSU, SU, RPCC
- Helps you assess the areas of interest and what you need to be a better match at more advanced job role
- Identifying certificates that will help you reach that new role

Rinaldi Jacobs, Sr., CEO, Full Circle Development

- 4 Es
- Employment, Entrepreneurship, Engagement, Evolving
- 4-12 weeks out of the course without debt to get to their

point of employment

- Gaps
- Usually focus on young people
- Gap on middle age/older workers
- Gap with those with incarnation records
- Job literacy
- How do we get this out to the people who really need it?
- Online, but that is only helpful if you can access it
- Needing guides during the resume-building or application process
- Transportation, child care
- Average income 70805, 70809 is \$26,000/year
- Developed w/ BRCC (Girard Melacon) for CDL (truck driver) 4 week course

Keith Sawyer, Recruitment & Job Placement, Futures Fund

- Veteran recruiting push for Employers happening now
- Transition into civilian employment
- Futures Fund 3 Levels finished in 6-7 months
- HTML, CSS, JavaScript for frontend development
- Income levels and geographic locations allow for tuition-free access to program
- Additional stipends available for veterans as well

Week 71 (8/27/21)

Our Kids - Covid State Of Mind

MEETING NOTES:

Dr. Kim Mosby - Director of Programs, Institute of Women & Ethnic Studies

I am Dr. Kim Mosby. I am a sociologist and urban planner. My background is in disaster recovery, structural inequality with a focus on race, class, and gender, and housing and community development. I joined the Institute of Women & Ethnic Studies 7 months ago as the Director of Programs. Today I'm supported by our Director of HIV & STI Initiatives, Christi La Mark, who is a licensed master social worker. IWES is dedicated to improving the mental, physical and

ONEROUGE COALITIONS

spiritual health and quality of life for women, their families and communities of color, particularly among marginalized populations, using community-engaged research, programs, training and advocacy.

All of our work uses a trauma informed lens to support the mental and emotional health of the individual. We use a socio-ecological approach which recognizes the influences and interactions between the individual, interpersonal, community, and society levels. Our work is divided across 6 portfolios. They are:

- Adolescent Health, which focuses on providing as well as training others to provide comprehensive reproductive health education in Orleans, EBR, and the River Parishes,
- The Collective for Healthy Communities, this is our Social Work team, which provides community-level interventions, trainings for educators, and mental health education for youth, and also facilitates support groups at women's shelters
- The goal of our HIV/STI Initiatives division is to reduce HIV stigma and increase access to HIV prevention, testing, and access to care and support services among African American and Latinx people ages 13-60, as well as changing social norms that support Intimate Partner Violence. This team also operates support group for BWLH to reduce stigma, isolation, and feelings of loneliness and to foster leadership and advocacy skills
- In the Maternal and Child Health space - IWES is the lead of the new maternal mental health task force - policy work, social media campaigns, also collaboration with doula and health care trainers in order to improve infant and maternal health experiences and outcomes
- Media & Communications - to raise awareness, share valuable health information & advocate for positive behavior change through new and traditional media outlets
- Research & Evaluation - allows us to evaluate our own projects as well as partner with other organizations and universities when they need assistance conducting community based research projects. We also have a community IRB to

ensure our work meets ethical standards.

Over the past year we've conducted focus groups with the youth we work with to understand their Perspectives on COVID. We've found:

- Students are human but they're expected not to be stressed just bc they're young. However many face COVID plus additional issues (financial, housing instability, racism/ socio-political climate)
 - Aware of virus and how it's transmitted. Felt responsible to others and were frustrated that some chose not to follow health guidelines (masks/distancing/etc)
 - Everything has changed - don't think their learning as well; worried about not being prepared for the future and "robbed" of "normal" social experiences
 - More time at home can be more challenging but for some also brought about stronger bonds
 - Needs:
 - o communication about COVID
 - o familial and non-familial support
 - o teen virtual groups
 - o one person to trust
- 1) encouraging parents and caregivers to talk openly with their youth;
 - 2) utilize local resources, especially to seek mental health services; and
 - 3) to provide continued opportunities to hear youth voices and collect data on their unique experiences (Focus groups, surveying, hosting youth panels), as well as engage in advocacy efforts to increase funding for accessible mental health supports, especially in schools. We know that there is a shortage of mental health professionals available to students, sometimes only one social worker for a student body of over 500 students.
 - 4) if parents and caregivers are looking for ways to get more involved in how to communicate with their youth, they can reach out to our parental engagement team (they do not have to have youth who are a part of Believe in Youth – Louisiana

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(BYLA) programming) at ibutler@iwesnola.org.

This Meeting is a Protest video

Ya Heard Meh? Youth Stories in a Global Pandemic

<https://www.iwesnola.org/news-blog/2021/2/9/youth-share-their-experiences-amid-covid-19-in-catapult-study-focus-group-series>

Toni Bankston - CEP, Baton Rouge Children's Advocacy Center

Work history

-Social worker by trade and spent the last 37-years around trauma of children and their families.

-Has worked with disaster-based trauma, other trauma

-Has worked with children in the foster care system

Children's Advocacy Center

-Has expanded from 8 employees to 16 over the last eight years.

-Nonprofit organization that has specialized limbs of the agency

-Agency that works with children who have been through violent crime like domestic violence or like this last year there has been "unbelievable amount of children witnessing homicides and we've even worked with siblings of children who were murdered." Also children who have experienced physical or sexual abuse.

-Works in four parishes: East Baton Rouge, West Baton Rouge, Iberville and Pointe Coupee

-Work with Government agencies such as DCFS, police and sheriffs

-Help investigate the crimes by providing specialized interviews with the children. Those interviews can then be used as evidence in a trial.

-Nonprofit status allows the organization to focus its attention on the children, "we are the child's voice."

-There are 900 CACs in the country; Baton Rouge is one of 14 in Louisiana

-Baton Rouge is working to expand to have an on-site

medical program.

-Baton Rouge uniquely has comprehensive mental health program. After the forensic examination process, they are able to immediately go to group therapy at no cost to the family

-Work with parents as well as children

-Provide prevention in communities - teach children how to recognize when they might not be safe and how to recognize a safe adult vs a not safe adult.

-Teach children signals and how to communicate with safe adults.

-Work with anyone who is a provider for children

-Go into schools and work with teachers - professional development to recognize trauma in the classroom. Teach the teachers how to be trauma detectives.

-Testify in court. Some staff are considered expert witnesses. Explain to jury why it took a child so long to disclose abuse.

-Next week PSA commercials will run on WAFFB.

-All CACs have madidate to serve partners (law enforcement, prosecutors, teachers, etc).

-Partnered with the Center for Mind Body Medicine to bring a program here to BR and trained 100 people from various groups - training is about 1) giving people training and tool kit in dealing with trauma and stress 2) helping providers to recognize their own stress - mitigating secondary stress in these professions. All 100% free and scholarships available.

Sergio Antonio Garcia - Sr. Manager of Learning Systems, Big Thought - Dallas, TX

What is Big Thought

-Arts engagement - using arts as the vehicle to break down barriers and fill in gaps.

-Systems building - building ecosystem of partners. 500 to 600 partners in ecosystem to share and provide resources in Dallas and north Texas area. What are the resources each organization is bringing to the table

-Rise in organizations addressing that being part of the ecosystem.

-How is Big Thought part of that - provide SEL (social

ONEROUGE COALITIONS

emotional learning) - communications learning - someone who looks like them is giving them the resources they need. "Just by me being in the room has been the biggest step in filling in the gap in destigmatizing mental health." Those are a large part of what's happening in the communities of color.

-Using cultural relevance as breaking down stigmas of mental health - explaining to African American or or Latin X - the indigenous practices and when they realize it's been part of their culture for a very long time, these can be part of the everyday conversation.

-Cultural strategy and relevance are part of the approach in how mental health is being viewed in communities of color. Using them as communication ambassadors.

-Coming from a healing centered approach.

-Dr. Sean Genwright - he engaged with a young man who came up to him and said, "I am more than my trauma. I am more than the negative connotations of that trauma."

- recognizing it but coming from an asset based mindset - there are more facets to an individual than there are.

360 approach

-Work with the youth but also the families.

-Working with the community. Very POC centered approach.

-Our communities are part of who we are. Are part of how we go about our everyday lives.

-"My job is to take those things I hear to a higher level - to our city officials. Take these conversations and go to city council meetings and school systems and say this is what your youth need, these are what your families need, how can we provide that."

-Equipping youth to imagine their best lives in the world. It is a long game. It takes a long time, but as long as we are there we can really start to have that conversation and create that change.

Dr Anna Long - Program Director, LSU School Psychology

Professional history

-Academics have three roles; 1) research 2) teaching 3) service - "being service-focused is a big part of my identity."

Service to people is critically important

-Implantation science - how we think what we know works and how we get it implemented - doesn't naturally happen how we can improve access and quality of practices in underserved communities in mental and behavioral health
-Partner with a lot of different schools and districts and a multi-tiered system of support.

What are universal practices that can be going on throughout the school?

-Screen and identify students - link with agencies outside the school - pushing into schools right now is proactive and preventative programs but also trauma informed care
- becoming more healing focused - less strength based more resiliency - restorative justice practices - disproportionate impact - shifting discipline in schools - proactive and positive rather than reactive. How do we actually conceptualize - social cultural variables that impact treatment engagement and outcomes.

Week 72 (9/03/21)

Our Kids - Covid State Of Mind

MEETING NOTES:

Lauren Hebert

Damage Assessments

-As of 6:30 a.m. on Friday – 56,457 outages with Entergy, 9,688 with Demco, 66,145 EBR residents still without power, 29.60% in EBR parish remain without power

-245 downed trees, 35 trees with powerlines mixed in them and 8 are not city parish trees

Shelters

-River Center, FG Clark Center, and medical center at FG Activity center at LSU (already at capacity)

-No hotel space available in EBR Parish – no hotels until Alexandria and Lake Charles

Hot meals and charging stations

-Leo Butler Center – 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. – serving breakfast, lunch and dinner

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-MLK on Gus Young – 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. 1:30 and 5:30 lunch – 8-6

-Jewel Newman – 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. charging and lunch – 4-8

-Woodlawn Baptist Church – Hot meal at 1:30 p.m. (Friday)

-BREC Burbank on Saturday – drive thru from 8:30 a.m. – 11 a.m. of boxed meals

-YMCA Pennington dinner until 5 p.m.

Additional supplies

-BRPD headquarters – Free ice until supplies last on Friday and Saturday. 12 p.m. to 2 p.m.

-looking for volunteers – especially with ice distribution

-Cheneyville – Mt Pleasant church – until supplies last
Mayor's Office needs Volunteers to distribute ice & essentials w/ Mayor's Office (include link). Go to Volunteer Louisiana to help across the state

Covid Vaccines and Testing

- These are DRIVE THRU or you can stay in your car places!

COVID-19 Community Testing and Vaccine Sites

*no order or appointment needed

TESTING

Our Lady of the Lake:

Corner of Essen/Constantin:

Monday-Friday 5pm-7pm

Saturday and Sunday 2pm-7pm

Ascension:

2647 S. St. Elizabeth Blvd, behind Medical Plaza 1, Gonzales, LA 70737

Monday-Friday 7am-4pm; Saturday 8am-12pm

Livingston:

5000 O'Donovan Blvd, Walker, LA 70785

Monday-Friday 5-7pm; Saturday and Sunday 2-7pm

Open Health Care Clinic:

4560 North Blvd

Monday-Friday

8am-11am

St. Gabriel Health Clinic:

1707 Gardere Ln, Baton Rouge, LA 70810

Monday-Saturday: 9am-12pm *Monday and Thursday open until 2pm

(225) 930 -4922

5760 Monticello Drive St Gabriel, LA 70776

Monday-Saturday; 9am-12pm *Monday and Thursday open until 2pm

VACCINES & TESTING

Ochsner:

Runnels (17255 S. Harrell's Ferry Rd.)

Baton Rouge, LA 70816

Monday-Friday; 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Saturday; 8:00am-1:00pm

Sunday; 8:00am-12:00pm

Thursday, September 2

9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Iberville Parish – Health Unit

24705 Plaza Dr. A

Plaquemine, LA 70764

VACCINES:

Our Lady of the Lake-Pennington Vaccine Location

6400 Perkins Road

Baton Rouge, LA 70808

This week: Thursday-Friday from 9 am to 5 pm

Normal hours next week will be Mon-Thurs, 9am-5pm

Edy Addison

-Work as a network to serve 11 parish area

-activated by state at DCFS – statewide shelter information – 898-211 shelter information – DSNAP – get resources directly from them with up to date information

-Pre-storm – worked to provide sandbags, tarps, etc.

-Activated 24/7 – activation by MOSEP – CAUW.org – if

ONEROUGE COALITIONS

you are providing resource support you can email it there.

- 2500 calls taken so far – break it down by zip code – primary reason is recovery resources -DSNAP, FEMA hotels, power outages and looking for resources like ice, water, food, shelter, expecting more on financial help needed, directing everyone to Volunteer Louisiana,
- Grant recipients wanting to flex, let them know

Rachelle Sanderson, Capital Region Planning Commission

Short term

Organizations to get money to

- River parishes – Rise St. James
- New Orleans – Imagine Water Works
- Indigenous – United Houma Nation
- Grand Cayou Doulac (sp?) – Head of Native American Commission – online there

Middle term

- Be ready for an influx of people in Baton Rouge
- No body has anywhere to go that has power that is reliable

Long Term

- Energy infrastructure is fragile – looking to do cross regional plans. Most of the area have been destroyed.

Casey Phillips (Walls Project) Important to note government response is exponentially better than it was during Katrina and we have to recognize that fact. Levee system did hold. The storm breakers did work.

Tatiana Sofia Begault, Goodwill NOLA

ReEntry Community Coordinator

Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Louisiana
3400 Tulane Ave, Suite 1000
New Orleans, LA 70119
Cell: (504) 275-7489
Tel: 504-635-0172

-First responders mutual aid relief team – formed in 2016 for the great floods – 900 meals being prepared and will be distributed to non-profits

- Anyone looking for recovery grants : <http://gohsep.la.gov/GRANTS/OVERVIEW>

Points of distribution (8 a.m. to 6 p.m.)

• Meals ready to eat and water are provided at the following locations:

- Joe W. Brown Recreation Center, 5475 Read Blvd.
- Mahalia Jackson Auditorium, 1451 Basin St.
- Beginning tomorrow at 12 p.m.:
- Skelly Park, 730 Vespasian Blvd.
- John P. Lyons Recreation Center, 624 Louisiana Ave.
- Beginning Friday:

• Wesley Barrow Stadium, 6500 Press Drive

Meals (4 p.m. to 6 p.m.)

- Treme Recreation Center (900 N. Villere St.)
- Cut Off Recreation Center (6600 Belgrade St.)
- Gernon Brown Recreation Center (1001 Harrison Ave.)
- Milne Recreation Center (5420 Franklin Ave.)
- Stallings St. Claude Recreation Center (4300 St. Claude Ave.)
- John P. Lyons Recreation Center (624 Louisiana Ave.)
- Joe W. Brown Recreation Center (5601 Read Blvd.)
- Rosenwald Recreation Center (1120 S. Broad Ave.)
- Other pop-up meals:

• 1 p.m. - Arthur Monday Center (1111 Newton St.)

• 1 p.m. - St. Roch Park (1800 St. Roch Ave.)

• 1:30 p.m. - Harmony Oaks (2514 Washington Ave.)

• 5 p.m. - McDonogh 35 (4000 Cadillac St.)

Salvation Army mobile units:

LUNCH LOCATIONS (Starting within the Noon hour):

66306 LA Hwy-41, Pearl River, 70452

1001 Harrison Ave, New Orleans 70124

900 N Villere St, New Orleans, 70116

4300 St. Claude, New Orleans, 70117

3508 Arkansas Ave, Kenner

Roaming Mobile Kitchen Units - These are targeted areas

ONEROUGE COALITIONS

and subject to change -

-Dot Diner

2239 Williams Blvd., Kenner, LA 70062

-St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church

105 Bonabel Blvd, Metairie, LA 70005

-Milne Recreation Center

5240 Franklin Ave, New Orleans, 70122

-General Neighborhood

385 Longview Dr, Destrehan 70047

-Rio Vista Subdivision

28 Davis Blvd, Jefferson 70121

-New Orleans area

1040 St. Charles Ave, 70130

-Plaquemines area

1617 Ridgelake Dr, Metairie

-New Orleans Area

1632 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd, 70113

DINNER LOCATIONS (Begins approx at 5pm):

66306 LA Hwy-41, Pearl River, 70452

1001 Harrison Ave, New Orleans 70124

900 N Villere St, New Orleans, 70116

4300 St. Claude, New Orleans, 70117

3508 Arkansas Ave, Kenner

Jefferson Parish:

Alario Center is giving away MREs, water, ice, and tarps starting at noon.

St. Tammany Parish:

- Abita Lumber – Cash or Card
- Academy – Pinnacle Pkwy – Covington
- Ace hardware - Hwy 190 in Covington
- Ace Hardware – Robert Blvd - Slidell
- Acquistapace in Covington – Cash and Cards
- Arcane Inspection Services - Mandeville
- Army Surplus – Slidell
- Batteries Plus Bulbs- Gause Blvd - Slidell
- Bayou Adventure - Lacombe
- Best Nutrition – Gause Blvd
- Big D's – Pearl River

- Big Easy Diner – East Gause – Slidell
- The Blind Tiger - Covington
- Blue Harbor Car Wash/Gas – Mandeville – expect long lines
- Braswell's Drugs - Covington – Limited hours and cash only
- Burger King – Gause Blvd - Slidell
- Butter Crisp – Covington – only burgers, no donuts
- C&C Classic Carpet Care - Mandeville
- C & C Drugs – Hwy 59 – Mandeville
- Caretta's Grill - Slidell
- Cash Savers – Pontchartrain - Slidell
- Chevron next door to Slide Memorial Hospital
- Chicken Salad Chick – Gause Blvd – Slidell
- Chick-fil-A – Gause Blvd - Slidell
- Cornerstone Property Services – Slidell Clearing Trees away from driveways 502-1132
- Copeland's – Gause Blvd - Slidell
- Creekside Coffee Café – Picayune
- Creole Tomateaux – Florida St – Food Truck
- Cross Gates Family Fitness – Open to members only: Power, Wi-Fi and showers are available
- Cross Point Veterinary Hospital – Hwy 1077 – Covington 7:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
- CVS – 1305 Gause Blvd. – Slidell
- Dollar General – Hwy 190 – Covington – Near Covington High / Fosom
- Domino's – Robert Blvd - Slidell
- Downtown Drugs - Covington – Cash only
- Drain Surgeon – 985-641-7919
- Dufrene Building – Hwy 190 – Slidell – Cash Only
- ECO Builders - Slidell
- Elliott Electric Supply – N Collins – Covington
- El Paso Mexican– Robert Blvd - Slidell
- Evergreen tractor in Covington
- Express Oil Change – Hwy 21 - Covington
- Exxon - Gause and Military
- Fantastic Sam's – Gause Blvd – Slidell – Open 9/2
- Fleur de Green Lawn and Landscape - Slidell
- Folsom Discount Zones – cash only – expect long line –

ONEROUGE COALITIONS

police directing traffic

• Fratellis Italian Grill – Slidell – to-go only – 11 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

• Fuji Yama – East Gause - Slidell

• Gas available at Shell next to Pelican Car Wash on Hwy 21

• Gator’s Travel Center – Hwy 434 - Lacombe

• Gen Stop – Slidell

• Gowland’s Heating and A/C – 985-326-8013

• Gulf Coast Bank – Hwy 190, Covington

• Habitat Restore – Hwy 59, Mandeville – Has tarps

• Holden’s - Covington

• Hambone in Mandeville – Serving fried chicken starting at 11 a.m.

• Home Depot - North Shore Blvd. – Slidell

• Home Depot – Gause Blvd - Slidell

• Home Depot – Covington

• Hooter’s – Gause Blvd - Slidell

• Jack’s Beverages – Old Spanish Trail - Slidell

• Jenkins Lumber – Folsom – Cash Only

• Jubilee – Pearl River

• Keefe’s A/c and heating- (504) 553-3721 – air conditioning and generator repairs

• Kessler Federal Credit Union ATM - 1338 Gause Blvd.

• Key Credit, Inc – Gause Boulevard - Slidell

• La Sabrosa Tacos Y Mas – 551 Gause Blvd. – Slidell

• Lacombe Family Pharmacy - Lacombe

• Larson’s A/C - Slidell

• Layton Family Pharmacy – Hwy 21 - Covington

• Lishman’s – Hwy 190 – Lacombe

• Los Tres Amigos - Slidell

• Lowes – Covington

• Magee Financial of Slidell

• Market Max (in Franklinton) – GAS

• Medicine Shoppe – Robert Boulevard - Slidell

• Mike’s Hardware – Brownswitch – Slidell – Cash Only

• Minnie’s Quick Stop – Florida Street - Mandeville

• Mizers - Slidell

• Mr. Joe’s Chinese - Slidell

• Moody’s Timesaver – Pearl St and Gause - Slidell

• Most Dollar General stores are open in Franklinton and Bogalusa – cash only

• Napa Auto Parts in Mandeville - Florida Street

• Northshore Trailer & Equipment – Covington and Pearl River

• NuAir-AC, Mandeville

• O’Keefe’s Feed and Seed - Covington

• O’Reilly Auto Parts – Florida St - Mandeville

• Papa John’s- Robert Blvd – Slidell – cash only

• Pat’s Seafood – Collins Blvd – Covington – 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

• Peck’s Seafood – Gause Blvd - Slidell

• Pennington’s Hardware – Madisonville – Cash and Credit Card

• Piggly Wiggly – Madisonville – cash only

• Pit Stop Carwash

• Pool Store – Mandeville and Slidell locations

• PJ’s – 2040 Gause Blvd.

• Quick Stop – Hwy 59 – Mandeville

• Rapid Urgent Care – Hwy 190 - Slidell (Near Northshore Mall)

• Racetrac – Picayune – credit and debit \$99 limit

• Raising Cane’s – Gause Boulevard - Slidell

• Rapid Urgent Care in Mandeville and Slidell

• Redfish Trading – Pontchartrain - Slidell

• Rouses (all Rouses) – Attempting to take Credit Cards but bring cash instead

• Sam’s Gas station - Sam’s Northshore Boulevard – Slidell

• Sam’s- Northshore Boulevard - Slidell

• Save-a-Lot - Franklinton

• Schaff’s family pharmacy - Madisonville – Limited hours and cash only

• Service Rigging – Terrace Ave East - Slidell

• Shell Gas station - Hwy 21, Mandeville- Next to Pelican Car Wash

• Shell – Hwy 190 (by Planet Fitness)

• Shell Gas station – Hwy 1077 and Bootlegger (Traffic Circle)- cash and credit cards

• Smith’s Sporting Goods - Slidell

• Southside Café – Pontchartrain Dr – Slidell – cash only

ONEROUGE COALITIONS

- Subway – Inside Wal-Mart on Northshore Blvd – Open at 10 a.m.
- Target – Hwy 21 – Covington – Open until 6 p.m.
- Tchefuncte Animal Hospital – Hwy 21 - Madisonville
- Timesaver – Voters Rd - Slidell - cash only
- Tractor Supply – Hwy 190 - Slidell
- Waffle House - Hwy 190 - Covington - cash only
- Waffle House – Military Road – Pearl River
- Wal-Mart – Mandeville Neighborhood
- Wal-Mart – Slidell Neighborhood – Robert Blvd
- Wendy's - East Gause - Slidell will open for lunch, drive-thru only
- Wine Market – Gause Blvd - Slidell
- Winn Dixie - Collins Blvd - Covington - cash only (By HWY 25)
- Winn Dixie - Gause and Military - cash or card
- Winn Dixie – Hwy 21 - Covington – cash or card
- Winn Dixie - Hwy 59 – Mandeville - cash or card
- Winn Dixie – Pontchartrain - Slidell
- To aid in the hurricane relief effort, Academy Sports + Outdoors in Covington will offer free cases of 24-count bottled water to the public, while supplies last. No purchase necessary.
- Customers can look for the 18-wheeler parked in front of the stores to pick up their free case. The trucks only contain cases of water for this donation to the affected communities. 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

PODS in St. Tammany:

Covington off Bootlegger Rd HWY 1085 -Near HWY 21 at First Baptist Church Covington, LA.

St. Tammany Parish Sheriff's office is providing security - please have patience and follow their directions.

MREs, water, and ice will be provided.

Tangipahoa Parish:

POD locations have ice, water, and MREs. POD (Point of Distribution) opened at 8 a.m. at the three Walmart locations:

Hammond: 2799 W Thomas St., Hammond, LA 70401

Amite: 1200 W Oak St., Amite City, LA 70422

Ponchatoula: 1331 US-51

Ponchatoula, LA 70454

St. Charles Parish:

The National Guard and Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness have established a resource distribution site at the West Bank Bridge Park.

Ice, water, and meals ready to eat will be provided.

Residents should turn onto River Road from I-310 and will be directed to the location.

Do not use the levee to access the distribution site.

The site will be open until 5 p.m. today, and normal hours will be 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. until further notice.

The National Guard and GOHSEP have established a distribution site at the West Bank Bridge Park.

The site is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or until supplies run out.

Terrebonne Parish:

- From noon to 5 p.m.
- Front of Houma-Terrebonne Civic Center (ice available)
- Montegut gym (ice available)
- Front of South Terrebonne High School (Ice available)
- Tech Action Clinic on Grand Caillou Road (Ashland)
- Ward 7 Citizen Center (Chauvin)
- Dulac Central Fire Station
- Bayou Blue Central Fire Station

Commodity distribution hours begin on Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Lafourche Parish:

Point of distribution sites are now open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and will supply various items such as water, meals ready to eat, and tarps. Residents can go to these sites and receive supplies.

Pod Site # 1 Thibodaux Family Church 785 North Canal Blvd. Thibodaux, LA

Pod Site #2 Raceland Ag Center 100 Texas Street, Raceland LA

Pod Site #3 Lockport Central Station 806 Crescent Ave, Lockport, LA

Pod Site #4 Out Lady of Prompt Succor Church 723 North Bayou Drive, Golden Meadow, LA

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Rouses Market #4 - (E. Park Ave.) Houma
Rouses Market #6 - (West Main St.) Houma
Rouses Market #10 – Morgan City
Rouses Market #15 - (St. Charles St.) Houma
Rouses Market #16 - (N. Canal Blvd.) Thibodaux
Rouses Market #59 - (S. Acadia Rd.) Thibodaux
Matherne's Supermarket in Paulina - open until 6 p.m. (cash only)
Schexnayder's Supermarket in Vacherie - open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (cash only)
Veron's Supermarket opens at 9 a.m. - cash only
Belmont Lumber - cash only
St. John the Baptist Parish:
• Distribution Sites will be open from noon until 5 p.m. at Wallace Fire Station and Regala Gym. Tarps, waters, and meals ready to eat will be distributed via drive-thru.
Wallace Fire Station, 5733 Highway 18, Vacherie (Wallace)
Regala Gym, 200 Regala Park Road, Reserve

Week 73 (9/10/21)

Access to Affordable & Reliable Transportation

MEETING NOTES:

Bill Deville, CEO, CATS

-220,000 rides a month. 70% of riders are going to jobs, school, shopping and health care.
-95% of our riders have no other form of transportation.
-During the 2016 flood, CATS rescued 6,000 people.
-CATS supports \$145 million in economic benefits to the community economy each year. We have a tax renewal on Nov 13 - asking for your support on that ballot. Will allow CATS to upgrade busses and upgrade shelters. Have already reduced wait times from 75 minutes to 30 minutes with the money. Next will be 15 minute wait times at peak hours. That money is to leverage federal funding. October 30-Nov. 6 - early voting
-We've kept the promises and we've added a few more.
-Working with Amazon at the distribution center and they've made it clear they need public transportation. We're not

thinking just about now but we're thinking about the future of businesses and jobs. We will continue to connect people to jobs, businesses and health care

-Every great city has a great public transportation system

Cheri Soileau, Director, Planning and Program Development, CATS

-In the next 10 years we have a lot on our plates. We have a 10 year capital improvement plan

-Traffic signal prioritization, 15 minute wait time, taking a big deep dive into the rest of our service.

-We want to hear from everybody because it's important to get everyone's input.

-Micro project in the works in Baker. Pilot program. Hope to move that to other parts of the city. -We only have so much money so we want to use the money thoughtfully and strategically.

-Van pool system can be used in other areas.

-You will hear the word regionally from us in the future.

-The United Way points out that they have seen a lot of people say they need a reliable transportation system.

-We take people to dialysis, we take people to critical medical appointments.

-It's just right. It's just right for our citizens.

Chris Tyson, Rapid Transit on Plank Rd Update, Build Baton Rouge

-CATS tax renewal is something I can't stress enough the importance of. If you think that what we are doing at Build Baton Rouge is worthwhile work, that we're doing anything we do is good, then I want you to be very passionate about the CATS renewal.

-Sat on the CATS board prior before there was dedicated funding. Back in those days bus rapid transit was being discussed, and frankly I don't think everyone in our community didn't understand how handicapped our city was without that funding.

-Competing for a limited pot of funding. What skin do you

ONEROUGE COALITIONS

have in the game? Why should we put up \$20 million dollars if you haven't gotten basic funding for your transit system, if you haven't established the value of transit as essential infrastructure.

-People who get up and do jobs of dignity and value to our society do not deserve less of our attention. It's no less valuable if we only have those riders. There's no shame in using public transit. -Baton Rouge as a community is leaving money on the table. We are missing out on other funding for projects because we lack a public transit as a source.

-I cannot stress enough that the renewal of the CATS vote is vital to what I do, it's vital for what we want to see for our city.

-We have to build the coalition and the consensus in the community to where there isn't even a question to see if we should renew.

-Is CATS deserving? Is Baton Rouge deserving?

Rannah Gray - (Communications Director, Move EBR)

-More than 1 billion dollars of 93 transportation projects going on in EBR

-To improve mobility for everyone.

-To enhance existing corridors that need updating for safety and mobility purposes

-Was approved overwhelmingly for a specific list of projects.

This program serves all parts of the parish

-90 miles of new sidewalks

-72 miles of new bike lanes

-10 million in ADA improvements

-119 miles of new vehicle lanes

-126 enhanced lanes

-All signals in the parish are being tied to a central command center on Harding blvd.

-Putting battery back-up on these critical coordinators so the intersections are not lost when the power is out.

-Over 400 new school flashers to make schools safer

-Signal projects are well underway. Everything will be completed by the end of next year

-2021 became the year that we're really kicking off construction

-Small business outreach program - more small businesses involved - they have the opportunity to work on right away, to design, to construction services

-Bus rapid transit is moving through Move EBR

-Pervious concrete - https://www.usgs.gov/science/evaluating-potential-benefits-permeable-pavement-quantity-and-quality-stormwater-runoff?qt-science_center_objects=0#qt-science_center_objects

Mark Martin (Vice-Chair, BikeBR)

-Established what is now Bike Baton Rouge and is currently on the board. Serve as EBR Parish Complete Streets Advisory committee and on PED Bike Master plan

-I haven't owned a car since 1991 - My highest mileage per year on a bike in Baton Rouge is 6,000. I know what it's like to ride a bicycle in Baton Rouge

-We live in a very deeply embedded car culture. It is very difficult to convince someone to do something for transportation that doesn't involve their car. It's hard to get traction for things that don't involve cars. It's hard to get money for bicycling, it's hard to get money for busses, but you can get billions of dollars for new lanes on the interstate.

-For 70 years there have been studies that show that adding lanes doesn't improve traffic but it makes it worse

-Downtown Development is working on a number of projects - one of which is going to parallel the bus transit - connecting downtown via the levee to the Scotlandville path.

-The last mile - how do we connect people to a mass transit system.

-Discussion about the rail from New Orleans to Baton Rouge. What do you do when you get off the train? A lot of these things are deeply connected. How can we improve Baton Rouge? Instead of making it a monoculture, make it a diverse culture for all forms of transportation. If the gas transportation system goes down, people shoot each other for gas because they don't know another way to get around.

-1973 - The Netherlands introduced its bicycle infrastructure program. 1973 portland introduced its bike master plan. 1974

ONEROUGE COALITIONS

baton rouge created its first bicycle master plan - two cities held to it, one did not. Consider how we have the master plan again. Will we implement it? Will we tie it into our other forms of transportation? That's up to us.

Davante Lewis (Director of Public Affairs and Outreach, Louisiana Budget Project)

Payday lending is often seen as one of the most useful tools to provide low income families temporary assistance in the US. They target people who are suffering a setback. People get a payday loan because they've had a car accident or some other issue - they offer short term loans between \$500 to \$1,000. Why do we call this a payday lending trap? They take out a loan and they are now making repayments on those loans. Not only are they making payments on the loan but they are making interest payments. Louisiana does not have a cap on interest rates. A \$500 payday loan is around 257% interest. The highest is around 367% interest. Now they are repaying that loan with a 300% interest rate, that's where the trap starts. They then offer a loan for more money. The moment you accept a new loan, all of your previous payments are now wiped out. And now you start over from scratch. You can never catch up to now pay all of your bills and what you're doing. We've been really working on this. We really need our credit unions to step up. They target low income communities and they make sure they don't invest in those communities. It is an objective to buy a building that is deteriorating. That's why you're only going to see payday lenders in locations that are underserved communities. There were 256 payday lenders in our city. When you're talking about a lack of a grocery store, you have to think about how many of these predatory lenders exist in those areas. Why has Louisiana not done anything? Payday lenders really market themselves as the only ones who care about low income people. Banks are not going to give them a loan. If you're trying to keep someone from going on government assistance, payday loans help with that. The industry makes itself out to be a savior. But what they don't

say is how predatory they are. As we start to rebound after COVID, they are going to get very active again. As evictions go up, as supply is down, they are going to get more active. We're going to see a great effect policy wise. What can we do about it? We've working to get a cap at 36%. We are going to encourage local governments to be empowered. They can do it with zoning policies. This would restrict the number of payday lenders that could be in a particular area. That's what we do now. We zone how many restaurants can be in an area. These are some of the solutions.

Carmen Million (President, BBB of South Central Louisiana)
The BBB is a nonprofit organization that was established in 1950 to combat advertising issues. We try to educate the public and that's both consumers and businesses. To build trust. We also mediate marketplace disputes. Most people think we only take complaints. One of the things the BBB does, when we rate companies, there's a formula. Payday loans automatically get a F rating because of the way they target consumers. When people go to a payday lender, they're in a bind, they're scared. Most of these consumers are embarrassed. They don't want to talk to their family about it. Unfortunately they have that used car salesman pitch. They signed the contract without reading it. They're not familiar with it. They don't want to sound stupid asking questions. And then they get involved in a situation where they rob Peter to pay Paul. We also see people years past paid off payday loan and they get a call telling them that still owe some amount and they have to pay immediately or they are going to issue a warrant for their arrest. We have people call us crying thinking they are going to get arrested. These people are just trying to scam you or continue to scam you. People think that they have to pay this high interest rate, that they don't have any other choice. There are. You have to be your first line of defense. Investigate your company. If you go to the BBB, they're going to have an F rating. I'm meeting with bankers now and credit unions to where they will alert the public they do have resources to help people. With COVID and everything else that's happened, they're

in situations they never thought they would be in. We tell people to do business with someone you feel comfortable with. They're not going to judge you because you have bad credit. They may not tell you what you want to hear either. We have to make our own informed decisions.

Week 74 (9/17/21)

Lack of access to foods to sustain a healthy life

MEETING NOTES:

Tarani Merriweather, PhD (Senior Researcher, Pink Cornrows).

-Pink Cornrows is a small, data-driven, people-centered consulting firm. The organization is currently working with the American Heart Association.

-She asked, "How does someone know if they are in a food desert? What are some of the short and long term effects of food injustice?" She noted that living in a food desert is a symptom and that we need to get to the root causes of food injustice. The problem is what's below the surface. The not so obvious reason is structural racism. It goes back to stolen land and stolen labor - the history of enslavement in this country. "The system is not broken," she said, "it's doing exactly what it's supposed to be doing."

-On Friday, October 5, Pink Cornrows will be holding a community listening session. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

Korey Patty - Executive Director at Feeding Louisiana

-Feeding Louisiana is a state association of food banks.

-Everybody is familiar with the on-the-ground impacts of Ida. Every storm is different, but where this one was different has been the gas challenges, which has been difficult to work around.

-Baton Rouge - most folks have had power restored, but the areas closer to the coast, those places have a long road to recovery. Not dissimilar to Hurricanes Delta and Laura.

-There are a number of policy options and programs the state can request from the federal government to assist in disaster response. From day 1 of the storm, they have been

submitting some requests to be able to more freely distribute commodities so people can use them quickly.

-With this storm there have been more pop up, mobile and scheduled distributions from the GBR food bank, so that anybody impacted by the storm, regardless of your income, if you've lost power/food/home, you might need that assistance.

-Starting next Monday - those places where power has been better restored, is the start of DSNAP - in the past people had to go to a physical place to apply, but in the last couple years the state has moved that to a virtual process. On Monday - Wednesday or Thursday of next week, depending on the first letter of your last name, you have an opportunity to enroll in DSNAP. All of next week for this area allows folks to apply for those benefits so people can use those in grocery stores as they open up.

-All of these solutions spin up pretty quickly - hot food waiver is available for SNAP retailers.

-This isn't over. For Ida and because hurricane season is long from over.

Emily Chatelain

-Working with a few organizations who made donations of fresh produce, fruit, veggies, geared towards kids. Daily hot meal delivery St. Helena, St. James, St. John, East Feliciana. Fill needs where we see them.

Week 75 (9/24/21)

Teen Pregnancy & Maternal Health

MEETING NOTES:

Dena Christy, CEO, Family Roads of Greater Baton Rouge

Family Roads of Greater Baton Rouge is a nonprofit one-stop-shop for social services that works with other nonprofit and private entities and government agencies to provide services. In addition we do direct services. Founding ideas is looking at the magic moment of birth and intro families to skills and to their journey of being a lifelong teacher to their child.

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Case management services - works with expectant mothers and fathers and other birthing people - home visitations - started 25 years ago. When we started there was a large gap. Louisiana is 4th in the country for infant mortality. We felt the Healthy Start Program would be able to address that issue. There was a lack of education in the community and focusing on youth and their education and knowledge. Even though teen pregnancy has gone down, the effects of that continue.

In the past we talked about abstinence and abstinence only, because of Louisiana's systems. Being able to allow them to make decisions that will affect and impact their future. Human sexuality is a part of life and your body and mind is more than just about sexuality. Many times our children don't hear that. They hear that sex is bad, don't do it, don't bring a baby home. Many people in our program are in their 20s and 30s and still don't know how their bodies function. And that leaves them in dangerous situations when they didn't have to have that experience if they had had the education.

Ashley Everett, MPH, Program Manager Adolescent Health, Institute of Women & Ethnic Studies

Build on previous teen pregnancy programs. It teaches comprehensive sex ed but in a trauma lens. Funded through the office of population affairs. Programs = Get Real (middle school) Reducing the Risk (high school).

Primarily focused on getting parents focused on child's sex education - offer parental caregiver workshops. Just for parents so they can work with other parents and have a safe space. Teen sex and the law - what the laws are related to consent. Healthy relationship communications - how to talk to your kids about that. STI 101 - what are the different diseases, where can you go to get treated, talk to your kids about those uncomfortable conversations.

Parental advisory team - they will look over the workshops

and they go over what is being said before they go out and teach the classes.

Youth Leadership council - safe space for them to talk about things. They look over the materials, they give feedback.

Moving from direct implementation to capacity - training others to teach sex education as well. The goal is to keep tapping into different areas in schools

Kenyatta Parker, Adolescent Health, Institute of Women & Ethnic Studies

Importance of moving into a more capacity building approach. For the last 10 years building direct implementation so it's important to move into capacity mode. Moving into a training model. Quality implementation is a priority for us. Being inclusive is also important. If they're not prepared that's going to show up in the classroom.

Amid the pandemic we had to switch to sex ed virtually. Post-disaster we've been really trying to figure things out. What can we do with some of our schools still being closed. We know the river parishes have been completely destroyed due to the hurricane. We're trying to see what's feasible now. Whether it's going back in person or going back virtually.

Week 76 (10/01/21)

Growing number of neighborhoods in poverty

MEETING NOTES:

Dr. Tracey Rizzuto, Director, LSU School of Leadership and Human Resource Development

We are working with law enforcement in Baton Rouge to innovate so they use data instead of their gut. This relates to opioid and drug abuse. Treating drug abuse as a crime is not healthy. Addiction is a disease. We need to approach this challenge differently in the city. Got grant money to take a different approach. Let's look at the data and try to find out what the needs are. How can we best communicate with

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them and put them with the services that will give them the best outcomes.

When You're Ready BR - www.whenyouarereadybr.com (newsletter). Follow @WYABR on Facebook & "whenyouarereadybr" on Instagram. It's a one-stop-shop for people looking for counseling and addiction services. Sign up for the newsletter and you'll get regular announcements on what's happening. Few different strategies using data. Targeting neighborhoods where there is a hotspot of overdoses. Organizing at the grassroots level is step 1. Step 2 is a coalition of providers to help people link in to the services that are available. If you look at the hotspots, some of them are hotels and motels, landlords that are absent and halfway houses that are not well regulated.

Two events upcoming

- a. 10/10/2021, Faith and Blue Community Outreach, by BridgeAgency in partnership with BRPD, When You Are Ready BR, and LOGOS Center of Deliverance Ministries (nicole@bridgeagencyinc.org)
- b. 10/20/2021, D.A.'s office will join Capital Area Human Services to discuss prevention & recovery efforts in the fight against opioids. Don't have a link to that webinar yet, but anyone can sign up for it.

Donald Monistere, CEO & President, General Informatics

Allowing an organization to use technology to solve business problems. Working with LSU, BRPD, Sheriff - we see the challenges and the issues. Try to use data and technology to be better at policing and in our communities. This has been a passion for me because I see the impact on leaders. The old school leadership doesn't work anymore. AEI initiatives - did this in Birmingham - take all the programs focused on education - high school and post graduate - focusing on finding ways to get education to the people who want it most. Pull all those programs together to have one single source.

To get better and more education. We want to add value.

October 13 - I'm teaching a class based on my books. About how you as an individual can execute on a high level so that you can become an influencer as well. We're doing this at the cost of materials. One of the things you'll come away with is my three books, a workbook and a thumb drive full of information I've collected over my 30 years and it puts you in the best position to be successful. My job is really my calling. I get to influence people every day.

<https://geninf.com/contact/enhanced-series/>

Derrick Green, Founder, Betty Smothers K-Y Track Club

Started running when we were younger. Warrick Dunn's my brother. Been helping kids the way the track club helped us. We keep pushing them to the point of wanting to break them. Kids today feel entitled so we want to teach them that you can only get somewhere because of pain. We want you to learn that when things get harder you have to dig down and you will succeed. My brother is my example of that. Through my own trials and tribulations we have continued to build and build. It's tremendously sad every time you turn on the news. We, as a community, it doesn't matter what color you are or what nationality you are, we have to make sure we continue to push these young people to deal with that anger and just let it go. Kids are killing today because they don't know how to let go of that. As a community I think we need to do a better job of saying that I'm not going to throw you in jail, but I'm going to show you a better way. It isn't going to be easy but as you continue to practice this you will continue to evolve.

Week 77 (10/08/21)

Economic & Workforce Development

MEETING NOTES:

Summer Steib, Louisiana Equal Pay Summit Update 11/16/21

Louisiana continues to rank at the bottom of gender pay equality and gender wage gaps. What would an equal pay summit look like for the entire state of Louisiana? We will be doing that on November 16.

We will focus on three specific areas around equal pay

- 1) How do you maximize what you're worth so you can advocate for yourself?
- 2) What can companies do to focus on equal pay? We will have HR experts talking about what companies can do. In Louisiana we have an equal pay mandate for state employees. How can closing wage gaps actually benefit business and the economy instead of the negative connotation it typically has?
- 3) And then we're going to end the day with a panel on activism and engagement. They're going to talk about how they were able to achieve what they accomplished.

It is going to be virtual and it is going to be all day, but there will be three distinct sessions that people can drop in on. We know that folks who were already on the margins before the pandemic, they've now been pushed even further away. You can't turn on the TV without hearing conflicting narratives about working shortages. Are there some opportunities through the pandemic to really look at ways that closing the wage gap can be part of that conversation. We want as many people there as possible. Getting folks to get excited about it and to register and drop into one of those sessions.

Victoria Armstrong, Women In Marketing Conference, 4thFloor Productions

I created a Women in Marketing conference. The conference was supposed to take place in August but it was postponed

to January 29, 2022. The conference will be a networking platform for all women who need help, no matter where you are in this journey of building your company or nonprofit organization. It will be led by powerful influencers in this realm. Sevetri Wilson has great experience raising money with little to no capital. She's going to share resources and teach women how to utilize these resources in your business and organization. Some of our partners, Power Pump Girls, the other side of their business, they do all these really amazing things. They are now a partners of 4thFlr. They are going to be talking about experiential marketing. Ellen McNight who is a master networker. She is going to be leading some networking activities like ice breakers. Jamie Strayer, strategic planning, works with credit unions and teaches them how to get big grants to keep them afloat. She's going to tell her journey. She started her business at her kitchen table and her company now makes \$100M a year. She is going to be teaching other women how to be the powerhouse that they already are. Sometimes we need to see women in this space to see that it's possible. The conference is already sold out but opened more seats because so many people were asking to be part of it. I have grown to just love the company of women, but I love the atmosphere that women create when they let their guard down.

Sherreta Harrison, Sustainability Catalyst, MetroMorphosis

Let's talk about women leadership and equal pay in the nonprofit sector. One of the things I love about Baton Rouge is the amount of people who want to do good work, especially in the social service sector and nonprofit. Think of three nonprofits in Baton Rouge. Who leads them? How many of them were led by women? Baton Rouge is home to 4,000 nonprofits and 35,000 people in that sector. Nationally, only about 7.5% of executives in nonprofits are women. We are usually on level or a little worse than the national average. Women in nonprofits make 65% to 70% of what men make. When you think about the nonprofit industry, especially progressive

nonprofits, you would think these things are not true, but even in nonprofits that's true. Here in Baton Rouge our women led and people of color led organizations are less funded and less supported than white male led organizations. If we are employing a pretty good bit of people, we are contributing to this gap. One of the things we do at Metromorphosis is that we try to include women and young people to bring in women, specifically women of color and young women. We also provide specific opportunities to cultivate their leadership. And then do business with women owned businesses. We use caterers, we buy supplies. Are you intentional about using women owned businesses for your vendors? We connect small, women owned and minority owned businesses. Pay women more! If there is a wage gap, pay women more. We know that we all have our own experiences, so even though we don't mean it, we might be blinded to the opportunities. You have to be intentional about correcting that. Compare men and women in similar positions and it might be for now you just need to pay the women more.

The Urban Leadership Development Initiative email luke@metromorphosis.net

To find women owned (or minority owned) businesses visit <https://metromorphosis.net/small-businesses/>

Week 78 (10/15/21)

English proficiency and cultural differences

MEETING NOTES:

Nathalia Rocha Dickson, LL.M (Immigration Attorney, Dickson Law Firm, LC)

I do mainly immigration law. I'm originally from Brazil. It's been 10 years that 've been in the US. I'm part of the Baton Rouge Immigrants' Rights Coalition. We're asking the East Baton Rouge Sheriff's Office to end 287(g), an agreement with ICE. This allows the sheriff to do ICE's job. Whenever the sheriff has a suspicion that someone is here illegally, they can stop that person. If you are undocumented person,

the sheriff can arrest you and hold you for 48 hours until ICE comes to get you. So people who are arrested for everyday things like a traffic violation, they can be held for that time. We want to end this. We believe this increases racial profiling and separates families and makes our parish work for free from the federal government to feed these people who are being held for 48 hours and for pursuing people who are here undocumented. We have monthly meetings on how to gather ideas and how to work on these issues. We are very open to new members coming in and participating with us. New ideas are always welcome. I also work with Catholic Charities. We provide some legal orientation "know your rights" for those detained here in Louisiana. Our local prisons <https://www.foundationforlouisiana.org/baton-rouge-immigrants-rights-coalition-1/re> receiving immigrants and they are receiving money from the federal government to house these people. We want to make sure the conditions in those centers are appropriate.

Baton Rouge Immigrants' Rights Coalition

Our Story

The Baton Rouge Immigrants' Rights Coalition (BRIRC) was created in 2018 to address the unmet needs of the immigrant population in the Baton Rouge region while creating a positive narrative about immigrants and their role in the community. The coalition provides an empowering and safe space for residents, advocates, and service providers to:

Build relationships to better coordinate their existing work;
Develop a communications strategy to push against efforts to demonize and criminalize immigrants; and, Co-design a shared policy advocacy agenda to advance immigrants' rights while increasing visibility and civic participation of this community in the Baton Rouge region.

John Pierre (Chancellor, Southern University Law Center)

The law center has been doing work in the immigration space and we have an immigration course that we offer every semester. We have worked with Catholic charities

and Rosa was part of the first project I did. We have talked about having an immigration clinic at the law center. We haven't given up on the idea. It's mostly about timing. We have had many students interested in immigration law. We have always been involved in our students learning about immigration law and we would like to do whatever we can to get more engagement in this particular space. We have students who are interested and this is an extremely important area. One particular area is workers rights. We are hosting something this weekend.

Rosa Gómez-Herrin (Lead of Innovation & Strategic Partnerships, Operation Restoration)

I am an immigrant. I lived in the US now for 18 years, so all of my adult life. We support women and girls in incarceration. This includes immigrant detention as well. We run the only secular college system in the incarceration system. We provide social services, advocacy. If you look at the countries that do not require a Visa to enter the US - it's called the Visa waiver program - you will see how racialized the immigration system is, because for the most part white and wealthy nations are not part of this conversation. Those people from white and wealthy nations are not even required to apply for a Visa to come into the US. They only have to register with the state, that's a new thing that started in the last few years, but before that they could just come in. The other reason we're in the situation we're in is because the system is quite outdated. The backlog for cases is insane. They are right now processing cases from 1999. And the final thing is that in 2017 the state of Louisiana passed a package of legislation called the Justice Reinvestment Initiative (JRI). It was a success because the intention was to reduce the harsh sentences of people were getting in the criminal justice system. As a result we've seen a reduction of people who are incarcerated in Louisiana and an increase in the number of people who are in immigrant detention. So really, when we look at people who are in confinement, we're still number 1 because we have the highest number

of immigrants in detention other than Texas. So now we're seeing local jails like the one in Baton Rouge renting beds to ICE because they get more money from ICE than from the state. It's a money making enterprise and it shows how we're looking at legislation in the criminal justice space. If we don't look at the unintended results of legislation on other communities, we get these results.

Week 79 (10/22/21)

Healthy Food Access For All

MEETING NOTES:

Special announcement from Nina Ross (Founder, The Power of Women Fashion Show) about the upcoming spring is an arts & culture phenomenon uplifting young professionals and elevating our cultural landscape seeking strategic partnerships.

Myra Richardson (Founder, Red Torch Agency)

Last year Nina hosted one of the first fashion shows during the pandemic. It was an upscale, rooftop event, attended by the mayor's office. Looking for strategic partners

Nina Ross

I had a vision to create a platform to help entrepreneurs get a platform. It's not just a fashion show, it's about art, it's to inspire, it's to uplift. It's networking, etc. Last year we had more than 300 guests. This year we would like to see 500 in attendance.

Yolanda Kinchen (Scenic Market)

We're from here, my parents met in this area and we always had a vision to do something positive. The convenience store was a great vision. With Myra's assistance we partnered with Geaux Get Healthy and we now have fresh fruits and veggies from Top Box. I don't have the space for a lot of things right now. Last week we had a cooking demo with Baton Roots, Top Box, American Heart Association and

the Mayor's office. We didn't have a lot of traffic because it was early in the morning. The next event will be at 3 in the afternoon and we'll have more people involved. We want to get the idea of fresh fruits and vegetables to the community. We would also like to have a farmers market once a quarter. We want to push healthy eating. Also approved to do SNAP, which is super successful for providing low income families access to fresh food.

I can be reached 225-235-7248 and the address is 890 Scenic Highway. cenicMarketLLC@gmail.com or yykinchen@gmail.com

Trey Godfrey (Senior Vice President of Policy, BRAC)

It gets to the point where one asks, what will it take to get here? Through all of the consultants and analysis we've started to ground ourselves in what needs to happen. These issues become emotionally charged because we conflate economics with emotions. What we're actively doing is trying to address both sides at once.

Donnie Miller (Director of Business Development, BRAC)

We've been working with the mayor's office to focus on this topic. We brought together a group of stakeholders and the chamber's role was a support role. We did our own study to see what north Baton Rouge looks like, what's housed there and what it will take to overcome those challenges. What came out of that is a population of 73.5 thousand, average age of 36, average income of \$31K, 36,000 households. What will it take to get a tier one grocery store. When you contact groceries from around the country, it's actually an oversaturated market for groceries when you look at the greater scope. That doesn't mean they're in this market. We needed to put real concrete data to practice. Of all the folks that say they want a grocery, who has picked up the phone to call those groceries? That's what we've been doing. Who is our best chance of recruiting into North Baton Rouge? It's been an education to understand the cost. The sheer need,

hope and wish isn't going to put four walls up. Even dollars isn't going to put one there. Making sure we're thoughtful and that we're coming with the community need and not just the emotional need. We've had some embarrassing conversations about who will not come into the market. Kroger no longer wants to put in a 50,000 square foot market anywhere. They are looking for super stores at 80,000 square feet and they are only going to do 5-6 a year. As we learn more about what groceries are interested in and how we can craft the decisions to get someone here. It's going to be a heavy lift. If a grocer decided today, it would take at least 1 year to go through permit planning, hiring, etc. Donnie Miller - Donnie@brac.org (Baton Rouge Area Chamber)

Rinaldi Jacobs Sr. (Founder, Full Circle Development)

I live, eat, work, worship in north Baton Rouge. The issue of grocery stores, I live on North Sherwood and I am close to three stores, but for those in Scotlandville and others such is not the case. Many times people have to get their groceries from the dollar store or a convenience store. There are about 25 studies about things in north Baton Rouge. The Scotlandville plan was written in 2008 to address grocery stores. \$18 million leaving out of Scotlandville regarding grocery. What we've done since then is to create the Scotlandville new plan. Chris Tyson and Build Baton Rouge with grant from Chase are looking to put a grocery on Plank. It starts moving things to the north. From that, Cleo Fields got an appropriation of \$500,000 for a grocery store in north Baton Rouge. The economics in the fresh food initiative - the argument for disinvesting in neighborhoods is that there's not enough people there. And we have to talk about theft of products. We have to look at this through a different paradigm. The Dollar Store matrix is saturated in disinvested neighborhoods. Everybody uses dollar stores, but in those areas it's more of a concentration. Because of the transportation issues, you have to go with what you have. Now we're at a tipping point when we can bring several

grocery stores over the next couple years. Specifically Zion City and Plank road. Please, no more studies.

Pat LeDuff

Yes, 30 years we've been working on this. It's been 40 years since we had Food Town on Scenic Hwy. I'm surrounded by people who are naysayers. We are going to get a grocery store in Scotlandville. We don't rob people, steal things, etc. I see that happening on the other sides of town. We're getting ahead of those things to show we are successful. What the other areas can do is some accountability. A lot of the substandard stuff, they ship that to my neighborhood. It's always expired or about to expire. Let's find out who is responsible for holding those people accountable. There's flies on the meat, the milk's not good. The substandard stores should not be allowed to be substandard. Shop within. Support Scotland Saturday. Shopping within our community. We have been a viable village from the beginning. When we get back to that America is going to choke out because one thing we do is spend money.

Week 80 (10/29/21)

Mental Health

MEETING NOTES:

Special announcement from Nina Ross (Founder, The Power of Women Fashion Show) about the upcoming spring is an arts & culture phenomenon uplifting young professionals and elevating our cultural landscape seeking strategic partnerships.

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Week 81 (11/05/21)

Lack of Educational Attainment

MEETING NOTES:

Dr. Erin Bendily (Executive Director, Propel America)

Spent the last 15-16 years in education policy. Worked in the governor's office and in the State Department of Education. Leading a non-profit now. Also a mom of a public school student. I get that testing is not popular. My son reminds me every day that it's not his favorite. In the world of education, our teachers need it to figure out what they're learning and where they're falling behind. It needs to be in an unbiased way. If we're not doing that then we're missing an opportunity and we're not arming teachers with what they need to do their job well. Tests aren't perfect. We spend a lot of time and money with test vendors to make sure they're measuring the things that are valid and they're free from bias. There are good debates on all sides about how long the test should be. These are all good issues worthy of discussion and debate. At the end of the day we have to have information about where the gaps are. If we don't know where the needs are we can't formulate a plan to attack the issue. In Louisiana we've done a lot of the last several years to standardize the LEAP test. It is a federal requirement to get those federal funds. School has been really hard lately. It's more important now than ever to find out where our students are falling behind.

Jill Pinsky (Managing Director, Watershed Advisors)

Worked with Erin for much of the last decade at the department of education. Now working with Watershed. Assessments are important. They tell us what kids know and can do. Those types get the most attention because they're tied to accountability. They set the standard for what we expect kids to do. They are a tool. I'll add they have been a critical civil rights tool. Without those tests and the related accountability, we wouldn't have had the evidence in the large gaps between our students and the

state wouldn't have had what was needed to close those gaps. It was important during the pandemic to see where those gaps are. They are imperfect, but they are one of the biggest tools we have to hold adults accountable. There are a lot of carrots and sticks attached to those systems. We have a lot of work to do. There's some fact and fiction to all those criticisms. It's time for us to think about other ways we measure students. One path forward is to make better tests and tools. Innovative humanity assessment. This test is different in a few ways. It's taken throughout the year. A shorter test three times throughout the year. It asks questions about what students are learning in the class. We think this is more equitable. The content matters. Tying the material to the books kids are reading in class levels the playing field. There's an opportunity to expand our toolbox. Tests are not the only way. Louisiana doesn't test grades K-2. Schools do more than just English and math. We think there's an opportunity to measure these things that are true and equitable. Louisiana is looking at new ways of doing assessments and measurements. This is the moment. We got a break from accountability due to the pandemic. The state has other ways to do this work. Let's take this moment to build something better.

Tyrin Johnson (Office of Admissions, Louisiana State University)

I'm a recent education graduate from Southern University. I do think standardized tests are very important. As someone from a single-parent household with low-income, I was able to get an education due to testing. Unfortunately a lot of my classmates were not able to get to the score needed because they didn't have the resources. TOPS has been really influential in my education journey. I understand what it has done for me. It really launched my passion for education. There are those with the drive to excel but don't have the resources. LSU has implemented the test optional requirement, but you have to forego TOPS. I know from personal experience it is important. It has shaped my entire experience. I started in 8th grade, so I was introduced at a young age to ACT. K-8

area can often be shifted to the assessment of the teacher rather than the student, but it is very serious to students. From an admissions standpoint, students are waiting until their senior year, and that's too late. It's important to start in 9th grade and do it through 12th grade to track your progress. I did that and I was able to see that I improved academically, but I was not increasing, and that made me realize I'm not a good test taker.

Week 82 (11/12/21)

Access to Affordable & Reliable Transportation

MEETING NOTES:

Cheri L. Soileau (Director, Planning & Program Development / Capital Area Transit System)

Tomorrow is the renewal of our millage for Baker and Baton Rouge. It's not an increase. We're carrying 2.5 million people in this system. This allows us to leverage federal funds. Without it we can't do anything. Without it we will go back to pre-2010 transit. We will be starting micro-transits starting in Baker. We have a huge grant initiative where the ask is over \$45 million. We're working with Build Baton Rouge. One grant is due Monday and the other is due Friday. We have a lot of really great things Baton Rouge needs and deserves, but we need that millage. At the BRT stations, I'd like to have art at our transit stations. I want to talk. Let's make these stations and everything we do from now on, not just a transit stop, let's make it make sense and community wide that there's a connection. This is what we have planned and we need your support to get that millage renewed so we can do what we do. We're that line for people being able to provide for their families.

Mika Torkkola (Advocate, former president of Bike BR)

I live in Helsinki, Finland as of about two years ago, but before that I lived in Baton Rouge for twelve years - during which time I commuted exclusively by bike - and before that I've also spent big chunks of my life in Australia, New Zealand, and Germany. During my time I've seen a bunch

of different ways that people travel and get around, and I wanted to reflect on one of the paradoxes of how people TEND to do that, in most of the US. So if I were to put up a picture of the American flag, right now, and ask people to list some of the words that come to mind, then, in the very top few words you'd surely find the word 'freedom'. You hear that all the time from people in America, how much they love their freedom, how much they're willing to do for it. You see it plainly in everyday life, ranging from people doing crazy things like open carrying weapons, or refusing to wear masks - to more normal things like choosing how and where to educate their children, who to vote for, and what church they go to. In short, freedom good! Everybody agrees! This freedom extends, in principle, to how people choose to get around. In America you can choose between more types, makes, and models of cars than anywhere else in the world. You can have expensive cars and fast cars, small and efficient ones, hybrids, teslas, trucks, vans - everything in between. And with those come the highways and interstate infrastructure to match. I sometimes joke to my friends in Finland that when I lived in Baton Rouge we would regularly drive to visit my wife's family in Texas - it's 'only' 7 hours drive away. For us, that's 'normal'. But this freedom comes at a price. In exchange for the supposed freedom that a car offers, people who live in America, in large, give up a much more significant freedom - the freedom to actually choose how you get around. Think about this for a second. If you're home today in Baton Rouge, how many different options do you have, say, for getting to the office? You certainly have your car, but unless you're brave, or weird, or poor, you're pretty unlikely to decide to walk, bike, or catch a bus to the office - without even considering if those options are actually available to you. Like most people in Baton Rouge, you'll probably drive, and you'll do it without even realizing that you didn't even get to have a say in that decision. You only had once choice, to drive. That's not freedom at all. To illustrate what I think true freedom looks like, let me tell you about some of the ways that I can choose to get around in

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Helsinki. Of course, I can walk, or bike - there's plenty of facilities for those. Those facilities are shared, with among other things, e-bikes, roller-bladers, even small scooters. Then there's your public transportation. Depending on where I'm going, I can choose a bus, a train, a metro, a tram, or even a ferry - and I get my ticket through an app on my phone - they're all operated under the same service. And finally, if I so choose, I can use a car, and - bonus - if I do use a car the traffic here isn't even too bad because there's so many people getting around by other means! Helsinki isn't some giant metropolis, by the way - it's about twice the size of Baton Rouge. In many parts of the world this kind of choice I'm talking about is normal, and it's even normal in some cities in the US - you probably know what they are... So what does all this choice mean? It sounds great, but does it necessarily mean freedom? What do the stats say? The public transportation here is world class, so people use it, of course - about half of all people commute via some form of transit. The rest are split pretty evenly between 'active' transportation - biking/walking, or the like - and driving. And with all of this freedom to choose how you get around, comes a bunch of other freedoms. You can choose to live further away, with the bigger house and yard and all that, and drive, or catch a train, or what have you. Or you can live close by, forego the car - walk, bike, or take transit around town. And given actual choices - not the illusion of them - it turns out that people tend to choose to live how they actually want to, not how they have to. And when people truly get to live where and how they want to, they're happier, more physically active, more socially engaged, and even kinder! So I urge you all to think about walking, biking, transit, not as things that we have to make good because some people have to use them, but as things that we have to make good because people want to use them - even if they don't know it yet. I promise that if you do it right, then ten years from now the people who were against it will be coming up to you to tell you 'I've been saying we needed this for years!'. Baton Rouge

will probably never be like most of these cities I'm talking about, and that's okay - but it wouldn't take too much just to give people a little more choice, a little more freedom - in the way they choose to live and the way they choose to get around. That's probably a pretty easy sell.

John Spain (Executive Vice President, Baton Rouge Area Foundation)

Let's talk a little about New Orleans to Baton Rouge rail. During the Obama administration, Louisiana was offered \$300 million to start the rail and Jindal turned it down. A number of us still believe this is a good idea and we started looking at how to make that happen. It's not just linking the two largest economies, there's about 1000 people who work in New Orleans and live in Baton Rouge and vice versa. And they're getting on the interstate. The idea of moving lots of people efficiently by train is something that happens around the world except here. It's also important to remember that in 2005 we housed thousands of people in the Super Dome. With trains, they can become evacuation trains. Where we are today is more optimistic than we've been. We have a president who is often called Amtrack Joe. He lost his wife and children in a car accident and made a commitment to his surviving children that he would spend every night with them so he started taking the train from the capitol. The infrastructure bill contains \$66 billion for passenger rail. In 2016 I had lunch with Biden and he said "if your governor had accepted that money we'd be riding on that train right now." One of his senior officials is Cedric Richmond, from Louisiana, and is aware of the train. John Bel Edwards has run on the idea and has repeated his pledge that he's in favor of it. He has a special relationship with the president as one of the only democratic governors in the south. The Kansas City Southern rail line is an obstacle. They have no passenger rail in its system. Kansas City Southern is being sold and the new owner is going to be Canadian Pacific and they are already running passenger rail. Last week, Canadian

Pacific put into writing that they were excited about putting passenger rail in service in Louisiana. On Dec. 8, a senior person with Canadian Pacific is going to speak at a press conference in New Orleans. Assuming all that plays out, there has to be infrastructure improvements. Bridge over the Bonnet Carrie has to be replaced. Do we start the train and say it's going to go slower and then speed up or do we wait and do the improvements first? That's the question we're working on now.

Week 83 (11/19/21)

Economic and Workforce Development

MEETING NOTES:

Keisha Whaley, Founder, CEO of Brass Tacks Collective & BT Foundry - Dallas, TX

We've been having to creatively problem solve for things we've never thought of before. I have plenty of risk avoidance in other parts of my life, but when it comes to having to go into a situation with very little information and start making moves, that's where I lose that fear. As I have pivoted and reacted to the world around me, the fear goes away. I don't know exactly where that comes from. I have to guess that it is related to my mom being a midwife. Beyond that, I think the other thing going on here around me in Dallas is an invitation to collaboration that I've never seen before. I can't say that Dallas is all full of competitors, but that's the feeling. When I came in with my big energy of starting a business that involves giving people a start in this industry and working with nonprofits and I want to put all these people together, people were hesitant. When the pandemic hit, that changed. The rest of the world wants a connection. It softened people who had a hard shell, especially in business. We've been able to make a lot of progress in the last year. We do a whole lot better bigger things together rather than when we are in competition with each other. What if we just see where this takes us and we give each other the grace to figure that out.

Derek Haigler (Founder, Yoga For All Humans - Austin, TX)
I was born and raised in Baton Rouge. I worked in corporate America for the last decade and thought that was going to be my life forever. I had no doubt my HR career would lead to an executive C suite. A lot of people talk about the shift that happened during COVID and that's real. I went to the end of my career and I was doing everything I wanted to do. I had the impact. But one thing that shifted for me in the pandemic is that I've always been a yogi, but yoga went online. I was able to increase my practice from one or two times to three times. That really got my wheels turning about how I can make a bigger impact in the world. One reason I wasn't going is because before the pandemic was the cost. Renting space is very expensive. And then time. It's really hard to make the time. It's not just an hour you have to carve out, it's time to get there and time to get back. So I saw an opportunity to truly help people with yoga. If we want to see societal change, it starts with self. I started thinking about blind and def yoga, and people with physical disabilities. There are a lot of barriers to yoga. Our goal is to break down the barriers and make yoga actual inclusion. What can you do to create space for yourself and for those around you, because change happens with ourselves first.

Rodneya Hart, Division Director, Louisiana State Museum

I do art stuff. I've always done art stuff. My goal in life is to open the doors wide. I had access to arts culture and history my entire life. It changed my entire perspective in life and it opened so many doors for me. I wondered why other people didn't take advantage of this. I was often the only black person in the room. I started to look at the economic issues. You have to have a generation of wealth to take that leap. To feel entitled to those spaces, someone has to open that door for you. My goal is to create the living room of museums. I want people to feel so entitled to this space they're mad when we close the doors. I want people to eat lunch here and live here. If you're not taking advantage of what's already yours, you're going a disservice for yourself.

It will only pay you dividends. If ever you do feel intimidated, call me. I'm here. One of the things that has been said is that we're here to break down barriers. This is not a pie. There's not a slice. There's always room for more. We are a majority minority city, but the majority in arts spaces are not a representative model of our community. So I'm very intentionally bringing in exhibits that people in the community can see themselves reflected in. I want to make sure the future of this institution is more accessible. How can I take away language as a barrier? I'm very open to feedback. We had 2,800 people go into the gallery and see the Green Book exhibit. But what I was most excited about was the programing. I brought in people who were able to speak to a new audience and engage in a new way and gave them the floor to feel empowered. The Yellow book talks about the interstate system and how it bifurcates the black neighborhoods here. And we're showing pictures of houses here in Baton Rouge. Those are important conversations people need to have. This is not just buzzwords, this is not academic, this is a passion project, a life's mission I aspire to continue to do. One thing I encourage is for people to become a member of any museum. Feel invested in a space. One of the ways that happens is by becoming a member. It's not just a sell to make money, it's a sell for investment. If you like it, put a ring on it.

Week 84 (12/3/21)

Cannabiss in Louisiana

MEETING NOTES:

David Brown, Attorney & Biologist, Coastal Cannabis Consulting

We've come a long way in drug law reform in Louisiana during my time in involvement. When I first started doing anything in this space I was in school at LSU and I moved over to Austin, TX back in 1996 with a plan to establish residency there and then apply to graduate school. I ended up getting involved with a drug law reform project there that was ahead of anything in Louisiana. Although we were not

successful, I got a good education. A lot of the names and faces I met in 1996 were names that are still active to this day. Moved back to Louisiana and started groups at LSU. Both part of a larger network. Louisiana has led the prison population internationally for as long as I could remember and that's on a per capita basis. Over time we were able to do some things. As a piece of all of this I was motivated in a couple different ways. One was to end war on drugs. It was nothing but destructive over any metric you look at. It didn't make any sense that we were waging a war as a country against a plant and one that had significant medicinal benefit. We found it was relatively easy to get local media to cover it. We were amplifying our voices from farther than the parade grounds of LSU. We started lobbying at the capitol. Drug law reform was a piece of it but sentencing reform became a big part of it. I eventually became a city prosecutor in Baton Rouge and saw what was coming through the doors. People coming in were people of little means. It's devastating to see that every day. Although I didn't have involvement in drug prosecution it was around me every day. I have been lobbying at the capitol for over 20 years. I've been seeing some significant changes. And then Gov. Edwards got elected and his main platform was criminal justice reform. As far back as anyone can remember, there has been no Louisiana governor who has gotten elected without endorsement by the Sheriff's association. It was heartbreaking to see people's lives affected by these nonviolent offenses that didn't hurt anyone but themselves. I was able to access LEAP (Law Enforcement Action Partnership). From seeing the war on drugs first hand, they couldn't remain silent anymore. We became part of the coalition under Gov. Edwards that has helped to change things. There's an article from Nov. 29 in the Advocate and it noted that when Gov. Edwards signed legislation in 2017 the prison population had reached 40,000 and has dropped by half. There's a lot more legislation that needs to happen. Clean slate legislation was represented by Ted James. I got up close to this reform and through the effort to achieve medical marijuana legality in the state of

Louisiana. Louisiana was one of the first four states to legalize medical marijuana although it was only on paper. In 1978, Louisiana joined three other states to have a medical marijuana program on the books and it was only 4 medical issues. They came back in 1991 and added additional issues. We were actually cutting edge back then but we never got anything done with that. In Louisiana the projections are for 400 million business in medical marijuana by 2025. We have a medical market and it's hard to compare that to an adult use or recreational market. Louisiana is currently prohibited from levying a sales tax on medicine. That issue came up in the 2021 session so we were able to avoid levying a tax on it. Keep in mind that when we do transition from medical to adult use, you can put some significant taxes on it. You should be careful to make sure that the retail is competitive against the black market.

Peter Robins-Brown, Policy & Advocacy Director, Louisiana Progress

I came to Louisiana progress a year ago. When I got involved we were coming at it from two sides. We really wanted to come at things from an anti-poverty and anti-racism level - at the state and local level. The second was what can we actually get done in the short term. What are some holes we're not seeing a ton of advocacy that we can help fill in or build on? We saw that the medical program was moving forward and that nationally state after state was eliminating prohibition. This is one of the major legs that's holding up the war on drugs and perpetuates the mass incarceration system. White folks and black folks use marijuana at the same rate but black folks are 2.5 times more likely to be incarcerated for it. The first week of the legislature this year I went around to the 20 folks that are the bellwethers. They all told me they are okay with the medical expansion, I can't vote for legalization but I can support decriminalization. We walked around the capitol and talked to everyone we could and helped create an echo chamber and it gained momentum. We got it out of the house first with almost

70 votes. Admittedly we got lucky in the senate committee because one of our no votes didn't end up showing up that day. We got exactly 20 votes, which is what we needed and the governor signed it. We are now ahead of everywhere else in the deep south. One of the things we're going to try to come back with next year is retroactive expungements. We are going to bring a bill to end prohibition. We are going to bring a bill to end reciprocity. This is going to be a years-long effort. I do believe that it's inevitable that we are going to end prohibition. The more momentum we can build the sooner that will happen.

Week 85 (12/10/21)

Debt

MEETING NOTES:

Davante Lewis (Director of Public Affairs and Outreach, Louisiana Budget Project)

Payday lending is often seen as one of the most useful tools to provide low income families temporary assistance in the US. They target people who are suffering a setback. People get a payday loan because they've had a car accident or some other issue - they offer short term loans between \$500 to \$1,000. Why do we call this a payday lending trap? They take out a loan and they are now making repayments on those loans. Not only are they making payments on the loan but they are making interest payments. Louisiana does not have a cap on interest rates. A \$500 payday loan is around 257% interest. The highest is around 367% interest. Now they are repaying that loan with a 300% interest rate, that's where the trap starts. They then offer a loan for more money. The moment you accept a new loan, all of your previous payments are now wiped out. And now you start over from scratch. You can never catch up to now pay all of your bills and what you're doing. We've been really working on this. We really need our credit unions to step up. They target low income communities and they make sure they don't invest in those communities. It is an objective to buy a building that is deteriorating. That's why you're only going

to see payday lenders in locations that are underserved communities. There were 256 payday lenders in our city. When you're talking about a lack of a grocery store, you have to think about how many of these predatory lenders exist in those areas. Why has Louisiana not done anything? Payday lenders really market themselves as the only ones who care about low income people. Banks are not going to give them a loan. If you're trying to keep someone from going on government assistance, payday loans help with that. The industry makes itself out to be a savior. But what they don't say is how predatory they are. As we start to rebound after COVID, they are going to get very active again. As evictions go up, as supply is down, they are going to get more active. We're going to see a great effect policy wise. What can we do about it? We've working to get a cap at 36%. We are going to encourage local governments to be empowered. They can do it with zoning policies. This would restrict the number of payday lenders that could be in a particular area. That's what we do now. We zone how many restaurants can be in an area. These are some of the solutions.

Carmen Million (President, BBB of South Central Louisiana)

The BBB is a nonprofit organization that was established in 1950 to combat advertising issues. We try to educate the public and that's both consumers and businesses. To build trust. We also mediate marketplace disputes. Most people think we only take complaints. One of the things the BBB does, when we rate companies, there's a formula. Payday loans automatically get a F rating because of the way they target consumers. When people go to a payday lender, they're in a bind, they're scared. Most of these consumers are embarrassed. They don't want to talk to their family about it. Unfortunately they have that used car salesman pitch. They signed the contract without reading it. They're not familiar with it. They don't want to sound stupid asking questions. And then they get involved in a situation where they rob Peter to pay Paul. We also see people years past paid off payday loan and they get a call telling them that

still owe some amount and they have to pay immediately or they are going to issue a warrant for their arrest. We have people call us crying thinking they are going to get arrested. These people are just trying to scam you or continue to scam you. People think that they have to pay this high interest rate, that they don't have any other choice. There are. You have to be your first line of defense. Investigate your company. If you go to the BBB, they're going to have an F rating. I'm meeting with bankers now and credit unions to where they will alert the public they do have resources to help people. With COVID and everything else that's happened, they're in situations they never thought they would be in. We tell people to do business with someone you feel comfortable with. They're not going to judge you because you have bad credit. They may not tell you what you want to hear either. We have to make our own informed decisions.

Week 86 (12/17/21)

COVID-19 Update

MEETING NOTES:

Jared Hymowitz, Director of the Mayor's Healthy City Initiative, City of Baton Rouge

Early on, there was a high positivity rate and low amount of cases. As test kits became more available, we had a lot of tests and low positivity. The difference with Omicron, we have a huge positivity rate, and that means there's a lot of COVID in the community. We're at a 28% positivity rate at the end of December. That's going to go up.

We've had over a million tests in EBR. There are two types of tests:

Molecular/ PCR - it is a test that gets sent to a lab and gets processed.

Antigen are the rapid tests. They can be done in a clinic or pharmacy.

We've had 76,000 total cases in our community. Deaths, over 1,000 confirmed deaths in EBR parish. It's important that we continue to look at racial breakdowns. We know there are social determinants of health. Outreach and messaging are

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key. It's also about access.

Omicron is very contagious and we have a lot of virus in our community.

Antigen tests are not perfect but they are still a valuable tool.

We need to protect our healthcare workers. We need to protect our hospitals.

Wear a Mask, Wash Your Hands, if you feel sick stay home, if you have covid-19 symptoms get tested and know your status.

We have a shortage of tests in our community. If you're going to the clinics and you want the rapid test, it's likely you're not going to get it. The PCR is going to tell you whether you have it or not. The rapid might give you a false negative.

Our healthcare workers are our priority. If you want to go to the doctor or the emergency room, you need those healthcare workers. They're getting covid. They're having to stay home. They're leaving their jobs because they are overburdened.

We also need to protect our hospitals. You're waiting three to four hours in an emergency room. Oscher and the Lake are reporting double the volume because people are going to the emergency room to get tested and they should not be doing that.

Omicron symptoms are different. People are not losing their sense of taste. They're getting things like night sweats and coughs.

Get vaccinated, get boosted. That's the only way we are going to get out of this.

Nathalia Rocha Dickson (Founder, Dickson Law Firm)

287(g) agreement is an agreement between ICE with the local law enforcement that deputizes the local police. The federal government gives the local law enforcement, in this case EBRSO, gives them the opportunity to perform the federal agent's duties. They're given this power to find and arrest undocumented individuals until ICE is able to come pick the person up and take them.

We are pushing very hard for the sheriff to end this agreement.

We think this is very prejudicial.

We think it profiles people and the immigrant community will lose faith in law enforcement. We want these people to be here and be part of this community.

What is the right way of getting here? And once they are here, how should they be treated? We do believe this is an unfair agreement.

Homero López (Legal Director, ISLA)

We've seen racial profiling at the criminal level due to 287(g) Louisiana is currently the state with the second largest detained population. Out in central Louisiana, in areas where people typically don't go to. It's far away from metropolitan areas. The closest one is 2 hours away from Baton Rouge. And that's where we're detaining people.

In 2018, Louisiana expanded. It expanded from 2,000 to at the end of 2019 to 70,000 people.

People used to be released to their families and their communities. We used to release them, we don't do that anymore. Louisiana started housing people in that situation. What that led to is expansion of detention centers. The reason the expansion happened is because in 2017 there were these wonderful criminal justice reform bills. It let a lot of people out of jail. ICE comes in and says you already have this great infrastructure, put a little paint on it and we'll pay you double what the state was paying you to become a federal detention center. It was really expensive on the state before 2017. The same incentive doesn't exist.

The Remain in Mexico policy. If you're not from Mexico and you show up at the Mexican border seeking asylum, ICE will make you stay in Mexico while you go to your court dates. In order to apply for asylum you have to be in the US. There's no process for you to do it while you're out of the country. Asylum is a legal method to come to the United States. They are going through the legal process.



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HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

Give Your Time

OneRouge wants people and groups from all walks of life to participate in this collaborative and consensus-building movement. Whether it's attending a Friday call, helping to lead a coalition, or suggesting the movement reach out to a subject matter expert—it's all valuable to the collective impact process.

Share Your Talent and Leadership Abilities

Collective impact only works when the voices of relevant lived experience(s) are recognized, elevated, and valued. Talent and leadership in the process is about bringing specialized knowledge and/or subject matter expertise to the table, but including all kinds of stakeholders in the discussion is critical to long-term success.

Provide Funding

Conducting work always has a cost; even if the cost is not in dollars. Energy and focus for one subject or effort, detracts energy and focus from another subject or effort. There comes a time when additional, dedicated resources are needed to deal with everything that needs to be done. Those additional resources—well beyond generous volunteers or in kind donations—require financial support to secure more manpower, time- or work-saving equipment, and/or highly efficient and/or automated solutions.

Join the Team!

Join the ranks, energy, and community spirit of folks on the following pages who are consistently involved in OneRouge work!



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