

**Urban Strategies Inc. (USI)**  
**Beecher Terrace Monthly Report**  
**November 2023**

**Executive Summary:**

*The future of every community lies in capturing the passion, imagination, and its resources of its people.*  
– Ernesto Sirolli

This month Urban Strategies Inc. (USI) continued providing comprehensive family support services through strategic service coordination and resident engagement. Utilizing the Results Count Framework, USI works to close equity gaps by implementing targeted strategies aimed to promote economic self-sufficiency for families, enhance the quality of life for seniors and over all well-being for all Beecher Terrace residents. Additionally, increasing access and connection to opportunities that lead to thriving outcomes. This report will reflect highlights from engagement strategies, such as monthly resident meetings, health chat event, and progress across all pillars.

There are currently 395 families in Family Supportive Services, which includes 756 individuals. We have seen an increase in engagement from last month. That is 6 more families and 8 more individuals that are actively engaged with USI. USI has exceeded a previous goal of maintaining over 80% engagement and will continue to maintain 90% of eligible families enrolled and actively participating in supportive services. USI continues to partner with LMHA, MBM, and newly management company CT- Group to fully support residents throughout the relocation and reoccupancy process. This supports includes providing accurate and up to date information, aiding with navigation of housing and utility support programs, assisting with lease cancellations, barriers that prohibit reoccupancy, maintain lease compliance and other factors that will jeopardize housing stability. USI continues to strategize and develop partnerships with organizations to uplift and support the residents. There were several engagement strategies utilized this month.

**This month's events included:**

**Monthly Resident Meeting:** (Held on 11/20/23). This month's meeting focused on our families with children attending school. Jefferson County Public Schools is one of our partners. USI asked them to come out and speak with parents and grandparents about the application process when applying to magnet schools. The guest speaker for this meeting explained to families that the application process had changed, and the school options were limited to 2 schools. There is a new choice plan that was implemented and now families can choose to attend neighborhood schools, but they are required to apply. The application process is also for those who are new to JCPS and those who wish to attend a magnet school. The guest speaker that represented JCPS came out and spoke with families about the process, sites where applications can be completed as well as important documents that will be needed to go with the application and deadlines. There were 41 attendees in this meeting.

**LMHA- Affordable Connectivity Program-** (Held on 11/2/2023) Louisville Metro Housing Authority partnered with Verizon wireless, ATT & T, Cricket, and Gen Mobile to get residents qualified for low-cost internet and cable. This program is designed for those who reside in lower income communities to be able to obtain internet access at a low paying cost. Many residents have been successful in receiving these services. The cost can be as low as \$10 or they're eligible to receive \$30 credit toward their current bill. This program is funded by the federal government. This program is to allow participants to have access to reliable high-speed internet. LMHA staff was also able to get individuals sign up for the LIHEAP program for those who need assistance with utilities. There were 17 attendees at this event.

**Equitable Community Development Leadership "ECDL"** - (Held on 11/2/2023) This leadership group was created by USI. The group consist of individuals from the community who are interested in becoming leaders and that are ready to advocate for other residents in the community. An ECDL group was formed in BT back in 2021. Each member of the group will attend a monthly meeting that includes training sessions from community members/leaders who currently who work in the community, doing work for the people. Being a part of this group gives opportunities to those who want to serve, find leadership skills within themselves, advocate on the behalf of their neighbor, assess and understand the needs of the neighborhood, and receive a \$100 stipend for participating. This opportunity is beneficial not only the participant, but more importantly the neighborhood. They can get one on one training to go out into the community to be vocal on resident needs where there are policies in place. These meetings will be held 1x a month at Beecher Terrace, and an expert speaker/ trainer will be there to discuss various important topics. This meeting held on 11/2 was led by TaLonda Holland. The topic was "Equity" and "What it means to be a leader" There were 8 participants in this meeting.

**Beecher Book Club Meeting-** (Held on 11/29/2023) The USI book club meets 1x a month. During these meetings they are given the opportunity to choose a book they would like to read and discuss the book they have previously read. The most recent book read was titled "The Woman in Cabin 10", Ruth Ware. Members of the group expressed that the book was "all over the place" and it could have been shortened. This club was designed to bring neighbors together in a relaxed setting and be able to share their opinion about reading and how it keeps them sharp. They plan to choose a different genre book for the month of December.

**Family Support Services- Outreach and Engagement:**

Total HH in Grant Award 767	Total Eligible HH 451
# and % of HH in Case Management	395 and 87%

Updates on Outreach and Engagement: (key meetings are conducted to engage residents, increase residents in family support services or to support residents who are actively participating with USI. USI continues efforts to enroll and engage all eligible Beecher Terrace families. USI is maintaining an 87% enrollment rate of eligible households. Implementing strategies that includes outreach to inactive households, USI has enrolled 7 new families in Family Support. Each week family support specialist makes outreach calls/visits to inactive families to re-engage them. After 5 successful attempts, they

become inactive in our system until we get a response. A letter is sent out stating their status in Family Supportive Services, and as always, they can be re-activated. During the holiday season, USI likes to send out cards to let families know that we are thinking about them and to see them a Holiday Cheer. In the past, this strategy helped to get families re-engaged. It didn't look like your everyday mail, and it was a heart felt message that one may not get all year. USI has set up opportunities in which individuals can engage in Family Support Services. During our recent resident meeting we were able to give away 5 turkey baskets and 30 pies (per resident request). During this meeting there were new faces and an evening filled with a lot of fellowship with residents who are new to the property. During these types of events, USI utilizes this time to promote more of the services we offer, encourage residents to be ambassadors for USI and to represent the neighborhood, have the capacity to lead and get more residents to want to be a part of family support services.

**USI continues to raise outreach efforts with the following strategies that has helped reach our organizational goals when it comes to engagement:**

1. Providing a monthly calendar of meetings and events that are accessible for residents,
2. Canvassing the community to share monthly calendars, flyers, and info regarding family support services.
3. Utilizing the ONE CALL systems to increase targeted outreach to identified populations.
4. Use of social media to engage and promote opportunities and successes of Beecher residents and supporting Choice Partners.
5. Send out holiday cards to residents who have not been able to be reached in the past 6 months.

**Economic Mobility:**

<p><b># and % of Able-Bodied employed residents</b>  <b>211 and 57%</b></p>	<p><b>2023 Target -150 or 71%</b></p> <p><b>Current Employment rate</b>  <b>122 or 57.8%</b></p>
<p><b># and % of 18–24-year-old youth in secondary education and/or job training (19 eligible)</b></p>	<p><b>2023 Target: 19 or 100%</b></p> <p><b>14 or 73% of individuals between 18-24 are employed</b></p>

**2023 Employment Targets:**

- Increase working work able to (150 or 71%)
- Increase # of 18-24 y/o working or be placed in post-secondary education to 19 or 100%
- Encourage work closer to neighborhood so that transportation won't be a barrier.
- Seek residents who are interested in working in the entertainment industry, ie those who may be interested in working at the new Derby Casino

- Build resumes with those who need enhancements to their resumes.

The number of working individuals has changed due to reporting current job transitions/changes by those who were inactive and now have been reactivated or those who may have changed jobs due to hours, school changes, etc. There were residents who were newly employed, and through the intense strategies of supportive services, engagement has increased. USI has been diligent in digging up barriers that prevent individuals from maintaining employment and/ or gaining employment. Childcare, transportation, and mental health have been expressed through case management as to why those who are not employed. We are partnering with childcare providers such as the YMCA and OVEC to get residents connected at a discounted rate with the 3C program. Many of the residents qualify for the assistance and just must find a way for it to work for them. Being out of the work force since COVID 19, there have been discussions around how to get back into the habit of working, going to school and being a parent. USI plans to gear things up for the month of December. We are hosting a Section 3 job inquiry tabling session for our current and former residents. USI recently partnered with "Dotted i Alliance" who are looking over the "interest forms" for the section 3 jobs. During these sessions, we plan to have one on one chats with residents regarding barriers being eliminated and have a therapist/mental health counselor on site to schedule any appointments for those who wish to receive services or consult with a professional about identifying reasons why one can't get back to work. USI will continue its efforts to ensure that we get 30 more individuals in the process to start working or enrolled in a training course to get certified for a job that has more than just great pay.

### **Educational Updates:**

USI has 250 + children enrolled in Family Support Services. There 28 out of 51 that are enrolled in center based or formal home-based early learning programs. We have reported that 133 of our school aged children that are enrolled in out of school time programming. During the holiday break, USI plans to visit homes of families to deliver books to children for Christmas. This will be an opportunity for parents to read with their children and uplift our children to read to stay ahead of the learning. JCPS data shows that the kids in the Russell Community score lower in areas such as reading and math, this is a way to try and close the gap. There are many parents who may not be encouraged to read with their children. USI will inform parents that reading increases vocabulary, increases general knowledge, how it builds independence and self-confidence. We have tracked during assessments, that over 59% of parents read "occasionally" to their children. We are aiming to increase this to 75% or more by providing these books in the homes before the holiday break.

JCPS has launched its school choice plan, and it also the time for children in transitional school grades to choose their school. The school choice plan allows families to select schools in their neighborhood, but they must still apply. Many of our parents are interested in sending their children to schools that have magnet programs. USI will continue to make phone calls to families that have those going in kindergarten, 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade. That is about 107 children. The application process is not difficult but, can be challenging. We are here to assist with the process, which is gathering documents, helping students with essays, advocating for students to get a teacher or administrator to complete documents for recommendation. USI presented JCPS at the most recent resident meeting to gather more insight on this process. JCPS also informed parents of sites that are hosting application sign ups with employees from JCPS there to assist. USI has offered to provide rides to the sites to those who are interested in

attending these sessions. As a partner with JCPS, we agree to connect the families to the sites that are hosting the application session as well as see to it that our families get the correct information.

### **Health and Wellness Updates:**

The health of an individual plays an important role in how we approach life. Our health determines our housing stability, our mental well-being, our physical well-being, and the way we move about our day. Therefore, in addition to efforts to stabilize housing, USI utilizes a holistic approach to execute strategies aimed to provide support that looks at health and wellness of the whole person: the physical, emotional, social, and spiritual well-being. USI partners with Oak Street health to ensure our families get the most updated and accurate information when it comes to health education. Our “Bingo with a purpose” will pick back up in the beginning of 2024. We use multiple strategies to keep individuals abrupt. Those strategies don’t always look like the gym or a healthy diet.

This month’s strategy and ongoing is:

**Beecher Book Club:** Reading is key to advancing knowledge, reducing stress, enhance sleep to improve memory circuits, sharpening decision making and possibly even delaying the onset of dementia. Our Beecher book club is open to all adult residents. This group is made up of seniors, as they were the only ones who showed interested based on sign ups at a resident meeting. The book club is keeping our residents refreshed and being involved with the library and the old way of “checking out” your book. Many people have resorted to using online reading and/or watching documentaries. USI believes that reading is good for the soul.

**USI Health Chats:** USI still conducts monthly health chats. Those chats include health education ranging from healthy meal plans to being able to go in advocate for yourself while talking with your provider. These discussions are aimed to keep residents up to date with healthy ideas, ways to improve health and focusing on the importance of what it means to be healthy. This month USI was able to discuss “Ways to change your mood”. This conversation was to give residents tips on improving your mood and your energy. We will continue to have to our monthly chats to promote health as it’s a way to get residents informed when it comes to their health needs.