

URBAN STRATEGIES INC, USI

MONTHLY REPORT

MARCH 2024

**Executive Summary**

We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community... Our ambitions must be broad enough to include the aspirations and needs of others, for their sakes and for our own -Cesar Chavez

What we do and how we do it, no matter which way, impacts our community. Urban Strategies Inc continues to support Beecher Terrace families as they continue to thrive while the neighborhood is still undergoing transformation. USI helps to enhance the quality of life through intensive case management, assist families with achieving realistic goals, promote healthy lifestyles to the senior population by implementing strategies to change lives. USI uses the Results Count Framework to identify target areas in which work needs to be done, analyze data to form a hypothesis, and work alongside families to seek better outcomes for themselves and their households.

There are currently 393 Households and 749 individuals in Family Support Services. USI still exceeds its goal of over 80% eligible families in Family Support Services. Through the continuous relocation services, USI still partner with LMHA, MBM, CT-Associates, and New Directions. This ongoing support allows our FSS to have a relationship with property management ensuring that residents are lease compliant, up to date with current information on policies and procedures, have access to accurate information as to property details and more. These relationships have helped USI build rapport with staff at properties. Having these relationships is not only useful for resident purposes, but for USI to continue to build throughout the community. To be effective and work as a team, USI is staying up to date with the latest relocation process and the guidelines for the new upcoming properties in the community. Building new communities allows residents to have an opportunity for change and for some, a fresh start, with that, we encourage residents to gain a sense of what it feels like to be in a new neighborhood. We strive to get residents acclimated become engaged in their new neighborhoods. In this report we will outline our engagement strategies through monthly meetings, family support services, and partnership collaborations.

**This month's resident programming and activities are as follows:**

**Monthly Resident Meeting (3.18.24.):** Community Leader, Jackie Floyd returned this year to speak with residents about the upcoming election and to introduce residents to new names on ballots for our local District council persons. Ms. Floyd is a long time, and vetted Russell neighbor, and advocate for this community. She brought awareness around the importance of voting and information about what our city leaders can do for us. Many residents are not knowledgeable about the individuals who are seeking to represent their neighborhood. Ms. Floyd was able to provide information about the 11 individuals running for metro council and answer questions that residents had about the neighborhood. District 4 is

getting a new council person for 2024, and residents have concerns about the changes that may take place. Ms. Floyd was also able to discuss subjects around the importance of voting and assisting those who need to get registered to vote. We also had Carrington Malone from the Office of Safe and Healthy neighborhoods there as well. The OSHN spoke on violence in the community and the importance of being aware of your neighborhood. Ms. Malone was able to share information around upcoming meetings that residents can partake in and allow their voices to be heard in the room. She also discussed the Grant money that was set aside for activities in the Russell neighborhood and to survey residents on how that money should be spent. The OSHN represents departments all to ensure neighborhoods are safe and healthy in the city. Ms. Malone represents the Russell neighborhood, and she plays a vital role in making this community aware of what's going on and how we can be a part of the conversations around change. MBM has a new property manager for Phases II and III in which was introduced at this meeting. K. Folley was there to support the residents and answer any questions that the residents had. There were 35 participants at this meeting.

**Section 3 Job Recruits (3.14 and 3.21):** USI has been diligent in recruiting individuals for the construction jobs at Beecher Terrace Phase IV project. We have been in the community for the past 5 months and have taken over 150 applications. The importance of being hired on this project as a resident or member of this community is just as important as living there. Being employed onsite gives any member of the community a chance to be a part of framework and what goes into the units firsthand. Section 3 jobs gives the opportunity to be able to live somewhere where your heart was put into the work of where you and your neighbors reside. These job recruits have been at Beecher Terrace community room and St. John's Men's Day shelter as well. We have partnered with Dotted I alliance, John G construction and LMHA to make this a smooth process in the hiring. We have taken 12 applications for the month of March.

**Gilda's Club Black History Trivia (3.11.24):** S. Rhodes with the Gilda's Club from the Republic Bank YMCA came down to get the minds of our residents thinking of some old facts about Louisville, Ky. This was in honor of Black History month in February and the Kentucky Derby that is on the way for May. The Gilda's Club provides support for families who have suffered loss due to Cancer or who may be a Cancer survivor. Ms. Rhodes informed residents of services that they provide at GC, which ranges from group therapy, yoga, meditation, luncheons and more. This Gilda's location is located at the family YMCA 1 mile away from Beecher Terrace. They are currently offering transportation for residents to utilize to attend programming at their office. Many residents enjoy the fellowship of one another when community members come out. USI collaborates with organizations in the community for residents can build relationships and seek resources when needed. There were 11 participants at this event.

**Equitable Community Development Leadership: (held on 3.18.24)** The leadership group had 9 participants in this meeting which was a dual meeting including the resident meeting. Members from this group were encouraged to be present at the resident meeting to gather information and pass along to residents who were unable to be present. The ECDL group has been gaining knowledge from community leaders about resources in the community to be able to share with their neighbors. The ECDL group is eager to become advocates for their community, but they are most interested in developing

leadership capabilities for themselves as they participate in this group. USI has not only local ECDL groups, but this is a national group that leads.

**Beecher Book Club (held on 3.20.24):** Book Club (held on 3/20/24): Beecher Book club is held at Beecher Terrace Community Room. This group of 5 participants has read a book titled “Tuesdays with Morrie: An Old Man, A Young Man and Life’s Greatest Lesson, by Mitch Albom. This meeting was a discussion of the book they read for the month of March. This book club is ongoing, and USI is partnered with the Louisville Free Public Library to get more residents to become involved in reading.

**Chair Yoga (held on 3.22.24):** Seated chair yoga was introduced to the Beecher residents for ages 55+. Chair yoga provides many health benefits, just as regular yoga would. This has been beneficial in reducing stress, improve strength and flexibility. Many of our Senior residents have health concerns when it comes to stiff muscles, arthritis, and breathing. This Chair Yoga was offered by staff within USI. USI is incorporating new activities within the Senior Building and bring more active awareness to the residents. There were 3 participants in this activity.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Beecher Health Fair (held on 3.27.24):** The Beecher Health Fair was located at the Community Room onsite. This was the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Health fair for residents to get health resources in one place. The health fair was an educational and interactive event designed for outreach to provide basic preventative medicine and medical screening to our residents. There were vendors ranging from Humana, Aetna, U of L hospital, Norton hospital, Gilda’s Club, Mental Health and more. There were 44 participants at this event.

**Family Engagement Night by OVEC (held on 3.29.24):** OVEC hosted a family engagement night at Beecher Terrace to get engagement with current families and to more families enrolled at their Russell Site. Beecher Terrace currently has 21 children who may be eligible for Early Childcare services. This event was hosted by OVEC in which food and activities were planned for the entire family. Many families came out to this event. OVEC and its staff were able to enroll children on site for open classrooms which age ranged from 0-2 y/o and was able to recruit parents for employment as teacher assistants. USI had 3 families to register and sign up of childcare services.

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

<b>TOTAL HH IN GRANT AWARD 767</b>	<b>TOTAL ELIGIBLE HH 451</b>
<b># AND % OF HH IN CASE MANAGEMENT 393 &amp; 87%</b>	<b># OF INDIVIDUALS IN CASE MANAGEMENT 749</b>

**UPDATES ON OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT:** USI has continued its engagement strategies with home visits, phone calls, texts messages and mailed letters to engage and re-engage residents who actively participate in Case Management. We have been very successful in using these strategies as it has been effective with the increase in participation. Resident engagement is the glue to this work. It allows our team to build relationships through programming, consistent interaction, meaningful in person meetings, one on one home or office visits and allowing residents to be resilient in spaces where there may have been feared. Our team is equipped with resources which is very vital when engaging with

residents. Building relationships with residents is only part of the work we do, the other part is making connections with community partners to be able to talk to residents about what the community has in store for them. We have been strong in numbers when we target specific areas in their life where goals are set. Rather it be employment, earning a GED, getting children connected to programming, obtain better housing, etc, we work alongside to make sure the goal is met. A strategic plan is put into place to keep the individual on track and to stay engaged. The strategies we currently have in place for resident engagement are the following:

- 1.) Provide a monthly calendar of meetings and events that are accessible for residents.
- 2.) Canvass the community to share calendars, flyers, and info regarding family support services.
- 3.) Utilize the ONE CALL system 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.) Creating and sending a newsletter to our residents each month to highlight past and upcoming events within each pillar, provide contacts to partners and other resources.

**Economic Mobility:**

# and % of Able- Bodied Residents 210	2024 Target – 150 or 70% Current Employment Rate 122 or 57%
# and % of 18-24 y/o youth in Secondary Education and/or training- 19 eligible	2024 Target- 19 or 100% 15 or 74 % are employed between the ages of 18-24.

**2024 Employment Targets:**

1. Increase employment numbers to 150, USI is continuing to push the importance of working a job.
2. Seek candidates that are qualified to work on the Phase IV redevelopment.
3. Assess and identify through survey, jobs that residents are seeking.
4. Focus on residents that have a large gap in employment.
5. Assist residents and make them aware of requirements for those who are awaiting SS Disability.

USI is currently working to support residents who are unemployed. Transportation remains a concern and childcare. There is childcare in the Russell neighborhood, but there is a limited amount of space available for children aged 3-4. We have 12 kids in that age range in Family Support Services, which brings a challenge for our moms. We partnered with OVEC to host a family night, to present OVEC and for a hiring fair this past week. There are several opportunities at OVEC, not just childcare, they have good paying jobs, tuition reimbursement, and more. There has been an interest in working in childcare as individuals have expressed during case management. We have connected 3 moms to the open

opportunity. We are working collectively as a group to help residents seek deeper into the job market. We are still considering remote jobs remain an option, as families discuss the challenges around transportation. USI will set out to develop plans and become intentional with working intimately with this population of individuals. USI is planning to host a "Youth Network". This will be a network of employers that hire individuals 15- 24. In April, we will collaborate with Youth Build to set up a night out to bring jobs to Beecher Terrace and the Russell community. Summer Jobs are important so that there will be an early mindset of what it means to have generational wealth. USI has been focused on creating a better opportunity for those who are currently unemployed. With the development of Phase IV being undergoing construction, we are being very intentional with making our residents a 1st priority. Section 3 jobs give individuals to become a part of the project. These jobs are for the community. The section 3 specifically identifies jobs that are suited for those that we work with. These jobs can range from carpentry to general labor. These positions are for men and women, with a special focus on women. Section 3 would like to see more women apply for the jobs. The construction business has been a male saturated business for decades and USI is focusing on bringing more women to the site. Woman can build. USI wants them to know that as well. USI is working very closely with the General Contractor, John G. Jones to be up to date with open positions, provide weekly flyers to let GC know where USI will be in the community promoting jobs, to build rapport with potential candidates and to keep an open-door policy to allow qualified individuals to know that social services are available. We want employees to maintain the job and have a relationship with USI so that we can stay in the loop and follow our clients, in such circumstances may arise. USI is staying in communication with the employer and employees to be able to support the residents.

**Employment Strategies will remain as listed:**

- Reach 5-10 unemployed individuals per month and identify reasons for unemployment.
- Seek employers that are close to residence so that transportation can be eliminated.
- Present residents with employment that may be new for them, office setting jobs, clerks, admins, etc.
- Allow residents to work on resumes at the office, set up appointments so resumes can be formatted by themselves.
- Be a support model, in which residents can see beyond a paycheck while employed.

**Education Updates:**

USI has been working closely with OVEC. OVEC is a community partner who homes newborn to preschoolers for early learning settings. We currently have 47 youth who are considered "pre-school". We only have 27 in early learning settings and/or daycare. This number could be increased if there were daycares in a 100 ft radius from home that had classrooms for that age group. Families in supportive service have a small group of 3 and 4year olds that would like to be in an early learning setting. The centers in the neighborhood don't have the space for the children in that age group due to no instructor in the classroom. USI and OVEC are working closely together to be able to register the children, who are currently on a waiting list, but also to seek out parents who may be interested in teaching. There are job opportunities in building, we must get the parents certified and qualified to be able to teach or work

with the children. OVEC is working with current parents in advocating to establish relationships. USI is committed to connecting those who are seeking childcare, and employment with the parent advocate. We have come together to be able to get children enrolled, but also to get individuals hired. OVEC will be on site once a month to start speaking with families about the opportunities they have available. OVEC is currently looking for instructors, assistants, floaters, and admins to work at their sites which lie in the hearts of Jefferson County neighborhoods. We are hoping to increase our numbers from 27 to 38 which will be at least 75% of the children we serve. USI knows how important early education plays a role in the success of an individual. We are working with each family as a whole to see where we can become a source in helping them to gain the resources, they need to become successful. Reading and math scores are very low amongst the children in the schools in the Russell community. There are a lot of students who are in Case management, and we want to make sure we are working with these families to reach better test scores. Our goals from last month will carry over so that we can stay focused on what was initially set as to working with JCPS. As we stated last month: JCPS is our primary partner and resource when it comes to retrieving data. USI will continue to use the data to be able to identify where work needs improvement. The data we need to track where a concern may be is provided by JCPS. Recently in a report, the data that is retrieved from the 2022/2023 school year, it was shown that there are major concerns about reading and math scores in the Russell neighborhood, which reflects a portion of BT students. USI would like to work with those who are challenged in those specific areas. In the past this was a major concerns and Family Support Specialist were able to address and work with families more strategically. Our target areas will be those children who have scored low, and we will collaborate with the schools in which had low test scores. Most of our students are in this data that was conducted by the schools. USI will collaborate with parents individually and produce a co- hort in which parents and children can be paired to work collectively as a unit. A lot of this work begins in the home. USI will speak directly with parents to see what ways would work best.

**This Month's Strategies will remain--** Include: Using the data from 2022/2023 school year to determine the area in which the concerns are mentioned; math and reading, working particularly to connect those families with structured OST programming. Increase Reading in the home: USI will continue to encourage families to read to their kids, which will help them in their development with their schoolwork, so that their scores will be raised. During Case Management: Work with parents to see where they would like to support the students to ensure better reading and writing skills. Work closely with OVEC - working with OVEC will give us a lead on opening spots within their centers and be able to be a magnet for parents who are seeking childcare.

**Updates on Health and Wellness: (Key meetings and activities conducted to support improving health and wellness outcomes for residents this month.**

<b>Number and percent of residents who have health insurance.</b>	<b>714 –100%</b>
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**Targets:**

1. Engage Residents in Activities that promote mental and physical health, ie: book club, exercise with Silver Sneakers at local YMCA.
2. Residents that would like to participate in activities outside of Beecher Terrace.
3. Connect families with children to primary care doctors if none is reported.

Beecher Terrace families are still at 99% when it comes to having Health insurance, that includes adults and children. USI looks at health as the primary focus when it comes to your well-being. To be stable, you must be mentally, physically, emotionally, and socially healthy at some capacity. Your health affects all parts of your body, with, we like to raise awareness when it comes to promoting good health. We serve a population in which chronic illness is generational. We make sure that families are connected to the care they need to stay healthy. USI addresses the stress or psychological distress that are reported during assessments. We are partnered with agencies to help combat these issues if residents make us aware. We currently have the Beecher Book club to help relax and relieve stress. Reading is a tool that helps concur the stress of daily life. In March, USI will re-introduce Beecher Walks when the season changes. We will encourage residents to walk 5 miles per month to be entered into a drawing to win a gift card at the end of the month. Walking is the most effective way to increase blood flow, safe way to exercise, easy to manage and promotes good health. Many residents have expressed the need for healthy eating habits. Aetna Health will be making its way to our community to discuss healthy recipes and easy cooking ideas.

**The Month's Strategies Include:**

1. Increase number of Senior residents in Chair Yoga
2. Bring more awareness around health policies.
3. Encourage residents to utilize more health benefits.
4. Enroll children in Kids Finish 1<sup>st</sup> Race with Louisville Sports Commission.