

Ingham Health Equity Council Mini-Grantees 2023-24

- 1. Eastside Community Action Center (ECAC)** will use grant funds to support its community information and education initiative, which is dedicated to increasing COVID-19 awareness and facilitating vaccination services for Lansing's underserved BIPOC community. ECAC plans to extend the reach of its outreach efforts, develop educational materials, and offer essential transportation services to vaccination sites. This grant request aims to achieve three key outcomes. Firstly, it will boost vaccination rates in ECAC's target population. Secondly, it will reduce barriers like transportation and limited access to information, particularly for BIPOC individuals. Lastly, this initiative will improve overall health outcomes in our community, aligning with our mission for a healthier, more equitable Lansing.
- 2. Ingham Health Plan Corporation (IHPC)** will serve about 645 members designated as "ACA ineligible," which means that they are not eligible for *full* Medicaid due to citizenship status. However, they *are* eligible for Medicaid Emergency Services Only (ESO) but often aren't aware that it is available. Staff will reach out to offer application assistance using the MI Bridges system. Materials will be developed in English as well as native language of the member. Staff will serve as a liaison between members and MDHHS healthcare services. Providing funding to support this type of Medicaid outreach will help reduce barriers to care and narrow the gap of health disparities and inequities for the Hispanic/Latino population in Ingham County.
- 3. Lansing CommUnity Development Corporation** will provide a multifaceted program that provides youth with a hot meal, tutoring, homework help, and transportation to and from its location and Technology Center. During the COVID-19 pandemic, food costs for its Food Pantry rose from \$0 to approximately \$12,000 annually. Grant funds will not only help to offset rising food costs but also to increase efficiency and continue to expand programs that support our diverse community.
- 4. Lansing Latino Health Alliance** will aid in recovery from the mental health impacts of COVID-19 and increase awareness of mental health issues and services for the Latino community. LLHA plans to to: 1) conduct three focus groups with members of the Lansing Latino community to understand barriers to optimal mental health and the mental health effects of COVID-19, 2) develop and disseminate educational materials on mental health and mental health services based on research and focus groups, 3) engage the Latino community in two Town Hall discussions led by knowledgeable mental health speakers to dispel myths and misconceptions about mental health and COVID-19, address cultural stigma concerning mental health, and decrease barriers to access.
- 5. LMTS Community Outreach Center** will provide individual and group therapy to clientele who frequent the LMTS Center. Therapy will also be provided to any member of Tabernacle of David Church who desires assistance. LMTS will host two workshops related to mental health counseling and methods to reduce stress and anxiety. Lastly, LMTS will provide opportunities for de-stressing which include (but not limited to) yoga, Zumba, line dancing, and cardio workouts.
- 6. L-Town Jubilee** will mitigate COVID-19 risk and impact to BIPOC community members that are working to overcome homelessness during the 2024 respiratory illness season. L-Town will incentivize participation with free transportation to medical appointments. 100 households will receive packets that include a list of updated COVID-19 symptoms, a list of updated vaccine and testing sites, masks, mental health support and resources, and instructions to access their free \$100 LYFT digital gift cards. Participants will complete a brief health assessment and indicate if they would

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like to receive individualized health education and coaching. Participation is voluntary and participants will have the opportunity to reflect on their mental, emotional, and physical health and decide the next steps they should take for better health.

7. **North Star Birthing Services** plans to host three activities for its project. It will host a community baby shower for birthing persons most at risk for poor maternal health outcomes. Families facing hardships will be provided with resources and items carefully chosen to alleviate some financial worries in the early days of becoming a parent. Second, North Star will host a free childbirth education class series for teen birthing persons and BIPOC families facing barriers. Finally, North Star will host a screening of *Below the Belt*, a film that exposes widespread problems in healthcare systems with the stories of patients searching for answers to their symptoms while their voices are not being heard.
8. **NorthWest Initiative (NWI)** will utilize its mini-grant funds to help bridge the gap between the need for public health information and resources targeted specifically to all low-income populations, but especially low-income BIPOC men who were disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. NWI serves a large BIPOC male population, 90% of which will not get vaccinated. NWI will use grant funds to purchase and secure items to create 400 personal needs boxes for its target population that will help them and their families whenever someone gets sick. The boxes will contain items such as a touchless thermometer, disinfectant wipes/sprays, soap, KN-95 masks, COVID-19 tests, and other household cleaning items so that the person can sanitize their home quickly to decrease the spread of any virus. NWI will also include a lot of easy-to-read public health information and NWI contact information where individuals can obtain additional information or assistance.
9. **Punks with Lunch Lansing** will use its Mobile Outreach Program to establish temporary access points across the City of Lansing to distribute harm reduction, overdose prevention, and first aid supplies to those in need. The Mobile Outreach Program is in its first year and was started with the support of the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD).
10. **Sugar Smart Coalition** will provide education and make/promote industry changes that improve access to healthy beverage choices and encourage water consumption over sugar-sweetened beverages in order to lower rates of obesity and improve health outcomes for BIPOC communities. Sugar Smart will achieve this through: 1) working with 1 restaurant in a SNAP-eligible census tract to replace sugary drinks on its kids' menu with water, milk, & 100% juice; 2) a Healthy Drinks Healthy Kids campaign for families in eight of the Association for Child Development's low-income daycare centers; 3) taste tests & educational materials for a Healthy Vending Initiative for Ingham County, if this initiative is passed in November; 4) creating a Parent Advisory Committee; and 5) facilitative leadership and project coordinator positions.
11. **The Firecracker Foundation (TFF)**, a Black-led, survivor-led organization that works to end child sexual abuse, serves BIPOC communities in Ingham County, where a disproportionate number of residents living below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) are Black. TFF will work to improve maternal and infant health outcomes for BIPOC survivors in Ingham County through Perinatal Advocacy and Labor Support (PALS). TFF will provide doulas that can prevent or cushion the impact of the re-enactment of traumatic histories in the birthing room. Systemic racism exacerbated by COVID-19 worsened already-dire maternal death rates for Black women, which increased by 24.9 deaths per

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100,000 births between 2019 and 2022. TFF's expansion into birthwork since 2020 has been an investment in intergenerational healing and impact.

12. **Union Missionary Baptist Church** will leverage in-kind expertise of its licensed social work and mental health professionals and a student (Lance Wimberly, LMSW; Letisha Holloway, LMSW; Christopher Rollins, MA-LPC; and Barbara Davis) to form an ad hoc group with leading agency representatives from the Greater Lansing community. The slated partners are NAMI Lansing, CMHA-CEI, Mid-Michigan Recovery, RISE Recovery Community, City Rescue Mission, Hannah's House, Haven House, Greater Lansing Area Club of NANBPWC, DST, Lansing Alumnae Chapter, and Omega Psi Phi, Inc., Sigma Epsilon Chapter. Union Missionary Baptist Church will host one virtual Town Hall, one live stream podcast, and a 2024 Mental Health and Wellness Summit to target BIPOC family members ages 16+.

13. **YMCA of Metropolitan Lansing** provides a mobile food pantry - the Healthy Living Mobile Kitchen Bus - that serves low-income properties such as rentals, mobile home parks, and apartment complexes in food deserts. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Bus visited locations through the Lansing community and served over 359,000 free meals to kids to help combat food insecurity. Grant funds will support daily meals to children year-round, with 3 sites during the school year and 12 sites in the summer. This project includes 30 minutes of exercise during the summer months. The project promotes healthy living and eating to counteract the negative effects of obesity; 20% of Michigan kids are obese.