**YCEH/AWC**

**Meeting Notes 4/29/25**

**Attendees:** Lucia Wilson-Achieve, Elvis Kost- Achieve, Carmen Gardea Adult Protective Services, Reetiak Dhawan-AWC

Reetika Dhawan, Carmen Gardea, and Lucia Wilson discussed a collaborative project to develop a physical structure in Yuma to help reduce the number of unhealthy people, particularly the homeless. They explored the possibility of involving students to create a business plan and secure funding. Reetika offered to help with strategic planning, business development, and leveraging community resources. They discussed potential funding sources, including grants from the Discount Tire Foundation and the League of Innovation. The project aims to provide comprehensive services, including low-barrier shelters, behavioral health, and workforce training, to support the community effectively.

**Action Items**

* Carmen Gardea - Carmen Gardea to reach out to Juan Guerrero, who is close to the mayor of San Luis, to see if he can help with securing land for the project.
* Lucia Wilson - Lucia Wilson and Carmen Gardea to provide Reetika Dhawan with an outline or vision for the project by next week.
* Reetika Dhawan to schedule a follow-up meeting with Lucia Wilson, Carmen Gardea, and Laura De Leon to discuss a strategic plan and business plan development.
* Reetika Dhawan to reach out to a contact at the Hale's Foundation to see if they can meet with YCEH representatives to discuss potential funding.

**Outline**

**Meeting Introduction and Purpose**

* Reetika Dhawan greets Lucia Wilson and Carmen Gardea, who introduce themselves as ACS investigators and community members.
* Carmen Gardea explains the purpose of the meeting: to develop a physical structure to help reduce the number of unhealthy people in Yuma, especially considering the weather and transportation challenges.
* Carmen mentions the need for a business owner to apply for the necessary funding and suggests involving young professionals or students to work on a business plan.

**Proposed Collaboration and Support**

* Reetika Dhawan offers to help create a business plan and mentions working with San Luis City to open an incubator space.
* Reetika suggests involving faculty and the SBDC to assist with the project, emphasizing that the students can work on it for free.
* Lucia Wilson supports the idea of developing plans for various aspects, including business plans and outlines, and mentions the importance of incorporating outlying communities.
* Reetika proposes having meetings with faculty and a Business Development Coordinator to create a strategic plan, offering to support the project without charging anything.

**Community-Driven Project and Funding Challenges**

* Carmen Gardea emphasizes the importance of a community-driven project and collaboration with different community pieces to present a comprehensive plan for funding.
* Lucia Wilson discusses the challenges of securing grants, mentioning a previous attempt to build a homeless shelter that failed due to lack of complete plans.
* Lucia highlights the need for low-barrier shelters and inclusive community resources, including PCP assistance and behavioral health services.
* Reetika suggests looking at programs like Coconino's, where students build houses for the homeless, and mentions a grant opportunity from the Discount Tire Foundation.

**Strategic Planning and Grant Applications**

* Reetika offers to support strategic planning and business plan development, mentioning her experience in applying for funding and the success of previous grants.
* Reetika discusses the possibility of using workforce training programs to support the project, offering to write grants for related programs.
* Carmen Gardea inquires about the grant's eligibility for land acquisition, and Reetika confirms it covers building costs but not land.
* Reetika suggests having a plan A and B, with a timeline for securing land and starting the project, and offers to apply for the grant herself if necessary.

**Land Acquisition and Community Involvement**

* Carmen Gardea and Lucia Wilson discuss potential land donations, mentioning a plot next to a Marine Base but facing residential zoning issues.
* Carmen suggests reaching out to a business owner, Juan Guerrero, who might be able to help with land donation.
* Reetika explains the tax benefits of donating land and the potential for significant funding through grants and foundations.
* Carmen emphasizes the importance of having showers and basic amenities for the homeless, which are crucial for their ability to access education and job opportunities.

**Next Steps and Action Items**

* Reetika proposes meeting with a foundation CEO to discuss the project and secure funding, asking for talking points to represent the project accurately.
* Carmen and Lucia agree to work on a vision statement and share it with Reetika by next week.
* Reetika plans to reach out to a foundation CEO and other potential funders, including the League of Innovation and Hills Foundation.
* The meeting concludes with a commitment to collaborate on the project, ensuring that the community's needs are met and the project is inclusive and comprehensive.