

**Urban Strategies, Inc. (USI)**  
**Beecher Terrace Monthly Report**  
**September 2020**

**Executive Summary:**

With a community impacted by both the COVID 19 pandemic and repercussions from the fight for racial justice, the USI Louisville team remained committed to supporting the families of Beecher Terrace through the implementation of targeted strategies to increase housing stability, economic mobility, improve educational outcomes and enhance the holistic health and wellness of all individuals and families.

In September, we continued to engage and inform residents through individual and family check ins by USI Case Managers, Outreach and Specialist workers, in addition to LMHA FSS staff. USI held its second virtual resident meeting this month. September's resident meeting included a Housing Panel (with special guests from LMHA, MBS, and Section 8) and guest speaker S. Shabazz from Each One Teach One, that provided additional information regarding voting rights restoration and voting registration. USI utilized a range of strategies that resulted in a significant increase in resident participation from the previous month. There were 31 total attendees to the resident meeting and approximately 16 Beecher Terrace residents. We will continue to hold monthly resident meetings utilizing the virtual platform each month until there are changes to social distancing requirements that make in person meetings a safe option.

With nearly 150 case managed families negotiating NTI, non-traditional in-home instruction, USI continues to work with JCPS, Choice Partners and other community resources to connect families to all viable educational supports and opportunities. Recent assessments yielded that families have a commonly expressed feeling of overwhelm due to increased demands from NTI requiring an increased need for one on one, hands on support from USI staff. In response, families working through NTI receive additional wellness checks by USI Case Managers as well as the Education Specialist. Additionally, staff prioritized connecting families to NTI camps and hubs and addressing barriers preventing participation throughout the community. There are currently 12-14 youth attending community in person NTI hubs. USI held an Educational Equity Partner Meeting to further the alignment and execution of education strategies. There were a total of 13 attendees (despite significant community conflict) representing 11 different organizations or programs who partner with USI to drive educational success.

USI deepened the exploration of partnerships with Bellarmine University, Collaborative for Teaching and Learning, and Tutor Me. Such potential partnerships could include acquiring current college students to mentor and tutor Beecher and Russell youth, obtaining training for childcare facilities as well as adding additional trauma informed supports. In October, USI will be releasing a Request for a Proposal to elicit partners to deliver direct services to advance education outcomes in key results areas of Kindergarten Readiness, Academic Proficiency and High School Graduation and College Preparation. Given that the continued impact of COVID-19 is unknown, USI will be seeking supportive service partners who can deliver both in person and virtual services to ensure maximum resident participation regardless of the state of social distancing requirements.

## Case Management - Outreach and Engagement:

<b>Total Households in Grant Award</b> 767 # and % of HH and People in Case Management	<b>Total Eligible Households</b> 579 408 (71%) and 803 participants
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### **Updates on Outreach and Engagement: (Key meetings conducted to engage residents, increase residents in case management or to support residents who are active in case management with USI:**

USI staff continue to work towards a goal of 80% participation of eligible residents by executing strategies to re-engage inactive residents and maintain engagement of current residents enrolled in case management. Such strategies include: 1) identifying and connecting with property management to ensure current residential status; 2) door knocking on homes with youth to offer additional educational supports and resources; 3) USI Case Managers having specific outreach requirements for households on their “inactive” caseload. During September, partnerships were developed to plan and host ongoing family engagement activities throughout the remainder of the year.

#### **In Process:**

- Partnership with Delta Foundation and Creation Gardens will yield a Food and Resource Event held at Baxter Park will provide estimated 1,200 boxes of food in addition to resources for all pillars.
- Partnership with PlayCousins and Opportunity Corner will yield a Fall Festival in which USI/Russell Reads will provide books, literacy and voting resources.
- USI is currently seeking sponsors for pumpkins. USI is hosting a pumpkin carving challenge contest to encourage multi-generation engagement, as well.
- USI continues to use Social Media to engage and promote opportunities to Beecher residents and supporting partners.

## **Economic Mobility:**

Due to the impact of COVID, USI staff relentlessly continues to identify and support residents in overcoming financial burdens that threaten their stability. Service connections have continued to include supports for rental and utility assistance and with food and other basic needs. In prioritizing these areas, monthly income can be used to address other household need areas and/or monthly bills where ongoing support is not available.

Currently, USI Case Managers are supporting approximately 13 individuals/heads of households that are considered workable but are seeking disability. These individuals are in various stages of the process. Regardless, USI staff offer support, advocacy and education to individuals throughout the lengthy application process.

Currently, 61% of the work-able population are employed. Approximately, 11 residents are still unemployed due to COVID. USI continues to identify partners in industries that align with resident interests, in addition to supporting any digital literacy barriers or needs and lastly, working to address barriers such as childcare and transportation to reach our aggressive target of 80%.

Partnering with Messer and McCormack Baron USI shares via One Call and through case management, current openings and future needs to maximize Section 3 hiring and increase access to opportunities to interested Beecher Terrace residents.

## Education:

### Updates on Education: (Key meetings and activities conducted to support improving educational outcomes for children this month)

USI is conducting the following strategies to advance educational outcomes and increase parent engagement:

**Increase Access:** Assisting families with obtaining laptops and any other technical needs such as internet availability and navigation of technology

**Education Passports:** Surveys were conducted in order to understand needs of the families and also curtail workshops and educational activities to be resident driven. Next steps will include scheduling the pillar workshops and resources.

**Early Childhood Enrollment:** We have currently enrolled 50% of eligible youth for ECE/Headstart with JCPS. USI staff continued to identify barriers such as proper documentation and work conflicts in order to meet the 70% goal for enrollment. Inactive youth have also been targeted in our engagement strategies in order to re-engage in case management.

**Increasing Partnerships:** As mentioned earlier, USI will release a RFP to increase direct services for Beecher families. USI is in process of exploring partnerships to provide more support with literacy, attendance and academic proficiency with Bellarmine University, CTL, and Tutor Me.

## Health and Wellness:

# and % of residents who have health insurance	(791) – 99 % of Residents have Health Insurance
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### Updates on Health and Wellness: (Key meetings and activities conducted to support improving health and wellness outcomes for residents this month)

USI-LOU has increased intentionality regarding the holistic approach with health and wellness. More in-depth assessments have led to improved strategies to support individuals physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. Such strategies include:

**Conducting Monthly Targeted Health Chats.** Each month a topic is chosen, in addition to selected residents and families. Through collaborative efforts with Passport, Family Health Centers and JenCare, USI staff provides information regarding health benefits, resources and tools, as

needed. September included a focus on Hypertension and Parents Coping with NTI. Approximately, 20 families participated in Health Chats (Hypertension) this month. Next month will focus on Breast Cancer Awareness for both men and women and the management of stress for families impacted by NTI.

**Walking Wednesdays.** USI staff will begin Walking Wednesdays, initially targeting seniors that have struggled with isolation due to COVID 19. Staff will walk with residents at two different sites on Wednesday mornings. USI will work with resident leaders to eventually have the initiative led and driven by Beecher Terrace residents.