**Make Health Happen – General Meeting**

**February 23, 2023**

**Present:** Greg Witherspoon, Grace Margherio, Dr. Jerrica Ampadu, Marla Goodwin, Hannah Gravot, Coach Melody, Valda Haywood, Mark Peters, Bhagya Kolli, GESL Family Leaders (name?)

The meeting began at 1:35PM

Greg welcomed the attendees and shared the goals of Make Health Happen.

He introduced the newest member of the MHH Steering Committee, Valda Haywood. She is a life time resident of East St. Louis with a career in Family Services.

Dr. Jerrica Ampadu shared about the Mobile Health Unit being run by the We Care Clinic.

* Overview of We Care Clinic – Part of SIUE School of Nursing; Primary healthcare clinic serving people 2 years and older; Open Mon-Fri 8AM-4:30PM; Appointments are recommended; Walk-ins are welcomed
* East St. Louis and many surrounding communities have a high social vulnerability index
* Educates students so that they are better equipped to address social determinants of health
* Take all insurance and serve the uninsured
* Has a grant from the HRSA to provide the mobile unit and to allow for more flexibility in amount of time spent with patients to be able to support a variety of needs.
* Dr. Jerrica introduced the members of the grant team and their expertise.
* The grant goals are Access to Care, Workforce Diversity including provider concordance and cultural competency, and Curriculum Enhancements at the School of Nursing
* She shared a drawing with the layout of the Mobile Health Unit. Chestnut also has a mobile health unit that has a regular schedule at the Metro Link stop. The unit will be accessible.
* The grant allows the We Care Clinic to provide stipends to students while they are in nursing school as part of the Primary Care Nursing Fellowship.
* Multiple organizations are collaborating with We Care to increase accessibility and meet the goals of the project.
* They are waiting for a date of delivery from the company building the unit.

For more information, contact Dr. Jerrica Ampadu at jerphil@siue.edu 618 225 9903 (my number). She also shared the public address and number for the clinic: 601 James R. Thompson Blvd Suite 2015 Building D East St. Louis Clinic number 618 482 6959.

Bhagya shared the treasury report. MHH has $1,759.32. We have paid for one Master Gardener course and are still taking applicants for others who would like financial support for this training. Greg shared costs for MHH t-shirts. If we buy in bulk, they will be about $6 - $7 each with screen printing. It was suggested that we purchase about 50 in variety of sizes.

Grace gave an update on Local Foods, Local Places. She is the 4H Youth Development Educator for Illinois Extension housed that the Jackie Joyner Kersee Food Education Center. The Local Foods, Local Places committee came out of a community strategic plan. Committee meeting participation has been fairly low. Many of the projects the committee is leading are already being done by members of MHH. She asked the Local Foods, Local Communities be included in the MHH meeting instead of a separate meeting.

Goals of Local Foods, Local Places are:

* Mapping vacant lots to make spaces available for residents to grow food.
* Health Fair for Juneteenth. Instead of hosting our own, we decided to join a city-wide effort hosted by the city government. City effort could be more focus on health in this event.
* Faith in Place, who is a MHH member, is looking to create/host a mobile market to increase access to healthy foods.

Apologies to everyone who was attending the meeting and got dropped when the meeting timed out. Some people were able to rejoin so the meeting continue using the same link, but we were very sorry for the technical challenge and are sorry not everyone was able to rejoin.

Garden Expo planning is going well. It will be held at the FRESH Garden at East Side Health District on April 29 10Am – 2PM. There will be music, dance, smoothie bike, backyard gardening kits, plant and food give aways, etc. East Side Health District is finalizing the screenings, services and classes that will be available. They are looking for volunteers – people to carry bags of food to cars for seniors, welcome people, etc. Fruit Tree Planting Foundation will be accepting application – must plant at least 15 trees – 10 feet apart. Rima will share the garden applications.

Caroline shared about the Americorp Intern position. They have one interview scheduled. The Americorp member will be supervised by Rima and Caroline and will have their office at the Jackie Joyner Kersee Plant Science Center. The Americorp member will supervise a weekly volunteer day at the Lalumier School Garden, supervise weekly drop-in hours for the Cahokia Schools food pantry associated with their community garden, and help with the MHH mapping project. Grace asked that mapping of vacant lots available for gardening be included in the mapping project for the Americorp member. Caroline recommended that MHH member organizations sign-up to host volunteers in the Lalumier garden. If each member organization took one week during the growing season and committed to brining volunteers from their organization, we can have more time that volunteers can drop-in and will introduce more people to the garden.

Greg recommended that MHH check in with food pantries to make sure they have enough food and volunteers to remain open. He referenced a period of time pre-pandemic when many of the food pantries closed. Bhagya shared that East Side Health District has updated the pantry and farmer’s market guide which will be printed and available at the garden expo.

There is a professor from SIUE interested in working on MHH mapping project.

Apologize and ask for info

Member agencies sharing and requests:

* One organization asked for recommendations of agencies providing rent and utility assistance. Urban League was offered as one of these agencies.
* The Y asked for members of the medical community and/or public safety who would be willing to be interviewed by high school students in Youth & Government at East St. Louis Senior High. The students are researching ways to prevent gun violence and reporting to their state representative. Greg volunteered to be interviewed as the chair of MHH.
* There was a Local food purchasing meeting – Illinois Extension is trying to connect farms to food pantries, schools, etc. It is free to the community, if an organization can transport food. Available food includes produce, dairy, meat and eggs. They will pay for vehicle rental and gas.

Greg thanked everyone and the meeting adjourned at 2:55PM