

FORT BEND RECOVERS

COVID-19 Weekly Meeting 04/28/20

Participants

1. Delena Pinkney – United Way
2. Mary Vazquez – United Way
3. Terri Stuart – United Way
4. Chelsea Lucas – Katy Responds
5. Herman Rogers – Endeavors
6. Penny Meek – The Henderson-Wessendorff Foundation
7. Alvaro Hernandez – Endeavors
8. Andrew Van Chau – Brazos River Rotary
9. Jacqueline Washington - Endeavors
10. Lori Marcus – Texana Center
11. Anna Gonzales – Fort Bend Health and Human Services
12. John Lockhart – First Baptist Church of Richmond
13. Amy Harkins Ph.D. – Easter Seals of Greater Houston
14. Loretta Jelks – On the Road Lending
15. Elise Kaufman – Friends of North Richmond
16. Annie Derry – Endeavors
17. Joseph Higgs – TMO
18. Mia White – Houston Tool Bank
19. Spencer Walker – Mental Health America
20. Avalon Sykes – Attack Poverty
21. Vickie Bernal – Katy Christian Ministries
22. Clif Cummings – Fort Bend County Chaplains Association
23. Jimmy Fenwick – Sugar Land Methodist Church
24. AP Vo – The Alliance
25. Brandon Baca – Attack Poverty
26. Michelle Gonzalez – SVDP
27. Renee Teel – Christ Church Sugar Land
28. Michelle Dobbins – Baker Ripley
29. Nadar Afshari – Endeavors
30. Rashmi Singh – Sewa International
31. Vince Mannio – Agri Life Extension
32. Sweldmariam – Endeavors
33. Melissa Washington - GLO
34. Qwentadria Ware Williams – Endeavors
35. Roy Hayley – Attack Poverty
36. Anahi Hernandez - United Way
37. Jagruti Sarkar - Sewa International
38. Sarah White – Second Mile

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Updates

Mary Vazquez – United Way

Thank you all for joining our weekly call. These calls are critical and are an opportunity for us to touch base and share information about what is happening. Caroline was pulled into an emergency meeting this morning, so we do not have a county update. If anyone would like to provide an update feel free to do so.

Sue Levin – HGI Counseling

HGI Counseling is fully operational remotely. We are not doing any face to face work although we are starting to talk about what that could look like if people are ready to go back to the office.

At this time, we have been able to accommodate all referrals, because of the flexibility teletherapy has provided. Therapists from various locations are offering services with a wider range of hours and languages.

We are doing group self-care and mind body sessions on-line and hosting meetings for colleagues and leaders of nonprofits that are wanting to talk about how we will move forward. Recently, we had a meeting with behavioral health professionals around Houston to talk about how and when people will open offices.

If anyone wants to utilize our services, we are available.

Chelsea Lucas – Katy Responds

Katy Responds is partnering with Houston Responds in their Masks For All mission. We are trying to get 1,000 churches to make 1,000 masks. If you are interested in receiving more information, please check out www.Houstonresponds.org/masksforall.

Roy Hayley – Attack Poverty

Attack Poverty had a food distribution in Brazoria county in Rosharon. We partnered with Second Mile, Fort Bend Community Church and the Houston Food Bank. It went well and because of its success the disaster recovery team will do food distribution sites in rural areas every other week. We are looking for our next location. If you have any recommendations for sites or people/organizations that we can partner with, please let us know.

We are still doing home repairs. We currently have 35-40 projects going.

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Rashmi Singh – Sewa International

Last Saturday Sewa hosted a PPE distribution. More than 100 organizations were present, but they were predominately first responders and hospitals.

We still have resources for PPE and sanitizer. If interested in procuring these items, please fill out the google forms. The system is completely automated. After the request is received the organization will be contacted by email with a date and time to pick up the requested items.

- Masks and gloves request form : <https://forms.gle/zKP4Ww6ZVwCAnvWT7>
- Hand sanitizer request form: <https://forms.gle/degBtoxSjm3EqGLG9>

Programming is also available for first responders, doctors and nurses.

If any organization needs any of our resources or would like to partner with us, we welcome you.

Vince Mannio – Texas Agri Life Extension Services (Fort Bend)

Texas Agri Life Extension Agents have been assigned roles by Governor Abbott and John Sharp. We are working with various local leaders, including the Commissioner's Court, municipal jurisdictions, independent school districts and private schools to help them navigate paperwork and answer any questions related to seeking federal funds. Letters have gone out to county judges across the state from our director. We also followed up with a letter from our office on Friday, that identified agents that have been assigned agencies.

The agents will serve as liaisons between communities and those that have answers. A list of frequently asked questions will be created and shared as time goes on. Agents cannot help individuals fill out paperwork but serve as a source of information and to help navigate the process.

A directive to assist nonprofits in this process has not been established but it may be coming down the pipeline.

Brandon Baca – Attack Poverty

We have a basic needs workgroup call that meets every Monday at 2 p.m. If anyone would like to be a part of the call, please reach out to me and I will send you the Zoom information. We had about 30-35 people on the last call. Elise Kauffman is working with Caroline to develop a resource sheet that contains information on distribution sites, day care options for essential workers, technology, health care, and COVID-19 testing sites. A grid will be added with financial assistance resources from various organizations with capacity to help. This document can be found on Slack as well as the Fort Bend Recovers Portal.

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Anna Gonzales – Fort Bend Health and Human Services

In the last two months, Fort Bend Health and Human Services received over 8,000 phone calls. We have a little over 180 appointments schedule between now and next week.

The first round of calls (300) for Project 1800 was completed. We are receiving calls from seniors who originally said they did not need help but are now requesting items. We are circling back to these individuals and hopefully we can deliver some items to them. Going forward, we need nonprofit organizations to help with targeted interventions because the elderly cannot get to distribution sites. This is a critical need.

Additionally, there is a great need for more donations. We are receiving some donations from Constable Wayne Thompson's Office. I have asked him to challenge other law enforcement agencies to give toiletry items so that we can have something for all the seniors. I also requested a contact information list from the city's tax office of all seniors that are 65 and older as well as disabled individuals. We want to use this list to ask property owners if they need assistance.

Nonprofits have facilities to store items as well as more volunteer capacity to be able to really do targeted interventions to help this demographic. If anyone is interested in helping us with this project, we are more than happy to share the information with you. We have two binders full of information of seniors who has expressed need for help.

I have a contact of a person who can provide hot meals to the homeless in Fort Bend County. I will try to send an email out today with their information. One thousand (1,000) PPE masks have been secured for nonprofits. The masks will be given to Brandon Baca at Attack Poverty to distribute. If you would like masks for your organizations, please contact him. We also secured PPE for homeless organizations. We will be receiving that shipment on Saturday from a private donor. Etta Vincent and Vera Johnson will issue the PPE to homeless providers and the homeless population.

AP Vo – The Alliance

The Alliance is helping with COVID response and the top 5 needs are: food, rental and utility assistance, jobs and small business PPE. Three items that are really lacking resources are rental and utility assistance as well as jobs. We have a team of financial counselors that are assisting small business with PPE shortages.

The Alliance is lucky to have staff that speak almost 30 languages. Feel free to refer clients that have challenges with language barriers to us. We are more than happy to help.

In addition, we have a weekly self-care support group happening every Wednesday at 10 a.m. This is open to all organizations and partners. Please feel free to contact me if you would like more information on the group.

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Vickie Bernal - Katy Christian Ministries

There is a utility assistance program called LILAH that is available to low income households. This program will allow them to apply for reduced billing during this time.

There are programs that were awarded to help with utility and rental assistance. Please refer clients to 211 so they can get information on how to access this assistance.

Spencer Walker – Mental Health America

Mental Health America is conducting an art show case for young people up to young adults, ages 5-20. It is an art piece in the face of COVID-19. They are accepting all submissions on-line through May 8th. More information can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/MHAGreaterHouston/>.

MHA is also conducting a series of townhalls with several legislators regarding policy changes moving forward.

Melissa Washington – GLO

The Texas General Land Office is working remotely but we are still working. Builders are onsite working on houses. Inspections have been happening over platforms like Facebook Live to ensure Harvey impacted individuals are getting back into their homes. If you know someone who is having issues, please tell them to get in touch with their GLO application manager as they are still working.

Elise Kauffman – Attack Poverty

The resource sheet is about 4 pages front and back and it is filled with a lot of great resources. There are sections on distributions, mental health and spiritual wellness, childcare for essentials workers. I am currently working on updating it with financial resources such as rent and mortgage assistance. The document also has general resources on testing sites and information on accessing technology.

Mary Vazquez – United Way

Next week's meeting will have a brief section on preparedness as we are moving into Hurricane season.

As we move into Hurricane season, I want you all to think about how our services will need to be altered to serve the community considering COVID and an additional disaster. I really encourage everyone to devote some time to think about this. We must be able to help our community while navigating this new normal.

We are also having a discussion with Texas Gulf Coast VOAD about how we can better integrate from VOAD to Long-Term Recovery and how we can ensure a seamless transition. In Fort Bend County, how

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do we strengthen that immediate response? Conversations and meetings have been started centered around these topics.

-Adjourn