



MOBILE COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT  
INITIATIVE



HSIAC 2008 Conference Puerto Rico

# Project Description



- Take information, resources, and training out to residents of Delta Region communities through the use of the a mobile unit, a 38-foot air-conditioned, fifth-wheel trailer, equipped with seating and laptop computers and Internet access. Staffed by a trainer and community development specialists, the mobile unit will be towed by truck to low-income neighborhoods in the Delta Region to provide resources, information, and training to residents on a variety of community needs.

# Delta Region Communities



- Edcouch, Elsa, La Villa, Monte Alto
- Small, rural communities
- 35,000 population; predominately Hispanic



# Socioeconomic Data



	Delta Region	Hidalgo County	Texas	United States
Per capita income	\$6,780			\$21,586
Median income	\$22,114			\$51,546
Poverty rate		36%		10%
Unemployment	16%	8%	6%	5%
High school diploma	19%			28%
College graduates	6%			24%

# Vehicles Available



	EDCOUCH	ELSA	LA VILLA	MONTE ALTO	TEXAS	US
0	13%	19%	24%	13%	7%	10%
1	45%	36%	31%	40%	36%	34%
2	27%	32%	35%	34%	41%	39%
3 or more	15%	13%	10%	13%	16%	17%

The communities in the Delta Region are geographically isolated.

Many low-income Delta Region residents, do not own a car, or cannot afford gasoline prices to drive to larger cities to get information and training.

There is a lack of an adequate public transportation system in the Delta Region.

# Mobile Unit



# Project Goals



- Stabilize and contribute to sustainable community development of the Delta Region communities.
- Develop partnerships with communities and organizations that foster long-term changes.
- Build partnerships that address critical social and economic issues facing the Delta Region; including poverty, education, housing, healthcare, and jobs.
- Integrate community engagement themes into UTPA's curriculum, academic studies, and student activities.

# Identified Needs



- Microenterprise training
- Job skills and career information
- Fair housing lending practices
- Financial literacy
- Health information (diabetes, nutrition, obesity)



# Microenterprise Training



- There is a need for job creation to relieve local unemployment.
  - An economic development strategic plan for the Delta Region found that 16% of the region's workforce is unemployed.
  - Commuting patterns from the 2000 Census reveal that few persons who live in the Delta Region work there.

# Mercado Delta



# Job Resources



- There is a need to publicize job resources and programs and to help residents to get resources and training to prepare for and gain employment.
  - A survey of Delta Region residents (225) found:
    - A majority of respondents are interested in receiving job information and training.
    - 40 percent of respondents do not have a high school diploma.

# Fair Housing Lending Practices



- There is a need to provide information on Fair Housing Lending Practices
  - Low-income Hispanics are prime target for lenders of subprime loans. HMDA data states that 40% of Hispanics buy subprime loans as compared to 19% of white families.
  - The key way to combat this crisis is through education.

# Youth Financial Literacy



- There is a need to provide youth financial literacy.
  - Surveys commissioned by the FDIC indicate that a minority of surveyed teens do not understand how credit card interest and fees work, how to balance a checkbook, or know how to check the accuracy of a bank statement.
  - A large majority of surveyed teens are eager to learn more about how to manage and handle their money.

# Health Education



- There is a need to provide health information regarding nutrition, obesity, and diabetes to Hispanics.
  - Much of the poorer Hispanic population in South Texas has a chronic problem of poor nutrition that results in high rates of diabetes and obesity, which have garnered national attention in recent years.
    - More than a third of Valley residents are obese, the highest percentage of any Texas region.
    - South Texas has been identified in national studies as having one of the highest rates of type-two diabetes in the nation.

# Staff



- Project Director, Michael Uhrbrock
- Field Instructor, Cristina Trevino
- Driver, Albert Ybarra
- Evaluator, Dr. Hector Diaz
- Field Placement Liaison, Dr. Sharon Pittman
- Community Development Specialists
  - 3 graduate students to be hired yearly

# Partners



- Accion Texas
  - Microenterprise loans
- UTPA Small Business Development Center
  - Small business expertise
- Texas/Mexico Border Coalition
  - Youth farmer programs
- Other community agencies and organizations
  - Workforce Solutions, Border Health Office



# Status



- Setting up accounts
- Mobilizing staff
  - Interviewing graduate students
  - Hiring Field Instructor
- Preparing mobile unit
  - Obtaining quotes
    - graphics, truck, generator, tires, etc.
- Developing detailed work plan
  - training, outreach, evaluation, etc.

# Challenges



- New project
- Paperwork
- Outreach

# Outputs



- 45 community members will receive microenterprise development training.
- 300 community members will be offered job skills and career development information.
- 300 community members will receive information on Fair Housing Lending Practices.
- 135 children will complete a youth financial literacy program.
- 9 graduate interns will complete their field work through the course of the 3-year grant.
- 450 community members will receive prevention information on border health issues such as diabetes, obesity and nutrition.

# Outcomes



- 60% of microenterprise training participants will start microenterprises and will maintain those businesses profitable.
- 70% of job skill development participants will be able to write a professional resume and will develop effective job interview skills.
- 85% of participants receiving Fair Housing Lending Practices information will report being satisfied or highly satisfied with program information.
- 100% of youth completing the financial literacy program will develop a budget.
- 100% of graduate students will successfully complete their field practicum to satisfy their coursework for a Masters in Social Work degree.
- 70% of the 450 individuals receiving health information will exhibit a higher level of health-related knowledge.

# Contact Information



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