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Jose Artiles

Binghamton University--SUNY

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Addressing Community Issues Through Alternative Funding Practice

Jose Artiles, MPA Student
Binghamton University, College of Community and Public Affairs, Spring 2016

Overview
United Way of Broome County has served in the Binghamton Community since 1973.

The mission of United Way of Broome County is “To drive change that will have positive impact on the critical needs of our community by strategically leveraging the collective resources of community partners”

United Way of Broome County is interested in improving the quality of services available to the residents of the Village of Endicott by seeking funding partners working in the area.

This project will explore what some of the issues facing this community is and how United Way can aid helping bring more programs to the area.

Goals
In order to improve the services in the Village of Endicott, United Way of Broome County is searching for funding partners within the community.

To provide the best services to the area it was first important to speak to community members in order to gain a better sense as to what they feel is missing in their neighborhood. As a result this project sets out to provide United Way with a process of distributing funds to organizations that have programs which address the issues identified by the community.

This project will develop a proposal for a new grant funding stream which will be based on the needs of the community, which were identified through a series of interviews.

Methodology
How was the data collected?
• Interview area was designated by United Way staff
• Scheduled group interviews
• In total seven (7) group interviews were conducted in George F. Johnson Memorial Library, located within the Village of Endicott.
• Twenty-six (26) door to door interviews were conducted in the Village of Endicott
• Purpose of interviews was to get a better understanding of what improvements they want in their community.

Interviews
The interviews conducted shed light on what the community members in Endicott want to see.

Common Themes during the interviews:
• Safety Concerns
• Lack of community pride
• Lack job readiness programs
• Accessibility of services

Request For Proposal Development
Proposals will be evaluated based on the following three (3) categories:
• Organizational Capacity (Max 35 points)
• Budget (Max 25 points)
• Community and Program Impact (Max 35 points)
Proposals will be scored on a 100 point scale.

Community Testimonials
The following are quotes from members of the community.

On lack of sense of community
“When I first moved in I knew everyone on my street. Now I know none of my neighbors.”

“I don’t feel I belong to this community”

On safety concerns
“I want to feel safe allowing my children to walk home”

On local economy
“It is hard to find jobs around here, there should be someone or an organization to help train people to work”

Conclusion
After extensive interviews with members of the Endicott community it is clear that there is a lack of services in the area. With this Request for Proposal (RFP) United Way hopes to create more partnerships within the area to improve the lives of those living in Endicott. By giving extra considerations to those organizations who attempt to address any of the four major issues identified by the community the hope is that the problems will begin to be addressed using the funds provided by United Way.

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