

Isaac Coleman Economic Community Investment 2nd Quarter Report, FY2018 (October-December 2017)



Buncombe County
Community Engagement Team
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Isaac Coleman Economic Community Investment

Named for social justice champion Isaac Coleman, the Isaac Coleman Economic Community Investment plan calls for targeted investments in our communities that are currently working to champion equitable opportunity. Our goal with this investment is to rebuild the health, safety, and self-sufficiency in our communities. These investments are part of a broader approach, which includes continued partnerships with nonprofit and faith-based organizations, mini-grants to augment emerging and innovative community efforts, support for small businesses, and investments in education and the economy. This mix of formal and informal approaches is intended to strengthen community infrastructure so that meaningful and sustainable change can take root.



On February 21, 2017, Buncombe County Commissioners unanimously approved funding for the Isaac Coleman Community Investment Grants. On June 23, 2017, seven projects (listed below) were announced as the recipients of the first round of funding. This funding, totaling \$635,426, represents the allocated funding of \$500,000 for the Isaac Coleman grants as well as additional funding of \$135,426, secured from grants such as Mobilizing Action for Resilient Communities and behavioral health. This additional grant funding is focused on addressing trauma and building resiliency within communities. We are bringing all of these efforts under one umbrella so that we can build relationships and share learning and resources where appropriate. Looking forward, the County has extended an invitation to funded and unfunded applicants for Isaac Coleman Investment Grants to be a part of the Isaac Coleman Learning Collaborative. Through this collaborative we hope to make available resources and training to further support these community efforts.

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Grant Recipient Summary

ABIPA – ABIPA Cares Cooperative

Place: Southside Community, 56 Walton St, Asheville - Southside

Shared Aspiration: Develop a worker-owned co-op to address the social determinants of health, specifically around education and economics, by providing training opportunities leading to Living Wage employment and entrepreneurship to build wealth among community members.

Anticipated Outcomes: Increased employment, improved social determinants of health.

Award: \$53,707

Deaverview: Residents, Schools, and Community in Relationship (Johnston Elementary/Deaverview Community)

Place: Johnston Elementary School, West Asheville

Shared Aspiration: Creation of a permanent community center for community building, academic supports and summer programming.

Anticipated Outcomes: Increased volunteerism in schools, decreased school discipline, adult training and employment, increased capacity of community leaders.

Award: \$44,520

Emma Community Ownership

Place: Nuestro Centro, North Louisiana Ave, West Asheville

Shared Aspiration: Pipeline for dignified housing, meaningful education, sustainable employment, economic equity and civic engagement. Uses participatory action research model to identify community needs and aspirations.

Anticipated Outcomes: Strong network of small businesses, resident owned housing, affordable housing cooperatives, resource center, thriving schools, inclusive community, community participation and pride.

Award: \$71,460



My Community Matters Empowerment Program Collaboration with Positive Changes and Writers in Schools

Place: Arthur R Edington Education and Career Center and Asheville GreenWorks, Asheville - Southside

Shared Aspiration: Pipeline for empowerment and educational opportunity for youth of color who are experiencing poverty and/or live in low wealth communities.

Anticipated Outcomes: Academic success, school readiness, increased skills, value of education, social capital, educational attainment, self-determination, cultural literacy.

Award: \$116,435

Shiloh Community Association/Pearson Plan

Place: Shiloh, Burton St and East End Neighborhoods (Asheville – South, West and East)

Shared Aspiration: Communication with City and County; Development and affordable housing; Greenspaces and maintenance of the neighborhood culture; Economic development and business development.

Anticipated Outcomes: Improved neighborhood infrastructure, reduced crime rate.

Award: \$125,000

United Community Development/Southside Revitalization

Place: Water St, Asheville - Southside

Shared Aspiration: To provide economic, social, and cultural opportunities to black people in Asheville, using the Southside community as a template for equitable community economic development which will be led and controlled by the community.

Anticipated Outcomes: Job skills, jobs created, new contractors/contracts, new businesses, loans received, operating funds raised.

Award: \$111,804

YTL Training/G.R.A.C.E. for Teens and Access for Mothers and Families

Place: Asheville City School buildings, Asheville

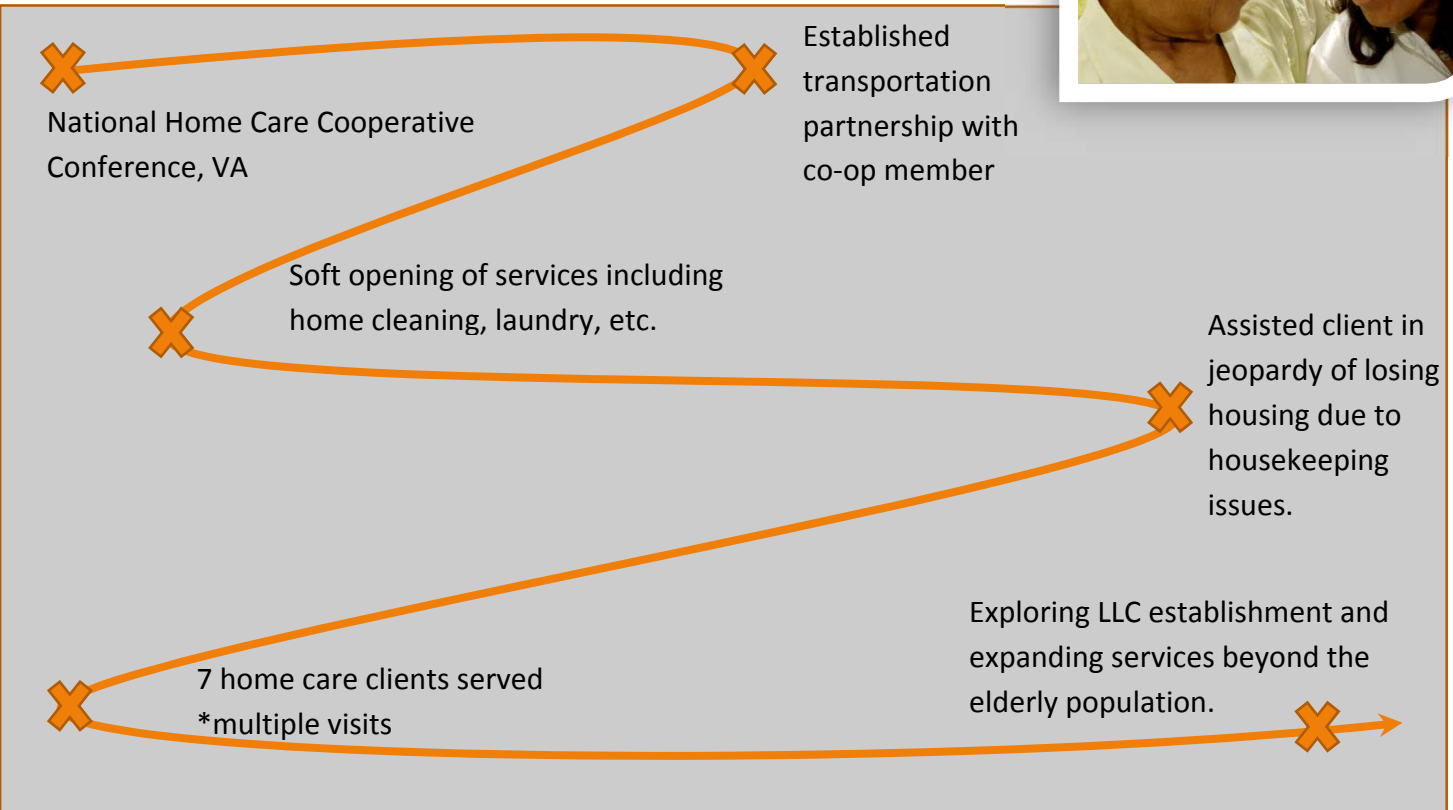
Shared Aspiration: Develop youth educational access and support parents and families.

Anticipated Outcomes: Emotional assets and resilience, academic success, parent engagement, self-care, engagement.

Award: \$112,500



Asheville Buncombe Institute for Parity Achievement



MILESTONES

- Worker/Owners using one share one vote for decision-making. Participants decided pay should be increased from \$12 to \$15 and buy in amount at \$600 because investment threshold would be harder to walk away from.
- Fostered more relationships with Home Instead and Housing Managers to help guide development and connect with prospective clientele.
- Founding worker/owners are engaged and gaining momentum.

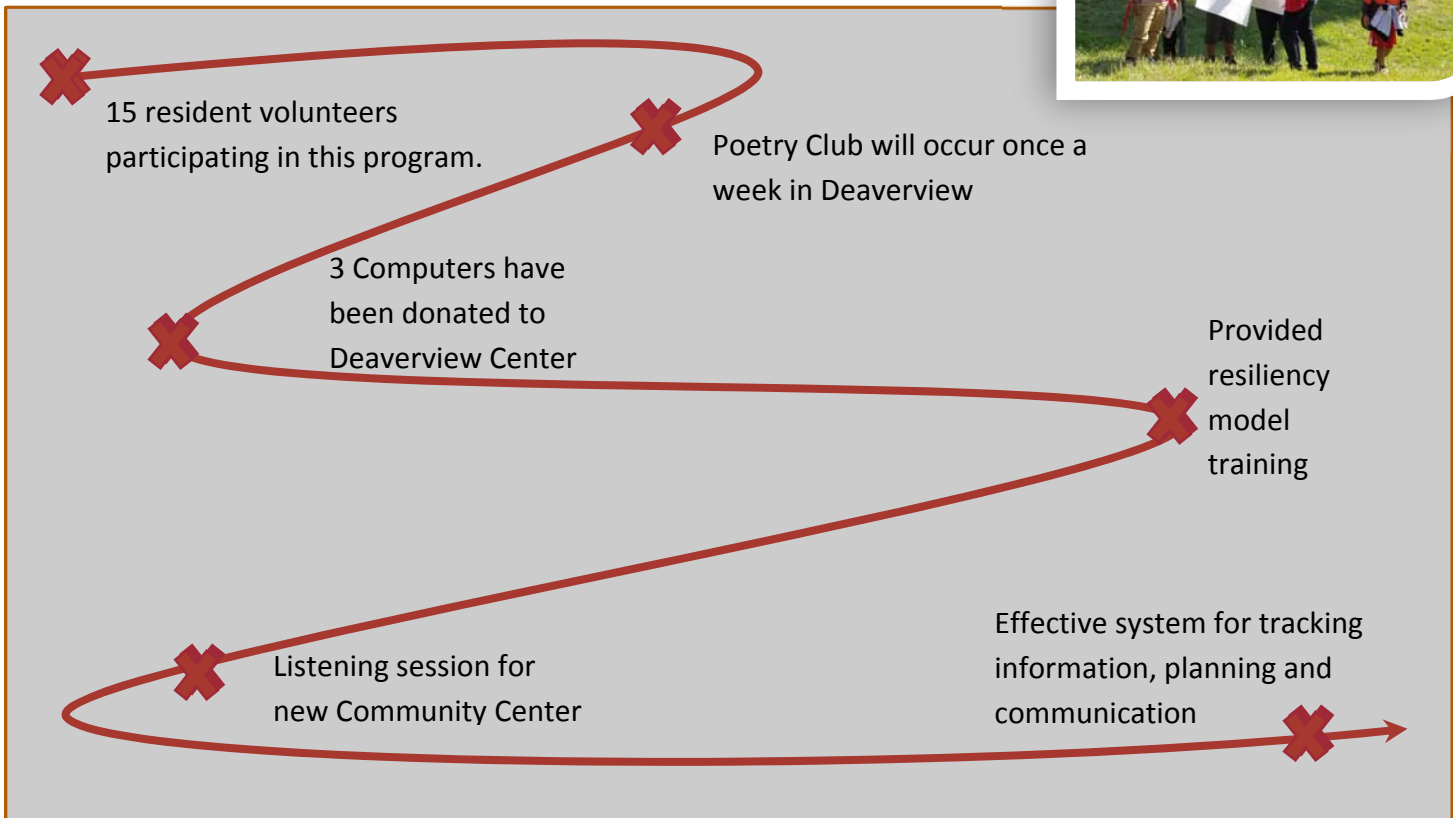
LESSONS LEARNED

- Co-op models are very complex. Developing an effective worker/owner co-op requires an exceptional mix of time, expertise and care.
- NC state regulation placed a moratorium on opening home health agencies until 2019. Most business endeavors involve some kind of roadblock, but the way you address and manage the barrier is what matters.
- How important all involved parties need to be a part of the startup phase in order not to develop in a vacuum.

NEXT STEPS

- Addressing NC moratorium barrier with assistance from attorney Thomas Becket who is deeply entrenched in the co-op development in NC.
- Received numerous inquiries to become worker/owner, but are holding off until structure is formalized.

Deaverview: Residents, Schools, and Community in Partnership



MILESTONES

- Established a program to use Poetry as a platform for creative expression, inspirations, and emotional release in the lives of children in Deaverview.
- Completed engagement activities:
 - New Community Center Listening Session
 - 30 residents attended & provided input
 - Residents created a resource area for job searches, printing resumes, and completing homework.
- Continued work on Stipend Volunteer Project:
 - Leadership Council has been developed in Deaverview with 8 residents.

LESSONS LEARNED

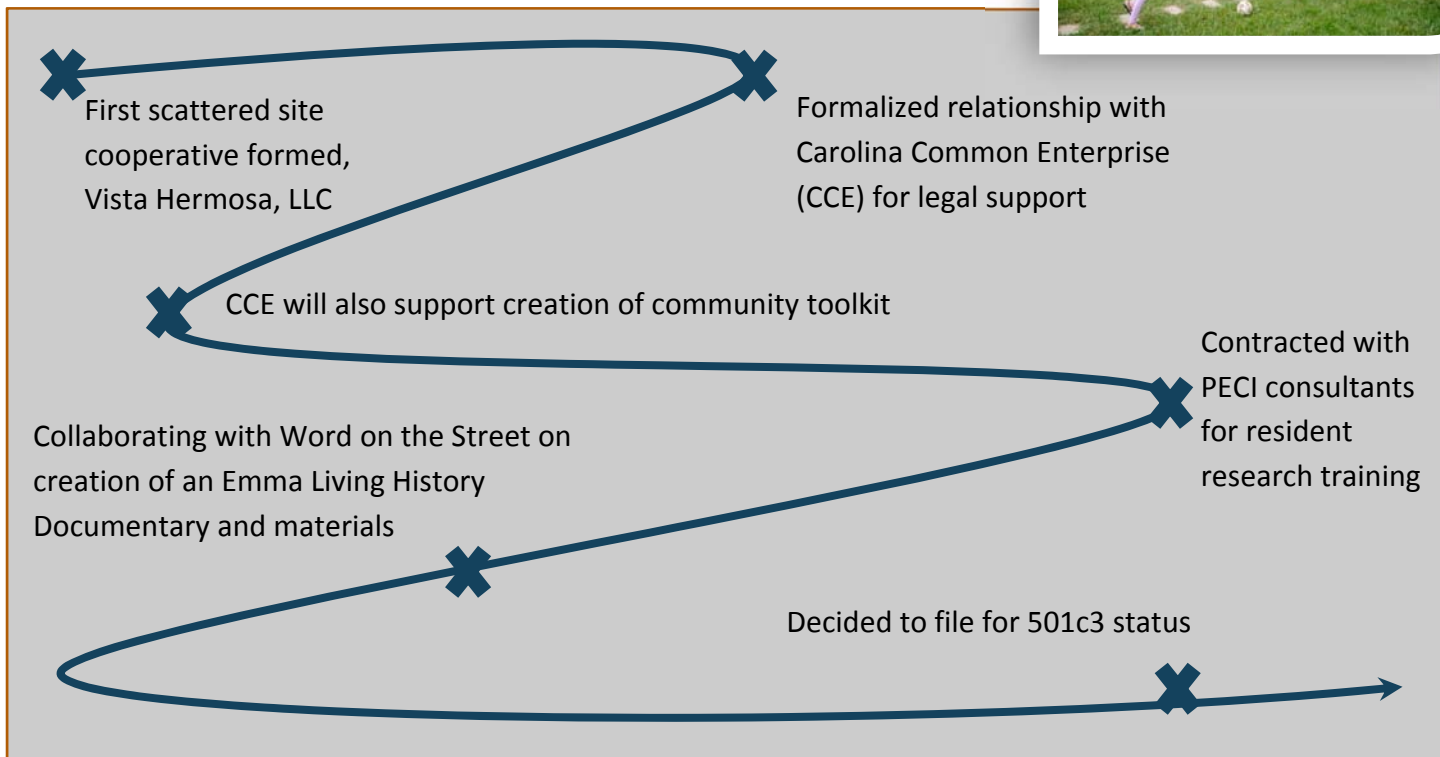
- At the beginning of this initiative, we felt a sense of urgency to spread the word about the stipend program, unfortunately we didn't have a system set up to pay our stipend volunteers immediately as payments have been delayed.
- We learned that it is crucial that we have all administrative processes in place before beginning to recruit people from the community.
- It is important that we work to lesson or eradicate barriers by providing a quicker turn-around on services, opportunities and monetary support.

NEXT STEPS

- To continue the communication with Transportation Department of Buncombe County Schools to secure free bus driver training for interested residents.
- Complete all paperwork needed to be in partnership with Asheville Housing Authority Association.
- Continue the collaboration with Resource for Resilience to provide wellness tools that aid the nervous system during moments or periods of stress and trauma.

Emma Community Ownership Project

CIMA



MILESTONES

- Submitted a built environment proposal to Invest Health and selected as a finalist to represent Asheville at the Robert Wood Johnson/Reinvestment Fund convening in New Orleans, LA.
- Interviewed over 50 community members to create the vision for a community park. Over 100 community members have committed volunteer time should project move forward.
- Work around community park has strengthened relationship with principal at Emma Elementary.

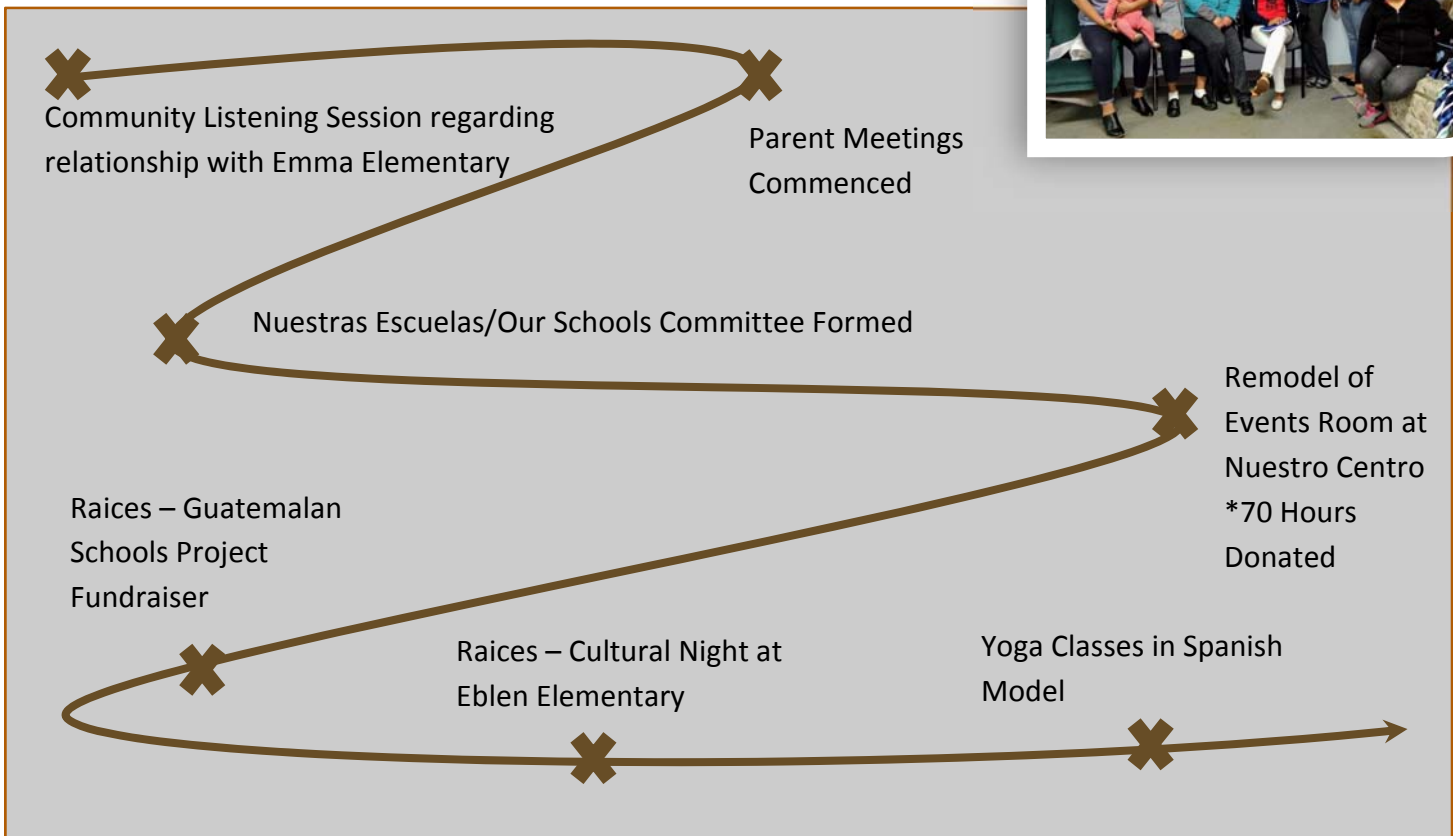
LESSONS LEARNED

- Organizers within Emma strategically decided to each focus on a critical area of our neighborhood's wellbeing (ECOP- cooperative ownership, Nuestro Centro- cultural organizing and community schools, and CIMA- immigrant rights), it is hard for us to stay connected since everyone is working so hard in their own focus area. We are learning that we need to do more strategic visioning and collective evaluation sessions to make sure that we are coordinating our work in a way that builds even stronger.

NEXT STEPS

- Pick up pace around access to financing, as well as cooperative governance capacity building in order to grow our work in current environment of rapid development.
- Collective strategy sessions with organizations working within the Emma community.

Raices/Nuestro Centro



MILESTONES

- Increased civic engagement as evidenced by number of volunteers, meeting attendance and input gathered on community needs.
- Identified 21 adults and youth interested in attending training to participate in Raices Summer Camp 2018.
- Strengthened relationship with Eblen and Erwin schools by direct interaction with staff and presence at school site.

LESSONS LEARNED

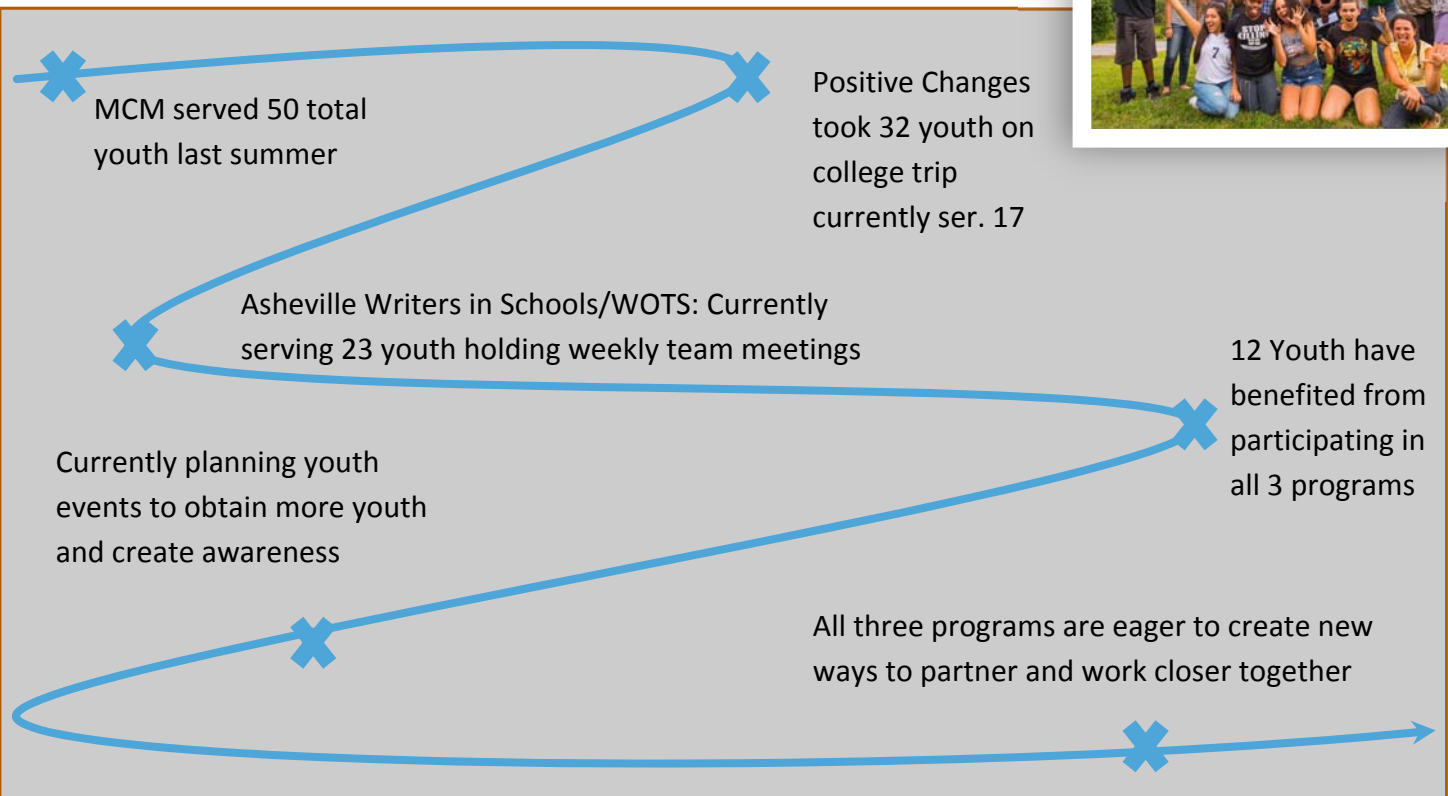
- Developing an initiative, expanding community capacity and collecting data from residents is a very complicated undertaking. If we do not keep up with collecting and organizing the data in an effective manner, all of the efforts could remain in limbo.

NEXT STEPS

- Addressing current spike of depression, suicide attempts, chronic disease and cancer through additional community activities including cultural, physical and art events.
- Meeting with NC Center for Health and Wellness for consultation on collected data and desired outcomes.

My Community Matters Empowerment Program

Residents Council; Positive Changes; Writers in Schools



MILESTONES

- 32 youth participated in the 2017 College Exploration Trip conducted by Positive Changes Youth Ministries.
- Writers in Schools: Is currently holding their weekly team meetings, where the youth are leaning a variety of things.
- My Community Matters completed a successful summer program where they have contact with 50 youth.

LESSONS LEARNED

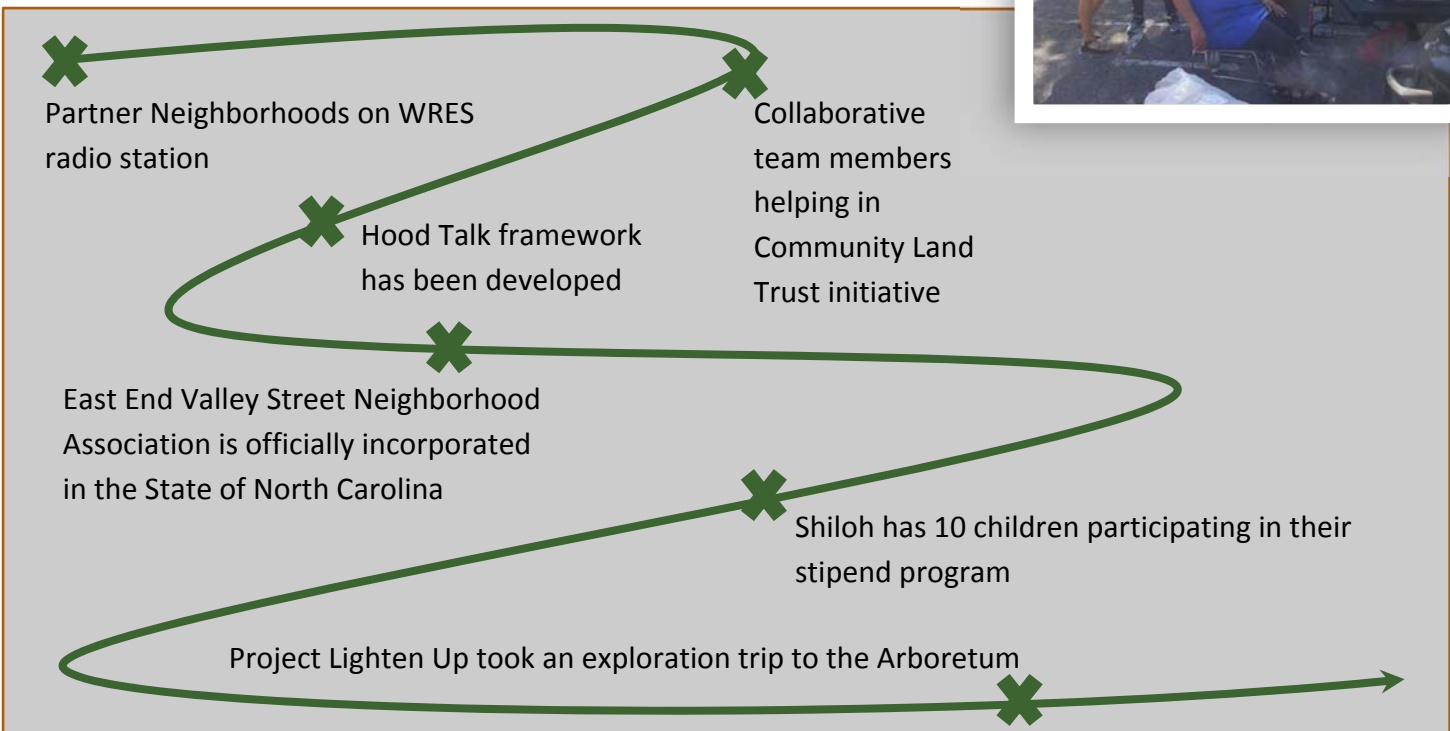
- Positive Changes: One of the biggest lessons learned was that we need a better screening process for the adults but also for the youth. PCYM has also learned that they need to evaluate and come up with a better system for college trips. To primarily be more effective with time & cost.
- All three groups: Have all learned that they need to create a system to where they can partner more and incorporate a structure to where the youth can benefit from all programs simultaneously.
- Are receptive and wanting help build their infrastructure.

NEXT STEPS

- Plan a retreat/meeting with liaison and county consultant to discuss an outline/plan they can work towards.
- Continue to run & build programs for the youth.
- Create a marketing tool that can be used to create awareness.



Shiloh Community Association/Pearson Plan



MILESTONES

- Collaborative's members worked together to develop a full-page article in Urban News that details the history of the E.W Pearson Project Collaborative.
- Coordinator serves on the Community Land Trust (CLT) initiative to ensure that the CLT includes the needs of the Collaborative's neighborhood.
- Shiloh continues to provide stipends for neighborhood students who work in the garden in order to support the concept of micro-businesses and entrepreneurship.
- East End had a "Stop Bulling Community Forum".
- Burton Street developed a new plan for Martha Jane's garden to increase growing garden space and to create income, while implementing more efficient growing methods.
- Project Lighten Up: established partnership with UNCA and AB-Tech for classroom and lab access.

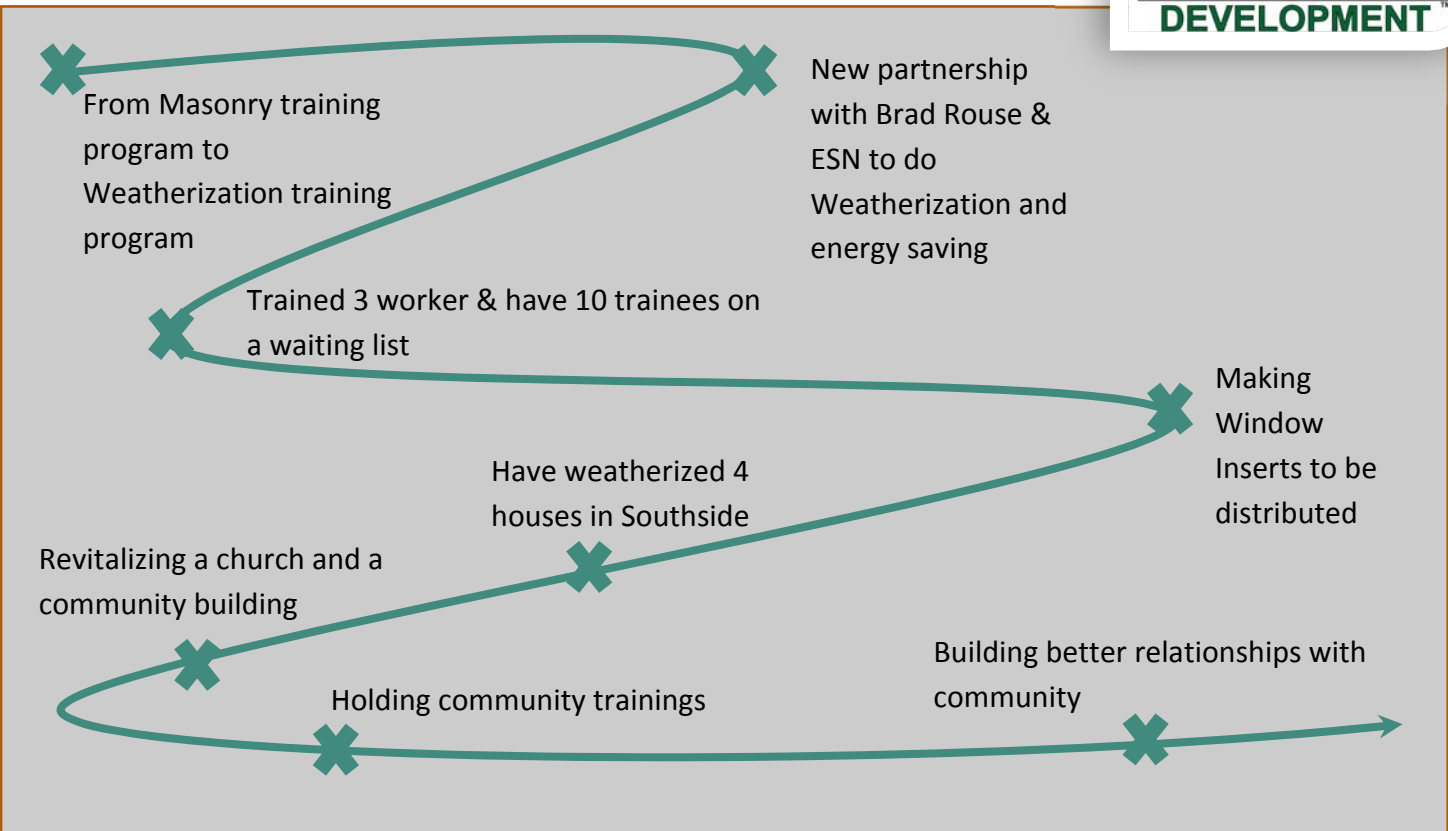
LESSONS LEARNED

- Learn how to celebrate small increments of movement.
- To make sure everyone is included.
- In each community, to continue support each other's events.
- To be organize, and develop committee structures to help coordinate finances, communications, and define roles of team members.

NEXT STEPS

- Each Neighborhood will identify additional ways to create economic and business developments within each neighborhood.
- Ensure African American Markers are define, get approval on markers and placed in Buncombe County areas.
- Creation of calendar for all EW Pearson Project Partner events in progress; cross-sharing of events on social media.
- East End Neighborhood newsletter available October 2017; hope for youth involvement in creation and distribution.
- Project Lighten Up: Working with local colleges to get student volunteers; enrolling students for tutoring.

United Community Development/Southside Revitalization



MILESTONES

- Have changed tracks from Masonry to Weatherization successfully.
- Have formed a partnership with Brad Rouse and ESN to do the weatherization, and have been charged with building and creating the window inserts. They are planning to get a patent for window inserts to sell throughout western NC.
- Southside has currently trained 3 individuals, and they are in the process of training another 10 individuals.
- Successfully weatherized 4 houses and have 15 more houses on the waiting list to be completed by April 1st

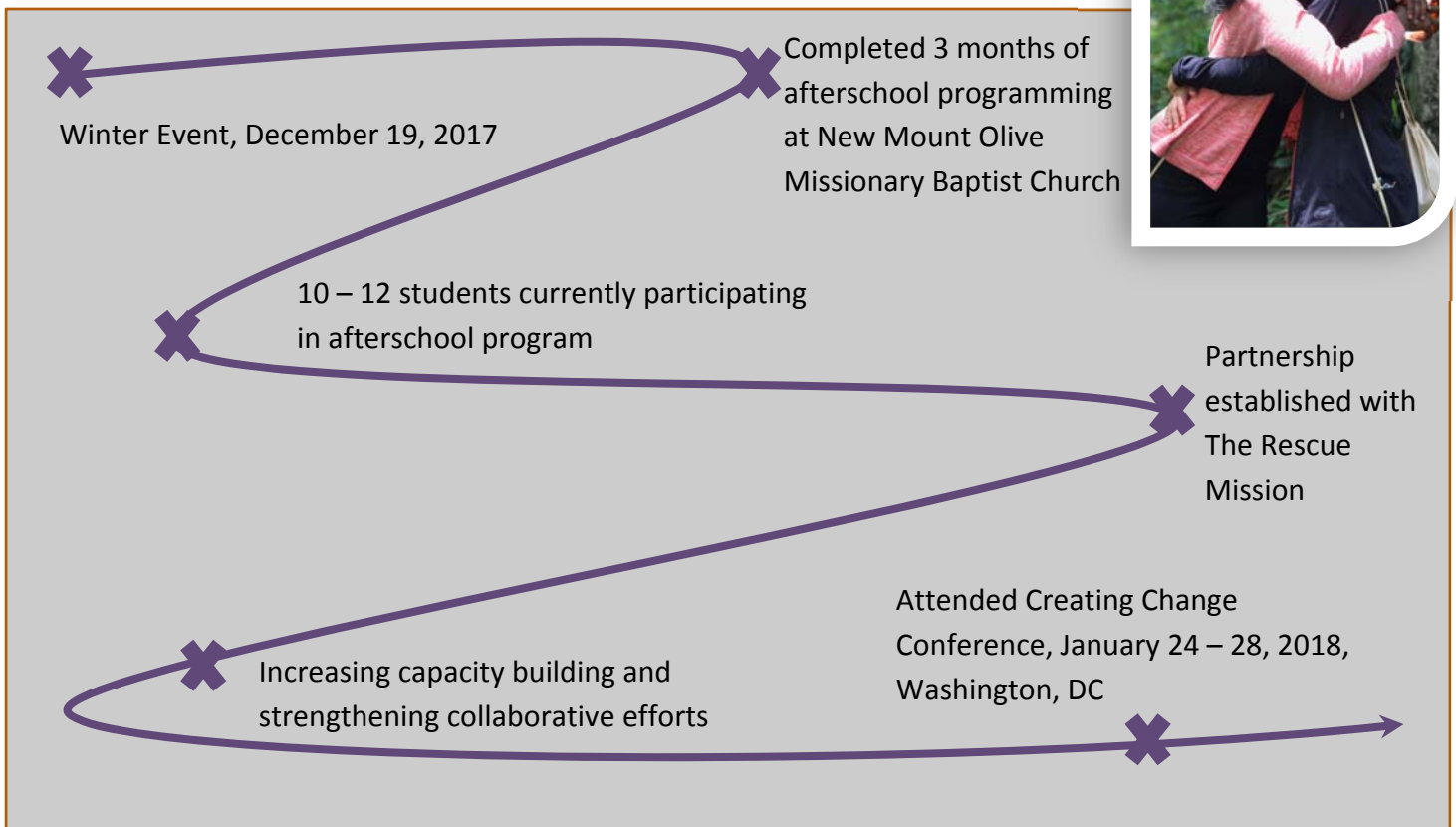
LESSONS LEARNED

- They have learned to trust the liaison and is willing to ask for help when needed.
- Moving from Masonry to Weatherization program was a great switch and feel that they can do much more training and community work because of this. Can also transition into construction work & training with this track.
- Having a clear view of how to layout the funding. Moving it around from on line item to the next. Putting the money to where it is most needed.

NEXT STEPS

- Job skills training program re-design is in process – train-the-trainer is ongoing and insurance obtained; operating space located.
- Use the church as a training site. –Have done much revitalization work to the church, and it will be the primary training site.

YTL: Youth Transformed for Life



MILESTONES

- Joined United Way's Middle School Success Initiative and now part of the Dashboard system.
- Chosen to implement Parent Rise, a program that will recruit parents to volunteer within Asheville Middle School and offer parents professional development.
- Staff participated in Listening Project for Asheville High School and Asheville City Schools Foundation.

LESSONS LEARNED

- The biggest lesson learned is that as with most things, relationship building takes time. We are currently investigating several key aspects of community healing that we hope will increase our ability to be leaders in asset-based thinking and community reengagement.

NEXT STEPS

- Due to space limitations, did not recruit in 2nd quarter, but will start process in January.
- Participants will work weekly with other nonprofits through the months of January through March.
- New math tutor will start late January.
- Investigating several key aspects of community healing that we hope increase our ability to be leaders in asset based thinking and community reengagement.