

# FY2022 Buncombe County Tipping Point Grant Report

<b>Organization Name:</b>	ABIPA
<b>Project Name:</b>	Shaniqua Simuel Change Your Palate

Activities Accomplished	Annual Goal	Amount Completed
Number of community surveys completed	18	12
Number of recipe card bundles distributed to community members	18	80
Number of community members provided with sample meals or potluck educational events	20	22
Number of families participating with the pilot meal kit program	10	22

Expenses (please list all grant related expenses)	Amount Spent
WordPress subscription, logo purchase	\$ 108.00
Pack and Delivery supplies	\$ 904.74
Stipends for helpers	\$ 1,738.48
Groceries for meals and laminated recipe cards	\$ 1,949.78
ServeSafe class and Black Wall Street membership	\$ 299.00
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$ 5,000</b>

<b>Overall project updates:</b>	<p>The pilot program Change Your Palate (CYP) was developed by me, Shaniqua Simuel under Simuel Enterprises, LLC. CYP is a whole food meal preparation program that focuses on the gap that Black and Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) have between access to fresh healthy food options and health outcomes. It also highlights that all families living in a low socioeconomic situation have parallel gaps. Participants in the household have someone with type II diabetes or hypertension. Each family receives uncooked, prepackaged meals with colorful easy to follow recipe cards. The partnership with the ABIPA resulted in the distribution to 20 families in Buncombe County. The participants received two to four meals over three weeks, each having six to eight servings (80 meals in total).</p> <p>I experienced setbacks after receiving the funds, including the need to build trust with community members, have consistent mentorship, and navigate through my limited entrepreneur skill set. During the grant cycle my priority was to build trust and rapport with the Shiloh community and the Shiloh Community Association (SCA). Despite, being raised in Shiloh, I was not recognized for my academic training in cultural competency, as a health educator in the Peace Corps nor for my MSPH from Campbell University. I was still perceived as an inexperienced youth.</p> <p>This shifted when I began volunteering in the Shiloh Community Garden every Saturday beginning in April of 2021. In July of 2021, I was invited to take on a leadership role. My role as the Community Engagement Coordinator for the garden, gave me a notable presence at the garden and at the monthly SCA meetings. At these meetings I report on community partnerships, garden maintenance, grant funding, volunteer engagement, along with youth stipend recipient activities as it pertains to the Isaac Coleman grant.</p> <p>Another challenge was building a relationship with the director of ABIPA, Je'Wana Grier-McEachin. She has a remarkable presence in the community. My partnership with Je'Wana required me to be flexible, pray, and to have patience along with persistence.</p>
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The cultivating of this partnership was intentional as we share the same target audience, and ABIPA has a longstanding relationship with the families they serve.

While I was building the trust, I realized I needed to strategize the following:

- where my families were
- how to promote to them
- how they would receive the meals
- frequency of meals
- ideal start up target numbers
- and the amount time to pre plan.

In addition, I earned my ServSafe Certification, connected with food distributors, located a commercial kitchen, and cold storage facility availability. I also realized a need to engage with local business and non-profits, who are doing similar work. Through my partnership with Je'Wana I was able to make a decision for the future of Change Your Palate, create a brand, and LLC.

Other struggles included:

- a need for a social media presence.
- a logo
- confidence with the name, Change Your Palate.
- creating an elevator pitch

It was motivating to reminder how impactful this was in graduate school.

As deadlines were approaching, I had not actually started and needed to work with the schedules of others in the midst of COVID-19 restrictions and working two jobs, one which was high stress.

I'm thankful that this grant had a deadline or else I'd still be stalling and attempting to execute the "perfect plan." Along the way, I enjoyed partnering with ABIPA and the YMCA to record cooking videos for their Minority Diabetes Prevention Program. I was able to promote Change Your Palate and other food justice work. I'm also thankful for East Fork and their equity and inclusion model that allowed me to prep and package meals without cost. This supported me in using additional funding towards food and materials.

**Indicators of service quality:**  
*(How well did we do it?)*

The family testimonies and feedback have been the most impactful piece. As the founder it is important for me to hear back from the participants. Families were contacted to learn about their experience and listen for feedback while and read a survey. So thankful for the food. Some reported that we gave too much food for their household size. Most participants followed the recipe card, several made small or large alterations. The changes were reportedly due to unfamiliarity with a new taste or ingredients supplied. Their changes gave them the ability to enjoy the meals given by us, with healthier ingredients. Everyone we surveyed enjoyed the convenience of having the food items and the measurements of those items along with the recipe card.

<b>Result/Outcome:</b> <i>(Is anyone better off)</i>	The goal was to give 20 families four meals, two at a time. The first week that we began, ABIPA reached out to 20 families who qualified. We were able to deliver to 18 of those families. One family saw how much food we were giving and did not have enough cold storage space and the other one was not available during the time frames we had set for delivery and could not get to us. When we had the second round, we were able to choose two replacement families, 18 families received four meals and the two additional families received two meals each. The overall outcome was enjoyment and expectation to receive more. I learned that this meal preparation method is a great teaching tool. It allows families and communities to engage. We were able to not only work with Shiloh residents but residents in West, South and North Asheville, NC. These meals are now a buzz word around communities we serve.
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