
Our Neighborhood, Our Health Final Report

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the Hispanic Center of Western Michigan

2024

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INTRODUCTION



**SALVADOR
LÓPEZ**
KConnect President

Historically, Black and Brown communities have been systematically excluded from decision-making processes that directly impact their lives. Traditional funding mechanisms from government, philanthropic, and other sources have often been inaccessible and non-inclusive, creating barriers for those living in these communities. These inequities have perpetuated cycles of disadvantage, stifling growth and development where it is most needed.

KConnect's innovative funding process was designed to disrupt this cycle. Our approach prioritized community involvement and ensured that residents had real power and influence over the direction of their neighborhood. By placing decision-making authority directly in the hands of community members, we fostered an environment of true collaboration and responsiveness to local needs.

One vital aspect of this process was the rapid distribution of funds. We recognized that many organizations needed immediate resources to address pressing issues in their neighborhoods. By streamlining our procedures, we were able to quickly get funds into the hands of those who needed them, allowing vital projects to commence without unnecessary delays.



**This has been a
tremendous year.**

- Our Neighborhood, Our
Health Grantee

The results of our efforts have been profound. From bringing a first-of-its-kind medical device to the neighborhood to funding a group of parents to provide student safety services, the initiative funded diverse programs and services. All this happened while new connections were made between the grantee organizations, strengthening the fabric of our community. You can read more about these organizations and their stories on the following pages.

Overall, the Roosevelt Park neighborhood has seen significant advancements in health, mental health, and public safety. These improvements are a testament to what can be achieved when communities are given the tools and authority to drive their own progress.

Thank you for your continued support and belief in the power of community-led initiatives.

INTRODUCTION

KConnect is a network of public and private organizations working to advance a collective movement to ensure all children in Kent County have an equitable path to economic prosperity through quality education, family, and community support.

To fulfill our mission and vision and that of our partners, we inherently believe we need to :

Be Curious.

Be Creative.

Be Courageous.

KCONNECT™

the backbone team



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Our Racial Equity Statement

In an ideal world, the prosperity of children and families would not be shaped by where they live or how they are racialized and marginalized. Instead, youth and families would thrive while living in economic prosperity through quality education and family and community support.

We know systemic racism is the root of many problems across the country. Communities are situated differently concerning well-being and opportunity. Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and Asian communities each have their own experiences of racism. We must address and acknowledge each community's unique expertise, assets, and needs. We must also break down and rebuild the policies and power structures that fail people of color. Racial and ethnic equity is necessary to help every child succeed in school and life.

We know that communities are strong together. We need to acknowledge and address inequities collectively. This work requires a commitment to anti-racist policies, practices, and behaviors. Our resolve comes from our belief that every child has value and promise.

We continue to do our best to live out our values by working to:

- Center lived experience, including people of color and those most impacted by systemic racism, to create solutions together, with particular attention to the Black and Latinx communities that continue to be significantly harmed.
- Operationalize equity to improve outcomes for those most affected by oppressive systems.
- Increase participation and the development of leadership positions for Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and people of color in systems work.

We recognize that much work needs to be done to make our communities more just and equitable, and we commit to doing all that we can to live out our mission and values.

qualifications

A Backbone Team, At Your Service. We facilitate difficult conversations, convene small and large groups, write strategic messaging, provide project management, and visualize data. All of our work is completed or overseen by experienced staff.

A Natural Extension of Your Team. Our team has years of experience working with cross-sector leaders. We act quickly and strategically to support the collective's mission, vision, or north star.

Our Network Goes Deep. Our team is supported by cross-sector groups led by content experts in Data and Capacity, Policy and Advocacy, and Community Engagement. We will ensure that qualitative and quantitative storytelling is embedded within the work, that the work is informed by policies that impact the scale of an initiative, and that lived experience is embedded in all parts of the planning from beginning to end.

Our Experience Sets Us Apart. We live, work, and play in Kent County and understand the challenges and opportunities at a local and regional level. Most recently, we have served as facilitators and conveners in challenging spaces, including early childhood, housing, and arts & culture. We can provide more specific examples upon request.



our work

Many of Grand Rapid and Kent County's most respected organizations have recognized KConnect's work, including the City of Grand Rapids, Kent Intermediate School District, The Hispanic Center of Western Michigan, and First Steps Kent.

KConnect is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, founded in 2013. Our regional impact is clear, but our success extends nationally and internationally. We have recently received the designation as a "Impact Accelerator" community by StriveTogether, a national collective impact convener. KConnect is one of less than a dozen communities in the United States to receive this designation. We have led national system change conversations nationally with FSG, Talent Hubs, CivicLab, The Collective Impact Forum, Collective Change Lab, and Reimagining Social Change.

We have consulted with communities across the country and even the world on how to start, stay the course, and reinvigorate systems change work. Some of these communities include: Salt Lake City, Utah, Racine, WI, Aspen, CO, & Traverse City, MI, Greensboro, NC, Cambridge, MA, The United Kingdom, and Israel.



HISTORY

project history

In the fall of 2020, Corewell Health Healthier Communities, Calvin University, and the Kent County Health Department received seed funding from Healthier Communities and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to develop a community-based participatory research approach to pilot in the Roosevelt Park neighborhood. The development of this model was based on the approach Calvin University has been using for over 20 years, as well as the Health Equity Zone model in Rhode Island. The purpose of the model development was to create a resident-driven model that could be scaled to other neighborhoods and broaden the institutional support for the model, including addressing systemic change and implementing resident-identified solutions.

The ONOH project dedicated time in 2021 to connecting with over 15 neighborhood organizations in the Roosevelt Park neighborhood to communicate the vision of the project. In March 2022, a Roosevelt Park Community Advisory Board was developed to provide input and guide the application of the approach in the Roosevelt Park neighborhood. Between March and May 2022, the Community Advisory Board selected a lead community-based organization to partner with. Ultimately, the Hispanic Center of Western Michigan was chosen.

A comprehensive assessment was conducted in partnership with the Roosevelt Park community. This assessment started with a broad approach to understanding community members' strengths, needs, and wishes. The assessment started with focus groups, followed by a community survey with questions developed to follow up on themes identified in the focus groups. Three focus groups were hosted at the Hispanic Center of Western Michigan in May and June 2022. Two of the focus groups were conducted in Spanish and one in English. Overall, 32 community members attended.

In parallel, a community survey was developed with input from community advocates from urban and rural settings. This survey expanded on themes identified in the focus group and included questions with comparison groups at the state or national level. Between August 27 - November 1, 2022, the survey was administered by teams of two to three using iPads. These teams were coordinated to include one bilingual surveyor and, as allowed, a community member. Overall, 27 surveyors administered the surveys. This included 12 community members, 12 Healthier Communities team members, and 3 team members from the Kent County Health Department.

In January 2023, the Hispanic Center partnered with KConnect, a Kent County prenatal-to-career collective impact headquartered in the Roosevelt Park neighborhood. KConnect was brought in to help move the ONOH project forward, analyze data, create a funding process, and facilitate funding decisions. Five months later, funding decisions were made, and dollars were in the hands of six different initiatives based in the neighborhood. From bringing high-tech medical equipment to the neighborhood to funding a group of parents to ensure the safety of their children before and after the school day, the different initiatives were as diverse as the neighborhood itself.

design principles

KConnect identified four design principles to guide the funding process phase of the Our Neighborhood, Our Health initiative, including:

Inclusive

The process and funding decision themselves would be inclusive of Roosevelt Park neighbors.

Transparent

The process and funding decisions would be transparent to the neighborhood. Additionally, all applicants who did not get funding would receive one-on-one conversations and feedback.

Equitable

The funding process would be accessible to all in the neighborhood, including identifying organizations that could act as fiduciaries if an ad hoc group applied for funding and using smartphone technology to decrease barriers to applying. Short videos were requested, as opposed to a lengthy written application.

Realistic

Moving forward with meaningful projects in the Roosevelt Park neighborhood while understanding that a one-year, \$200,000 investment would have limited impact.

timeline



timeline, cont.

May 15, 2023

KConnect conducts two informational and technical assistance meetings for organizations/entities interested in applying for the ONOH funding. One event is conducted in English and another one is conducted in Spanish. Both are virtual and can be [found here](#).

May 25, 2023

Hispanic Center for Western Michigan and Healthier Communities (absent) build awareness of the ONOH initiative with the overall KConnect network in the Gallery Walk for the May Accountability Partners Council.

May 26, 2023

Meeting to review applications with funding committee

June 6, 2023

Funding is dispersed to grantees.

May 11, 2023

KConnect prepares the Hispanic Center of Western Michigan and Healthier Communities to present the Our Neighborhood. Our Health initiative to the KConnect Network at our biannual Accountability Partners Council.

May 16, 2023

KConnect meets to train the Funding Committee.

May 26, 2023

Deadline for Application Submission

June 5, 2023

Award letters go out to grant recipients. Partners who did not receive funding are contacted and informed.



FINDINGS

roosevelt park strengths

In a survey and focus groups conducted in the first phase of work, community members of Roosevelt Park identified the positive aspects of living, working, and playing in the neighborhood.

Belonging

The neighborhood has a strong sense of belonging and welcoming, while other neighborhoods throughout the Grand Rapids area do not foster the same sense of belonging.

“Just the family atmosphere, neighbors support each other.... people on the streets kind of watch out for each other's kids and stuff.” - Roosevelt Park Resident, Focus Group Participant

Identity

Living in the Roosevelt Park neighborhood fosters a strong sense of identity. Residents felt that it meant something to them and their neighbors that they lived in this vibrant area.

“Most of us who live here are Hispanic and we pretty much know one another.” - Roosevelt Park Resident, Focus Group Participant

Culture

Residents identified that the neighborhood has a distinct culture that is rooted in diversity. This culture is different from other neighborhoods in the area.

“I think this neighborhood is unique because this is a very immigrant-driven neighborhood, whether that was Dutch or Hispanic and now West African. So, this becomes like the Ellis Island of Grand Rapids.” - Roosevelt Park Resident, Focus Group Participant

Helpful

Roosevelt Park Neighbors often roll up their sleeves and help their fellow neighbors which fosters a strong sense of community.

“That it's a very nice community, we neighbors help one another out during the winter season. One neighbor might shovel the snow for another. Sometimes when I need a ride, I'll ask a neighbor for a favor. I mean, it's nice to have good neighbors and live here.” - Roosevelt Park Resident, Focus Group Participant

Community Strengths can be explored by a public dashboard created by KConnect

Focus Group

Before KConnect was a part of the Our Neighborhood, Our Health project, Corewell Healthier Communities and the Hispanic Center of Western Michigan held focus groups to better understand better the strengths, opportunities, and needs of the Roosevelt Park community. Between May and June 2022, three focus groups were hosted at the Hispanic Center of Western Michigan. Two of the focus groups were conducted in Spanish and one in English. Overall, 32 community members attended. KConnect analyzed the results of the focus groups to identify the three funding focus areas (Health, Public Safety, and Mental Health).

Survey

Between August 27 - Nov 1, 2022, community members, Corewell Healthier Communities, and the Kent County Health Department implemented a community survey in the Roosevelt Park Neighborhood. The survey was constructed using input from the focus groups held earlier in the year. The survey team collected 112 completed surveys from neighborhood residents. KConnect analyzed the survey data. Below are the findings of that analysis.

Demographics

The majority of Roosevelt Park Residents are Hispanic

Of the 112 survey respondents:

- 72 percent identified themselves as Hispanic
- 11 percent identified as White
- 9 percent identified as Black

The majority of Roosevelt Park Residents Speak Spanish

- 63 percent of respondents indicated that Spanish was their preferred language
- 37 percent preferred to speak English at home

Other Info

- The survey was nearly half Male and half Female.

[For more information on the demographic characteristics of the respondents, please explore KConnect's interactive dashboard.](#)

data, cont.

Health

Roosevelt Park residents are Seven times more likely NOT to have health insurance than Kent County Residents.

- 31 percent of all respondents report they do not have health insurance.
- 4.2 percent of Kent County residents report not having health insurance.

Nearly two-thirds of Residents Report that at Least One Person in their Household has a Chronic Health Condition.

- 64 percent of survey respondents indicated they have at least one person in their household with a chronic condition.
- The top five health conditions identified were:
 - High Cholesterol
 - Diabetes
 - High Blood Pressure
 - Obesity
 - Mental Health Concerns

Half of all Roosevelt Park Residents do NOT Receive Medical Care When Needed.

50 percent of the survey respondents indicated they do not receive medical care when needed.

One in Five Roosevelt Park Residents Report Language Barriers when They Access Medical Care.

20 percent of respondents reported language barriers with health systems when they tried to access medical care.

For more data related to the survey results of the health section, please explore an interactive dashboard published by KConnect.

data, cont.

Public Safety

Nearly Half of Roosevelt Park Residents Feel Public Safety is an issue in the Community.

- 46 percent of respondents indicated that they felt public safety was either a major issue (23%) in the community or somewhat (23%) of an issue.

Two-thirds Identify Traffic as a Public Safety Community Issue.

- 66 percent of respondents report that traffic is a major issue (35%) in the community or somewhat of an issue (31%).

Nearly Half of Roosevelt Park Residents Identify Gun Violence as a Community Issue.

- 48 percent of respondents indicated that gun violence was a major issue (29%) within the community or somewhat of an issue (19%).

Half of Roosevelt Park Residents Believe More Policing is Necessary to Address Public Safety.

- 50 percent of respondents indicated that more policing was necessary in the neighborhood for them to feel safe.

[For more data related to the public safety section of the survey, please explore an interactive dashboard published by KConnect.](#)

Mental Health

Nearly 40 percent of Roosevelt Park Residents Report Signs of Mental Health Conditions.

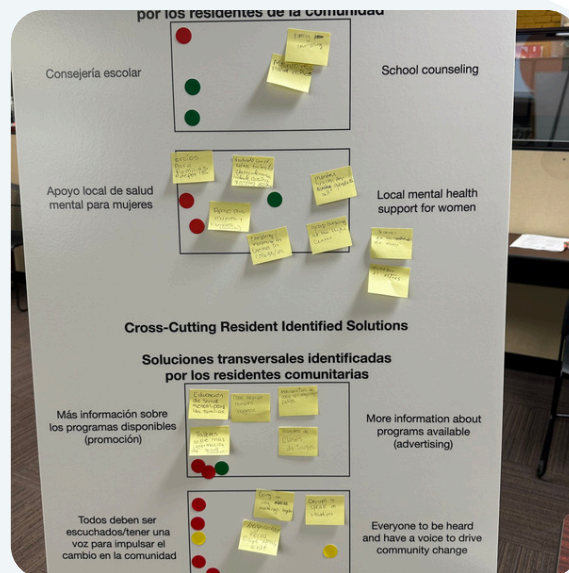
- 38 percent of respondents indicated that they have signs of depression, anxiety, worry, and/or lack of interest.
- 18 percent of respondents indicated feeling anxious or nervous every day.
- 15 percent report fighting depression every day.

[For more data related to the mental health section of the survey, please explore an interactive dashboard published by KConnect.](#)

PROCESS

community meetings

In February 2023, the Hispanic Center of Western Michigan, KConnect, and Corewell Health Healthier Communities hosted two meetings open to the community. The meetings, located at the Hispanic Center, were a chance for residents to come together, learn about the Our Community, Our Health Project, explore community data, and provide feedback and input into the community's needs and possible solutions. The meetings were conducted in Spanish and included materials such as slide decks and posters. The Hispanic Center provided live interpretation services in English.



application process

Awards

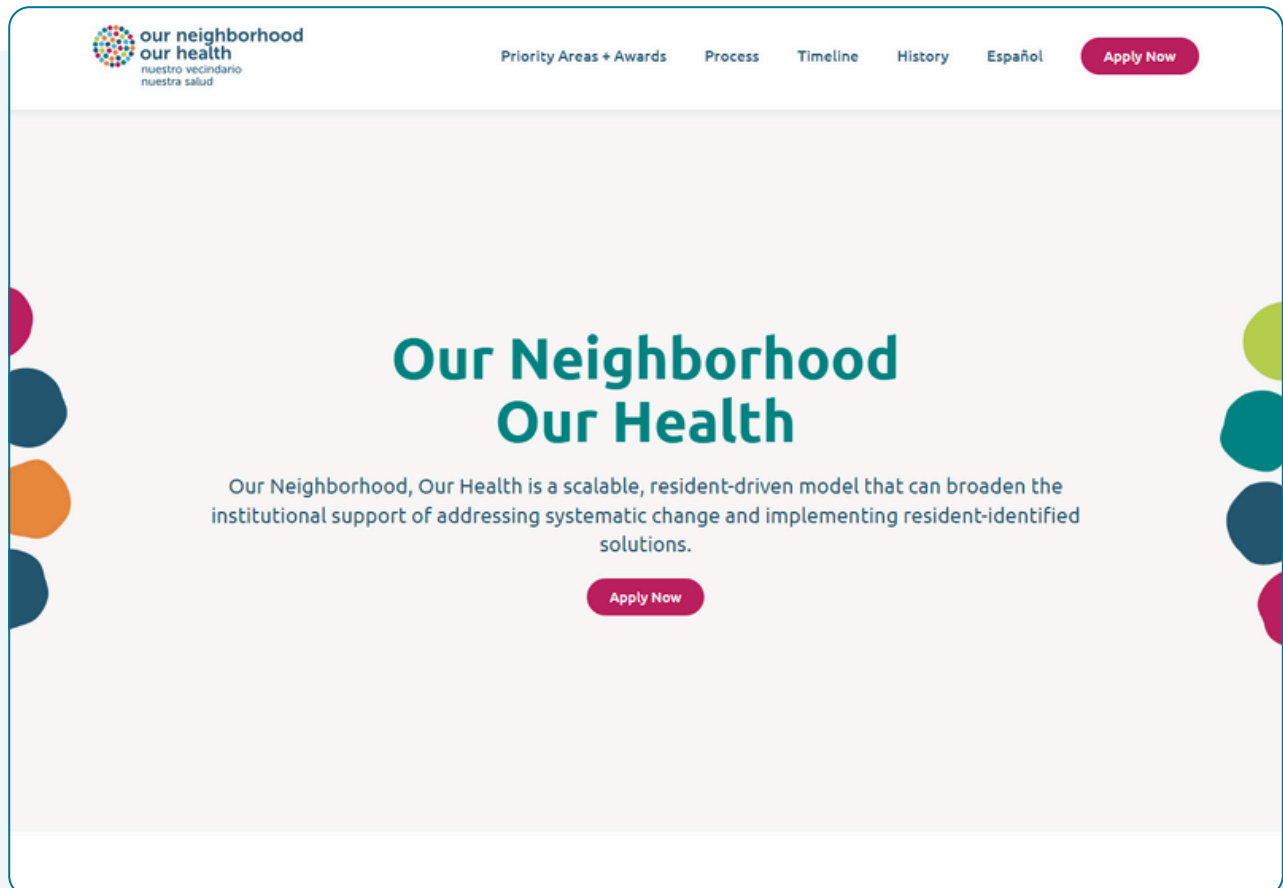
Three priority areas were identified based on data collected by the ONOH Community Advisory Board in the Roosevelt Park Neighborhood. These high-priority areas included Health, Public Safety, and Mental Health.

The \$200,000 in ONOH funding was divided into six total one-year awards with:

- Two awards in **Health** for a total of \$100,000
- Two awards in **Public Safety** for a total of \$70,000
- Two awards in **Mental Health** for a total of \$30,000

Website

KConnect leveraged an existing relationship with WellDesign to design, build, and launch a bilingual website to communicate the initiative and the funding to the neighborhood. Rooseveltparkfunding.org became a one-stop shop for individuals and organizations interested in applying for funding.



application process, cont.

Outreach

The Community Advisory Board, Hispanic Center of Western Michigan, KConnect, and Corewell Health contacted their networks to inform them of the opportunity, including posting on social media. Three informational meetings, including one in Spanish, were held in May 2023 for those interested in applying. The meetings were recorded and sent to those who could not attend. KConnect offered one-on-one technical assistance meetings with prospective applicants if they required further assistance.

Application

The application was a short video submitted online at rooseveltparkfunding.org. KConnect requested that videos be five to ten minutes long and be from a smartphone or recorded Zoom meeting. Editing and adding effects to the videos were discouraged.

Applicants were asked to answer six questions (see below). Videos could be submitted in the applicants' language of choice. Organizations were allowed to apply for funding in multiple priority areas but were informed beforehand that they could only be funded in one area.

Questions

Each organization that applied answered the following six questions, which became the basis of the scoring matrix for the award process. These questions included:

- What's your favorite part of living and/or working in the Roosevelt Park Neighborhood?
- How long has your organization been operating in the Roosevelt Park Neighborhood?
- What has your organization accomplished in the Roosevelt Park Neighborhood in the past?
- What focus area (Health, Public Safety, and Mental Health) would you like to focus on and why?
- What are you proposing for funding from the Our Neighborhood, Our Health initiative?
- How would you measure the success of the program or initiative?

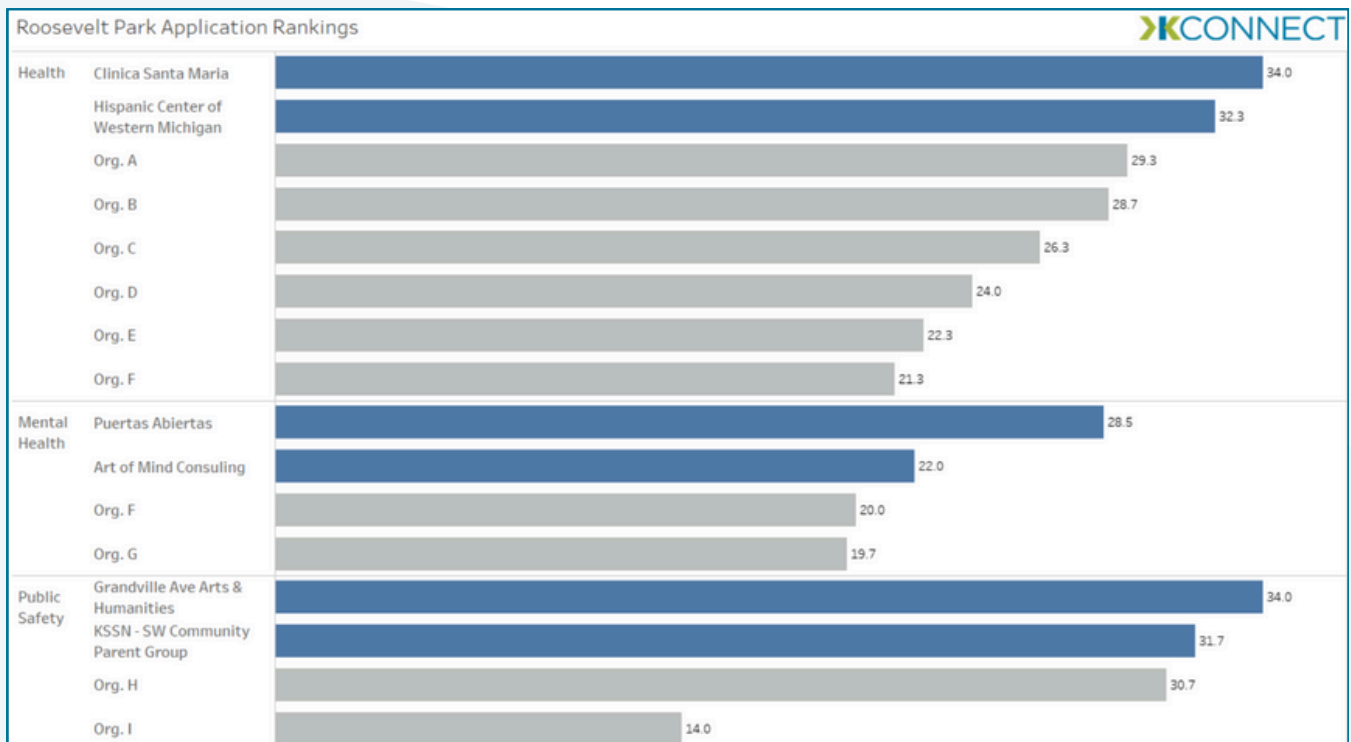
application process, cont.

Proposal Funding Questions

Up to seven (7) points were awarded for each criteria (1 being the least, 7 being the most). The overall scores were averaged. A total of 35 points were available for each proposal.

- The proposal demonstrates the organization's interest in working in or being involved in the Roosevelt Park Neighborhood.
- The proposal demonstrates the organization's understanding of the Roosevelt Park Neighborhood.
- The organization has demonstrated its prior accomplishments in the Roosevelt Park neighborhood.
- The purpose of the proposal is clear.
- The plan to measure the proposal's success is clear and practical.

After a review of the overall scores, the two organizations with the most points in each category were awarded the grants.



GRANTEES

health

Trinity Health Grand Rapids - Clinica Santa Maria

Award: \$50,000

Clinica Santa Maria used the funding to fund two programs. First, the organization purchased an artificial intelligence camera called EyeNuk to test the eyes of patients with diabetes. This first-of-a-kind camera for the Roosevelt Park neighborhood allows residents to get tested, learn the results immediately, and be referred to ophthalmology if their exam results show signs of Diabetic Retinopathy, all without leaving the neighborhood. Before purchasing this camera, residents would be referred to medical offices outside the neighborhood, and utilization rates of those referrals were very low. Second, the “Centering Program” was relaunched. Pregnant parents with similar due dates met together with their doctor to ask questions, share their concerns, and learn about pregnancy, breastfeeding, safe sleep, and labor & delivery.

Clinica Santa Maria is a part of Trinity Health, a national health system with over 36,000 physicians and clinicians, 101 hospitals, and hundreds of clinical sites throughout 27 states.

Hispanic Center of Western Michigan

Award: \$50,000

The Hispanic community in the Roosevelt Park Neighborhood faces significant health disparities. The HCWM had two goals with the ONOH grants. First, to increase access to preventative health care services by increasing referrals to health care agencies and providing social support when seeking health care services through case management. Second, they aimed to increase awareness through outreach strategies, ensuring that health information is accessible to all.



public safety

Grandville Avenue Arts and Humanities

Award: \$35,000

GAAH used the ONOH funding to fund their Teen Leaders program. The Teen Leaders program has three major components: academic support, leadership development/civic engagement through internships, and creative expression. GAAH works to provide opportunities in these areas, all with a foundation of trusting relationships. Building strong interpersonal relationships and networks of support for each participant is their number one focus, as they know that real individual growth and support for young people cannot happen without trusting relationships. GAAH believes the community is safer and stronger when there are strong and trusting relationships with one another - especially with young people.

KSSN/Southwest Community Campus Parent Group

Award: \$35,000

Southwest Elementary School Academia Bilingue has established a committee consisting of parents and other members of the community who will be Guardia's de Cruses (crossing guards) and will oversee the success of the program. Through rain, snow, and sun this past year, Guardia's de Cruses promoted the safety of students walking to and from school. It improved the success and safety of Southwest students and was an important part of the school and community.

mental health

Art of Mind

Award: \$15,000

AOM used the funding to expand awareness of Mental Health as an important priority in the Roosevelt Park neighborhood. Funds helped with the creation of an AOM - Mental Health Champion certification, which is for community leaders, business owners, nonprofits, and religious institutions serving the Roosevelt Park community. The bilingual train-the-trainer model allowed leaders who interact with residents to be better equipped to identify signs of mental health stressors and take action to support their neighbors.

Puertas Abiertas

Award: \$15,000

Puertas Abiertas was developed in January 2019 to create culturally specific strategies to enhance access to services and resources for rural and urban victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking. The financial support helped them to expand 1:1 mental health therapy and therapeutic support groups for women, men children, adolescents, and LGBTQ+ victims or witnesses of domestic abuse.



RESULTS

health

Trinity Health Grand Rapids - Clinica Santa Maria

Clinica Santa Maria used the \$50,000 Our Neighborhood, Our Health grant to (1) purchase a state-of-the-art, artificial intelligence-based eye scan machine for diabetic patients called EyeNUK and (2) relaunch their “Centering Program” for their pregnant patients to learn prenatal and postnatal health.

Clinica Santa Maria is a not-for-profit health clinic run by Trinity Health, a national health system with over 121,000 colleagues and nearly 36,500 physicians and clinicians caring for diverse communities across 27 states. Nationally, they are recognized for care and experience. The Trinity Health system includes 101 hospitals, 126 continuing care locations, the second largest PACE program in the country, 136 urgent care locations, and many other health and well-being services.

As of the end of June, Clinica Santa Maria had purchased the camera, it has been deployed at the clinic and has been integrated into their IT system. They began training staff at the beginning of June 2024. To date, they have had five patient eye scans. The purchase and deployment of the eye scan camera was delayed because it uses advanced A.I. technology that had yet to be used within the Trinity health system nationally. The purchases of this machine in the Roosevelt Park Neighborhood of Grand Rapids, Michigan, forced a national health care system to innovate. They created an Artificial Intelligence committee, developed policies and procedures for their hospitals and clinics to follow when using artificial intelligence, and consulted with their legal department.

The EyeNUK machine is the most sophisticated piece of medical equipment at Clinica Santa Maria. It is the only one currently in the Trinity Health System. In fact, the only A.I.-driven EyeNUK machine in the state of Michigan is located at Clinica Santa Maria in Roosevelt Park. Before purchasing this machine, Clinica Santa Maria would refer their Diabetic patients to clinics outside the neighborhood for their yearly recommended eye screens. The clinic currently has around 1,200 patients who are diabetic, and the follow-up rate on referrals for eye screens was less than 10%. Clinica Santa Maria believes that having this eye screening camera onsite will increase follow-up eye screens to around 47%, which can catch complications from diabetes earlier and save patients' eyesight.

The “Centering Program” is relaunching in September. Since Clinica Santa Maria is part of a large health system, it often takes time to sort out the red tape of starting or restarting a program. The Centering Program was no different; it took longer than expected to get approval. The steering team has completed a two-day training program and recruited patients for the first 12-patient cohort. The first cohort will start on the first Tuesday in September, and the second cohort will start in October, with a new cohort beginning each month after that. Our Neighborhood, Our Health funding went towards training and materials, including building diaper bags with all the essentials for baby and mother. Nutritious foods will also be available at each meeting for expectant mothers.

health, cont.

Hispanic Center of Western Michigan

The Our Neighborhood, Our Health funding allowed the Hispanic Center to focus more resources towards its healthcare navigators program, which helps clients navigate the complicated world of healthcare and health insurance. Since receiving the ONOH grant, the Hispanic Center has placed 761 residents into health insurance programs and made over 20 referrals to mental health services for clients.

The funding also allowed the Hispanic Center to launch a healthcare awareness campaign to help build the neighborhood's awareness of many of the free or low-cost healthcare programs in and around the neighborhood. To launch the health awareness campaign, the HCWM partnered with WKTV community access channel 25/26, located in Wyoming, Michigan, to produce video content for the campaign. They partnered with Exalta, Trinity Health, Clinica Santa Maria Pharmacy, and Catherine Health. The campaign produced ten videos (5 in English and 5 In Spanish) to build awareness of health issues and resources in the Latino community.

In addition to the videos, the Hispanic Center produced flyers to distribute to clients at neighborhood events or the Center to build awareness.

The flyers were distributed to over 4,000 individuals in the community, while the video series was distributed by their network through social media. It has reached over 10,800 social media users in the community in just five months since its launch date.

Videos Clips and Synopsis



The video helps build awareness of Catherine's Health Centers. With over 4 locations throughout the greater Grand Rapids Area including in nearby Wyoming, Catherine's Health transforms lives through high-quality, affordable, and compassionate care. Catherine's Health is a community-driven approach to well-being and provides essential health services and dental care. They ensure that everyone has access to a healthier tomorrow. With a commitment to inclusivity, they offer a sliding scale for clients without health insurance.

[Catherine's Health Video \(Spanish\)](#) [Catherine's Health Video \(English\)](#)

health, cont.



This video helps build awareness of Trinity Health's new mobile Mammography 3-D imaging unit, as well as the importance of early screening and detection of breast cancer. Started in mid-2023, from grant funding and fundraising from Trinity and St. Mary's, the mobile Mammography unit focuses on women who are hesitant to receive breast cancer screenings because they do not have insurance, mistrust health care, lack transportation, do not want to enter a traditional health care setting, or fear the results of a scan.

[Trinity Health Mammography Video \(Spanish\)](#)
[Trinity Health Mammography Video \(English\)](#)



This video builds awareness of Clinica Santa Maria. Located in the heart of the Roosevelt Park neighborhood, Clinica offers vital services to the underserved, homeless & migrant populations, as well as the uninsured. With a team of eight providers and specialists, including gynecology and obstetric specialists, the clinic ensures comprehensive healthcare and pharmacy services. In addition, Clinica Santa Maria breaks down the language barrier as the staff are bilingual and financial assistance is available to break down barriers to medical access..

[Clinica Santa Maria Video \(Spanish\)](#) [Clinica Santa Maria Video \(English\)](#)



This video builds awareness for the Hispanic Center of Western Michigan and the services they provide. Located in the heart of the Roosevelt Park neighborhood, it provides vital services involving Language, Workforce, Youth & Education, and Family Support Services.

[Hispanic Center Video \(Spanish\)](#) [Hispanic Center Video \(English\)](#)



This video raises awareness of Exalta Health and the comprehensive services available to the uninsured, underinsured, and refugee communities in West Michigan. Located in Burton Heights, this faith-based nonprofit healthcare center offers accessible, compassionate care for the whole person. It utilizes an integrated healthcare model that includes physical, vision, dental, behavioral, and spiritual services.

[Exalta Health \(Spanish\)](#) [Exalta Health \(English\)](#)

public safety

Grandville Avenue Arts and Humanities

GAAH was awarded \$35,000 in ONOH funding to support its Teen Leaders program. The Teen Leaders program has three major components: academic support, leadership development/civic engagement through internships, and creative expression. GAAH works to provide opportunities in these areas, all with a foundation of trusting relationships. Building strong interpersonal relationships and networks of support for each participant is their number one focus, as they know that real individual growth and support for young people can only happen with trusting relationships. GAAH believes the community is safer and stronger when there are strong and trusting relationships with one another - especially with young people.

Throughout the year-long Teen Leaders program, GAAH served 51 unique participants. Some teens participated in multiple aspects of the program and during various sessions, and other participants selected individual sessions or program elements that worked with their needs and schedules. This level of individualization is critical to ensuring the available opportunities work for the teens.

Internship Program

Summer

20 teens participated in summer internships

Fall

16 teens participated in the fall internship cycle

Winter

18 teens participated in the winter internship cycle

Spring

17 teens participated in the spring internship cycle

Internships include one-on-one tutoring and academic support, scholarship and FAFSA workshops, monthly hang-out nights, field trips, and creative coaching sessions. All teens participated in one-on-one interviews and goal check-ins with GAAH staff. It is during these times that we know which parts of our program were truly successful and where there is opportunity for growth and improvement.

One teen, Ximena, shared, *“The support with school and my general well-being, being in the classes and helping the kids is what motivates me to keep coming back [to the program]. The environment is fun, and it’s a great outlet. I had never done an afterschool program, and this was such a helpful experience.”*

public safety, cont.

Grandville Avenue Arts and Humanities

Another component of our program that had a big impact this year was their advocacy component, where teens are connected directly with community leaders, partners, and institutions to learn more about how to influence and lead when it comes to the issues they care about. Education and the experiences at school were an issue that rose to the top this year, with students naming school food, qualified and caring teachers, and violence/bullying in schools as one of their highest concerns and priorities for improvement. GAAH connected teens with the Urban Core Collective, which was already running a program for youth to advocate within the Grand Rapids Public School systems, present in front of the School board, learn how to take direct action, petition for the changes they want to see and learn how to get involved directly with the issues that they care about.

GAAH also engaged youth directly in the City of Grand Rapids City Master Planning process, which took place over several community sessions, feedback processes, and community walk-throughs.

Throughout all of these different educational components, advocacy training and internship opportunities, they partnered with several community partners and organizations, including, but not limited to, the following groups:

- Grand Rapids Community Foundation (scholarship night and FAFSA support)
- Grand Rapids Community College (secondary education support)
- Urban Core Collective (advocacy workshops and civic engagement)
- Casual Simulation (tech company internship)
- Cooking with Nicole (“Adulting 101” series - cooking on a budget)
- West Michigan Center for Arts + Technology (step year, studio arts, and workforce development opportunities)
- City of Grand Rapids (Community Master Planning and Civic Engagement)



public safety, cont.

Kent School Services Network/Southwest Community Campus Parent Group

KSSN received \$35,000 to help the parents of Southwest Elementary School (Grand Rapids Public Schools) form a crossing program called Guardia de Cruce to help students stay safe at the beginning and end of the school day. Because of this initiative, Southwest Elementary School – Academia Bilingue established a committee in 2023/2024 of parents and other community members who served as Guardia de Cruce. They trained the crossing guards, and Guardia de Cruces went above and beyond, promoting the safety of students walking to and from school. Their commitment and contribution contributed to the success and safety of Southwest Elementary School, which is now an essential part of the school itself.

With this partnership, the parents, GRPS, and KSSN created a resident-driven model that has scaled to other neighborhood schools wanting to implement the same model.

To date, the program has recruited 12 parents and community members to serve as Guardia de Cruces to help students cross the street to and from school every day, rain or shine. They trained each Guardia de Cruce, and they worked two hours a day, Monday through Friday, during the school year. Parents received a stipend for their time, as well as compensation for training and meetings. The program was so successful that it continued at Southwest for another year in partnership with GRPS, the Grand Rapids Policy Department, and the City of Grand Rapids.



mental health, cont.

Art of Mind

AOM used the Our Neighborhood, Our Health funding to expand awareness of Mental Health as an important priority in the Roosevelt Park neighborhood. The funds helped to create the Art of Mind - Mental Health Champion program and certificate. The Champion program targets key community leaders, business owners, nonprofits, and religious institutions serving the Roosevelt Park community. This bilingual, train-the-trainer model allows leaders who interact with residents to be better equipped to identify the signs of mental health stressors and to take action to support their neighbors.

To date, Art of Mind has used the funding to create a Mental Health Champions guidebook in English and Spanish so participants can continue learning and developing the skills after the training. It has also developed and launched a [promotional video](#) highlighting their Mental Health Champion training, featuring testimonials from community leaders and participants.

The program has trained over 40 leaders in the Roosevelt Park neighborhood and has worked with 14 different organizations, including many of the other grantees in the Our Neighborhood, Our Health initiative.

Puertas Abiertas

Puertas Abiertas received \$15,000 in Our Neighborhood, Our Health funding to expand 1:1 mental health therapy and therapeutic support groups for women, men, children, adolescents, and LGBTQ+ victims or witnesses of domestic abuse.

For the Latinx/Hispanic community, mental health and mental illness are often stigmatized topics resulting in prolonged suffering in silence. Puertas Abiertas offers culturally sensitive mental health services that help victims and survivors achieve self-sufficiency and independence while reducing the cycle of domestic abuse at the individual and community levels.

With ONOH support, Puertas Abiertas has served 33 children and adolescents and 92 adults, 64% of whom are residents of the Roosevelt Park neighborhood.

LESSONS LEARNED

feedback on the process

Grantees were given the opportunity to give feedback on the Our Neighborhood, Our Health funding process. Below is a synopsis of that feedback.

Overall Experience with the Application Process

- Application was easy
- Support and guidance provided throughout the process
- The video application was very easy to navigate

"Best application in town!" Steff Rosalez, Grandville Avenue Arts and Humanities

"This is the most equitable funding process I've ever seen!" - Community Advisory Board Member

"I wouldn't change anything. It was one of the easiest application processes, receiving the funds was straightforward and the reporting allowed a lot of flexibility." Alexandra Lopez, Hispanic Center of Western Michigan

Experience After Receiving Funds

Many organizations talked about the support they received from the backbone staff.

"The support I got from the Hispanic Center and KConnect was great - if I had questions for them. Usually, with grants, it's hard to get ahold of people, but you (Salvador), Alejandra, and Jocelyn were helpful. Jocelyn from the Hispanic Center was amazing."

"I had a great experience from the minute of receiving the grant to beginning the work. We had a cushion of time to prepare before many of the neighborhood initiatives started and that was very helpful. It allowed us to create a strategy and better prepare to go about the work."

lessons learned

Expand Our Neighborhood, Our Health Model to Other Neighborhoods

Our Neighborhood, Our Health partners should expand the resident participatory funding model to other communities throughout the area.

Celebrate the Success of the ONOH Project in Roosevelt Park

Overall, the Roosevelt Park project was a great success that put world-class medical equipment into the neighborhood, saw hundreds more enroll in health insurance, built awareness of local healthcare options, enabled parents to start an innovative program to keep kids safe that then received sustainable funding, allowed for the training on key leaders in the neighborhood on mental health, built and maintained relationships with youth to keep them safe. Residents of the neighborhood were involved and in power from start to finish in this project. This should be celebrated.

Limit Study Phase

The ONOH project started in 2020, and it took about three years to move the funding into the community. Much of the first three years were used to study what community members wanted and needed, as well as delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic—the first three years focused on something other than moving funding into the community.

When KConnect started on this project in January 2023, there was limited time to learn about the project, hold community events, meet with the CAB, and develop an inclusive funding process. Because of the short time frame, lack of continuity with the people in the project's first three years, and minimal capacity-building dollars, the process for organizations applying for the ONOH funding was rushed. Organizations had just 24 days to apply. Ideally, organizations should have a six-week lead time. In future ONOH health projects, it is suggested that the project's study phase be limited to six months to move funding into needed areas in the community as quickly as possible. Learnings from one neighborhood could be used to start conversations in other neighborhoods to see what resonates and doesn't to shorten the first phase of work.

lessons learned, cont.

Right-size Community Funding with Research and Model Building

According to Daniels (2023), ONOH raised a total of \$505,000 from three funding sources to disperse \$200,000 into the Roosevelt Park community.* ONOH should limit research and overhead funding in future projects to under 20% of the total budget. This will ensure that more dollars get into the hands of organizations and community members that are making the biggest difference.

Increase Funding Years

One year of one-time funding in marginalized communities has a less significant impact since sustainable funding sources are more limited. If possible, future ONOH projects should consider securing multi-year funding sources.

Start Continuation Funding Sooner

In addition to increasing funding years, ONOH should consider starting to plan for the next grant cycle with existing grantees sooner rather than at the end of the process.

Turnover Will Happen - Plan for It

The current ONOH project was delayed and often lacked continuity due to staff turnover in key positions throughout the initiative. ONOH should plan on staff turnover and document needs and expectations for future staff members.

Alongside, Not Top Down Philanthropy

ONOH funders are encouraged to reimagine traditional top-down funding models when engaging in community participatory funding initiatives. This approach is particularly important in neighborhoods with high rates of low-income residents, People of Color, and marginalized communities. Outdated funding practices and mental models can unintentionally create barriers and distance between communities and their partners. Instead, adopting inclusive and collaborative funding strategies can empower and uplift these communities, fostering stronger and more equitable partnerships.

*Daniels, K., Ph. D. (2023). Corewell Health Healthier Communities Our Neighborhood Our Health Roosevelt Park Pilot Evaluation. SIDEStrategies.

CONCLUSION

The Our Neighborhood, Our Health initiative in Roosevelt Park successfully drove \$200,000 into areas of the community that residents wanted and needed. From bringing a state-of-the-art medical device to the neighborhood to funding a group of parents to provide student safety services, the initiative funded a diverse array of programs and services. In addition:

- Hundreds of more residents were enrolled in health insurance,
- A campaign was launched to build awareness of healthcare facilities in the area,
- More residents received mental health services,
- Youth received internships and leadership development,
- Neighborhood mental health champions were identified and trained;
- A prenatal support program was relaunched.

All this happened while new connections were made between the grantee organizations.

Roosevelt Park residents were involved and empowered throughout the process. A funding process was developed that was accessible, easy to use, and replicable. We look forward to seeing how this model can be replicated in other neighborhoods throughout the area.

Acknowledgements:

Calvin University
W.K. Kellogg Foundation
Corewell Health Healthier Communities
Kent County Health Department
Hispanic Center of Western Michigan

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