ACHIEVING HEALTH EQUITY IN WEST SACRAMENTO, CA

CASE STUDY

West Sacramento is a diverse community of over 53,000 people. Ensuring that all segments of the population have the opportunity to live healthy lives is at the forefront of Mayor Guerrero’s work. Health equity is defined by the CDC as “the state in which everyone has a fair and just opportunity to attain their highest level of health.” Mayor Guerrero believes that the best way to achieve health equity is to listen to people in affected communities and work with them to address the barriers they face daily.

Welcome Baby: Removing Barriers to Prenatal Care
The City of West Sacramento partnered with Yolo County to expand the reach of their “Welcome Baby” program, increasing access to prenatal care for expectant moms. The city-county partnership funded by both Yolo County and West Sacramento's American Rescue Plan funds (ARP) is the first to serve new mothers who experience barriers to healthcare services due to stigma, cultural myths about healthcare services, and transportation. During the pandemic, the “Welcome Baby” team noticed positive trends of mothers accessing maternal, child, and well-baby care—over 80% of families who were offered the program, participated. The program has had success reaching a diverse population — 66% of program participants identified as Hispanic/Latino and 44% of participating families spoke a primary language that was not English. Health education, access to healthcare, and postpartum access to mental health treatment are yielding positive results in the community.

Welcome Baby
Prenatal program for expectant moms
- Health Education
- Access to healthcare
- Mental health treatment
- Nurse home visits for postpartum

85% Take-Up Rate
61% of The City’s Latino Population Accessed the Program

Urban Farming: Connecting More Residents to Healthy Food
In recent years, West Sacramento has grown into a regional leader and hub for the food industry. Food companies from around the world have built facilities in the city. However, many residents struggle with access to healthy food. The city invested over $300,000 from the American Rescue Plan to partner with the Center for Land-Based Learning to expand their mobile farmer’s market program. The mobile farmers market is a special refrigerated truck that travels to various parts of the city, including Section-8 and low-income housing complexes, to increase access to healthy food. The mobile farmers market teaches residents about healthy food choices and encourages them to engage

Urban Farming
The mobile farmers market program
- Features a refrigerated truck that travels to various parts of the city, including low-income housing, to increase access to healthy food.
- Connects residents with the urban farm program, which provides resources on growing gardens.

~350 Households Served in 2022
>15,000 Pounds of Fresh Produce Distributed

"In every jurisdiction, there's always some level of inequity, and what we do is listen to the individuals in the community on how to reduce those barriers and get people access to resources"
Mayor Martha Guerrero, LCSW
West Sacramento, CA
Mayor Guerrero worked with the Bryte and Broderick Neighborhood Association to help residents organize and develop advocacy skills. The neighborhood has limited infrastructure for physical activity, and has a lower socioeconomic status compared to the city average. She wants to empower community members to hold their leaders accountable. If they can communicate to her what their needs and desires are, it helps her and other elected officials better serve the community. Neighborhood residents identified priorities including increasing access and opportunities to support physical activity and programming. For example, rebuilding a community pool that had closed several years ago. Additionally, parents have expressed concerns about youth delinquency and a lack of after school programming. The city is engaging parents and youth to identify desirable after school programming options. They are also working with local partners—who are better positioned with space, staff, and resources to offer programming – and finding ways to support their efforts.

Moving Forward
Mayor Guerrero’s ideas to enhance physical activity and health for the rest of her term, include:

- Expanding the city’s collaboration with organizations that can provide recreational services, such as the Washington Unified School District.
- Working with nearby mayors to tackle complex issues facing their communities, such as ending hunger and bringing in more healthcare services.
- Most importantly, continuing to learn from constituents and being a strong advocate for city residents, especially the most vulnerable.

"I'm trying to accelerate getting recreational activities to parts of the city that have had basic things, like a pool, close down."
-Mayor Martha Guerrero

LESSONS LEARNED

- Trust and open communication are critical for health equity. In West Sacramento and elsewhere, the communities facing the largest health disparities often have a history of mistrust with the government. It is everyone’s job to rebuild trust through open and honest communication.
- Know the community you want to serve. Community members will tell you what barriers they face, and ideas to overcome them if you are willing to listen.
- Partnerships are key. Religious organizations, county or regional services, and non-profits are all key allies in working to solve complex issues.