



**SUPPORT & EMPOWER**

**RISE Corp**

HEALTHY FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROPOSAL

City of Battle Creek | September 2021

### **Amount Requested**

RISE Corp is requesting \$1,000,000.00 from the City of Battle Creek's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to address the food insecurity disparities / inequities that COVID-19 have placed on the vulnerable populations. Particularly communities of color, the impoverished, the elderly, disabled and more.

### **Program Overview**

Since the onset of the Coronavirus Pandemic (for almost 18 months) RISE Corp has been addressing the food insecurities of the most vulnerable residents of Battle Creek. Distributing 508,125 pounds of healthy food boxes, serving more than 350 families per week. RISE has served 10,750 families and approximately 43,000 individuals. RISE Corps data collected through its Healthy Food Distribution Program Food substantiates the fact that insecurities for many Battle Creek area families is a real and ongoing problem. Feeding American reports that food insecurities among children in Calhoun County is at a rate of 16.4% among the general population it is 14%. This project will continue to support the most needy individuals and families in communities of color, the elderly, low income, single parents, physically and mentally disabled and all other vulnerable populations in Battle Creek's Washington Heights and Post/Franklin neighborhoods (who are financially distressed, and have a higher risk of catching the coronavirus and dying due to compromised immune systems or other underlying health issues and experiencing trauma as a result of COVID-19), to access healthy food.

RISE Corp throughout this pandemic has witnessed what researchers and evidence have shown, "that the Coronavirus Pandemic has and will inflict long lasting financial hardships and emotional trauma on an unprecedented global scale." In light of the recent increase and resurgence of COVID cases in Calhoun County the need for this program continues to grow. Recent (8/23-8/29) Calhoun County COVID data shows 212 new cases and 1 death. CDC and other research continually report that African Americans as a group in the U.S. have a higher rate of poverty, housing and food insecurity, unemployment or underemployment, chronic medical conditions, and disabilities. Ward 2 (Washington Heights/Post Franklin) a primarily African American community is located in the heart of the North Central Neighborhood Planning Council. It is the poorest and most violent area in the city of Battle Creek. According to the United ALICE report, households living in this area are 27% below the federal poverty level making them vulnerable.

Three hundred and fifty (350) healthy food boxes will be distributed from the Washington Heights UMC / Hub of Hope and St. Mark CME Church location weekly. Working with a number of community-based partners such as the Calhoun County Faith Based Coalition, VOCES and the Burma Center who will support the project in the areas of recruitment of families and volunteers, and by providing translation support (written and verbal), helping to reduce cultural and language barriers, subsequently creating a safety net for their community members. RISE will continue to buy food from SPROUT Urban Farms and the Southwest Michigan Food Bank at a wholesale rate, which allows for maximization of funds and the feeding of more people.

**How Will Funds Be Spent**

Funds will be used for program operations, administrative/program staff, to purchase 350 boxes of healthy food weekly, for equipment purchase to keep the items safe at and at the proper temperature and other support type expenditures.

**3 Year Budget**

Administration / Operations	\$333,000
Food (350 boxes/week)	\$504,000
Equipment (Refrigerator Truck)	\$50,000
Other i.e. (gas, maintenance, storage space)	\$118,000

**Target Population**

The priority populations served by project are: Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), Undocumented or Under documented individual, LGBTQ+, Persons with Disabilities, Older Adult (80% of past participations have been 65 or older), the homeless and those living below the ALICE threshold. RISE will not discriminate and will provide services to people of any racial, national, or ethnic origin, from all backgrounds. i.e., race, age, gender, income level, etc.

**Food Distribution History**

**United Way Disaster Relief Funds**

**(4/18/2020 through 7/3/2021)**

<b>Grant</b>	<b>Amount of Award</b>	<b># of Families Served Weekly</b>
<b>#1</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>	<b>40, 60</b>
<b>#2</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>#3</b>	<b>\$14,500</b>	<b>95</b>

#4	\$35,000	125
#5	\$20,000	150
#6	\$75,000	175
#7	\$75,000	225
#8	\$25,000	300
#9	\$60,000	330
#10	\$100,000	350

**Critical Partnership**

The following partnerships are critical to this program: SPROUT, South Michigan Food Bank, Washington Heights UMC/Hub of Hope, St. Mark CME, VOCES, the Burma Center, Ryder, Catalyzing Community Giving (CCG), the Southwest Michigan Urban League, the African American Collaborative, the Rotary and Lion Clubs, and the Battle Creek Community Foundation and United Way of the Greater Battle Creek Kalamazoo United Way.