



COMMUNITY WELLNESS CENTER  
450 N. WASHINGTON AVE.

**PROPOSAL:**

RISE Corp is requesting ***\$1 Million Dollars for A Community Wellness Center for Washington Heights***

In community gatherings held during a nationwide pandemic, it became clear that a neighborhood needed more. Residents needed a variety of much needed resources, help meeting basic needs, support that fosters healthy community interaction, and assistance reaching its full potential. Above all, the Washington Heights neighborhood expressed the desire for a location governed by, and responsible to the local community.

In response, the Community Wellness Center (CWC) was officially formed. This Center is to be housed in the former Washington Elementary School and will serve a variety of needs. The CWC is designed to succeed through the strength of community participation and local organizations. The proceeds will be cycled back into programs, activities, classes and community center operations. We envision transparent governance by a board of community members, joined solely to meet the desires and needs of this community.

We envision programs, classes, and resources to address the wellness of residents of all ages, from preschool to seniors taking place at this location. We will include collaborations with local organizations and nonprofits who best fit the community needs. A sustainable food pantry, wellness classes, support groups, informational activities, a communal kitchen, urban food garden, RISE food distribution and Student Empowerment program.

We envision a cultivation of leadership, partnership, growth, confidence and a sense of neighborhood pride.

That sense of pride begins with the Community Wellness Center housed at Washington Elementary School. This building is located right in the heart of the Washington Heights neighborhood. It has the potential to house all of the programs and organizations needed to meet the basic needs of the community.

## **Program Area I: Youth**

**Goal-** To support youth to become successful members of their families, school, communities and workplace through collaboration with Battle Creek Public Schools and other key stakeholders.

### **Priorities:**

- Provide low-income students access to programs that complement in-school learning and development during non-school hours
- Provide life skills, vocational/career guidance, pre/post-employment support and job placement for low-income youth
- Provide students access to programs that complement in-school learning and development
- Provide culturally and/or gender specific programs for vulnerable youth that promotes positive youth development
- Provide opportunities for positive community engagement for youth at-risk of involvement in the criminal justice system
- Provide access for low-income parent/guardians education, skills and resources to raise successful youth

## **Program Area II: Children and Families**

**Goals:** To ensure that children and their families have access to developmentally appropriate, quality, affordable child care. To assist and educate parents/guardians, child care providers and the community to prepare Battle Creek's children for optimal growth and development.

### **Priorities:**

- Provide access to education and resources for low-income parents/guardians to raise successful healthy children.
- Provide healthy meals to help stretch family food budgets
  - Urban Farms
  - RISE Food Distribution
- Provide supplemental educational resources to strengthen young minds
  - Student Empowerment Program

- Provide referrals for Family Counseling Program

### **Area III: Seniors**

**Goal:** To help our seniors live as independently as possible, maintain/improve senior health and well-being, and reduce senior isolation.

#### **Priorities:**

- Provide case management activities that help seniors live independently by connecting them to needed services.
- Provide volunteer-based home chore services that help seniors remain in their homes.
- Provide volunteer or low cost maintenance or yard services to help seniors maintain their homes.
- Provide services that improve seniors' health and connection to community utilizing recreation, education, social, health and safety, multicultural and intergenerational activities and volunteer opportunities.

### **Program Area IV: Trauma, Violence, Crisis Intervention, Safety and Support.**

**Goal:** To provide crisis intervention and supportive services for victims of Trauma, Violence and Crime. To support the urgent needs of vulnerable children, runaway/homeless youth and families in crisis.

#### **Priorities:**

- To provide immediate direct services for victims of Trauma and Violence.
  - Hospital Intervention Program
- Provide supportive services and address Emergent needs
- Provide assessment, referral and short term services to this community
- Provide active Crime and Violence Prevention
  - Stop The Violence BC
  - RISE Up Violence Interruption Program
- Provide education for the prevention of Trauma and Violence
  - Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT)
  - Social & Emotional Learning (SEL)

### **Program Area V: Access to Resources**

**Goal:** To provide services to overcome barriers to basic needs which will improve their quality of life. Basic needs may include: housing, healthcare, child care, employment and food security.

Barriers may include: education, knowledge, awareness of services, background and transportation,

- 411 Resource Center
- RISE Food Distribution
- Washington Heights Food Pantry
- Urban Gardens
- Community Health Clinic
- On-site Social Worker

### **Program Area VI: Adult Workforce Preparedness and Employment Services**

**Goals:** To improve the opportunities for economic stability for residents who are facing multiple barriers to employment including: criminal background, language barriers, long-term poverty, lack of skills and lack of education.

Priorities:

- Provide employment related skills training
  - Skills trade classes
  - KCC-RMTC program
- Provide education and literacy proficiency skills needed to acquire employment

### **Critical Community Partners:**

Battle Creek Public Schools, \*Children's Defense Fund Freedom School, \*United Way, \*Kellogg Foundation, \*Binda Foundation, \*BattleCreek Community Foundation, \*Binda Foundation, \*City of Battle Creek, \*Eudemonia LLC, \*Bronson Battle Creek, \*Summit Pointe, \*Grace Health, \*Battle Creek Police Department, \*Food Bank, \*Sprout, \*Sunlight Gardens, \*Calhoun County, \*Sojourner Truth Center



**1). Estimated Date Funds will be Available:**

- *Funds will be available IMMEDIATELY*
- *Proposed Purchase Price: \$85,000*

**2). What stakeholder input process was used, and input received (if any), regarding the community's support of your plans for the property:**

RISE organization conducted several different ***Community Conversations*** at Washington Heights United Methodist Church. At which time data and input was collected from the Washington Heights Residents, in regards to community barriers, needs, and aspirations. According to the consensus, the community needs are:

- Increased access to mental health services, food, education, and wellness services and resources
- Activities to deter youth violence
- Programs like Rec may need to come back. (Full Blast exists but charges admittance which is a barrier to some youth)
- Job training and skill building

The Community Wellness Center is also supported by CCG (Catalyzing Community Giving) which is made up of 8 Bipoc organizations:

***Burma Center***

***Voces***

***Urban League***

***Eudaimonia LLC***

***Truth in action***

***A. Philip Randolph Institute***

***New Level Ministries***

***R.I.S.E.***

### **(Community Resident Quotes)**

- *“For example, in the past a program called Rec at Lincoln School (now Macedonia Church) had youth looking forward to attendance three days a week. Parents did not have to worry because children were fed and had a productive way to get all of their energy out while learning social and emotional skills. Youth looked forward to Rec and made sure to behave at school and home accordingly so they wouldn't face the consequence of missing rec. There were also mentors available at Rec. Later, the Rec program disappeared and so did Lincoln School”*
- *“Idle time is the devil's playground. Youth today don't have enough to do outside of school; they have a lot of time on their hands”*
- *“Some youth tend to get into trouble and mischief and need positive influences and programs to deter them from engaging in harmful activities as teens”*
- *“These types of programs are not readily available outside of sports, but some youth don't play sports and have other talents.*

*Some students struggle academically as well, but they also want to tap into other talents outside of sports”*

- “The community needs to nurture youth and find alternative activities, like meaningful after school programs”*
- “The trades are an important option for youth who don't want to go to college”*
- “The community could benefit from increased access to and options in trades, such as plumbing, electricians, etc”*
- “For example, KCC was at this community conversation with a welding simulator to get youth interested in a lucrative career and as an alternative to college”*

***Also, attached are several letters of support from stockholders within the community.***

### **3). PLANS FOR SUSTAINABILITY:**

Rise has intentionally incorporated several sustainability measures into its feasibility research and they are as follows:

- Partnership with CCG (The Village Network) CCG would be responsible for 50% of maintenance cost*
- Blend and integration of lease partners with Rise who focus on behavioral health services, social services, and educational services*
- Residential development of the back portion (Approximately 5 Acres) of the property for Mixed Income Housing.*

#### **FOCUS AREAS**

- I. ***Out of School Time Learning*** - Out of School Time (OST) is a supervised program that young people regularly attend when school is not in session. This can include before- and after- school programs on a school campus or facilities such as academic programs (e.g., reading or math focused programs), specialty programs (e.g., STEM, arts enrichment), and multipurpose programs that provide an array of activities (e.g., 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCAs).

- A. ***Freedom School Model*** - The CDF Freedom Schools program incorporates the totality of CDF's mission by fostering environments that support children and young adults

(known as "scholars" in the *CDF Freedom Schools* program) to excel and believe in their ability to make a difference in themselves and in their families, schools, communities, country, and world with hope, education and action.

By providing K-12 scholars with rich, culturally relevant pedagogy and high quality books to deepen scholars' understanding of themselves and all they have in common with others in a multiracial, multicultural democratic society, *CDF Freedom Schools* programs further empower scholars to believe in their ability and responsibility to make a difference while instilling in them a love of reading to help them avoid summer learning loss.

- B. ***Tutoring* (Lease)** - Recurring value-add services for the community. Revenue for continued sustainability.
- II. **Behavioral Health Services** (This focus area creates recurring funding through leasing)
  - A. *Behavioral Health Agency. Bronson?* (Lease)
  - B. *Rise Health & Wellness Programs*
- III. **Social Services**
  - A. *Foster Care Supportive Services* (Lease) - Support Services for Youth in Transition. As youth age out of out-of-home care, receiving guidance and support when facing life's challenges can help prepare them for self-sufficiency.
  - B. *Youth Homeless Services* (Lease to eventual State contract/subcontract) - The federal definition of a homeless youth is a person under the age of 21 who lacks having a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence. This includes youth living in temporary settings with others due to economic hardship- motels, campgrounds, emergency shelters, and those awaiting foster care placement or left in hospitals.
  - C. *Supportive Food Services*
- IV. **Mixed Income Housing Development**
  - A. *20-25 Units of mixed income housing*
  - B. *Community Center* (Lease)
  - C. *Community Green Space*