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**2015**  
**EXCELLENCE IN  
INNOVATION**  
Awards Program

recognizes

**Buncombe County HHS**

for development and implementation of the

**Community Service Navigator  
Pop-Up Markets**

Team Members:

**Rasheeda McDaniels & Keynon Lake**

## LGFCU Excellence in Innovation Award Project Evaluation

<b>Project Number</b>	HS-2
<b>Title of Program</b>	Community Service Navigator Pop-Up Markets
<b>Program Category</b>	Human Services
<b>Submission Date</b>	6/10/2015 12:47:00 PM
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<b>Implementation Date</b>	2/2014
<b>FLSA Designation</b>	Exempt
<b>Project Team Members</b>	Rasheeda McDaniels, Community Service Navigator Coordinator Keynon Lake, Community Service Navigator

## Description of Productivity Improvement

To provide the best possible outcomes to residents of Buncombe County, Community Service Navigators are connected to safety net systems in every area of our community. The lay navigators connect individuals and families to support services that bring good choices within reach.

To have an even greater impact, the pop-up market program was developed in February, 2014 in partnership with Buncombe County HHS and MANNA food bank to connect deep into the community, providing support for our hardest to reach residents. The pop-up markets provide healthy foods, preventative health screenings, safety tips for individuals and families, community engagement, and a connection to local support services. Most importantly, the navigators and volunteers build strong, trusting relationships within their communities which can offset other sources of stress that can lead to a myriad of poor health and safety issues. The program has reached over 500 families.

When a family doesn't have enough food to eat, it is often connected to other challenges caused by conditions such as overwhelming stress, under-employment or health issues. The Pop-Up Markets are a great way to connect with individuals and neighborhood communities where we can address these needs at a local level bringing resources and better choices within reach.

Our navigators work closely with volunteers within these communities to get food and resources to people that we would never be able to reach and while doing so also help them to move toward greater health, safety and self-sufficiency.

These markets run bi-weekly in the community centers of local housing communities in Buncombe County. They rely on "just-in-time" food donations from MANNA FoodBank which often includes the healthy but perishable fruits, vegetables and bakery items that many local food pantries are not equipped to accept because they require immediate distribution. At each site, neighbors who qualify for SNAP, (formerly known as Food Stamps) come to "shop" for groceries in a colorful, farmers' market style setting, choosing their food items while catching up with friends and neighbors.

Through this initiative, we have strengthened our community neighborhoods, brought fresh, nutritious food to individuals and families, and built collaborative partnerships with Mission, MANNA, ABCCM, the SPARC Network, ABIPA and the Asheville Housing Authority.

Community Service Navigator Pop ups are more than food distribution sites. The educational and health screening aspect of the pop ups (such as blood pressure and weight monitoring with partners from Mission Hospital and ABIPA) is key to bringing good choices within reach. Relationships built through the navigators and neighborhood volunteers provide supports so that individuals can take small steps to improve their lives and their neighborhoods.

During the pop-up times, CSN are able to talk with people about other basic un-met needs that they might and offer them a referral to Buncombe County HHS for something like Medicaid, immunizations, and family planning.

With this program, we are seeing more and more people who, with a little help, are able to focus on safe and healthy choices for themselves and their families.

### **Description of why this project was initiated**

The purpose is to connect people to needed health and human services throughout Buncombe County by building relationships through regular healthy food distribution. These clients are often harder to reach by traditional means of government outreach.

### **Quantifiable results (sustainability, cost savings, cost avoidance and/or a higher level of service).**

#### **Indication of what resources were used and what was done with any accrued time savings**

- On average in 2014, 270 households per month were reached with this service. In October of 2014, we served 454 households and expect to see this level of service continue. These are all clients that are eligible for HHS program and historically difficult to reach.
- Estimated Number of Meals Provided 2014 to People in Need = 91,260
- Pounds of food distributed in 2014 = 109,512

According to MANNA Food Bank, the CSN program for fresh foods distribution has been a model program to show other partners how a successfully coordinated perishable foods program can work. They have a great need to get healthy, fresh, perishable foods distributed quickly and in a smoothly coordinated fashion.

### **Other descriptive information**

This program was recently featured in USA Today