City of San Antonio
Faith-Based Initiative

Second Convening of the Faith-Based Initiative
Summary Report, May 25, 2017

Artwork Courtesy of San Antonio Artist Christopher Maroney
Executive Summary

Created from information gathered through earlier surveys and the initial convening of faith-based institutions, the Department of Human Services held the Second Convening of the San Antonio Faith-Based Initiative on May 25, 2017.

The primary purposes of this convening were to:

- Update faith-based community and stakeholders on the progress of the Initiative and development of a Faith-Based Initiative Working Group,
- Provide background and strategies on developing a resilient community through coordination and partnership, and
- Develop networks and potential collaborative action plans focused on shared community concerns identified by the Faith-Based Initiative Survey and First Convening.

Held at the San Antonio Food Bank, the Second Convening was attended by 152 participants representing 127 faith-based institutions: 47 Faith Congregations, 55 Non-Profit Agencies, and 25 other organizations, including universities, businesses, and multiple City of San Antonio departments and offices.

The overall capacity-building theme was *Creating a Resilient Community in SA!* and opened with a keynote entitled, *Doing Good Together: Toward Mutual and Equitable Community Partnerships.* The remainder of the morning was a facilitated working session about *Building Community Resilience: San Antonio.* Skeletal strategies by community concern were also an outcome of the working session.

An evaluative on-line survey was distributed on May 31st to all registrants and attendees from both the First and the Second Convenings. Significant feedback noted the value of relationships and coming together with the desire to have more time to actually work together. Based on information gathered through the Second Convening and the follow-up evaluative survey, the next steps in the San Antonio Faith-Based Initiative include:

- Forming a Working Group with representatives from the San Antonio Faith-Based Community,
- First meeting of that Working Group in July 2017,
- Setting the Initiative’s priorities and strategies for the next 1-3 years, and
- Forming necessary Action Teams coordinated by members within the Working Group.

Resilience – n. bounce-back recovery with a bounce-forward effect, both in times of crisis as well as daily adversities. Based on researched Best Practices, Resilience is key to Community strength and wellness.
Communications prior to the Convening continued to build and expand awareness of the Faith-Based Initiative and invited participation in the Second Convening.

Needs, Community Concerns, and Goals

- **Surveyed Faith-Based Community’s stated Needs** identified the following: (1) networking, (2) meeting regularly, education, (4) information, (5) resourcing in regards to shared community concerns;

- **Surveyed Faith-Based Community’s mutual Community Concerns**, which identified the community’s most pressing concerns, prioritized as: (1) generational poverty, (2) homelessness & hunger, (3) immigration & refugees, (4) literacy, (5) children & foster care, mental health, neighborhoods, public health, and religious discrimination; and

- **San Antonio’s Faith-Based Initiative’s stated Goals**: (1) developing relationships, (2) surveying leadership, (3) creating an accessible network, (4) facilitating common vision, and building capacity.

Format

**Powerful speakers that honed in on... issues that we face as a nation that are applicable to San Antonio.**

- Convening Participant

- **Keynote Description**: The most resilient communities are diverse communities that draw on the shared wisdom that mutual and equitable partnerships produce. But how do we bridge in service the divide between faith and society? Divides between geography, religions, race, economic status? Integrating research from social psychology and her experiences as a community leader, Dr. Christena Cleveland discussed the factors that prevent mutuality and equality in these potential partnerships and offered the best practices in overcoming them.

- **Dr. Christena Cleveland** is a social psychologist with a hopeful passion for reconciling across cultural divisions. She earned a BA from Dartmouth College, a PhD from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and is the first Associate Professor of the Practice of Reconciliation at Duke University’s Divinity School. Her scholarly work includes integrating social psychological perspectives on intergroup and intercultural processes with current reconciliation dilemmas.

"The keynote speaker was dynamic and touched on many of the challenges and issues we face locally." -Convening Participant
Convening Overview and Format

- **Working Session Description:** San Antonio faith and civic leaders rolled up their sleeves around prioritized community concerns, applying the framework of Building Community Resilience (BCR), identifying key community and cross-sector partners necessary to develop strategies and tactics to address social determinants risks and strengthen factors that support resilience.

- **Dr. Wendy Ellis** is the Project Director of the Building Community Resilience collaborative at the Sumner M. Redstone Global Center for Prevention at the Milken Institute School of Public Health at The George Washington University. The BCR collaborative is testing and implementing a model based on a strengths-based approach and is aimed at building the infrastructure to promote resilience in vulnerable communities.

"The highly practical elements presented in the working session facilitation, the pamphlets and worksheets [Dr. Ellis] provided [for us to work through] were spot-on." - Convening Participant

**Working Session**

Tables were labeled by community concerns from the First Convening on April 3rd: Generational Poverty, Homelessness & Hunger, Immigration & Refugees, Literacy, Children/Foster Care, Mental Health, Neighborhoods, Public Health, and Religious Discrimination. Participants self-selected their working table group.

Following the Welcome and Keynote, the facilitated working session provided table participants the opportunity to work in small groups to network, identify resources and potential partners, and develop messages regarding specific community concerns towards targeted audiences. Each participant received the following Community Resilience take-back resources from George Washington University:

- Action Guide Tools’ comprehensive booklet
- Coalition Building and Communications’ comprehensive guide
- Worksheets on Asset Mapping, Identifying Partners, and Community Messaging
An evaluative survey was sent out after the Second Convening to all registrants/attendees from both Convenings with a 25% response rate (95 responses out of 379):

53% Registered for both Convenings
44% Attended both Convenings

Most remembered and appreciated from First Convening:
- Conversation Triads and Relationships
- Networking and Information Shared

% of Ratings of a 4-5 from Second Convening:
- Keynote Speaker, Dr. Christena Cleveland: 83%
- Registration and Welcome: 76%
- Working Session Facilitator: 58%
- Table Interactive Work: 34%
- Report Backs: 34%
- Next Steps: 31%

Most significant take-away from First Convening:
Meeting people, coming together, and networking

Most significant take-away from Second Convening:
Speakers, keynote, connecting and coming together

#1 suggested change in the entire process of the Initiative:
More time to actually work together.

We asked: “If you had only one moment to share with someone else, the most significant thing about the convenings would be....?” You said:

"We are not alone in our shared efforts."
"BEING PART OF A CITY-WIDE FAITH EFFORT."
"Working together to break old stereotypes to begin building a resilient community."
"[It's the] most inter-racial, inter-faith gathering to-date in my experience in San Antonio."

What you said you felt at the Convenings:

Passion!
ENERGY!
Optimism!
HOPE!
Based on participant input from both the Convenings and evaluative surveys, next steps include:

**On-going**
- Building relationships with faith leaders and faith-based institutions
- Developing network database & identifying technology, and
- Assessing congregational strengths and proposed collaborations

**July**
- First meeting of Working Group

**August**
- August 11 & 12 – Pathways to Hope Conference at Tobin Center

**September/October**
- Report on FY 2017 results and create FY 2018 action plan

"The challenge is going to be to get us all together to advance the identified issues."

- Convening Participant
Faith-Based Congregations:
Antioch Baptist Church
Baha’i Faith of San Antonio
Bethany Congregational UCC
Blueprint Ministries
Christ Covenant Church
Church of the Holy Spirit
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
Church of Reconciliation City Church
Domain’s Kingdom Group and Greater Faith
Episcopal Church of the Holy Spirit
Faith Community Baptist
First Baptist Church
First Presbyterian Church
First Unitarian Universalist Church
Friends Meeting of San Antonio (Quakers)
Good Shepherd Lutheran
Greater Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church
Healing Faith Fellowship
House of Prayer Lutheran
I Lean on Jesus ministries
Jacob’s Chapel United Methodist Church
J-Jireh Ministries
Kingdom Life Christian Ministries
Kingdom Studios
Living Faith Fellowship Church
MacArthur Park Lutheran Church
Metropolitan Community Church
MCGP Ministries
Mission Presbytery (central office for Presbyterians)
Mt. Calvary Baptist Church
New Creation Christian Fellowship
New Light Baptist
Oak Hills Church
Our Lady of Perpetual Help
Redeemer Presbyterian Church
Rio Texas Conference (central office for United Methodist Church)
Romanian Orthodox Church
St. Luke Baptist
St. Matthew Catholic
St. Paul Catholic
St. Paul United Methodist
Serve the City Any Woman Can
Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran
Temple Chai
The Islamic Institute
Zion Lutheran Church

Non-Profit Organizations:
Any Woman Can
Asian Child Rescue Ministries
Baptist Health Foundation of SA
Beat Aids
Bethel Prevention Coalition
Catholic Charities
Club Lighthouse Christian Services
Community of Churches for Social Action
COPS/Metro Alliance
DePelchin Children’s Center
Dialogue Institute of Southwest Environmental Defense Fund
Families Especial
Fight Against Sexual Assault
Good Samaritan Community Center
Health Collaborative
Haven for Hope
IKOR
InterfaithINC
Interfaith Welcome Coalition
Interreligious Council of San Antonio
Jewish Federation of San Antonio
Latina Leadership Institute
Maryknoll San Antonio
Methodist Healthcare Ministries
Monticello High School
Morningside Ministries
NAMI
Open Table
Pax Christi San Antonio
Saint Susie Charitable Foundation
San Antonio Area Foundation
San Antonio Community of Congregations
San Antonio Food Bank
San Antonio Interfaith Power & Light
San Antonio Metropolitan Ministries
San Antonio Peace Center
San Antonio Sponsoring Committee
San Antonio Youth Literacy
STCH Ministries
Strong Foundation
Texas Alliance For Human Needs
Texas Public Radio – Dare to Listen
Texas Leadership Coalition
The H. E. Butt Family Foundation
The Inspiration Center
The SoL Center
Trulight127
Unicity
United Communities of San Antonio
Unity Empowerment Center Inc.
Voices for Children
Wellness Center for Families of Faith
Wellspring Wellness Manifest-Center for Inspired Living
YMCA of Greater San Antonio

Other Organizations
Alamo Colleges
Building a Healthy Temple Program, UTSA
Building Community Resilience, Dallas
Communities in Schools COSA – CMO, DHS, Metro Health, DIO, Sustainability, Mayor’s Office, Mayor’s Fitness Council
Ettling Center for Civic Leadership, UIW
Google Fiber
National Inter-Organizational Collaborative
New York Life
Our Lady of the Lake University
Palo Alto College
Participatory Budgeting San Antonio
Ponce Consulting
Ramon Chapa, Jr. Promotions
St. Mary’s University
SARAH
Southwest Independent School District
The Cactus Report
Toyota
Trinity University
UTSA
Veterans for Education Reform
Wayland Baptist University