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Marketing Plan: Increasing Access & Creating a Local Voice

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Abstract

Too many youth in Santa Cruz County are not seeing their basic needs being met. Basic needs of residents include education, health and financial stability, three of the main focuses described in United Way of Santa Cruz County's (UWSCC) mission. The pandemic has only exacerbated the effects that low-income families and individuals have experienced, with youth at the forefront of those affected. UWSCC aims its programming towards local at-risk youth, providing needed support services and resources to the community. When systems for distributing these services and resources were switched from in-person to predominantly virtual pathways, it became harder for low-income families in the county to meet these basic needs. Having internet access at home is a luxury that many did not consider prior to the COVID-19 outbreak. If needs go unmet for a prolonged period of time, growing age youth see higher rates of homelessness, as well as increased physical and mental health related needs. This paper will describe the marketing plan created for UWSCC's Marketing and Resource Development department to help streamline outreach to youth in the county who could use the support services available. The project was successful in creating an organizational tool that can be used as a reference for maintaining a consistent and structured presence on social media, using a localized tone to increase organizational engagement over time.

Keywords: Youth, Santa Cruz County, basic needs, marketing plan, resource and development

Agency & Communities Served

United Way (UW) is a worldwide organization with locations in over 40 countries and territories, serving 1,800 communities in total, with the majority located in the United States (*About | United Way Worldwide, 2020*). The United Way of Santa Cruz County (UWSCC) has been a long-standing staple for the community, serving low-income and vulnerable individuals, youth and families for the last 135 years (*United Way of Santa Cruz, 2019*). While each UW location has larger corporate partners, much of the work this organization does is localized to its surrounding community. Local programming and services may be supported through UW's collaboration with community partners including donors, sponsors, nonprofits, schools, businesses, local volunteers and advocates. When the community seeks immediate change, UW transitions to asking corporate partners for support as they are better able to supply resources in larger quantities assisting a greater number of individuals. Having both local and corporate partners is beneficial for the community and organization when the level of need shifts.

UWSCC's mission statement is, "To improve the lives of youth and families in Santa Cruz County by uniting our community to address the basic needs of education, health, and financial stability" (*United Way of Santa Cruz, 2019*). The organization also holds a community vision of "equitable communities where all individuals are healthy, educated, and financially stable" (*United Way of Santa Cruz, 2019*). When considering the striking differences in household income levels throughout the county, those at the lower end of the payscale find it difficult to stay afloat financially. Service level jobs are needed to sustain any community with businesses and an economy. Although the inability to afford housing with the income provided in this line of work, either renting or owning in the area, is causing these industry workers to

become obsolete. As this income divide is continuing to grow further apart, it's become more important than ever to ensure the county's highest needs youth and families are able to access the necessary services and resources to meet basic needs. Especially amidst the COVID-19 pandemic when needs have been exacerbated all around.

One in four children in the county are at risk for being hungry (*Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Cruz County*, 2020). Affordable food accessible to low-income individuals in the community is found to be high in calories and low in nutritional value, which can produce unhealthy eating habits at an early age (*Second Harvest Food Bank Santa Cruz County*, 2020). Additionally, there's been an increase in the number of youth with mental health needs amplified by the pandemic who lack the ability to fulfill these needs (*Stern*, 2020). Families and youth are being displaced from their homes at higher rates due to a loss of income and the rise of rental property cost. The last Point-In-Time homeless count was conducted in 2019, finding that there were 122 families, 51 unaccompanied children, and 569 transitional age youth who were homeless (Applied Survey Researcher (ASR), 2019). The count found that 74% of homeless individuals were Santa Cruz County residents prior and 23% of youth were in foster care prior to becoming homeless (ASR, 2019). Due to COVID-19 the 2021 homeless count was not conducted. Although it is known from the shelter and food pantry participant increase within the county that there were a large number of people whose living conditions were impacted, resulting in homelessness.

United 4 Youth (U4Y) was a program designed by UWSCC to ensure youth in the county are able to meet basic needs by using a network of nonprofits who collaborate to offer wrap-around services in the form of warm hand-off referrals (*UNITED 4 YOUTH*, 2020). This

program has two locations in both north and south county to encourage community connection with those living locally to them. It offers its services close to where the participating youth live for easier accessibility.

Nonprofits participating in the north county U4Y program include Live Oak Community Resources (LOCR), Monarch Services, Walnut Avenue Women's and Family Center, Yoga For All Movement (YFAM), and Your Future Is Our Business (YFIOB). Nonprofits participating in the south county program include Community Action Board (CAB), Conflict Resolution Center (CRC), Living Evolution, Pajaro Valley Prevention (PVP), Youth Serve, and Youth Now. These nonprofits at each designated U4Y location cover an array of needs to promote youth empowerment and positive development with focus areas in education, prevention and awareness, health and wellness, community and social connections, leadership and economic resilience (*United Way of Santa Cruz, 2019*).

UWSCC achieves additional grant funding to support all of these nonprofits in their collaborations for both north and south county programs. This helps the U4Y program staff develop and strengthen relationships with the county's highest needs youth to gain a better understanding of how to best provide individual support. This allows the nonprofits to offer supplemental services that could be beneficial for the individual when circumstances change and needs increase in certain areas. For example, if a mother and her child were being abused at home, they would be referred to the Walnut Avenue Women's and Family Center and Monarch Services to find emergency safe housing and attain technology safety. The act of these two programs working together to provide the individual with all necessary resources to improve circumstances is considered wrap-around services. This wrap-around service wellness model

supports small nonprofits in continuing operations, gaining a larger beneficiary base, creating community partnerships that make long standing impacts and improve success rates among youth.

Other programs UWSCC runs include Youth Action Network (YAN) advocating for youth voices to be heard and Jóvenes Sanos focused on healthy eating & active living in Watsonville. They also partnered with Dignity Health and Applied Survey Research to create the Community Assessment Project (CAP) sharing data on Santa Cruz county residents and with Project Scout to provide free tax preparation for low-income individuals. And finally, UWSCC runs the county's 211 comprehensive information and referral service program that works to provide local health and human services information (211 Santa Cruz County, 2021). In the Fall of 2021, the 211 program received state grant funding to assist county residents facing financial hardships, due to COVID-19, with the emergency rental and utility relief application process.

Problem Description

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the needs of low-income individuals within the county. Low-income youth are at the forefront of vulnerable groups who have been dramatically affected by changes seen over the last year. Some of these changes include fully online classes, face mask protection, maintaining distance from friends and loved ones, reducing social exposure, overstimulation of technology and stay-at-home isolation orders. For many families in this high priced county it has also meant a change in living conditions that are not ideal for promoting health, safety and stability. Due to the many recent changes experienced, too many low-income youth in Santa Cruz County are not seeing their basic needs being met.

The programs that are available to counteract the increase in need have not been easily accessible since the spread of COVID-19. Pathways for distributing goods and services were rerouted to a new virtual world in an effort to reduce exposure to the novel Coronavirus. Most organizations were already experiencing setbacks trying to keep up with regular program services as the demand increased due to the pandemic. It took time and money to make the transition from in-person services to an online setting in order to continue operations, which were already sparse resources. The transition inadvertently brought to the surface communication and technology inequalities that produced barriers in access. Low-income residents who did not have access to paid services like wifi or cable were not able to access the support resources available. For low-income residents with limited English proficiency, even less was available due to a lack of multilingual virtual resources and information.

Contributing Factors

The cost of living in Santa Cruz County is at an all time high. The housing market is practically untouchable for individuals making even mid-range salaries, even though the local economy is supported by tourism and agriculture. It maintains a higher household average income than the states' average household income (Santa Cruz \$107,017 > California \$86,165), which was already higher than the national average (California \$86,165 > U.S. \$76,401) (*The Santa Cruz County Community Assessment Project*, 2019). In 2019, 122 families (419 members) and 569 transitioning youth were homeless, with the pandemic causing this number to rise (*Housing Matters*, 2019). In the county, 85% of young adults, ages 15-24, reported to be paying over 30% of their household income on rent prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, which then caused an increase in unemployment impacting this rate dramatically (*Santa Cruz Data Share*, 2020).

Changes posed by the pandemic have had severe psychosocial and mental health effects on the overall wellness of children and youth facing the various types of insecurity posed by the pandemic (Singh et al., 2020). Youth experiencing hardships at home tend to be more distracted in school making success harder to achieve.

In 2019, the cost of living index in the county rose to 151.7, a very high index compared to the nations' index which sits at 100 (Santa Cruz County City Data, 2019). The county's index has continued to rise. Residual effects from the pandemic include the unemployment rate rising from 9.9% in October of 2020 to 10.9 in February of 2021 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014). This has made it hard for many to pay bills, clear debts, and meet other basic needs (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014). Countless entry level, service industry and other low wage jobs were the ones put on hold when the economy was shut down last year. Those who experienced a reduction in pay were the families and individuals already paying over the recommended percentage of household income on rent to be able to afford living in this high priced county.

In March of 2020, an executive stay-at-home order was put in place shutting down in-person services in an attempt to reduce the spread of the virus. Over one year later and a multitude of services have remained virtual due to the random spikes in cases seen periodically when indoor public areas reopen. Prior to the last shut down in the winter of 2020 there was a rapid increase in cases causing the county health department to make the recommendation of continuing the stay-at-home order (City of Santa Cruz, 2020). To keep all community members safe, public gatherings and in-person programming were not recommended until cases became nonexistent in the county. This isolation and social distancing created a feeling of loneliness for

many adolescents and youth during the pandemic, causing the rates of mental health related disorders to rise.

Findings show, in 2019, 10.1% of residents living in the county were living in poverty, and at the start of the pandemic were at a greater risk of being unable to meet basic needs (Santa Cruz County City Data, 2019). The information, support services and resources that were required to transition from in-person to virtual, in most cases, took a good deal of time to establish. This meant the people who needed support the most were either not receiving it or experienced a delay in assistance. Additionally, in 2018 there were 30,947 foreign born spanish speakers and 36,472 native born spanish speaking peoples living within the county (Santa Cruz County Spoken Language Statistics, 2018). These are individuals who have specifically been impacted by the lack of multilingual resources available to them, in-person and virtually, during and prior to the pandemic (Santa Cruz County Spoken Language Statistics, 2018). This number has been expected to increase for the county and state.

Consequences

With the high cost of living in Santa Cruz County there comes the issue of housing insecurity. Out of the 569 transitioning age youth, 16 to 25 years old, who reported to be homeless in 2019, only 5% were sheltered (Housing Matters, 2019). This leaves 95% of this population unsheltered and seeking a safe space to reside (Housing Matters, 2019). There were 51 unaccompanied minors in 2019, with half reporting they were unsheltered (Housing Matters). The pandemic has only increased the number of youth experiencing homelessness, or in need of transitional housing, causing housing insecurity for this group to currently be at its highest.

Along with housing, food security is important in helping growing youth to feel energized, empowered, healthy, and resilient. Similarly to housing insecurity, when children are experiencing food insecurity self-worth is diminished, motivation dwindles, overall health suffers and there becomes a feeling of disconnectedness from peers. Youth experiencing a lack of confidence from this may be unable to see a better future for themselves or their families. This weighs on an individual's mental health and over time will lead to the development of unhealthy habits, like smoking or stress eating (Nguyen et al., 2015).

Obesity, diabetes, coronary heart disease, arthritis, cancer, stroke, hypertension and mental health disorders are some of the consequences that arise from prolonged levels of stress, lack of physical activity caused by the stay at home order, and lack of consistent nutrient intake (Ruelas et al., 2012). The cost of maintaining any one of these health conditions is high and for low-income families it can mean all that they have. Less extreme food insecurity will still lead to raised stress levels and an overall altered wellbeing, including mental, physical, and emotional states being negatively affected (Nguyen et al., 2015).

Problem Model

| Contributing Factors | Problem | Consequences |
|---|---|--|
| On-site / in person services and outreach are unavailable. | Too many youth in Santa Cruz County are not having their basic needs met. | Increased rates of homeless or transitioning youth. |
| Communication inequalities have been exacerbated by the pandemic; especially for low income and those facing language barriers. | | Increase in the number of youth experiencing a mental health disorder. |
| High cost of living in Santa Cruz County. | | Increased youth facing negative long-term health outcomes. |

Capstone Project Description and Justification

Capstone Project

This capstone project will focus on developing a marketing plan that will streamline the United Way of Santa Cruz County's (UWSCC) social media marketing needs helping to promote current organizational efforts. The aim of this plan is to increase awareness of the resources, programming and community partnerships UWSCC has to offer. By creating consistency in the organization's presence across all virtual platforms, and maintaining released information is up to date, community engagement with UWSCC will increase. This marketing plan will consist of an excel spreadsheet that contains scheduled post topics for each given day of a calendar year. The year will be divided into quarters and colorcoded. Quarters will include financial stability, youth success, community engagement, and health & wellness. Posts will use the quarter topic with assigned color as the theme for all post content during designated months. These assigned themes will direct what is posted to the organization's various social media accounts which include Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. This marketing plan will act as a calendar, helping UWSCC ensure all virtual pathways are releasing current information on programs, services and resources they provide. It also helps to see to it that all programming is being promoted to the community at equal and consistent rates. The topics to post on will include the organization's programs, affinity groups, fundraising, organizational achievements, and events. An additional calendar will be created to specifically direct campaign marketing. This release of information will represent UWSCC's vision of inclusion, equity, and diversity, as well as their mission to unite community members with the resources they need for economic stability, education, and health (UWSC, 2019).

Prior to this project, the organization's presence on Instagram was minimal to nonexistent as it had not been accessed since before the pandemic began. Facebook posts were sporadic and inconsistent as staff was spread thin due to the cutbacks caused by the pandemic. By developing UWSCC's marketing plan, these virtual outreach pathways now allow more people to access organizational information. The organization can better assess and meet community's needs through social media interactions, engagements and the platform algorithms that gather information to produce relevant data. The goal of this project is to develop a structured schedule for releasing the organization's necessary marketing materials, as well as creating a local voice for the organization throughout its virtual presence. The organization plans to continue utilizing this calendar as a tool to direct all future organizational posts. This project reduced the amount of time staff will need to spend on social media marketing by simplifying the posting process, allowing for more time to be spent on other organizational needs. UWSCC will save in resources training new hires to take on this task by having a system already in place that is comprehensible and simple to manage.

Project Purpose

The purpose of developing a marketing plan for UWSCC is to integrate additional pathways into its outreach efforts and create an efficient way for community members to access organizational information. It is important for the organization's different support services and programs available to be promoted in a timely manner so that county residents can receive the support they need. As remote learning became essential in reducing the spread of the virus, those who did not have access to the internet at home prior to the pandemic had to gain access somehow to continue participating in school. Along with the increased need for affordable

internet access came an increase in the number of free wifi locations available to the public. Social media networks saw an increase in the number of members joining and websites were being visited at higher rates as more people had access to free internet. In this snapshot in time, virtual pathways became a main route for accessing pertinent community information. The transition to online services has been the main reason many businesses and organizations were able to stay relevant through these strange times. UWSCC has continued its efforts throughout the pandemic and has multiple resources available to assist community members with hardships that they may be facing. The best method for UWSCC to promote this information to the community is through virtual systems, like websites and social platforms, that receive substantial foot traffic.

It is hoped that by creating a localized tone across all of UWSCC's social networks a deeper connection with the community will be formed. By producing genuine posts that promote relevant community efforts, additional relationships can be more deeply established. Maintaining a consistent tone that speaks to the surrounding community has shown to be effective for other organizations and businesses when attempting to build community relationships. United Way Worldwide (UWWW) has established its overarching marketing voice and brand that is mandatory for all 1,800 UW locations to use. Although solely using the UWWW marketing tools tends to make posts seem inauthentic and generic. Santa Cruz County is a tight knit community that generally supports small businesses and local partners. Using a localized voice in all social media marketing would go a long way in helping the organization gain community supporters, donors, and participants.

Project Justification

With youth being the population more so present in the social media and virtual realm, this group is more easily reached through these types of pathways. The pandemic caused an increase in the number of youth interacting on these social platforms, often using multiple platforms at a time. UWSCC's social media account posts will aim to target youth who could benefit from the organization's program services and resources offered, especially during the pandemic. Without the release of important program and resource information from all UWSCC virtual pathways youth may miss out on hearing about the services that are available to them. Services and programs that could potentially help them to better meet their basic needs. The United 4 Youth (U4Y) program aims to empower local youth, although accurate program information has not been available through virtual pathways. The affinity group, Emerging Leader Circle (ELC), aims to recruit young professionals to participate in workshops that introduce ways in becoming successful in career and life early on. Participants of the group pay an annual fee which gets funded back into UWSCC's U4Y program, supporting the county's at-risk youth. Releasing additional marketing materials through social platforms surrounding the benefits of an ELC membership could increase affinity group participation, increase funding for the U4Y program, increase knowledge of U4Y programs within the community, and benefit more young professionals in the area.

“Social media sites have introduced new convening platforms for organizations to facilitate relationship building and stakeholder engagement. Social media are claimed to help organizations engage present and potential stakeholders by sharing, cooperating, and mobilizing joint actions in near-real time” (Guo & Saxton, 2013, p. 72). By not having current information open to the public in the form of social media, people who are seeking support in these ways will

not be able to benefit, and therefore populations are not being reached. With youth being a population that is reliant on social media, lacking access to resources and information in this way would more so negatively impact this group, a group in which UWSCC aims to provide support.

Project Implementation

The purpose of this capstone project is to expand United Way of Santa Cruz's outreach into the community to better reach youth, create a localized tone across its various platforms and to streamline the organization's marketing efforts. This project will be implemented through a series of steps using marketing techniques that will ultimately help UWSCC grow in followers, reshares, likes, and eventually see an increase in program participation.

To implement this project, an excel spreadsheet has been created to divy up the different days in the week for posting, where under each day there will be a posting subject. The posting subject will vary day to day, with categories such as current program updates & information, affinity groups, community partnerships, events & fundraising, sponsorships & large grants achieved, community updates, and two free posts up to the discretion of the marketing manager.

Programs to be showcased through this project will include a 211 informational search, United 4 Youth (U4Y) as a network of nonprofits offered to youth, Jóvenes Sanos, and the Youth Action Network. Affinity groups that will be showcased through the project will include Women In Philanthropy (WIP), a group of women in Santa Cruz who fundraise for youth in the community, and the Emerging Leaders Circle (ELC), a collaboration of United Way of Santa Cruz County (UWSCC) and David Lyng Realty to offer young professionals the opportunity for networking, along with attending educational workshops.

Photos will be gathered from the various program photo archives at UWSCC, the newsletter with current program information and from outreach to the sources. WIP information and photos will be collected from the UWSCC CEO, Keisha Browder, who works directly with the philanthropy group to help fundraise for the success of our county's youth. ELC content can be created through communications with the organizations' David Lyng contact to receive information on upcoming workshops and for posting recaps from previous workshops giving tidbits of information that was covered. Upcoming event posts will be released with teasers through stories, creating a buildup to increase participant interest. When events are not approaching, highlights on previous successful community events will be posted to share special moments created with UWSCC. Any additional content photos from previous years can be found in the UWSCC archives.

Community partnerships and sponsorships will be promoted, including for the Community Assessment Project that was conducted by Applied Survey Research, UWSCC, and Dominican Hospital Dignity Health. Shedding light on the community members who are loyal supporters of the organization will help recognize their efforts and offer the community an idea of who UWSCC works with. This is also a great way for the organization to entice more businesses and donors to give in higher amounts. Logo and social media recognition are used as an incentive for business sponsors to make larger gifts and support the organization's programming for the full year's length.

New fundraising opportunities can arise with this social media marketing campaign including promoting posts to wider audiences, adding a donation button to stories that allows one to give directly to the organization, using links to direct social media users to the UWSCC

website to access all information and the donation page. In general, an increase in the foot traffic to the website is an overall benefit for the organization because people will become more familiar with what is being offered, as well as UWSCC's mission and work. This will also increase the chances of individual online donations and program sign ups as it can all be accessed through the UWSCC online webpage.

Post completion of this project, any person taking over marketing responsibilities at UWSCC will be able to follow the spreadsheet and posting pattern to seamlessly fill in the appropriate photos and text content for said day of the year. This will benefit the organization in the long run not having to spend extensive amounts of time in training each time there is a marketing staff turnover, allowing it to be an easily delegated task. To view a detailed implementation plan and timeline, refer to the [Scope of Work in Appendix A.](#)

Assessment Plan

To measure the effectiveness of this project, post-implementation parts that will be observed include the aesthetics of the different profiles, organization of posts, the number of new followers and social media interactions the organization has with the community. Also assessing along the way what other UW locations are doing to boost their social media presence in their communities. Following the lead of UW's with larger marketing departments that have a more cushiony budget to spend, like United Way of the Bay Area, ideas can be reused and transformed to a Santa Cruz specific social media campaign. Understanding the most common practices among social media participation with UWSCC is and in what ways follower interactions could grow.

By checking in regularly on the number of times people are using google search to research information on the organization and its programming, it can be observed how much foot traffic is being gained through the use of new social media activity. Search engines can track how many times people are seeking out a site or a specific need, and can offer the organization key words that were used when looking up information.

By posting interactive polls in social media stories, it can be assessed how many people are participating and even enjoying the posts. Satisfaction polls are a great way to understand better what followers want to see in content. Reshares by followers also show engagement and interaction. Messages and comments made to the UWSCC social accounts will be viewed as successful interactions between the organization and the community.

Finally, a meeting will be arranged between the different UWSCC program leaders that will be involved in providing the materials and communications necessary for implementing this project. This meeting will go over the various roles each team member will play in ensuring the efficiency of the marketing plan. Any ideas of how to better improve this marketing plan will be discussed, as well as any observations of how the marketing plan is doing in achieving the goals it is aiming at. This meeting will additionally assess if there was a change in the overall level of participation for the different programs, giving an idea of how many new people have been reached with information being promoted through social media. Overall success will be creating an organized plan that can be used to further UWSCC's marketing efforts and streamline the tasks for future marketing staff. Overtime, success can be seen from an uptake in calls for support from 211, an increase in U4Y participation, Jovenes Sanos and YAN participation

increase, growth in the affinity groups, new donors, and a larger attendance at events than previous to social media efforts.

Expected Outcomes

The expectation of this project was that it will be successful. Throughout the pandemic, virtual pathways have been the only way to really communicate organizational updates and news with the community. As many of the programs at UWSCC have continued to run through the shut-down, the participant base has dropped off dramatically. Programs like U4Y and 211 are great resources for the community, especially for those who fall in the low-income bracket. They do this through offering support, resources, and benefits that can empower families and youth to thrive.

With social media not having been kept up to date by UWSCC over the last year, many people in the community have been missing out on the opportunities that the organization has had available. Beginning to open up this additional pathway will increase access to these resources and youth in the community will be able to more easily find ways to meet their basic needs during the pandemic, and beyond.

Project Results

Project Activities

Through this project a marketing calendar was created that can be used as a reference tool for any individuals posting on the various UWSCC virtual social networks. To implement this project the intern first conducted a meeting with the new Marketing Director to initiate the discussion of the calendar and how it can be used as a helpful tool for the organization. The intern created a color-coordinated calendar grid that showed each day of every month. Then

separated the year into the UWWW quarterly themes with Q1 as financial stability, Q2 as youth success, Q3 as community engagement and Q4 as health & wellness. Once the grid was set up the intern assessed what was to go into it by creating a categories table. The category table was divided up by subjects, spreading them throughout each month in an attempt to keep the week's post topics balanced.

The intern began by mapping out a table with six columns on an excel spreadsheet, labeling them the different categories that the posts will be separated by. Categories consisted of events, affinity groups, programming, organizational achievements, and fundraising. The categories were then made into lists of the different subjects that need to be touched on under these categories. There are two main UWSCC events annually, the David Lyng Golf Tournament and the Stuff The Bus event. Under programming there are six to be touched on throughout the month including United 4 Youth, 211 Santa Cruz, Jóvenes Sanos, Youth Action Network, Shared Safety Network and Community Prevention Partners. Affinity groups include Women In Philanthropy and the Emerging Leaders Circle. Community history and fun facts is a more interactive category for the viewer, attempting to capture their attention while keeping the information local to the Santa Cruz community. Organizational achievements that will be covered include employee recognition, grant awards, fundraising goals achieved, partner recognition, and public policy advocacy. And lastly, fundraising includes leadership giving, workplace giving campaigns, call to action, sponsorships, and the Always United Endowment Fund. These subject topics for posting were approved by the C.E.O. prior to moving forward with this project.

Next, the intern assessed how many were in each category and decided how to evenly distribute the post subjects while maintaining a balance of topics. The intern took into account the aesthetic appeal of the different virtual social media platforms and how one may need to plan ahead so the subjects are aesthetically pleasing on the profile faces. For example, Instagram profiles when viewing have three photos per row visible, where Facebook and LinkedIn are posts to scroll through vertically. With this in mind, and the goal of creating local and consistent themes between the virtual accounts, the intern separated posts that would be distributed bi-weekly from those that would occur only once each week.

The intern divided up the six programs between two weeks, posting on every other day of the week (MWF). Three programs per week will be highlighted, with each of the six being highlighted twice a month. There are two affinity groups, each being highlighted once a week. Weekly fundraising efforts will include a call to action midweek, a workplace campaign partner or sponsorship shoutout and a giving group post. These will be spread out around the program and affinity group posts to keep the fundraising inquiries from overwhelming the viewer. To pull together the last pieces of the calendar, the intern researched relevant national holidays, UWWW corporate celebrations, and any other annual occurrences. The intern cross-referenced UWSCC's previous year's post timeline on Facebook for major events and previous annual posts. The intern color coded the holidays by the quarter that they fell in and created a key to describe the color coding.

Project Outcomes

The final marketing calendar was reviewed and approved by the intern's mentor, the Marketing Director, and the C.E.O.. The expected project outcomes discussed between the intern

and the mentor were to create a marketing calendar system where any individual managing social posts for the organization will be able to use it efficiently. Another aim being to create one aesthetic look and tone that can be maintained throughout all of the organization's social pages. This marketing plan has achieved this by implementing a structure to the daily postings on the various social pages. A social posting schedule will now be used by the different departments of UWSCC to help the different programs sharing to the social pages plan posts accordingly. This will help ensure all current organizational information is being promoted to the Santa Cruz community in a timely and organized fashion.

In addition to the general social postings marketing calendar, the intern created an additional social posting calendar specifically for workplace campaign season. This calendar will be implemented annually during the months of August through December, during nonprofit giving season. This calendar acknowledges a crucial time in the organization's annual fundraising by recognizing the different companies, both local and corporate, for their generous contributions through workplace campaigning. These recognition posts only occur during the workplace giving season although each partner must be highlighted in a personalized way through social posts as part of their acknowledgement. This calendar specifically will assist the organization with fundraising and relationship building.

A final outcome hoped to be achieved is to improve UWSCC's social media presence in the Santa Cruz community, specifically. This will be done by integrating a localized voice and creating consistency with the posting topics on each of the social media platforms. Recognizing local businesses and organizations doing good work in the community through social posts will help develop a mutually beneficial network for UWSCC and its partners.

Finding Results

The measures for finding results were previously thought to be an increase in the number of followers and increase in number of likes, although after completing this marketing project the look of success has slightly changed. Aims for the project have proven to be successful in that the Marketing and Resource Development department at UWSCC now has a social media schedule to use as a reference for future marketing staff and can base all further posts off of this schedule's plan. This plan will help to streamline the organization's social media outreach efforts and ensure employees continue to maintain a consistent appearance across all social platforms. This consistency is expected to eventually lead to an increase in followers and community participation throughout the organization's social pages, although this was not the main goal of the project. Observing an increase in participation among the social pages through likes and new followers while using the new marketing schedule will show the organization that community members and youth are accessing updated program and resource information. This part of the implementation process is still underway and observations are continuing to be made in the level of impact the new schedule has on the organization's social media presence within the community. Along with increasing community participation, the main goal of this project was to create a tool for the organization to assist with outreach and awareness of programming. This posting schedule will make certain that all relevant organizational information will be released to the community in a timely and organized manner. This will ultimately reduce the number of youth in the community not meeting basic needs due to a lack of knowledge of available resources.

Conclusion & Recommendations

To conclude this project, there are many youth in Santa Cruz County who through the pandemic have become at-risk individuals in need of greater support. United Way charity organizations redistribute goods and resources to those who need them the most. They are dedicated to bettering community member outcomes in health, financial stability and education, advocating equally for everyone to experience a higher quality of life. The United Way of Santa Cruz County now has a structure for releasing important organizational information to its community, better enabling them to do this. The staff now has a way to distribute program and other pertinent information in an organized and balanced manner. The community can now rely on the social platforms for sharing organizational information that can support them through a variety of circumstances or hardships. Youth being more so present on these types of virtual platforms will be the population primarily impacted by this organizational improvement.

The data that was planned to be gathered through the project implementation was not able to show there were large changes to program participation or social page interactions. Although one result that does prove the project was a success was an increase in the number of posts being scheduled. Programs have been posting on scheduled days seeing consistent engagement including comments and likes. With the giving season in full swing, the campaign calendar has been effective in scheduling the recognition and acknowledgement posts, as well as added promotional posts that will assist with fundraising. The project was successful in the fact that it created potential for organizational growth. This may not happen quickly, but over time the agency's social pages will see an increase in the participants both virtually and with in-person programming.

It has also been concluded that more can be done to ensure youth in Santa Cruz County are having their basic needs met through a combination of services and resources offered between the various support agencies spread throughout the area. Although UWSCC has great programs and services being offered, there is a greater need than one organization can take on. It will take a collaboration, a network, a team of nonprofits, and various county agencies to produce real change concerning the equity of Santa Cruz County residents. Through model programs like that of UWSCC's, a better future can be created by ensuring youth success.

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| | | Quarter 3 | | | Quarter 4 | | | Quarter 1 | | |
|---------------|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|---|---------|----------|
| | | Community Engagement | | | Health & Wellness | | | Financial Stability | | |
| | | June | July | August | September | October | November | December | January | February |
| Week 1 | Stuff The Bus - donation and sponsorship outreach begins | County Office of Education - 'Stuff The Bus' fundraising event * 3 - 4 POSTS PER WEEK * | Final weeks of Stuff The Bus marketing | Campaign kickoffs FedEx | Campaign kickoffs Graniterock, County Office SC, Costco Wholesale, City of Santa Cruz, City of Capitola | Campaign kickoffs Santa Cruz County Bank, Hospice of Santa Cruz | Campaign kickoffs Bay Federal Credit Union, Sutter Health | Campaign kickoffs Pajaro Valley Unified School District, Cabrillo | | |
| Week 2 | Continued outreach - No marketing on socials until new Fiscal Year (FY) | STB * 3 - 4 POSTS PER WEEK * | STUFF THE BUS EVENT | | Campaign kickoffs Dignity Health | | | | | |
| Week 3 | Continued outreach - No marketing on socials until new Fiscal Year (FY) | STB * 3 - 4 POSTS PER WEEK * | Thank you post - Santa Cruz County Office of Education | | Campaign kickoffs Central California Alliance for Health | | | | | |
| Week 4 | Continued outreach - No marketing on socials until new Fiscal Year (FY) | STB * 3 - 4 POSTS PER WEEK * | Campaign Kickoff Target | Campaign Wrap-up Post Target | | Campaign Wrap-up Post FedEx | | | | |

Appendix A

Scope of Work

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| A Scope of Work | | |
| Goal: | To decrease the number of youth in the community not meeting their basic needs. | |
| Primary objective of project: | To increase access to and information of United Way of Santa Cruz's resources and programs. | |
| Activities: | Deliverables: | Timelines/Deadlines: |
| Discuss capstone ideas with mentor | Final capstone idea approved | Jan - Mar 2021 |
| Discuss and create implementation plan | Final project implementation plan approved | Mar - April 2021 |
| Develop marketing agenda on spreadsheet | Final approved marketing spreadsheet | April - May 2021 |
| Curate posts that are aligned with the spreadsheet plan | Approved first posts shared using the marketing plan spreadsheet | May - June 2021 |
| Assess and capture data from the first and second months posts to share with mentor and CEO | Review data with mentor and CEO | June - July 2021 |
| Develop survey for program leaders to assess any uptake in program participation | Final mid-point checkin survey approved | July - Aug 2021 |
| Gather contacts of program stakeholders and leaders to send survey to | Dispersed mid-point checkin survey to program leaders | Aug - Sept 2021 |
| Assess and discuss adjustments to marketing plan based off responses to the survey | Final approval of adjustments to marketing plan | Sept - Oct 2021 |
| Complete reporting requirements and checkin with program leaders one last time for final results | Final agency and capstone reports | Oct - Nov 2021 |
| Prepare capstone presentation in selected format | Instructor approval & dress rehearsal of final capstone presentation format (posters submitted for printing) | Nov - Dec 2021 |
| Prepare for Capstone Festival | Final presentation at Capstone Festival | Dec 2021 |