

USF St. Petersburg, Initiative on Coastal Adaptation and Resilience (iCAR)
Race Equity and Community-led Climate Resilience in St. Petersburg

Final Report
Submitted to Foundations for Healthy Saint Pete

Dec 16, 2022

Dr. Rebecca Johns (PI June 2021 – Dec 2021
Dr. Barnali Dixon (PI Jan 2022 – Dec 2022)

The purpose of these events is to:

1. Provide the community-at-large (including citizens, professionals in the environmental field, NGOs, city, county and federal agencies, political leaders, scholars, students, etc.) the opportunity to learn from Dr. Robert Bullard, one of the premier national experts on issues of environmental and climate justice;

2. Provide the leaders of marginalized communities most impacted by environmental racism an opportunity to meet privately with Dr. Bullard in order to discuss strategies for addressing the most pressing concerns in these communities;

3. Build a coalition of groups and individuals led by leaders from the most vulnerable communities, that will create momentum and carry forward the urgent work of addressing both environmental and climate justice concerns in our area;

4. Identify and support (with funding, research, educational and outreach assets) organic leadership arising from marginalized communities to lead continuing efforts to address environmental racism and climate justice;

5. Develop a concrete Action Plan for addressing the three most pressing issues while also creating structure and a road map to continue to address other EJ/CJ issues in the future.

6. Dr. Bullard's public lecture on October 20th will serve as the keynote for the annual workshop of the Initiative on Coastal Adaptation and Resilience at USF St. Petersburg, which will feature a series of panel discussions on October 21st on social networks, social justice and climate resilience.

Principal Organizer: Dr. Rebecca Johns

CO-Principal Organizer: Dr. Barnali Dixon

From June to December, 2021, Dr. Rebecca Johns was the lead organizer for this project. In January, 2022, Dr. Barnali Dixon took over as lead organizer.

Community Meetings, June – September, 2021

Over the summer months of 2021, iCAR led a series of virtual organizing meetings with key community partners to establish the goals and timeline for the events leading up to the arrival of Dr. Robert Bullard on campus in late October. We also worked on logistics, fund-raising and identifying key stakeholders who could increase community participation and produce organic leadership in the Black community in south St. Petersburg. Key participants in these planning meetings included iCAR, the Suncoast Sierra Club, TBEP, Carter G. Woodson African American Museum, Child's Park Neighborhood Association, and CLEO.

Funds were raised to cover the costs of Dr. Robert Bullard's $12,500 honorarium, space rental, food, advertising, etc. for both the main event and the Town Hall meeting and private meetings with Dr. Bullard, as well as the follow-up Action Plan meeting schedule in November.

Fundraising and outreach produced the following co-sponsors:

- USF St. Petersburg, Chancellor Martin Tadlock; The Initiative on Coastal Adaptation and Resilience (primary organizer, signatory on contract with Dr. Bullard)
- The Foundation for a Healthy St. Pete
- City of St. Petersburg
- University of Tampa
- Tampa Bay Estuary Program
- Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council
- School of Geosciences, USF
- Child's Park Neighborhood Association
- Eckerd College
- CLEO Institute
- Institute for Black Life, USF
- Minority Health Coalition of Pinellas County, Inc.

Publicity was handled by USF's public relations office and included running articles and ads in the Weekly Challenger and covering the upcoming events in other major USF and local news outlets. The events were also advertised by the Carter G. Woodson Museum through their online newsletter.

September 25th, 2021, 10 am – 1 pm: Town Hall meeting took place in the outside garden area at the **Carter G. Woodson African American Museum** to hear the community's concerns about environmental and climate justice related issues. The event was attended by a total of 45 people and resulted in a useful and stimulating discussion of key environmental and climate related risks experienced in the Black community of St. Petersburg. Key attendees included Dr. Kenneth Bryant of the Minority Health Coalition of Pinellas County and future mayor Ken Welch. Topics that were highlighted included the location of hazardous facilities in St. Petersburg's southside communities; problems of rising heat and localized flooding; difficulties accessing federal and state funds after a major storm event such as Hurricane Irma, and the need to upgrade existing stormwater infrastructure on the southside. In addition, the need to gather data on what appear to be patterns of health -disparities occurring in the southside community was strongly voiced. Dr. Dixon and Dr. Bryant agreed to collaborate on using CRIS to gather scientifically sound data on the occurrence of particular kinds of cancers in the relevant neighborhoods in order to identify clusters. This data will then be shared with policy makers to highlight environmental racism and develop solutions and mitigations for those impacted. As a result of this conversation, Dr. Dixon and Dr. Bryant collaborated to apply for grants to fund data gathering.

Early October: post Town Hall meetings occurred virtually to discuss the key points arising from the discussions at the Carter G. Woodson.

October 20th, 2021:

5 pm. Meeting with Community Leaders and Dr. Bullard *by invitation only* at the Carter G. Woodson; hybrid meeting.

A hybrid meeting was held with ten community leaders and Dr. Robert Bullard in the Carter G. Woodson African American Museum. Community leaders were able to update Dr. Bullard on the work that had already been done in St. Petersburg to identify key threats to the Black community related to environmental and climate justice, to build community relationships, and identify resources and processes to address these concerns. Participants asked Dr. Bullard to identify next steps specific to our community's goals and progress to date. A key suggestion that emerged was the need to prepare for federal funding that will become available through Justice 40 initiatives. Present at this meeting were Maya Burke (TBEP), Erica Hall (Sierra Club Suncoast), Kimberly Jackson (IPS at St. Petersburg College), Michelle Madden (USF), Dr. Fenda Akawumi (Institute for Black Life), Jalessa Blackshear (Community Organizer), Terri Scott Lipsey (Carter G. Woodson), and others.

7:30 pm. Dr. Bullard's public presentation **- VIRTUAL**

> **"Confluences of Environmental and Climate Justice: Bringing Diverse Partners Together to Build Community Resilience."**
>
> Watch Parties were held at The Edge on the USF St. Petersburg Campus and other locations around town. Approximately 250 people were in attendance in the virtual audience.

October 21st 2021 **Afternoon**: iCAR Annual Workshop Panels on Social Networks, Social Justice and Climate Resilience. (USF Campus, Virtual). This online workshop featured panels on…..and continued the conversation launched by Dr. Bullard the previous evening.

November 10th, 2021, 10 am to 1 pm: a final meeting was held with stakeholders and supporters of the Bullard events to identify key next steps. This meeting ended up being held virtually and attendance was not as high as expected. Consequently, we requested the rollover of remaining funds to allow community organizing around the key environmental and climate justice issues identified through the conversations and meetings to continue in the new year. Dr. Barnali Dixon agreed to take over the role of Principal Organizer. Appendix A shows the summary of the Nov 10th meeting. Based on the discussions and interest of partners who attended Nov 10th meeting – we have taken several actions. They include the addition of an energy module including crowdsourced photo reporting capabilities for power-related issues along with a survey to the CRIS and continued to develop strategies toward neighborhood-level empowerment. To this effect (neighborhood-level empowerment), we created an online forum to discuss climate-related issues that is integrated with Facebook and hosted (or planning to host) a series of community events by working closely with OEM partners who attended the Nov 10th , 2021 meeting. The goal of these community-based forums is to provide a space for communities to communicate directly with government officials at OEM and co-develop strategies to reduce marginalization before, during, and after a disaster.

July 12, 2022, 10 – 1:00 pm: We hosted a community town hall for stakeholders on July 12, 2022, at Enoch Davis Center – The agenda and summary of the meeting is included in Appendix B.

Key highlights from the July 12th meeting: 3-4 members of the Pinellas County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) were present, so representatives from HOAs, NGOs, faith-based organizations, financial institutions, and business owners from south CRA

who attended the event can engage in conversation with emergency officials and emergency officials can share resources and opportunities with the attendees to empower the community. The attendees were interested in learning more about FEMA resources that are available and how local faith-based organizations can become part of VOAD (Volunteer Organization After Disaster), so they can serve as the first line of defense for vulnerable communities. Churches and faith-based organizations have the quickest way to reach out to the community.

Community leaders and participants had the opportunity to question the County personnel about the mechanisms and decision-making processes to select FEMA assistance sites (as they were located in North County during IRMA (and not on the south side). Attendees were further interested in finding out how to access FEMA forms to request assistance. Both - attendees representing communities and emergency officials - recognized the need to find out 'hidden needs' so emergency officials could meet them. There is a need for a network of people who knows about the 'hidden needs' and also know 'how to get answers/ assistance' as addressing hidden needs will promote recovery faster and minimize marginalization.

Based on the July 12th meeting and momentum and interest from the community and emergency office of Pinellas County, we are working to develop a street storm team at the neighborhood level to empower communities and working to connect faith-based organizations from south CRA to VOAD. To this effect, we initially planned to host the steering committee meeting on Sep 29th – which needed to be rescheduled due to Hurricane Ian. Further, following Ian – the emergency officials were deployed to Ft. Meyers so they had limited availability. The new meeting is scheduled for Nov 15th. The objective and goal for this meeting is noted in Appendix C.

Fall 2022 Meeting: **Community-Driven Empowerment Project: Storm Team Pilot Program -** Formulation of South CRA Storm Team Steering Committee. The objective of this meeting is to formulate a steering committee to explore the deployment of a community-driven pilot program called 'Storm Team'. The steering committee will be responsible for defining the scope, direction, budget, methods, and timelines for the storm team pilot program. Based on the participants' expressed interest who attended July 12th meeting and continued to remain engaged with us – we have invited selected members from diverse organizations but with a tie to south CRA to be part of the steering committee. The virtual meeting was scheduled for Nov 15th for the steering committee, which will then decide on a follow-up in-person meeting open to the public. This meeting is to identify the roles and responsibilities of the steering committee. Appendix C summarizes meeting notes from Nov 15th. The steering committee decided

on an in-person meeting on Dec 13th. This is the last meeting for this grant-related activities; however, we plan to continue to meet (the steering committee) and work toward securing future funding for this project. Appendix D summarizes meeting notes from Dec 13th.

APPENDIX A:

Summary Report of Outcomes of: Action Plan Meeting

November 10th, 2021

Introduction:

The Initiative on Coastal Adaptation and Resilience (iCAR) at USF hosted a virtual Action Plan meeting on November 10th from 1:00 pm-3:00 pm to develop a roadmap to address the unique needs of marginalized and vulnerable communities to build equitable resilience in preparing and recovering from disasters and the impacts of climate change. These communities often lack access to resources and information to successfully cope with disasters and the long-term impacts of climate change, which can increase disparities and exacerbate chronic and acute crises. The goals of this meeting were to 1) to solidify a collaborative coalition of stakeholders who can collectively develop a way forward in building a just resilience through the equitable allocation of resources to meet needs that are often unmet; 2) to develop specific steps and working groups to prepare proposals for federal funding in collaboration with iCAR within the Justice 40 framework as well as other funding sources suggested by the stakeholders. Figure 1 shows key issues related to community climate resilience and Figure 2 shows end goal of the Action Plan Meeting.

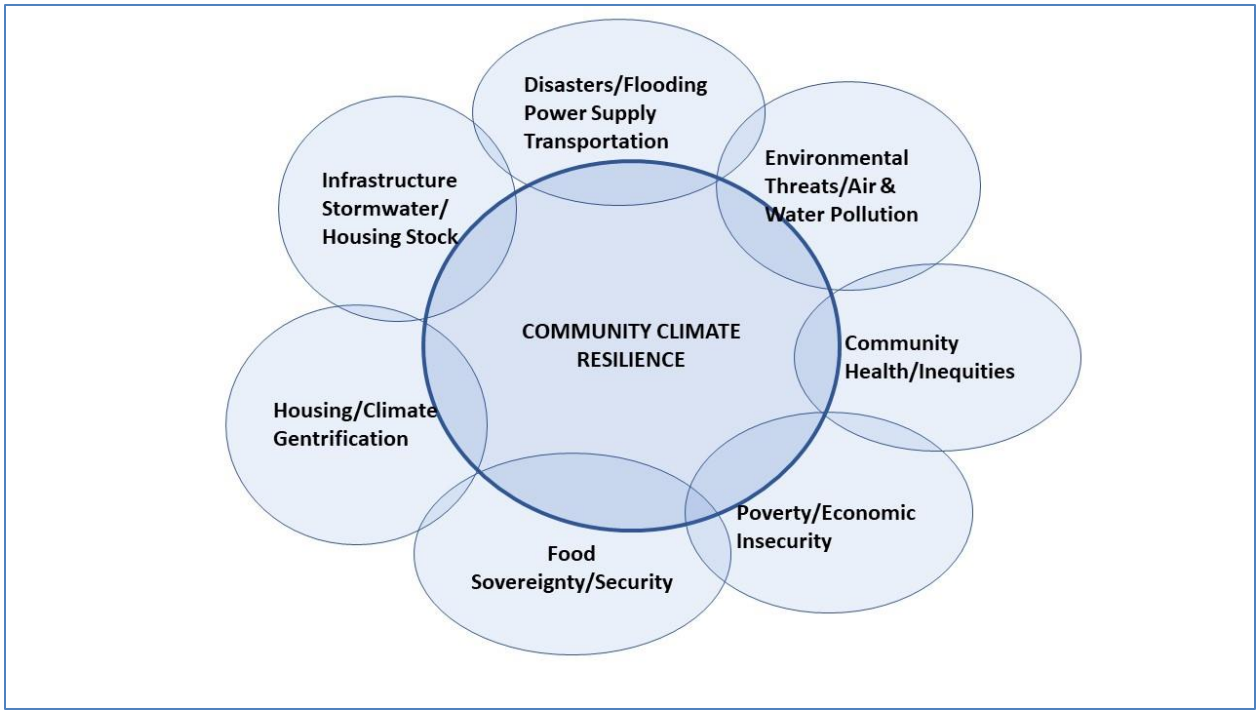


Figure 1. Interconnected issues of Climate Resilience at Community Level

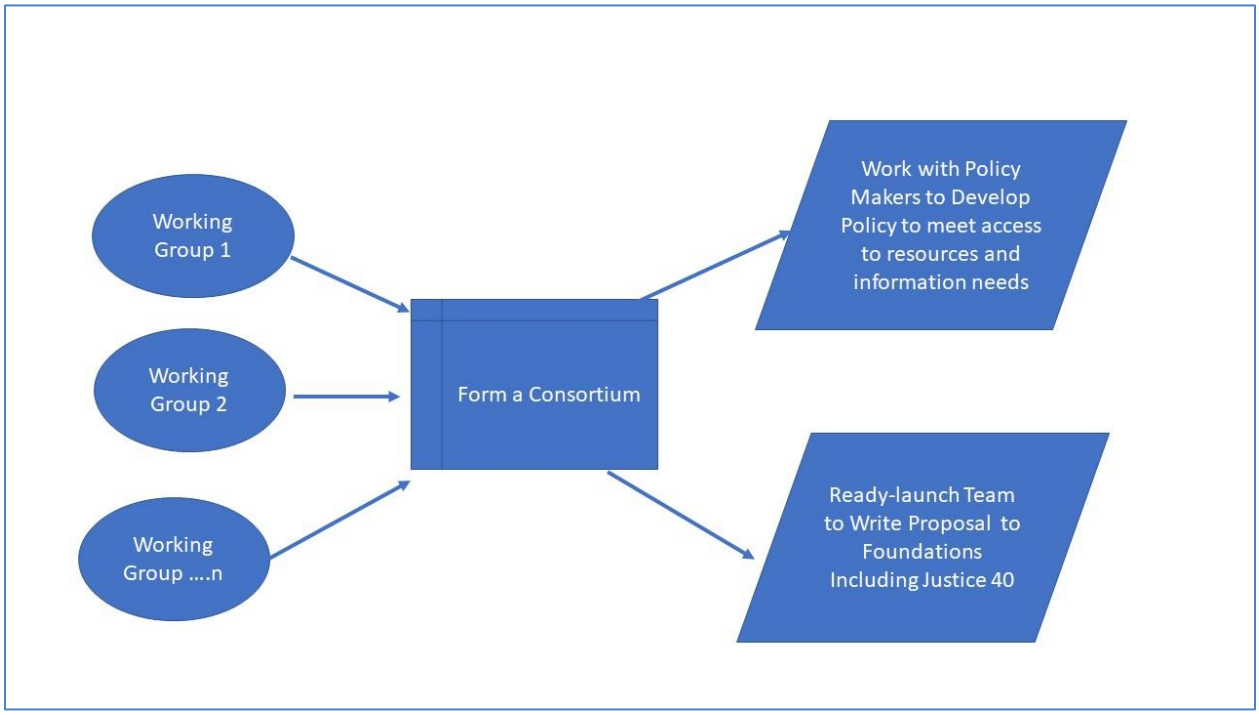


Figure 2. Overall Goals of the Action Plan Meeting

Background: This meeting follows several community gatherings with grassroots leaders and residents from underrepresented communities in September and October of this year. These facilitated discussions with residents of Midtown, a predominantly Black neighborhood, produced consensus in identifying a set of urgent issues that the south St. Petersburg community wishes to address, as well as some specific ideas from conversations with Dr. Robert Bullard about how best to proceed. Dr. Bullard, the keynote for this year's iCAR's workshop, is one of the climate and environmental justice advisors on the White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council and in the Justice40 Initiative, which applies an equity framework for awarding funds that is grounded in proven track record, data and research to meet the needs of the most vulnerable communities.

Key Highlights from the Action Plan Meeting

Five working groups/clusters were identified along with potential lead when possible (Table 1) summarizes the priorities:

a. Health Inequities
b. Data Aggregation and Collection/Grant Funding Opportunities
c. Neighborhood Level Flood Mapping/Infrastructural Needs
d. Post Disaster Energy Security
e. Neighborhood Leaders Empowerment and Mobilization

The Health Inequities group will determine what kind of neighborhood scale health data is already available by collaborating with existing entities such as the Pinellas County Department of Health; the group will then identify missing data and data collection needs. Specifically, the group will work to utilize CRIS through a health module to collect data that will support a call for specific action to address existing health disparities as well as the threat of intensification of disparities through climate impacts (see Data Aggregation Group). This group will interact with the Neighborhood Leaders group to mobilize local leaders/ambassadors in encouraging resident participation in health data collection.

The Data Aggregation and Collection and Funding group will look at already existing data sets and ongoing data gathering efforts of partner agencies in an effort to identify what is already known and what is unknown for each area of concern (for example, multiple agencies collect flood data; Duke Energy has power outage data; the Health Department has health data, etc). This group will also begin identifying grant funding

opportunities for each of the problem areas (flooding resilience and infrastructure; energy security and grid upgrades; health initiatives; disaster prep and recovery; neighborhood ambassador funding). Some potential funding sources and partners mentioned at the meeting include Suncoast United Way, National renewable Building Lab. Additionally, this group will meet to discuss adapting CRIS to collect missing and needed data on each issue area.

The Neighborhood Flood Mapping and Infrastructure group will begin by aggregating existing data on flood patterns and vulnerability in Pinellas County from various sources; assessing if additional data is needed; then identifying next steps for updating infrastructure and building local resilience to flooding. Once specific needs are identified, they will begin applying for funding. They will also work with neighborhood leaders to use CRIS to collect crowd-sourced geotagged information, including photos of problem areas with regards to flooding and standing water.

The Post Disaster Energy Security team will liaise with the county Sustainability committee that is already working with Duke Energy (CJ) to identify patterns of power outages, weaknesses in the grid, and vulnerable neighborhoods. This group will also ask for Duke's plan on where undergrounding of power lines is going to occur and on what timeline. Applying an equity lens to current plans for grid upgrades may help Duke Energy be more sensitive to the needs of our most vulnerable neighborhoods. This committee will also work with the City of St. Petersburg to find out the current status of the plan for resilience hubs/cooling and charging stations in Midtown; what still needs to be done to move this plan forward; how can energy needs be met after a disaster in other ways; where can we apply for funding to fund resilience hubs and energy security infrastructure. CJ also expressed interest in collecting crowd-sourced information using CRIS regarding power issues, including the vulnerability of residential power supply with pictures.

The Neighborhood Empowerment group will identify models from other cities that have been successful in funding training of local residents to be neighborhood ambassadors around environmental or social issues and adapt these models to our location. This group will identify the most important training for our local ambassadors including the use of CRIS and formulation of neighborhood-level street teams (such as storm team) and prepare to apply for funding. Identify ways to assist communities with FEMA paperwork.

Table 1. Summary of Issues and Team Members

Issues	Community Member	Government Dept. Contact	NGO of Interest and Contact	Business Dept and Contact	Timeline for subsequent follow-up	iCAR point of contact
Health			Dr. Ken Bryant, Minority Health Coalition,		Jan 2022	B. Dixon
The Data Aggregation and Collection and Funding group		Renee Duffey,	CJ Reynolds, Cara Serra, Ken Bryant,		Jan 2022	B. Dixon
The Neighborhood Flood Mapping and Infrastructure		Mary Burrell, Renee Duffey,	Cara Serra, Ken Bryant		Jan 2022	B. Dixon
The Post Disaster Energy Security	HOA President or Rep	Gina Driscoll, Sharon Wright,	CJ Reynolds	Jamie Serino, The Alliance	Jan 2022	B. Dixon
The Neighborhood Empowerment	HOA President or Rep	Mary Burrell		Jamie Serino, The Alliance	Jan 2022	B. Dixon

Attendance:

Julie Rocco, Foundation of Healthy Saint Pete
Barnali Dixon, iCAR
Rebecca Johns, iCAR
Ken Bryant, Minority Health Coalition
Joe Borries, Pinellas County Emergency Management
Mary Burrell, Pinellas County Emergency Management
Renee Duffy, Pinellas County Emergency Management
Gina Driscoll , Saint Petersburg, City Council

Erica Hall, Suncoast Sierra Club
Ed Sherwood, Tampa Bay Estuary Program
C.J Reynolds, Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council
Cara Serra, Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council
Jamie Serino, The Alliance

Appendix B

iCAR Stakeholder Town hall meeting

July 12, 2022



Agenda

1. Welcome – Jalessa Blackshear – Community Engagement Coordinator
2. Introduction to CRIS and its benefits - Barnali Dixon, Executive Director of iCAR
3. Attendees will learn about the resiliency forum on Facebook linked to CRIS that they can use 24/7 to communicate their needs – Dixon, Executive Director of iCAR
4. Overview of County Whole Community Engagement Efforts – Mary Burrell, Whole Community Engagement Lead, Office of Emergency Management (OEM), Pinellas County
5. Explore ways to fund street storm teams and cultivation of local leaders who will work closely with the County OEM and community liaison and explore interest in becoming storm team leaders – Dixon and Burrell
6. Overview of resources to aid recovery from disasters – Joe Borries, Operators Manager, OEM, Pinellas County
7. Overview of Volunteer Organization after Disaster (VOAD) resources that are available to the community after a disaster and explore opportunities for south saint Pete churches and businesses to become VOAD partners - Kevin Schnall, Chair of Pinellas county VOAD
8. Develop future meeting plans and working group – Dixon, Executive Director of iCAR

Summary:

On July 12th, leaders from the South CRA came together to discuss past experiences pertaining to the impacts of hurricanes in their neighborhoods with the Pinellas County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) staff. Attendees also had the opportunity to learn about Volunteer Organization After Disaster (VOAD) and CRIS, which can help empower communities before, during, and after a disaster to ensure equitable resilience.

Dr. Barnali Dixon presented 'CRIS' as a tool for community engagement that can reveal hidden needs and aid data-driven informed policy-making for resource allocations. Ms. Mary Burrell and her team discussed Pinellas County's Whole Community Engagement efforts. Mr. Borries gave an overview of resources available to the community after a disaster. For example, hotels are often available to help with housing needs, a piece of information that communities were unaware of. Mr. Borries also shared other information regarding assistance – such as a) Employ Florida will give temp jobs and disaster assistance and b) the Army Corp of Engineers' 'blue tarp' program that can help homeowners and renters put a tarp on their roof. However, Army Corp need the information on which roof needs the tarp. It was discussed this is where CRIS can be helpful. In collaboration with the Storm team and online community forum and CRIS (the neighborhood-based storm team will be trained to use CRIS) – the hidden and evolving needs of the communities can be communicated to the OEM.

Community members were able to share their experiences with OEM staff. For example, it was pointed out that a FEMA assistance center located on the SPC Seminole campus was not accessible to residents from the south side of the city after Irma. Mr. Borrries explained the process and the criteria the County used to accommodate FEMA service center location – i.e OEM was complying with an urgent request from federal agencies and it did not have much choice in the matter. Mr. Borries also pointed out practical challenges associated with the use of travel trailers for housing in Pinellas county since most of the County is developed. Still, parking lots of churches can be a viable option. This resonated with the church members present at the event, and they wanted to offer their support and explore options to become trained to be part of County VOAD. If insurance claims are denied by FEMA – Mr. Borries suggested that appealing the decision is a viable option. However, it reminded the attendees that FEMA assistance only provides minimum dollars, and access to their own funds will be needed to cover the difference. This additional fund, while critical for resilience, may not be available to members from disenfranchised communities. This is where VOAD can play a crucial role by providing immediate assistance and assistance for the long-term recovery process. VOAD will work with people on a case basis to provide assistance/services that can help fill in the financial gaps from FEMA money and insurance coverage in the event of a disaster.

Kevin Schnall of the Salvation army, who is serving as the Chair of Pinellas County VOAD welcomed churches and businesses from south Saint Pete to join VOAD. In-person meetings are hosted monthly (4th Tuesdays of every month) at the Ulmerton Road location – so it was suggested to consider a hybrid meeting format or rotational venue to include south Saint Pete locations such as Enoch Davis Center to ensure people from the south can participate. OEM officials were also interested in exploring options for how Enoch Davis Center can serve as a disaster assistance center – but this starts with identifying people who are ready to volunteer).

Storm Team Concept

OEM, Community members in attendance, and VOAD all recognized the problem of 'hidden needs' and how crucial it is to identify hidden needs to promote equitable resilience. It is critical to be able to identify hidden needs during blue skies, so appropriate resources and information can be provided when a disaster is imminent. It is equally important to know who would be the contact at OEM during and after a hurricane so those needs will be met. Dr. Dixon and Ms. Burrell mentioned the storm team concept and introduced the participants to the G.I.V.E. model and pilot being run in Gary, Indiana. Dr. Dixon explained how this model would work. The group, community members, OEM, and VOAD were all interested in promoting the concept of a storm team. Ms. Burrell and her team will work with Dr. Dixon at ICAR to develop a community-driven pilot program for the storm team. In addition, it was recognized that the storm team members could help support the operation of the disaster center at Enoch Davis Center.

Table 1. Attendance Summary

Total Attendance 20 who signed and a few more who did not sign - Plus Organizers from USF (5) and OEM (5)	RSVPed 25 (not all of them came)
Interested in Storm Team Leadership and Steering Committee (SC) (7)	• Jabar Edmond • Antonio brown • Kim Wells • Rhonda Anderson • Jean Fresher • Fareedah Humphries • James Scott
Churches (7) *Interested in VOAD	• Lakewood United Church of Christ* • Lakeview Presbyterian Church * • Pentecostal Temple Cogic * • Saint Peters Cathedral Church* • Victory Christian Church • The Gospel Ministrires • New Faith

HOA (2)	• Lake Maggiore Shores, • 13th Street Heights
Financial Institution (1)	• First Home Bank
NGOs and Government	• Sierra Club • City of St. Peterburg: Sara Gold
Business Owners : (6)	• Boutique Services • CDAT • Strength and Shanti • Web Talk • Grand Central Barbershop • Empact Solutions

Event Pictures






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Appendix C:

Community-Driven Empowerment Project: Storm Team Pilot Program: Steering Committee Meeting

November 15, 2022, Virtual 6:00 – 7:30 pm

Background: Many socioeconomically marginalized communities lack access to resources and information to successfully cope with disasters. Disasters often increase disparities and exacerbate chronic disenfranchisements into acute crises. Disaster assistance often follows the money and people with social capital and not the needs of the most vulnerable communities (Bullard, 2021). Often these needs of communities are hidden from the decision-makers. It is hoped that with the help of the storm team steering committee – a community-driven storm team pilot program will be launched that will help uncover the hidden needs of the community using CRIS (community resilience information systems) and communicate the needs to the decision-makers systematically and routinely.

Objective: The objective of this meeting is to formulate a steering committee to explore the deployment of a community-driven pilot program called 'Storm Team'. The steering committee will be responsible for defining the scope, direction, budget, methods, and timelines for the storm team pilot program.

Project Manager: iCAR-USF in conjunction with the team (Pinellas County Emergency Officials) & Community Collaborative of Florida

Meeting Agenda

1. Introduction and welcome – Ms. Blackshear:
2. Overview of the objective of the meeting – Dr. Dixon
3. How will this collaboration be of help to Pinellas County Emergency Management – Ms. McCracken
4. Discussion about the steering committee - led by Ms. Blackshear and Dr. Dixon
    a. discuss the vision for the storm team
    b. identify ways this committee can help the objective of the storm team
    c. identify the subcommittee that will be responsible for the development of policies and procedures for decision-making and conflict resolution for this collaborative identity
    d. Identify the subcommittee that will be responsible for identifying funding opportunities
5. Dec meeting data and scope

Meeting Summary

Following Ms. Blackshear's welcome, Dr. Dixon provided an overview and the scope of this meeting and emphasized that one of the things from Bullard's event, FEMA money follows the social capital and not the needs of the individual. Dr. Dixon and Ms. McCracken both emphasized the need to identify hidden needs during blue sky to aid preparation and recovery as it offered informed resource allocations. The strength of CRIS, when augmented by a team of street-based storm team members to reveal hidden needs to reduce marginalization, was discussed. The goal of the meeting is to formulate a steering committee (SC) that will work with a street-based storm team – the boots on the ground (Jason Sculla referred to this as *Storm Squad and Erica Hall compared this to the street team that is involved in point-in-time count of homeless population*) to benefit communities so when a disaster happens, marginalization doesn't get worse. The goal of this initiative, as envisioned by the steering committee, is a community-driven initiative where NGOs will play a critical role. Depending on the task at hand, the steering committee of this initiative will work with Community Collaborative of Florida, Bay area legal services, NAACP, Sierra Club, Cooperation Works, Saint Pete Free Clinic, and other interested community members from Faith-Based Organizations that expressed interest during our July 12 meeting but could not make it at the November 15 meeting. Ms. McCracken emphasized that a wider partnership would be beneficial for both groups – the community with needs and the emergency officials responsible for meeting the needs. She also emphasized the value of a neighborhood-level storm team lies in the

fact that nobody knows the community better than someone who lives there and understands their neighbors; therefore, the strategic selection of community members/leaders from predominantly marginalized neighborhoods located in the south Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) will help drive the community interactions with emergency officials before, during and after a disaster to meet critical needs. The members of these storm street teams will serve as 'neighborhood block captain' and will be in a position to identify needs and work with emergency officials to get the resources to the community to meet the needs of the community that is needed to ensure equitable resilience. This steering committee will also be involved in seeking funding to further the cause as needed to support the storm team and recommend policy-driven solutions. Dr. Dixon noted that this collaborative initiative, where NOGs, communities, universities, and emergency officials work together to aid the community before, during, and after a disaster, could become a national model. This collaborative initiative should be guided by the principle of cooperation. The steering committee will oversee the storm street team – including recruitment, assigning roles and responsibilities, funding solicitation and allocations (i.e, application of grants and funds, who gets the funds? what is the fund for?), and assigning tasks to the storm street team members. The steering committee will also be responsible for identifying/approving the lead organization for any fund/grant applications based on the funding agency criteria. It is expected that all organization involved with this initiative, when applying for grants/funds related to this initiative, will work to advance the mission of this project as well as their own organization's mission (when aligned) to find win-win solutions for this initiative and their respective organization. In essence, implementing the storm street team will need a lot of groundwork, collaboration, and cooperation, and the steering committee will work with iCAR-USF team and County Emergency Office (viz., their whole community engagement program) to make these happen. Below is a list of specific visions and tasks discussed at the meeting.

Vision for the role of the Steering Committee

- ✓ Decision-making body responsible for
    - Oversight of Street Storm Team
    - Resolve issues and conflicts
    - Identify key roles and responsibilities for the member organizations, including for the members of the steering committee
- ✓ Help develop appropriate training for the storm team members and communities
- ✓ Grant application planning and lead organization selection
- ✓ Budget oversight to ensure grants and funds are beneficial to this project as well as a leading organization that will submit the grant
- ✓ Selection of Strom Streem Team Members and Develop a Recruitment Plan

- Community-based member selection but need to be street savvy, specifically trained people to identify the critical needs of a neighborhood and how to start addressing the needs – Barnali Dixon
- Storm street team members will serve as community liaisons and should be trained in a very specific way so they know how to ask individuals non-intrusively about problems to identify the key problems that can prevent them from accessing assistance before and after disasters. As people don't always know the issues they may have until it's too late (e.g. requesting FEMA assistance for heir property) - Jason Sculla
- Storm street team members should also be able to train in conversation style with neighbors about sensitive issues, much like the training social workers receive, and also be able to use methods league of woman voters used to rally the community to their 'get out to vote efforts' to engage the community in pre-disaster information gathering events - Anita Pernell-Arnold
- Storm team's interactions should be pleasurable (James Scott), based on the principle of cooperation while respecting the individual's unique circumstances (Erica Hardison) and knowledge of neighbor's needs without being intrusive (Erica Hall)

✓ The steering committee should explain clearly the terms of engagement to the Strom street team 'we need you to visit these people at least 3 times this month' – Anita Pernell-Arnold

✓ The steering committee should ensure that the street storm team knows the following: What is the how? What does the commitment look like? – Jalessa Blackshear

Vision for the role of the storm street team

It was decided the proposed storm team's core mission is to provide service to the community and should have distinctive tasks and disaster plans for the **pre, during, and post-disaster phases.** Service efforts are planning to meet individuals' needs while making it as pleasurable an experience as possible. During the blue sky planning phase, it should not feel like a chore, and after a disaster, the process should not overwhelm the individual.

A detailed discussion followed regarding the roles the storm team can play, and they include:

1) **Pre Disaster Tasks include:**
    - ✓ Identifying hidden needs during blue sky
    - ✓ Work with emergency officials to aggregate information (e.g, a map showing what resources are available and where) to help with pre-disaster preparation
    - ✓ Aid county in communicating resources that are customized at the neighborhood levels as each neighborhood is unique, and one-size-fits all information does not meet the hidden needs.
    - ✓ Engage the community, so they know where to find critical resources
        - CRIS can serve as a one-stop-shop as it hosts disparate data and sources of information in one place within its resources page that complies with city, county, state, and federal resources in one place, along with Facebook and Twitter interface. CRIS's Facebook's resilience forum and Twitter interface can aid communications between neighborhood and emergency officials. Communication of needs is the first step in providing access to information and resources. The communications tools like CRIS can benefit from the storm team's outreach activities as they will be serving as a link between community members and emergency officials and help with systematic data collection
    - ✓ Organizing training workshops with community members in collaboration with steering committee members.
        - Mock trial to complete FEMA paperwork to access resources - James and Brian proposed this
        - Heir property which is commonly found in black neighborhoods often lacks the paperwork needed to claim FEMA assistance -Jason has expertise in this and is interested in creating a training workshop – he also noted people often don't know what paperwork they need before they are 'facing the problem (e.g needed to file a post-disaster FEMA claim).
2) **During a Disaster, Tasks include**
    a. Ensure community members follow orders given by authorities and ensure your own safety.
3) **After a disaster**
    a. Communication is crucial for accessing resources, but it can be interrupted. People who evacuated need a way to connect back to their

community to evaluate the situation – The storm team can help them get an update on their property.

b. Storm teams can communicate the unique needs and impacts of a disaster to emergency officials directly
c. Emergency officials can contact the storm team to find out the needs so they can allocate appropriate resources or to check on an evolving situation – emergency officials will know who to contact in which neighborhood.
d. Work with emergency officials to aggregate information (e.g revise the map created during the pre-disaster phase to show what resources are available and where they are available as a disaster can impact accessibility and change the landscape altogether)
e. Define new geographic territories if needed (past event with direct hit changes the landscape), and attach/embed information about specific needs, and locations they can get it from.
f. Create a list of community needs to help FEMA, Red Cross, Salvation Army, and other volunteer organizations coordinate their efforts to meet the need.

Next Dec Meeting: Tuesday, December 13 at 6 pm at Enoch Davis – may be set up as a hybrid meeting

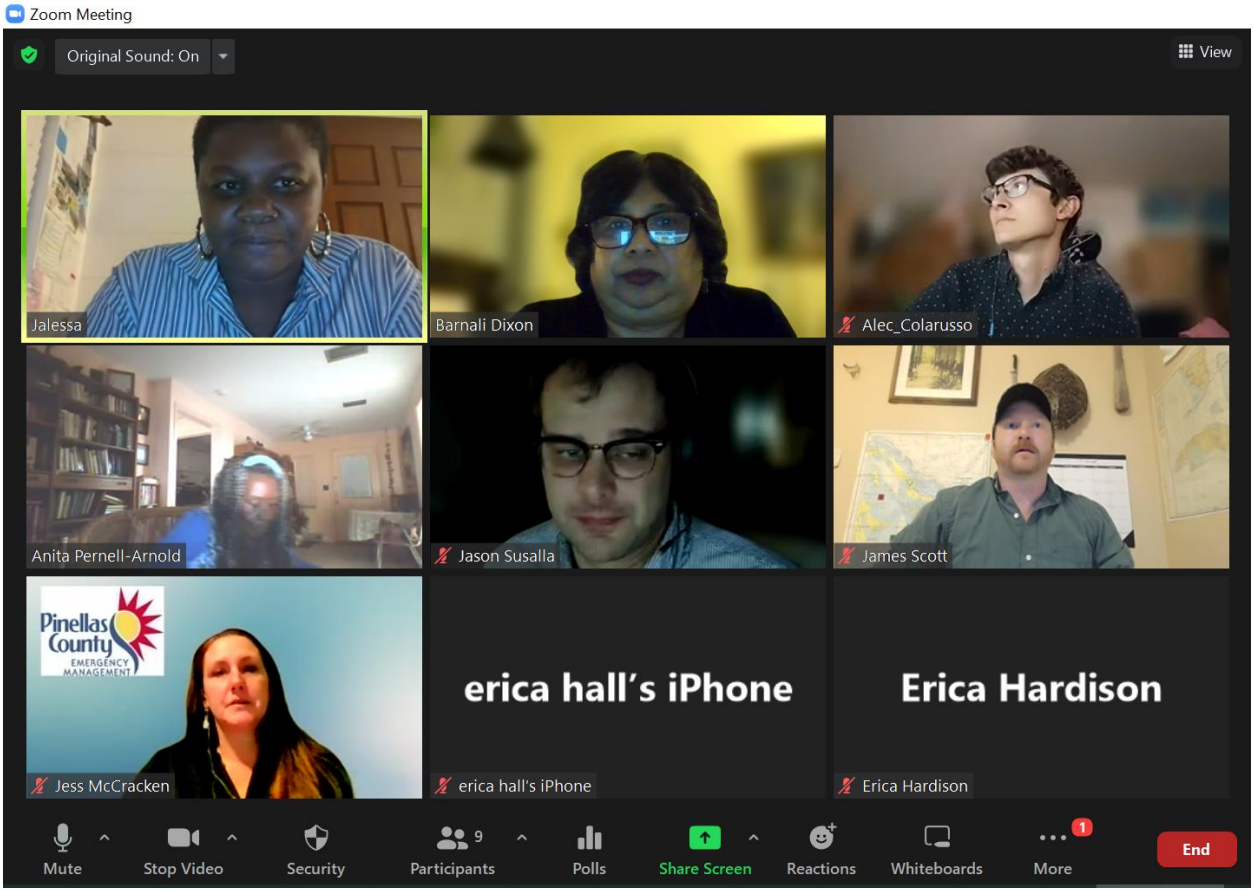
Tasks to be completed prior to the next meeting:

- ✓ Everyone should bring one or two suggested names for this initiative that is simple but captures the essence and are easy to communicate to the public and granting agency alike - all
- ✓ Start developing a list for Community Contact that can help us with insights at the neighborhood level – all
- ✓ Reach out to contact at the League of Woman Voters to identify resources that can help the street team for grassroots organizing – Anita and Erica Hall
- ✓ Identify possible funding sources to support the storm street team - all

Participants

Jalessa Blackshear – iCAR USF
Alec Colarusso – iCAR USF
Barnali Dixon – iCAR USF
Erica Hall- Sierra Club/ Florida Food Policy Council, Community Collaboratives of Florida
Erica Hardison- Lake Maggiore Shores NHA/ Cooperation Works

Jessica McCraken- Pinellas County Emergency Management
Brian Peret- Citizen/NAACP
Anita Pernal- Arnold- Citizen
James Scott-- Sierra Club
Jason Susalla- Bay area legal services



Appendix D:

Community-Driven Empowerment Project: Storm Team/Storm Squad Pilot Program: Steering Committee Meeting

December 13, 2022, **6:00 – 8:00 pm - Enoch Davis Center**

Objective: To finalize a plan for the way forward for the storm team/storm squad– including the name of the initiative and the roles and responsibilities of the steering committee members

Agenda:

1. Welcome introduction _ Blackshear
2. Overview of this effort – Dixon and Burrell
3. Summary of last Steering committee meeting (we will email this but will briefly review) - vision and mission identified - Jalessa
4. Report back from the last meeting assignment – Led by Blackshear
    a. Suggestions of names for this effort so we can finalize them
    b. Report back from communication with the League of Woman Voters regarding their street team training method that produces results
5. What are the goals of this steering committee (follow-up from the last meeting)? Dixon and Burrell
6. What is the structure/ subcommittees: **who reports back to who** Led by Blackshear
    a. Subcommittee formulation (**everyone's roles need to be identified and transparen**t)
7. What will be discussed next meeting, and when is the meeting time - Blackshear

Summary of the Meeting

After an introduction from everyone led by Ms. Blackshear, Dr. Dixon and Ms. Burrel discussed the value of the tool CRIS (Community resilience information systems) to reveal the hidden needs of the community when augmented by 'boots on the ground' (the main goal of the storm squad). When the 'boots on the ground' effort is comprised of community members, it can help overcome any perceived trust issues. Historically, marginalized communities are skeptical of government initiatives that can impact our ability to uncover the hidden needs of the communities and the wide-spread adoption of CRIS. Therefore, we need trusted sources that serve as the bridge between communities and emergency officials so CRIS can be used to find hidden needs and emergency officials can decide how and where to meet these needs. Communication between the community and emergency officials is crucial to meet hidden needs. It is hoped that Storm Squad members (once recruited) will know their community and neighbors and be able to serve as a 'message conduit' from the community to emergency officials and emergency officials to communities by establishing a direct connection to aid disaster preparation and recovery by using appropriate blue and gray sky information to reduce marginalization. For example, Storm Squad members from the community may know who are the owners and renters and who is living in 'heir properties' or who is diabetic and needs ice to store medicine during an extended power outage. When storm team members have trained appropriately, they can help their neighbors gather the required paperwork needed to access FEMA assistance, or they can reach out to emergency officials for ice delivery. These preparations of documents of information gathering need to be done during the blue sky phases of the operation. Further, if a direct hit causes existing plans to change – emergency officials can reach out to the storm squad members (much like a 'school phone tree' approach) to get the message across, and that message can then be communicated to the neighbors by storm squad members. Ms. Burrel also emphasized that the goal of the storm squad is to provide assistance to the most vulnerable communities. In Pinellas County, there are 5 at-risk areas, and south St. Pete CRA is one of them. Communication between the community members and emergency officials is needed to get everyone prepared before a storm and provide resources to meet the hidden needs before, during, and after storms. This is where the storm squad can play a crucial role. There are barriers to connecting with individuals and providing support in times of need, and a communication framework via Strom Squad members can be useful. This, when fully implemented, will help reduce marginalization.

The Steering Committee for the storm squad will serve as a governing body to help develop appropriate policies and procedures, training programs, budget oversight, and grant applications. This is a collaborative effort that should be guided by cooperation.

This project will develop a training program for storm squad members (community leaders) to train them to identify and report 'critical needs' via CRIS. So Ememegrncy officials can find out what they can do to provide help? Further, the storm squad will be trained to aid community members with completing FEMA applications for assistance. Ms. Blackshear noted that during the last meeting, there was an emphasis on finding the hidden needs in blue skies. The south CRA is going to be the area of focus for the storm squad pilot program. Ms. Hall mentioned that

storm squad members could be trained using a model used by 'Help Hands' which works with the homeless population within the county that has extensive 'boots in the ground' network. Ms. Hall further stated that downtown St. Pete (Williams Park and Mirror Lake areas) - where large homeless populations are found - need an appropriate outreach program for the homeless community before the storm. It was agreed that while the **Storm Squad Pilot program** will be South CRA based – it will also include an outreach approach to the homeless population found in downtown areas. Dr. Dixon stated storm squad efforts to address homeless needs could be piloted in Williams Park. Ms. Burrel noted that homeless communities are usually helped by churches, but there is no governing body that aims to help the homeless population, so nobody knows who is getting help and from where. Mr. Howard noted his organization' help hands' works with the homeless population in Saint Pete and will be able to help communicate messages to homeless communities. Ms. Yeagley noted they have a great outreach program, and they will be able to help with outreach efforts for this storm squad initiative. Ms. Yeagley also noted that it is a great idea to train people as part of the storm squad to help collect information about hidden needs in neighborhoods as well as the homeless population. Their organization (Saint Pete Free Clinic) is involved with an ongoing effort, and she will check with their director, who trains people to work on the street, to find more information. They have a team that works with people on the street on a regular basis. Jalessa will follow up in two weeks. Ms. Yeagley also noted that they serve 1000s of people and they can disseminate information as needed to the population they are serving.

Key Decisions:

The name of this initiative was suggested by Susalla be, **Storm Squad**, and it was unanimously accepted. Now onwards, we will refer to this initiative as Storm Squad.

Training Program: Due to the absence of Ms. Pernal-Arnold there was no update from the Training program used by the League of Woman Voters (LWV). Ms. Hall agreed to follow up with LWV.

Roles and Structures of the steering committee: Dr. Dixon noted that this steering committee will be the management body for the entire storm squad and will be responsible for hiring storm squad members, and budgeting and training the storm that must be set up to collect grants

Mr. Susalla noted that we need a legal entity for the storm squad and it can be a limited liability, 501C3 or 501C4 – depending on what types of grants and funds we are looking to obtain. Susalla will be able to assist, but we will need funding for the paperwork filing and fees. We will discuss this more at the subcommittee level and at future meetings. While many partners involved with this initiative already have their non-pofits (501c3) that can be used to apply for funding to further the mission of the storm squad (when synery exists between Storm Squad Initiative and partner agency and project scope is approved by the steering committee), the legal entity for the storm squad is needed. The legal entity for the storm squad will help with any liability concerns. It was proposed that we would need bylaws and processes to add new members to the steering committee as well as selection criteria for Strom Squad members. Dr.

Dixon and Ms. Hall will circulate examples of bylaws that can be used as a template for Storm Squad Bylaws.

Ms. Backshear noted the storm squad (once hired) will report back to the steering committee, the steering committee reports back to the project management team, and the project management team reports back to the funding agency (unless any of the partner organizations is securing funding – in that case, the partner organization will report back to the funding agency). The structure and the sub-committees need to be transparent, and oversight of the storm squad initiative will be the responsibility of the steering committee.

For now, iCAR led by Dr. Dixon is part of the project management team, including Ms.Blackshear. Ms. Blackshear help with logistics communicates with committee members and coordinates meetings. ICAR will solicit funds to pilot the Storm Squad. ICAR is collaborating with Ms. Burrell, who is with the Office of Emergency Management – the whole community engagement program lead- to launch this storm squad. Moving forward Ms. Burrell and her office will serve as a liaison between the government and the community. Community Collaborative of Florida, represented by Ms. Hall, will play a crucial role in bringing diverse partners together for community engagement and training and apply for funding when appropriate. Ms. Yeagly will help with outreach and training activities for this initiative, and Mr. Susalla will lend his legal skills to train communities about Heir Properties and other FEMA assistance programs. Mr. Howard will help us recruit two faith-based organizations to be part of the steering committee – as his organization' help hands' works closely with local churches. Ms. Blackshear will follow up with the other faith-based organization that initially attended July 12 meeting and expressed interest. Each sub-committee should have 3-4 members based on their skills and expertise. The group identified the following sub-committees listed in Table 1. Dr. Dixon mentioned we need sub-committee chairs, and Ms. Blackshear noted we could hold a vote during our next meeting if multiple people are interested in leading the sub-committee. The first round of proposed names (nominations) discussed in the meeting are summarized in Table 1. Ms. Blackshear will send out a follow-up email to solicit inputs for committee memberships. Once membership of each of the subcommittees is finalized, the task list and timeline will be finalized during the next meeting (January 17, 2023). The subcommittee will meet to undertake their assigned tasks.

Next Meeting: January 17 – every 3rd Tuesday of the month 6:00 – 7:30 virtual – we will meet every 3rd Tuesday of the month

Table 1: Summary of subcommittee and membership nomination

Name of the subcommittee	Lead	Members	Tasks	Timeline
Bi-laws, Policies, and Procedures Development	Susalla	Dixon, Blackshear, Hall, Scott		
Blue Sky Education and Training Development	Pernal-Arnold	Susalla, Burrell, Dixon, Yeagley		

Government Relations/Liaisons	Burrell	Dixon/ Blackshear, Peret, Hardin		
Budgeting and Funding	Hall	Scott, Hardin, Dixon, Blackshear		
Outreach and Recruitment	Yeagley	Howard, Hall, Peret, Blackshear, Hardin, Dechaine		

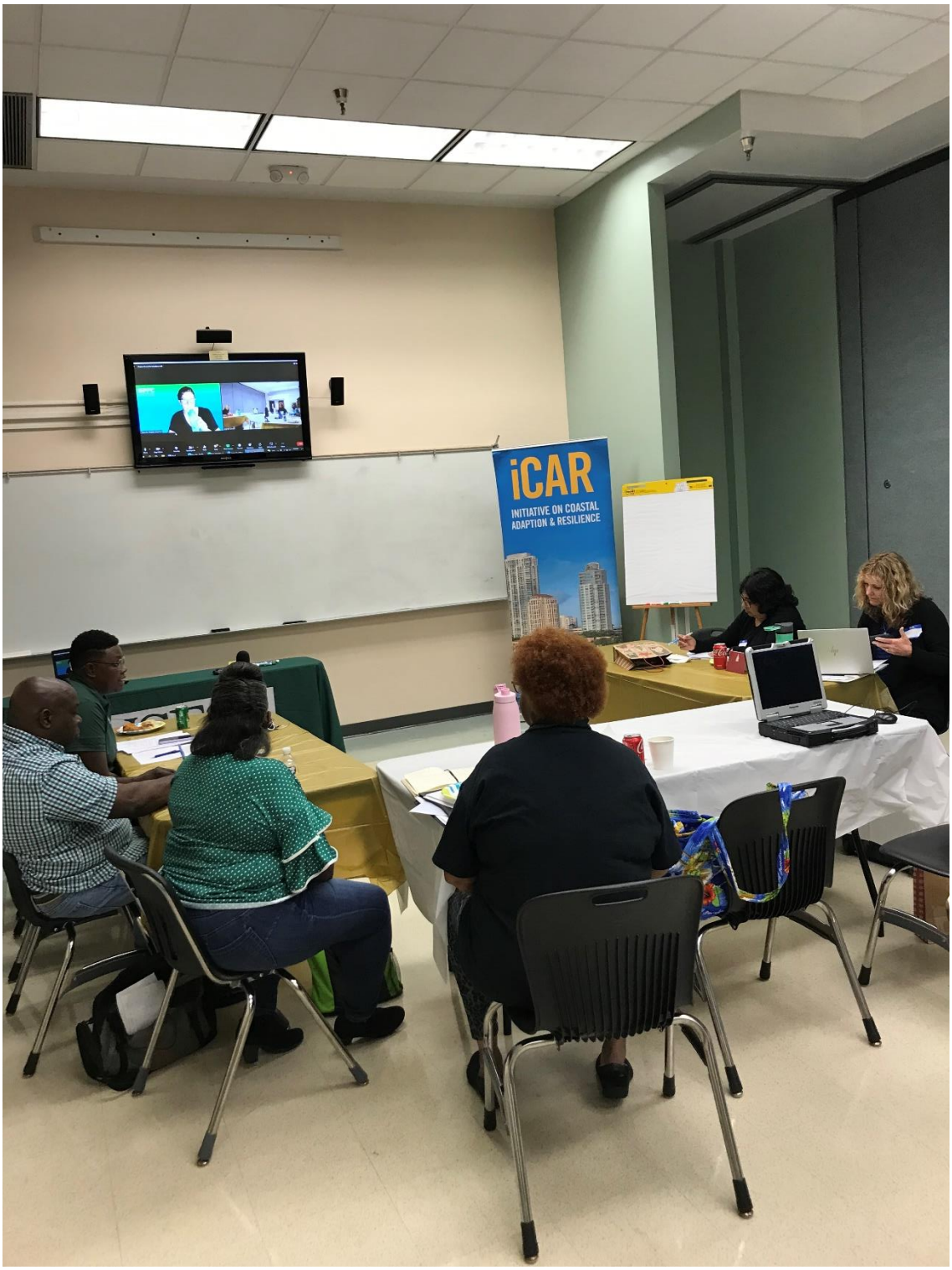
Steering Committee Members Present

Jalessa Blackshear – iCAR USF
Mary Burrell - Pinellas County Emergency Management
Alec Colarusso – iCAR USF
Monica Dechaine – Strength & Shanti
Barnali Dixon – iCAR USF
Erica Hall- Sierra Club/ Florida Food Policy Council, Community Collaboratives of Florida
Louis Howard – Help Hands
Don Howard Help Hands
Jason Susalla- Bay area legal services
Jennifer Yeagley - St.Petersburg Free Clinic

Steering Committee Members Absent[1]

Erica Hardison- Lake Maggiore Shores NHA/ Cooperation Works
Brian Peret- Citizen/NAACP
Anita Pernal- Arnold- Citizen
James Scott-- Sierra Club
Jessica McCraken- Pinellas County Emergency Management (alternate for Mary Burrell)

[1] A**ll of them sent regrets as they were absent due to health issues ecedpt McCraken who is an alternate to Ms. Burrell**


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INITIATIVE ON COASTAL
ADAPTION & RESILIENCE