

# Southward Village

## Fort Myers, Florida



USI | URBAN STRATEGIES, INC.  
Families at the Center of Results

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### The Edison Ave/Dunbar Choice Neighborhood Southward Village

The Edison Ave/Dunbar Choice Neighborhood in the City of Fort Myers presents an exciting opportunity to transform a community that has suffered from systemic racism and economic segregation but nonetheless has retained its underlying urban fabric and strong historical assets.

*55% of residents are employed with \$25,024 being the average annual income in 2022*



#### Propelling Educational Success:

USI will support children and families by collaborating with local education partners to increase target youth's participation in high-quality enrichment programs. This ensures that children graduate from high school equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve individualized post-secondary goals. The District Project Access Liaison have scheduled future tutoring services and homework help to increase proficiency in reading and math for school age youth.

*85% of residents have seen their primary care physician in the past 12 months*



#### Improving Health & Wellness:

The Fort Myers USI is connecting with health and wellness partners to support families by ensuring those that are uninsured will be insured and to increase seeing a primary care provider by 100%. In the second year of service to our Southward Village families, there was an increase from 79.1% to 85.8% of residents that have connected with their physician in the past 12 months. Our goal is to continue to increase seeing a primary care provider by 100% and to ensure all children, youth and adults are physically and mentally healthy.

*16% of in school youth are participating in enrichment activities*



#### Moving Families to Economic Self-Sufficiency:

The Southward Village Community has experienced economic segregation over decades. USI will focus on connecting residents with economic mobility partners to increase the average annual income by addressing the income gaps. Our goal is to increase the number of residents employed by linking them to economic mobility partners with skilled and vocational training opportunities. In addition, USI will continue to partner with Goodwill to host onsite Career Fairs and Career Source to promote and increase training opportunities on a quarterly basis. At the end of 2022, 55.1% (92) of Southward Village residents are employed with \$25,024 being the average annual income and \$14.41 being the average hourly wage.

*598 residents are enrolled in Family Support Services*



[www.urbanstrategiesinc.org](http://www.urbanstrategiesinc.org)



### Enrolling Families in Family Support:

In year 2 of the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative Implementation Grant, USI has 598 residents from the Southward Village Community participating in Family Support Services. The Family Support Specialists use motivational interviewing as a tool towards gathering information to assist residents with identifying goals. To ensure everyone in the community has accessibility to resources, the team has extended their efforts to the Greater Dunbar Community. This allows residents who reside in the zip code of 33916 the ability to identify and achieve their goals as well. The team works closely with leverage partners to provide effective resources to families and giving them the opportunity to become stable and thriving. 598 residents are enrolled in Family Supportive Services. Out of those 598 residents, 12 are neighborhood residents that reside in the zip code of 33916.

### All Families are Stable and Thriving



## Our Experience with Choice Neighborhoods

Urban Strategies partners with a diversity of stakeholders in Choice Neighborhoods sites to create and implement comprehensive neighborhood plans with a focus on human service needs. We owe our success with Choice Neighborhoods to our commitment to using a Results-Based Accountability framework that governs our approach to service delivery. We are using data to constantly measure and improve our programs for children and families

in real time. Using our LEARN (Learning for Effective Actions to Re-vitalize Neighborhoods) performance measurement system, Urban continuously builds evidence on what works best for the more than 30,000 families we serve. We aim to further build upon early successes with Choice to realize our organizational vision that “All families are stable and thriving”.

