

Mental Health Healing Garden

2024 Core Mission Grant

Hispanic Family Center of Southern New Jersey, Inc.

Michel Acevedo-Zmuda
35-47 S. 29th Street
Camden, NJ 08105

nmwismer@hispanicfamilycenter.com
O: 856-541-6985

Nicole Wismer

nmwismer@hispanicfamilycenter.com
O: 856-541-6985

Application Form

Introduction

Thank you for completing Impact100 South Jersey's Core Mission Grant application.

The application due date is February 28, 2024.

The application is divided into 4 sections:

1. Organization Overview
2. Organization's Operating Information
3. Proposed Project Information
4. Proposed Project Budget

Your responses will automatically save so you can complete the application in stages. However, once you hit SUBMIT you will not be able to edit your responses, even if prior to the application deadline of February 28, 2024. Please be sure to proofread your responses before submitting your application.

Please visit Impact100 South Jersey website to learn more about our Organization and our grant programs.

Questions/problems, please email grants@impact100sj.org

Section 1: Organization Overview

WHICH FOCUS AREA IS THE BEST FIT FOR YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT?*

Community Health & Wellbeing: Meets needs of community members or improves physical or mental health

MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT*

Please state your Organization's Mission Statement and Vision Statement as stated on your public-facing materials, such as website.

The **vision** of the Hispanic Family Center of Southern New Jersey, Inc. (HFC) is to provide comprehensive programs and services that address the immediate needs (physical, mental, social, and economic) of the residents of Southern New Jersey, as well as establish the organization as an instrument of change and a voice of power for those we serve and represent. Our vision is guided by our **mission** to provide the community with a broad range of culturally relevant social services and advocacy programs that promote and encourage empowerment and self-sufficiency.

TARGET POPULATION*

Please briefly explain the demographics of your target population and geographic area where they reside.

The Hispanic Family Center of Southern New Jersey, Inc. (HFC) was founded in 1976 to serve the physical and mental health needs of the growing Latino immigrant community in Camden. In nearly 50 years of service,

HFC has expanded our program offerings to meet the needs of a variety of vulnerable communities and populations in Camden and Gloucester counties while maintaining a commitment to providing programs and services that are delivered in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner. To accomplish this, HFC staff represents a diversity of cultures and ethnicities; their own personal lived experience and backgrounds, as well as agency-wide cultural competency training, inform their understanding of topics about sensitive or taboo issues that are often ignored or misunderstood within the Latino community.

Latino's currently make up approximately 70% of the clients served by HFC in both Camden and Gloucester county. However, our programs and services are available to individuals of all identities and demographics and do not exclude anyone based on ethnicity, gender, or identity. Women make up more than half of the clients we serve across all programs. Women and children are among the most vulnerable populations impacted by poverty, disparity, and restricted access to health and social services so many of our programs have a strong focus on serving women in a way that is empowering to both themselves and their families.

IN WHICH COUNTY IS YOUR ORGANIZATION HEADQUARTERED?

Your response to this question is from your previously completed Grant Eligibility Application and cannot be changed.

Camden County

LOCATION OF HEADQUARTERS IF OUTSIDE IMPACT100 SJ COUNTIES*

If your Organization is not headquartered in Burlington, Camden, Cumberland or Gloucester County, please state location of headquarters. Please state "N/A" if this question does not apply to your Organization.

N/A

WHAT IS THE NAME OF YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT?*

Mental Health Healing Garden

WHAT COUNTY(IES) WILL BE SERVED BY THE PROPOSED PROJECT?

Your response to this question is from your previously completed Grant Eligibility Application and cannot be changed.

Camden County
Gloucester County

Section 2: Organization's Operating Information

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TENURE*

How many years has the Executive Director served in this role at your organization? If less than two years, please state the Executive Director's previous position(s) and employer(s).

Michel Acevedo-Zmuda has served the Hispanic Family Center of Southern New Jersey, Inc. (HFC) for the last 4 years in a variety of executive roles. Michel was appointed as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Hispanic Family Center of Southern New Jersey, Inc. (HFC) by our Board of Directors in October 2023. Prior to this

official appointment, Michel served as HFC's Interim CEO beginning in January 2022, in addition to her role as Chief Operations Officer which began in February 2020.

FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES*

Please list the number of full-time employees.

If the number of employees varies from time to time, please state the average number throughout the year.

41

PART-TIME EMPLOYEES*

Please list the number of part-time employees.

If the number of employees varies from time to time, please state the average throughout the year.

2

FLUCTUATION IN NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

If the number of full-time or part-time employees varies during the year, please explain. You do not need to explain normal staff turnover.

The number of employees does not vary throughout the year outside of normal levels of staff turnover.

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION*

Please list the number of volunteers at your Organization.

If the number of volunteers varies from time to time, please state the average throughout the year.

10

BOARD/GOVERNING BODY INFORMATION*

What is the current number of Board members?

7

NUMBER OF BOARD MEETINGS*

How many times does your Board meet throughout the year?

6

BOARD MEMBERS' INFORMATION*

Please provide the board member names, professional affiliations (status) and the number of years served on your Board using the format in the example.

Example:

1. Jane Smith, Boeing engineer (retired), 5 years
2. Robert Jones, Clark High School teacher, 2 years

1. Ann Bagchi, Associate Professor, 1 year
2. Lori Delgado, Business Development, 1 year

3. Ingrid Rhetto, Vice President, 1 year
4. Derrick Tarver, CEO/Founder, 1 year
5. Amarita Mohanty, Attorney, 1 year
6. Brittany Harris, Pharmacist, 1 year
7. Noel Ramirez, Operations Manager, 1 year

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION & BELONGING (DEIB)*

Please state your Organization's commitment to DEIB. If you have a formal statement you may include it here. If you do not have a formal statement, please briefly state your Organization's DEIB efforts.

Hispanic Family Center of Southern New Jersey, Inc. (HFC) does not currently have a formal DEIB statement, but has been making efforts to create a formal statement for several years. Ensuring that we are committed to equity is critical to our mission and vision, and important to agency leadership. As such, we have been taking our time to ensure that all activities related to DEIB are meaningful and serve to amplify the voices of the community and those that we employ. In 2021, we engaged an outside consultant to assess our operations (inclusive of an analysis of all programming, language use, staffing, social media presence, policies/procedures, etc.) from an anti-racist action plan framework. This included many rounds of staff, community, and stakeholder roundtables to gather an on-the-ground assessment of our practices relating to DEIB. This resulted in implementing a series of workshops that all staff are required to attend and actively participate in, as well as creating a framework to formalize a DEIB statement in our next strategic plan.

ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET

What is your Organization's current annual operating budget? *Your response to this question is from your previously completed Grant Eligibility Application and cannot be changed.*

\$3,587,650.00

OPERATING BUDGET LAST YEAR*

What was your Organization's total annual operating budget last year?

\$4,475,433.00

REVENUE SOURCES*

Please list your Organization's highest three revenue sources for this year and last year. This can include all types of revenue (public/private grants, donations, fee for service, etc.). Please use format in the example:

Current Year's Revenue--3 Highest Sources

1. ABC grant, \$50,000
2. XYZ grant, \$15,000
3. ABC Foundation, \$30,000

Last Year's Revenue-3 Highest Sources

ABC grant, \$50,000
 ABC Foundation, \$30,000
 Donors, \$25,000

Current Year's Revenue-3 Highest Sources

1. NJ Department of Mental Health and Addictions Services, Outpatient Mental Health Fee for Service Contract \$821,653

2. NJ Department of Law and Public Safety, Trauma Recovery Center \$747,753
3. Latino Action Network Fund, Hispanic Women's Resource Center \$679,490

Last Year's Revenue-3 Highest Sources

1. NJ Department of Mental Health and Addictions Services, Outpatient Mental Health Fee for Service Contract \$760,000
2. NJ Department of Children and Families, Division on Women, VAWASA/RAPEPREV/Culturally Specific \$568,087
3. Latino Action Network Fund, Hispanic Women's Resource Center \$550,000

STRATEGIC PLAN*

Does your organization have a strategic plan? If yes, *what year was it adopted and what years does it cover?*

Example:

Yes, adopted in 2022. Strategic Plan covers 2022 to 2024.

If no Strategic Plan, please enter "none"

Yes, adopted in January 2020. Strategic Plan covers 2020 to 2025.

LONG TERM GOALS/VISION*

Please describe your Organization's long term goals or vision for the next 3 to 5 years.

Hispanic Family Center of Southern New Jersey, Inc. (HFC) utilizes our 2020-2025 Strategic Plan to guide our long-term goals in three key areas:

1. Operations and Services:

- HFC will align program offerings to meet changing and emerging community needs while assuring organizational sustainability such that HFC continues to positively impact the people we serve.
- HFC will recruit, retain, develop, and promote staff to deliver high quality, effective social, health, and educational services to the culturally, economically, and linguistically diverse communities of Southern New Jersey.

2. Community Engagement:

- HFC will collaborate with nonprofit, for profit, and community based entities to advance the mission of the center and the well-being of the culturally, economically and linguistically diverse communities of Southern New Jersey.
- HFC will employ social media and multiple other marketing channels to identify, reach, and engage clients and service partners throughout the culturally, economically and linguistically diverse communities of Southern New Jersey.
- HFC will emblemize civic leadership in the communities it serves through outreach, education, service provision, and advocacy.

3. Governance Strategy:

- HFC's Board of Directors will steward all current and newly identified organizational resources, continuously advance the mission of HFC, and stand as a model of excellence in volunteer, non-profit governance.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES*

in the next 6 to 12 months, do you foresee any significant changes possibly taking place within the Organization. For example a change in leadership, mission direction, funding, staffing, etc. Please provide details.

Hispanic Family Center of Southern New Jersey, Inc. (HFC) does not foresee any significant organizational changes in leadership, mission direction, or staffing in the next year. Our development team is always actively searching for new streams of funding to add new programs to the agency or to compliment our existing services. We use a prospective grant screening strategy to assess new funding opportunities to ensure that any new funder/program is in line with our agencies mission, vision, and values.

Section 3: Proposed Project Information

NEED STATEMENT*

Please state the need/problem this project will address and how the project will address the stated need/problem.

There is an urgent need for healing spaces in the City of Camden that offer therapeutic modalities outside of the standard office visit/ telehealth method of therapy. Traditional talk therapy is not always relevant due to an individuals lived experience, cultural context, and societal norms. A holistic approach to therapy and healing is more relevant to different cultural or spiritual traditions. Many who live in the City of Camden have personally experienced a traumatic event such as gun violence, child abuse, immigrant/refugee trauma, or are members of a marginalized identity. According to the CDC, Camden had an estimated 22% of adults report frequent mental distress in 2021, compared to an average of 16.3% across other similar cities. Individuals living in the City of Camden experience factors that influence their emotional and physical health that become so engrained in their daily life that they do not recognize the ways in which they have adapted to survive these stressors. The impact of living under extreme stress for a prolonged period of time often creates mental and physical health symptoms that aren't always obvious, because surviving becomes another part of daily living. Studies have shown that trauma survivors are more comfortable with therapeutic modalities that are not purely verbal interventions; fostering a connection to nature empower survivors to interact with their immediate environment, create bonds of trust, and reclaim their own agency and autonomy.

NEW OR EXISTING PROJECT?*

Is the proposed project a new project, an expansion or continuation of an existing project?

Continuation of existing project

PROPOSED PROJECT SUMMARY*

Please clearly define:

- 1. the proposed project**
- 2. the population it will serve**
- 3. the geographic area it will serve**

Do not address project need and impact as they are addressed in later questions.

Please keep response specific to *actual proposed project* and not other programs run by your organization.

The **proposed project** is to transform the Hispanic Family Center of Southern NJ's (HFC) existing green space located at our Family Counseling Clinic into a Mental Health Healing Garden that provides the community with therapeutic modalities to heal from trauma that better meet their needs, culturally and holistically. Many recipients of the Hispanic Family Center of Southern NJ's (HFC) mental health therapy, domestic violence counseling, and/or sexual assault services have personally experienced reoccurring instances of trauma throughout their lifetime, not just the single incident that may have led them to seek help. For some trauma survivors, traditional talk therapy may not be relevant due to cultural context, and a holistic

approach can be more relevant to their cultural or spiritual traditions.

The Mental Health Healing Garden will **serve a wide variety of populations**. The Healing Garden will be utilized by our existing mental health, substance use, and domestic violence programs as a place to offer therapeutic activities and group counseling sessions. The Healing Garden will also be open to all members of the community for special events aimed at improving mental health protective factors. We recognize that most members of our community are survivors of traumatic events (whether as a child/adolescent/adult) and often feel a deep sense of helplessness, lose problem-solving skills, lose the ability to move, and lose the ability to protect loved ones. The psychological impact includes high levels of anxiety and stress, behavioral disturbance, night terrors, emotional dysregulation, difficulty connecting with surroundings, and low self-esteem, among other impacts. The response to trauma is both physical and psychological. Traditionally the approach to addressing trauma has been through talk therapy, which is certainly still very important and a service that is available at HFC, regardless of insurance or residency status, and is provided by fully-licensed and credentialed psychologists and clinicians. Working with plants, in the garden, offers relief from that sense of helplessness because the risk of making decisions is lessened. The space surrounded by plants/vegetation has a different rhythm, it's a space free of judgement, a *safe place*; this is very important because the sense of safety allows survivors to experience it in their body without feeling overwhelmed, it is not blocked, and can continue to function daily; they regain hope, and painful memories of the trauma are unlocked. According to Bessel van der Kolk & Peter Levine: "The physical exercise of gardening gives the body the opportunity to redirect hyperarousal, to experience movement, heavy breathing, and even sweating, for good reasons. The sensory stimulation from fragrances, visual beauty, and physical contact with plants are powerful antidotes to the negative sensations that terrify and paralyze survivors."

The **geographic area** the Healing Garden will serve includes any client receiving services in our Camden County and Gloucester County programs, as well as partnering with other Southern NJ programs and agencies that desire to host events or programming in the Healing Garden.

PROPOSAL'S IMPACT ON CORE MISSION*

How will implementation of this project improve your Organization's ability to more effectively carry out its core mission?

provideAt the core of Hispanic Family Center of Southern New Jersey's (HFC) mission to "provide the community with a broad range of culturally relevant social services and advocacy programs that promote and encourage empowerment and self-sufficiency" is the hope that our programs and services work as tools that clients can use to build their life into one that they desire for themselves and their family. Incorporating new and innovative offerings, like a Mental Health Healing Garden, increases our client's ability to learn how to best deal with what life has handed them and to feel prepared to step into a life that they have created for themselves. This project will also increase our ability as an agency to implement new evidence-based models of therapeutic treatment and bring these offerings to a community that often doesn't get a choice in their treatment, furthering our mission to empower and foster self-sufficiency in our clients.

PROJECT'S RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN/ LONG TERM VISION*

How does this project fit into your Organization's Strategic Plan or long-term vision?

The vision of the Hispanic Family Center of Southern New Jersey, Inc. (HFC) is to provide comprehensive programs and services that address the immediate needs (physical, mental, social, and economic) of the residents of Southern New Jersey, as well as establish the organization as an instrument of change and a voice of power for those we serve and represent. This project is in line with our current Strategic Plan goal of continually aligning our program offerings to meet the changing and emerging needs of our community by increasing our ability as an agency to implement new evidence-based models of therapeutic treatment and bring these offerings to a community that often doesn't get a choice in their treatment, furthering our mission to empower and foster self-sufficiency in our clients. This project will also support our Strategic Plan's goal of increasing our staff's skills and talents through Staff Development activities. A portion of this grant award will

be used to train staff and interns, who are sent to us by local universities for field work experience in community mental health, in an accredited Horticultural Therapy CEU course.

IMPACT OF PROPOSED PROJECT*

Approximately how many individuals/families will this project reach over the 24-month grant period?

250 Duplicated participants served at Community Events

30 Unduplicated clients served in 12-week Horticultural Therapy curriculum (5 cycles x 6 clients per cycle)

80 Unduplicated clients (through existing HFC programs) served with individual and group therapy modalities in the Healing Garden

PROJECT OUTCOMES*

Please list 2 to 3 specific outcomes your Organization anticipates achieving with the proposed project.

Community Event Outcomes: Pre/post assessments will be offered to all participants at HFC-lead community events in the Healing Garden. The assessment questions will be tailored to the topic presented at each event and be used to measure knowledge attainment before and after attending the event.

1. 75% of Community Event participants will self-report an increase in knowledge about trauma, risk factors, protective factors, and treatment options available in their community
2. 25% of Community Event participants will self-report an interest in seeking mental health services after attending the educational event

Horticultural Therapy Curriculum Outcomes:

1. 100% of participants served will complete an initial evaluation with a clinician/therapist about their physical, cognitive and emotional state, as well as their interests, hobbies, habits, and horticultural skills.
2. 100% of participants will complete the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale within the first week, and during the last week, of program to measure self-esteem at the beginning and end of the program
3. 90% will self-identify a protective factor to increase self-esteem
4. 75% will improve their self-esteem by the end of the program, as evidenced by an increase in their Rosenberg score
5. 100% of participants will complete the Beck Depression Scale bi-weekly to measure the presence of depressive symptoms and assesses change

HOW MEASURE OUTCOMES*

Please state how your Organization will measure each stated outcome.

1. Outcomes achieved by participants of Community Events will be measured using internally-created pre and post assessments to measure knowledge attainment before and after attending the event.
2. Outcomes achieved by participants of the Horticultural Therapy Curriculum will be measured using psychological assessment scales and measures administered by trained clinicians.
3. Outcomes of the overall grant-funded program will be measured by an internal program evaluation conducted by Quality Assurance protocols outlined in agency policies/practices, and will consist of gathering participant and community feedback to evaluate the therapeutic impact of the program.

PROJECT LEADER/MANAGER*

Who, from your Organization, will manage this project? Please state name and title. If person not currently on staff, please state new hire and anticipated date of hire.

Michel Acevedo-Zmuda, Chief Executive Officer

PROJECT PARTNERS*

If you will be collaborating with other Organization(s) to carry out this project, please list the Organization name(s) and their contributions to the project. For example, providing funding, staff, materials, etc.

Please state "none" if there are no project partners.

1. **School of Environmental and Biological Sciences, Rutgers** Center for Urban Environmental Sustainability, Department of Landscape Architecture will utilize graduate-level interns participating in their Design Studio semester to implement urban design projects.
2. **Community Design Collaborative** matches nonprofits with skilled volunteers from the fields of architecture, engineering, and construction.
3. **Bohler, Landscape Architecture** provides planning, landscape architecture, and design assistance.

PROJECT TASKS AND TIMELINE*

Please list proposed project tasks and implementation timeline for each task. The timeline must begin on or after July 1, 2024 and be completed by June 30, 2026. Please use following format:

Project Task	Timeline
Hire project manager	Aug '24
Develop curriculum	Sept-Oct '24
Pilot curriculum	Feb '25

Administration Activities (search for mural artist, execute agreements with contractors, instructors, purchase hardscape/softscaping materials), July 2024-December 2024

Staff Development Activity begins (Horticultural Therapy Institute certificate course), December 2024

Marketing Campaign begins, January 2025-May 2025

Contractors begin work, March 2025

Mural Installation, April 2025

Begin use of Healing Garden for individual/group therapy, April 2025

Opening Day Event, May 2025

Begin use of Healing Garden for community, June 2025

12-week Horticultural Therapy curriculum cycles for participants (~5 cycles), April 2025-May 2026

Project Assessment, Final Evaluation & Reporting, June 2026

Section 4: Proposed Project Budget

PROJECT BUDGET (2 PART QUESTION)*

PART 1: Please **upload a spreadsheet** (Excel or pdf) showing the proposed project's budget . Project expenses must correspond to the tasks listed in the project tasks/timeline question in Section 3. If expenses include staff time, please state percentage of staff member's time to be spent on the project under "additional details".

The total of all expenses must equal the total project budget and must be at least \$100,000.

Please use the column headings shown in the example:

<u>Expense</u>	<u>Additional Details</u>	<u>Total</u>
Project Manager	30% of full time	\$25,000
Equipment	Computers, Projector	\$30,000
Furniture	desks/chairs	\$ 5,000

TOTAL BUDGET:

PART 2: If the proposed project budget exceeds \$100,000, you must show on the spreadsheet the additional funding sources, dollar amount and date you expect to secure this funding. The additional funding must equal or exceed the total of project expenses exceeding \$100,000. Please use following format.

<u>Funder/Doner</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Date Expected</u>
ABC Foundation	\$10,000	Oct. '24
Annual Fundraising Gala	\$20,000	Sept. '25
TOTAL	\$30,000	

Core Mission Grant Budget (Hispanic Family Center-Healing Garden).pdf

DOES BUDGET EXCEED \$100,000?*

Please note, if your budget exceeds \$100,000 you must provide the additional funder/donor information in your budget spreadsheet as described in PART 2 of the question above.

No

Thank you for completing Impact100 South Jersey's Core Mission Grant application.

PRIOR TO SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION

Please carefully review your responses prior to submitting your application. You may save the application as a PDF to facilitate proofreading and to ensure the accuracy of your responses. You may edit your application anytime prior to hitting Submit.

ONCE YOU HIT THE SUBMIT BUTTON YOU MAY NOT EDIT THE APPLICATION EVEN IF PRIOR TO THE DEADLINE.

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- Core Mission Grant Budget (Hispanic Family Center-Healing Garden).pdf

Core Mission Grant Budget (July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2026)
Mental Health Healing Garden, Hispanic Family Center of Southern NJ, Inc.

Expense	Detail	Total
Hardscaping	Costs inclusive of non-living landscape elements (i.e.- pavers, stones, container gardens, garden benches, wood, garden art/sculptures, etc.)	\$18,500
Softscaping/Landscaping	Costs inclusive of living landscape elements (i.e.- soil/mulch trees, grasses, flowers, shrubs, seeds, etc.)	\$16,500
Landscaping Vendor	Costs associated with excavation, removal of materials, installation, and contractor labor	\$14,180
Electrical Vendor	Costs associated with the installation of lighting and security system for safety and nighttime use of the Garden, and GFCI outlet for water feature	\$5,750
Water Feature	Costs associated with the installation of a pond or waterfall (i.e. water agitator, filter, liner, underlayment, pump, etc.)	\$12,500
Fencing	Costs inclusive of materials-only to fix existing fencing, installation/labor will be performed by HFC staff	\$3,500
Mural Artist	Costs associated securing a Camden-based/native artist to plan and execute a meaningful feature wall to represent the intent and message of the Healing Garden	\$15,000
HFC Personnel Costs	Costs associated with grant implementation and activities (5% to fiscal reporting; data collection & outcome reporting; communications; marketing) and maintenance/installation of project site by HFC maintenance staff (~10%, percentage of time will vary based on project stage)	\$8,500
Marketing	Costs associated with developing and updating materials to promote the Healing Garden in print and social media for advertising in our service areas	\$350
Opening Day Event	Costs inclusive of a welcoming event for community members, clients, and other stakeholders to open the Healing Garden and introduce it to the community (refreshments, incentives, instructor fees (guided meditation, yoga, etc.)	\$2,750
Staff Development	Registration for 1 staff member (\$950) and 2 masters-level interns (\$760/each) to virtually attend a virtual, five-day intensive seminar through the Horticultural Therapy Institute (program is accredited by the American Horticultural Therapy Association.) Classes include: Fundamentals of Horticulture Therapy, Horticulture Therapy Techniques, Horticulture Therapy Programming, Horticulture Therapy Management	\$2,470
TOTAL BUDGET:		\$100,000