**Food Security Coalition
Direct Service and Engagement Work Group meeting summary**One Community Health
November 30th, 1:00- 3:00 pm

**Participants:**

* Sharon Thornberry- Columbia Gorge Food Bank
* Kiara Kashuba- RARE AmeriCorps
* Bridget Hinton- OSU Extension
* Michelle Sager- OSU Wasco County Extension/ Master Gardeners
* Debi Budnick- Skyline Health and Wellness Educator
* Sarah Sullivan- Gorge Grown Food Network
* Nadja McConville, DHS Self Sufficiency

*Facilitator: Liz Oberhausen, Gorge Grown*

*Note-taker: Louisa Pavlik, Gorge Grown*

**Action Items:**

* Nadja McConville asked Kiara to send her recommendation document to Lynne Erickson, who is working on a Farmers Market grant in The Dalles.
* Nadja has county info on homeless population in Hood River and Wasco counties and will send it to Liz and Kiara
* Liz will send out a Doodle poll to select the next meeting date
* Liz will send out a survey for the worksheet that we did not have time to fill out.

**MEETING SUMMARY**

Participants kicked off the meeting by sharing their names and what they are proud of in their food security work this year. They then shared their goals for 2018.

**2017 Successes**

* I’ve been talking with the Master Gardeners about food security work & they’re open to involvement
* We have a warehouse! Columbia Gorge Food Bank
* We have a map of food resources that can build on next year
* I finally understand the work and potential of the Coalition
* We have a RARE AmeriCorps member, Kiara Kashuba, for staff support
* Survey summaries and recommendations
* Funding from Meyer Memorial Trust for continued program management/ staffing
* We have cooking demos at Washington Gorge Action Program and hope to expand

**2018 Goals**

* Figure out the distinction and connection between FSC and Blue Zones
* Universally share our food resource information in the Gorge in *one document*
* Add more items to the Food Resource Map
* Outreach to the community about FSC
* OSU’s Food Hero outreach for community involvement/ volunteers
* DEI- focus on outlying communities, perhaps through Healthy Cornerstore Project; contact: Silvan Shawe (note: this is no longer an option. Gorge Grown did not receive funding to continue the Healthy Cornerstore project.)
* Get more clinics involved with Food Security

**Looking back**- work group progress this year

Liz reviewed the work of the Direct Service/ Engagement workgroup over the past year:

* Ongoing: Staying up to date on each other’s work, resources, and events, providing help and input where we can
	+ Feel free to email Louisa Pavlik at outreach@gorgegrown.com to have your event added to the Gorge Grown calendar: <http://www.gorgegrown.com/events/>
	+ Find details there on the grand opening of Columbia Gorge Food Bank on Dec. 19th
* Collected in-depth inventory of food assistance resources in the Gorge
* Created an interactive map of resources to be shared on partner websites
* Created an interactive map of food insecure hotspots and information on what participating organizations do and would like to do, who they would like to partner with, etc.
* Collected, sorted, and summarized available data, survey, reports, etc. from food insecure populations in the Gorge.
* Aggregated the recommendations from the above surveys, data and reports.
* Began working with Community Health Workers as one format for getting input from food insecure populations
* Current: Setting priorities and creating a work plan for next year

**Drawing out recommendations from previously conducted surveys**

Kiara Kashuba, OSU RARE AmeriCorps, presented her compiled recommendations from the surveys we compiled last month. Kiara’s report is attached to the email in which these notes were sent, and on the [Food Security Coalition website](http://www.gorgegrown.com/foodsecurity/) under ‘Coalition Documents.’

* In this extensive report, Kiara outlined each study’s scope of data, target populations, content summary, findings summary, and recommendations. Group members were impressed by the accessibility of the summary.
* Participants pointed out that many of the concerns/themes from year to year are chronic.

**Review priorities generated throughout the year,** including recommendations from Kiara and Louisa’s research of existing surveys and reports, those selected in July, and others which have arisen as low hanging fruit since that time*.*

* Participants broke into pairs groups and filled out a worksheet for each project detailing what would be needed to make the project happen successfully, and whether it should be taken on by this group. The results are [compiled into this table](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/130HhHhB2zllLZaDFD-vHJZJRIPW5B4c_EK7oMKla_cE/edit#gid=0)- take a look to see more detail on the benefits of each project, what it would take to make it successful, and whether those filling it out felt it was an appropriate project for this group to take on next year.
* The group debriefed by giving an overall recommendation for each project for whether it should be taken on by this group, and if so, whether it was a top priority, or could be done later on.

**Overall recommendations:**

High Priority:

1. *Welcome/Outreach team: create an orientation packet, meet with new members, reach out to members who'd broaden representation* - important for group. Louisa can start draft and aim to have it done before the end of January.
2. *Develop shared, collaborative method for food security screening and data compilation* - Sarah S. says this is top priority & should be ongoing. This connects with how to share resources.
3. *Increase knowledge of existing resources among organizations and food insecure individuals* - Bridget & Kiara says this is top priority and could happen at quarterly meeting.
4. *Improving Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the coalition; could include: - arranging DEI trainings for work groups or whole coalition - targeted outreach to recruit new members to broaden representation* - Sarah S. says this will happen now with new grant; longer conversation is needed. The group recommended that the following projects be included in this work, rather than seen as their own separate projects:
	1. *Survey/ Engage/ seek data regarding food security among homeless population*- Sharon & Nadja have access to data already, and can send it to the group. This group can support efforts in the future, but should not lead the effort.
	2. *In lieu sites, and tribal departments and representatives more generally*- This group may be better as a supporting role. It could be a good part of the DEI work under the MMT funding.
	3. *Focus groups to identify language and cultural barriers to accessing food and food resources*-Yes- this is low hanging fruit. Louisa & Michelle said it dovetails with project #4.
5. *Transportation to food access sites- improve/develop, improve knowledge of existing resources*- Sarah S says this is very important and our group should connect with the regional transportation coordinator.

Medium-Priority and/or this group should play a supporting, not leading, role:

1. *Cross-train volunteers across organizations- create a central volunteer posting board, like craigslist, where requests and availability can be posted* - Bridget and Kiara said this is a long-term project for further down the line. Sharon would like to see a better volunteer mgmt. entity in the Gorge.
2. *Increase access and distribution of nutrition/cooking/food preservation/ gardening education*- It’s already happening but could be more collaborative. Medium priority. Louisa & Michelle wonder if the same populations are repeatedly served.
3. *Identify locations for new community gardens* – Michelle & Louisa said this depends on our level of participation. Support is more important than new development, unless we do an assessment in neighborhoods that lack gardens. This group functions better to identify opportunities for outside partnership than as actual labor for the project.
4. *Develop school food pantries, including training session*- OFB will lead the way on this. Sharon says these projects can be slow-moving. Once Columbia Gorge Food Bank is done, more focus will be allotted to this.

A different work group should take this on:

1. *Identify and coordinate direct service project funding proposal and opportunities*- This could be a role for the steering committee? Let’s keep WA side in mind.

Important, but needs further discussion to identify this group’s role

1. *Emergency planning, coordination and preparedness* – we have funding for this project from Meyer Memorial Trust, however, no one was able to complete the worksheet. Needs further discussion and planning.
2. *Increasing availability of fresh produce in/through pantries, schools, community meals, community gardens and cornerstores*- This is a big topic- let’s keep talking about this at the next meeting.

**Our next meeting will be** Mid January/ early February**.** The overall objective will be to use what we learned from this meeting and the surveys, select priorities and create a work plan and method for the coming year.