Environmental Issues

HOUSTON, WE HAVE A PROBLEM: COMMUNITY-DRIVEN SOLUTIONS TO COMBAT ENVIRONMENTAL INJUSTICE (TEXAS)

Need Statement:
There is a need for members of Black & Brown communities in the 5th & 3rd Wards of Houston, TX to be involved, access resources, and provide feedback on programs and policies regarding climate change and air pollution, considering that these communities are most impacted and least consulted or are least contributing to the problem. Our goal is to collaborate with Houston-based organizations to share and collect data about the problem and empower community members to be advocates for actionable change.

How did you specifically address the problem listed in your needs statement?
We collaborated with Houston-based organizations to identify resources that were already available and strategize on how to best disseminate new information to the community.

What qualitative and/or quantitative evaluation metrics did you examine?
Formed partnerships with local experts and organizations and engaged with community members through various events and platforms.

What community partners and allies did you work with to address the problem?
Houston-based Universities (University of Houston, Baylor College of Medicine, Rice University, UT at MD Anderson, University of Houston-Downtown, Houston Community College, and Texas Southern University), Rice University’s Kinder Institute for Urban Research, Office of Sustainability, One Breath, Resilient Houston group, Citizens’ Climate Lobby, food banks, and city parks.

Black and Brown communities in Houston are most impacted by climate change and air pollution while being the least consulted on solutions to the problem.

What community resources did you develop?
We created a toolkit that visualizes the impacts of climate change and environmental hazards on the local community along with contact information and ways to contribute to the dialogue.

How did you use social media or digital tools for outreach and/or data collection?
We used social media to identify community events, outreach efforts, to share information, and to engage community organizations and leaders.

How does this project lead to greater racial equity? By creating a pipeline of shared resources and empowering communities to get involved in the decision-making process, we are supporting the transformation of systemic practices that infringe upon community success and health.