

# **UNITED WAY OF SOUTHERN NEVADA**

**PROGRAMS IMPROVING SELF-SUFFICIENCY OF  
LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT (LEP) NEVADANS  
FIRST SEMI-ANNUAL REPORTING**

**March 2023**

**FUNDED BY THE ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**



# GUIDING VALUES

## UNITED WAY MODEL AND METHODOLOGY

The FY23 Congressionally Directed funding supported United Way of Southern Nevada (UWSN) in building programs that improve self-sufficiency for limited English proficient (LEP) communities in Nevada. We are grateful to Congresswoman Titus for championing this meaningful program for Nevada. UWSN's approach to this work is guided by three components:

- **Technical assistance** for 12 nonprofit sub awardees to develop or improve their language access plan,
- Facilitating the use of **shared interpretation and translation service**, and
- **Building a network organizations** who will provide cultural perspective, sustainability, and continued maintenance to language access plans.

Through this work, UWSN targeted the development of language access plans in the **top nine languages** in the region:

- American Sign Language (ASL)
- Amharic/Ethiopian
- Arabic
- Chinese
- Farsi/Dari
- Korean
- Spanish
- Tagalog
- Vietnamese

During the first quarter of the performance period, UWSN's primary focus was developing systems and infrastructure needed to ensure the success of the program. These systems and infrastructure were developed in partnership with the Language Access Working Group, a cross-sector group UWSN has convened since August 2022 with the purpose of providing regional coordination to remove barriers to access related to language. From this group the Language Access Steering Committee evolved as an advisory group to UWSN. Members of this group provide the perspective of key public organizations and their own lived experience with language barriers.

# TIMELINE AND KEY MILESTONES

## STEERING COMMITTEE MEETS AND REVIEWS APPLICATIONS

In September 2023, in support of the first component, technical assistance for twelve nonprofit sub awardees, the Language Access Steering Committee nominated forty-nine nonprofits based on their cultural and language expertise in at least one of the nine target languages. Selected sub awardees receive technical assistance in the form of training and guided workshops in addition to \$25,000 in direct support of their language access plan development. During September and November 2023, UWSN sent invitations to these forty-nine prospective sub-awardees to apply for the program, UWSN hosted virtual info sessions outlining expectations of the program, and the nominated nonprofit organizations submitted interest forms and final applications.

The Language Access Steering Committee is represented by the Governor's Office of Americans; Governor's Office of Science, and Innovation; DHHS Office of Minority and Health Equity; Regional Transportation Commission; Clark County; Clark County School District; City of Las Vegas; and City of Reno.

## SUBGRANTEES SELECTED

On November 22nd, 2023, the application period ended and on November 27th the Language Access Steering Committee selected the twelve nonprofit sub awardees listed here:

- African Diaspora of Las Vegas
- Arriba Las Vegas Worker Center
- Asian Community Development Council
- Casa de Luz
- DISCOVERY Children's Museum
- Indigenous A.F.
- Lighthouse Charities
- Make the Road Nevada
- Nevada Mercy and Care Inc
- Project REAL
- Puentes
- Research Education and Access for Community Health (R.E.A.C.H.).

# TIMELINE AND KEY MILESTONES CONTINUED

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## PROGRAM PERIOD BEGINS AND INTERPRETATION LINE SELECTED

In December 2023, UWSN and Nevada Grant Lab co-hosted a workshop focusing on **federal subawardee technical assistance and compliance requirements**; in January 2024, UWSN hosted a workshop focused on the program's background and expectations; and in February 2024, UWSN and Propio (an interpretation and translation vendor) co-hosted a workshop to demonstrate how to access interpretation and translation services through their platform.

UWSN selected the vendor Propio for virtual and phone interpretation and document translation services. These services funded through UWSN's award are accessible by the twelve sub awardees, local nonprofit organizations, and local public organizations providing community services.

# SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS AND EVENTS

## CONVENING OUR COMMUNITY

On February 21, 2024, UWSN in partnership with Congresswoman Titus hosted a meet- and- greet followed by a press conference to announce the twelve nonprofit sub awardees that would support programs to remove barriers for limited English proficient Nevadans. The event was covered by three English and three Spanish language media outlets, reaching an audience of over 250,000 Nevadans. Additionally, Nevada State Assemblywoman Selena Torres, who championed language access legislation during the 2021 and 2023 legislative sessions, was in attendance.

In the press release Congresswoman Titus was quoted as saying, “I am proud to announce \$1 million for United Way of Southern Nevada’s Language Access Project which I secured during the Community Project Funding appropriations process,” said Rep. Dina Titus. “We are a diverse community with many languages and various degrees of English proficiency. This funding will help twelve organizations serve individuals from diverse backgrounds more effectively seek housing, employment, healthcare, and other assistance, creating a more inclusive Nevada and bolstering our local economy.”

## CONTINUED COMMUNITY CHALLENGES

Another key finding identified by the Language Access Working Group is the shortage of translators and interpreters in Nevada. When UWSN began our search for a translation and interpretation vendor, we became aware of the lack of Nevada-based vendors. Additionally, UWSN’s consultants focusing on ASL integration found that the only Deaf Center in Nevada closed during Covid-19 and has not reopened contributing to a shortage of ASL interpreters in Nevada. Leading to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities feeling frustrated and challenged in their attempts to fully participate in our community and readily access resources needed for survival.

These findings reinforce the need to create a pathway to build this capacity at the local level. While State legislation made monumental strides in expanding language access plans and services to limited-English Proficient Nevadans, government and nonprofit organizations are struggling to maintain an adequate workforce to successfully execute the innovative vision to remove barriers to access. Additionally, as Southern Nevada’s economy grows to include international and global businesses, students, and tourism, we must work together to ensure everyone has timely and equal access to government and social services.

# MOVING LANGUAGE ACCESS FORWARD

## COMPLIANCE AND REPORTING

During the first six months of the program, UWSN developed systems to create sustainability, accountability, and minimize risk for this important work. Our first program component calls for technical assistance to twelve nonprofit sub awardees who have expertise in at least one of the nine target languages. UWSN understood the importance of partnering with nonprofit organizations who understood the communities that faced barriers to access. In some cases, these nonprofit organizations would not have experience as federal sub awardees. Members of the Language Access Steering Committee understood this and encouraged UWSN to find appropriate support and guidance to ensure compliance and the desired community impact. That is why UWSN enlisted Nevada GrantLab's support, a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering the nonprofit sector's readiness to apply and administer federal funds. From September to December 2023, Nevada GrantLab worked with UWSN to develop a toolkit for UWSN's sub awardees, financial and programmatic reporting guidelines, and provide one-one-one technical assistance. Nevada GrantLab will continue to work with the Language Access Project Manager for the remainder of the program for continued assistance.

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WORKSHOPS

For Language Access Plan specific technical assistance, UWSN partnered with Diversidad LLC to provide guided workshops and one-on-one technical assistance to the twelve sub awardees to create or improve their Language Access Plan. Diversidad LLC's leadership counts with extensive experience in interpretation and translation services in Nevada, most notably by developing the language access plan for University Medical Center (UMC), the largest public hospital in the State of Nevada. Beginning February 2024, UWSN worked with Diversidad LLC to design a curriculum that will allow the nonprofit sub awardees to develop a language access plan using their knowledge of the target languages and cultures they serve. UWSN will collect these plans at the end of the program and share them with the Language Access Working Group and the nonprofit sector widely to inform Language Access Plans for the region.

# QUARTER 1 IMPACT STORIES

## LIGHTHOUSE CHARITIES

Lighthouses Charities provides daily ESL classes that all clients must attend and are paid for during their work day. The classes are partially supported by UWSN's Language Access Program. These classes happen five days a week and are accessed by anyone who is on site.

Gisma is new to Lighthouse Charities and the ESL classes. She speaks Arabic but she does not read or write it. Ever since she began taking classes her confidence has grown. She is a very hard worker and we know she will one day move on to be a success!

## ASIAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Asian Community Development Council's (ACDC) medical providers and staff at the HAPI clinic are all bilingual in an Asian language. ACDC also utilizes the interpretation service provided by UWSN when clients cannot be served by staff in the language that they want to communicate in, this includes ASL.

An older gentleman whose first language is Vietnamese recently came to the clinic. Knowing this, we intentionally scheduled him with our Vietnamese provider. He was able to fill out the intake form and get his physical exam in Vietnamese.

He has now established care with us. His quality of life will improve significantly because he now can access medical care in a cultural competent and in language manner.