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Using Asset Mapping to Identify Health Needs of a Latinx Population in Rural Virginia

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Background

- Galax is a rural city in southwest Virginia that is more than 15% Latinx, a rarity in the Appalachian region (1).
- With the city ranking 130th out of 134 cities and counties in the state for health outcomes (2), an inquiry focused on identifying the health needs of Latinx in Galax was necessary to expand upon very limited data.

Aim

Asset mapping was conducted to identify community resources available for Latinx in Galax.

Methods

Design

- Kalpulli Research Group members underwent a CITI and asset mapping training prior to research activities.

Data collection

- Throughout the span of two days, three teams of 2-3 research team members were assigned predetermined geographical locations to assess through walking/windshield tours. Examining areas in this manner has been found to be effective in providing clues to community needs (3).
- Observations were collected using a standardized note taking form and with cameras. These included notes on:
 - Flyers and community materials
 - Observations of organizations and establishments in the area
 - Informal interviews with residents

Asset mapping is a powerful tool that helps research teams better understand community resources and strengths through information that is not widely available in secondary resources.

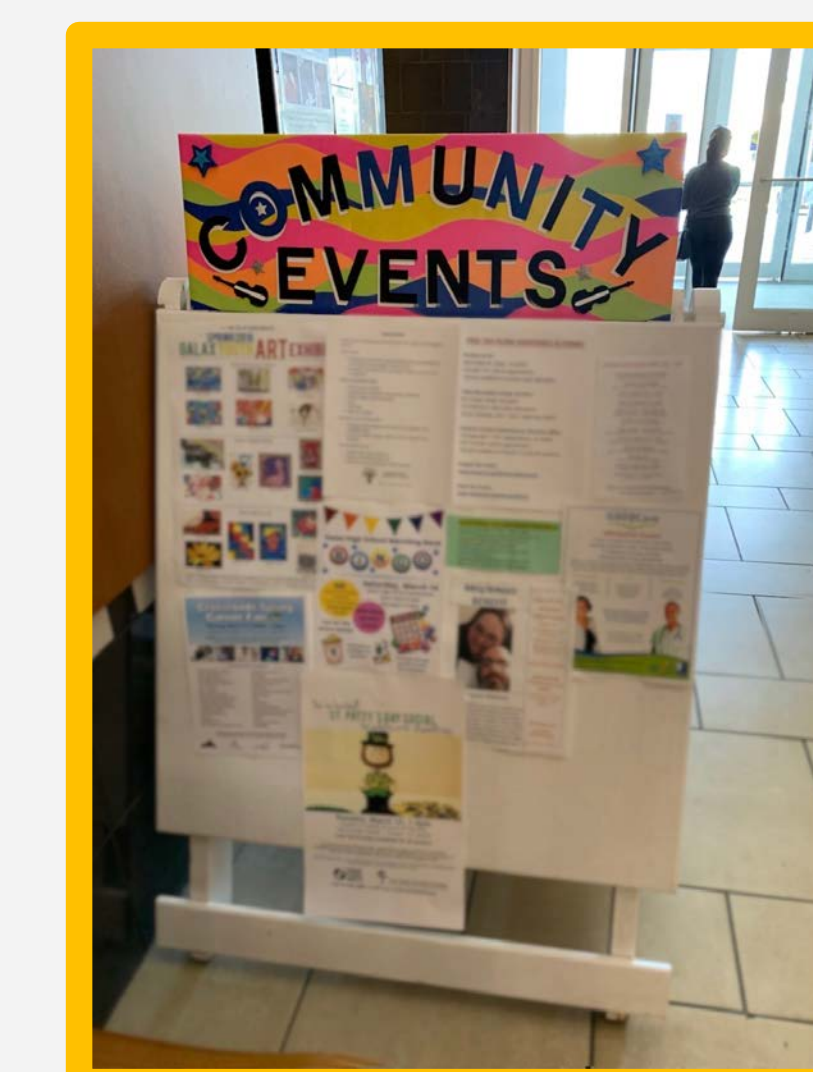
Results

Data collected from the asset mapping methods yielded a substantial amount of insights into which community resources are important to Latinx in Galax. The extensive qualitative data obtained was categorized in line with published participatory asset mapping strategies (4).



Businesses frequented by Latinx, such as tiendas and restaurants, were identified during windshield and walking tours.

Events and important services were extracted from tangible sources, such as fliers and posters. A breadth of information about health resources available in the area were also identified.



In-person observations documented in photos and notes provided data not available through secondary resources.

Conclusions

- The asset mapping approach allowed the team to make the most accurate assessment of key community resources and the essential health and social services in the region.
- As a result, the team was able to extract important contacts of key informants and set up interviews to further identify Latinx health needs.

Future Implications

- These findings support the use of community-based methods of research for identifying public health needs.
- This approach can be further used to mobilize a formal community advisory board with leaders across all sectors working to address the needs found in this inquiry.

Acknowledgments

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