



Rural Development • Community Programs • Community Facilities

AYUDA Receives Grant for Commercial Kitchen

The Adults and Youth United in Development Association, Inc. (AYUDA) is a bilingual, grass-roots, non-profit corporation founded in 1992 for the purpose of advancing and bettering the quality of life of El Paso County's low-income individuals and families. The organization accomplishes this by advocating for self-sufficiency and positive change through the building of stronger, healthier, civically-engaged communities; and providing direct services that are designed to eliminate the many obstacles to safe drinking water, affordable and decent housing, a quality education, a clean environment, and good health and nutrition.



Young people are taught how to work and grow their own food in AYUDA's community garden in San Elizario, El Paso County.

AYUDA had a need to develop projects related to healthy cooking and the promotion of good nutrition. The existing kitchen is inadequate in size and does not have the correct appliances for large-scale food preparation and cooking to satisfy the needs of the local community. To remain consistent with AYUDA's 5-year strategic plan of developing healthy cooking programs as well as nutritional curricula, they must build an adequate commercial kitchen.

USDA Rural Development awarded a \$50,000 Community Facilities Grant to AYUDA to assist with the renovation of the existing kitchen into a commercial kitchen. AYUDA will provide a local contribution in the amount of \$37,500. The completed commercial kitchen will be readily available as a training center and will also be utilized to cook and bake meals for members of the local community.

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"Learning about diet and healthy eating will empower our community to achieve a healthier well being," stated Olivia Figueroa, AYUDA Executive Director. "Healthy eating is the base of a healthy community."

Community Facilities funds are made available under the Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food (KYF2) initiative. KYF2 is an USDA-wide effort to strengthen local and regional food systems.

Obligation Amount: \$50,000 grant

Date of Obligation: March 2015

Congressional District: Representative Hurd, District 23; Senators Cornyn and Cruz

Partners: Adults and Youth United Development Association, Inc.

Demographics: San Elizario Population—13,603

Impact: Funds will be used to renovate an existing kitchen to a commercial kitchen to provide meal services and training to the residents of San Elizario and the surrounding area.