

CCATE X HEALTHSPARK Community Assembly Report



Executive *Summary*

In February 2026, Centro de Cultura, Arte, Trabajo y Educación (CCATE) and HealthSpark Foundation convened a Community Assembly to mark the one-year anniversary (January 27, 2025) since the first detention in Montgomery County. It also marks the first community meeting convened at CCATE, which brought together residents and representatives from all levels of government.

The Community Assembly was originally conceived by CCATE and brought to life through shared partnership, creating a space of community voice, healing, and collective care.

The assembly brought together community residents and neighbors, along with representatives from local, state, and federal government, public safety, education and higher education, mental health and social work, philanthropy, nonprofit organizations, and the medical field. We give our special thanks to Congresswoman Madeleine Dean and Carlos G. Obrador, Head of the Consulate of Mexico, Philadelphia for their presence at the event, who took the time to listen deeply to the conversation, which was grounded in lived experience, honesty, and urgency.

In preparation for the Community Assembly, CCATE and HealthSpark distributed a bilingual questionnaire in both English and Spanish to gather initial perspectives and to prompt reflection among attendees ahead of the assembly. The questionnaire invited community members to share their experiences, understanding of available resources, and perspectives on the challenges facing immigrant neighbors.

A total of 102 responses were collected – 51 in English and 51 in Spanish. These responses helped ground the dialogue in real-time community insight and prepped participants to arrive ready to engage more deeply in conversation.

Community Priorities & Shared Reflections

Through dialogue and reflection, several priorities emerged:

- **Legal Support and Protection:** There is an urgent need for accessible, trusted legal resources to support immigrant neighbors who are impacted and navigating complex or vulnerable situations.
- **Family Readiness:** Many shared that communities, families, and individuals are not adequately prepared to respond to both deportation threats and incidents. There is a need to create family readiness plans that prioritize safety and action in the event of challenges, especially for their children, recognizing that such situations often bring financial strains as individuals may be unable to work or engage in public activities.
- **Emotional Health:** The emotional toll remains significant. Feelings of fear, anxiety, and uncertainty continue to shape daily life, underscoring the importance of culturally responsive mental health support to mitigate the long-term effects of current events and engage in some form of healing.

Media Responsibility

Attendees named the powerful role of media in shaping narratives about immigrant communities, with a collective call for media to act with responsibility and care by:

- Sharing accurate, fact-based information
- Uplifting truthful, community-centered stories
- Avoiding narratives that cause harm or perpetuate fear

Telling the full and honest story of what communities are experiencing is essential to building understanding and accountability.

Centering Youth Voices

A key gap identified was the need to more intentionally center the voices of youth within our immigrant communities. While it is clear that young people are deeply impacted, there are limited spaces where they can safely share their experiences.

Creating opportunities for youth to speak, be heard, and shape solutions will be critical to building a more responsive and inclusive path forward.

Key Takeaways

- Immigrant neighbors are experiencing severe, ongoing impact, particularly in areas of safety, legal vulnerability, and emotional well-being.
- Community-centered spaces like the Community Assembly are essential for connection, healing, and collective problem-solving.
- Cross-sector partners have a shared responsibility to respond with care, coordination, and accountability.
- More intentional efforts are needed to center youth voices and experiences.

Next Steps

In alignment with what was shared, the following next steps will guide continued action:

- **Deepen Community Partnerships:** Continue building relationship with like-minded nonprofit and community-based organizations to strengthen coordinated support.
- **Create Space for Youth Dialogue:** Host dedicated conversations with youth to better understand their experiences and priorities.
- **Expand Emotional Health Resources:** Facilitate conversations, tools, and supports focused on mental health, healing, and managing anxiety.
- **Amplify Community Narratives:** Develop podcasts and storytelling platforms to share lived experiences, provide accurate information, and uplift community voices to undo the harm of negative media portrayals.
- **Encourage Civic Engagement:** Connect these issues to civic participation, including education and engagement in future election cycles.

The full report offers a deeper look into the experiences, priorities, and calls to action shared by community members. We encourage readers to engage with the report in full and consider the role they can play in responding with care, accountability, and commitment.

In partnership and solidarity,

The teams at CCATE and HealthSpark Foundation