

SAN AUGUSTINE COUNTY, TEXAS SOCIAL SERVICES NEEDS ASSESSMENT COMMUNITY PROFILE



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Introduction

San Augustine County is a rural county located in Deep East Texas. San Augustine County borders Sam Rayburn Reservoir, which is the largest lake that lies completely within Texas' boundaries. Sam Rayburn Reservoir, the Angelina River, Angelina National Forest, and Sabine National Forest offer many opportunities for recreation, especially camping, fishing and hunting. In addition to outdoor activities, San Augustine County has a rich history and several historical sites, including Mission Dolores, the Lewiston Hotel, the El Camino Real, and several historic homes and churches. All of these resources, combined with the friendly residents, contribute to San Augustine County's "small town" appeal. However, like many rural counties, San Augustine County has struggled with many social issues related to poverty, child abuse/neglect, health care, mental health and substance abuse. These issues are exacerbated by a variety of factors, including the local economy, limited services and resources, and geographical distances to services. The combination of these issues and factors has significantly impacted the county's ability to meet the economic, health and social needs of all its residents.

In late 2011, County Judge Samye Johnson contacted the School of Social Work to inquire about the possibility of conducting a county-wide needs assessment for San Augustine County. Dr. Emmerentie Oliphant took the lead on the project and began planning the approach, which included identifying potential partners. Given that child abuse was one of the key concerns identified by Judge Johnson, Ms. Becky Price-Mayo, Program Director for the School of Social Work's Child Welfare Professional Development Project (CWPDP), was recruited. Dr. Oliphant also recruited Dr. Darrel McDonald, a Professor of Geography who has extensive experience in working with census data and similar information in the context of GIS (geographic information systems). Dr. Steve Cooper, who teaches an undergraduate social work course on practice with organizations and communities (SWK 450), volunteered his class to conduct the preliminary assessment as a service learning project. Once the assessment team members were identified, Dr. Oliphant coordinated a series of meetings for the purpose of planning the needs assessment project. The end result was a needs assessment project consisting of three elements: 1) a preliminary needs assessment, 2) a county-wide survey to solicit information about social issues and conditions, and 3) GIS maps depicting census data and data collected from the county-wide survey.

The purpose of this document is to report on the results of the preliminary needs assessment, which was conducted by the students of SWK 450 during the spring 2012 semester. The first section of the needs assessment focuses on providing a profile of San Augustine County, as well as the Cities of San Augustine and Broadus. The profile discusses each of the following aspects of the community:

boundaries, demographics, economy, values and discrimination. The community profile is followed by discussions of the key social issues in the community: poverty, child abuse/neglect, health care, and behavioral health care. Finally, an overview of the health and human services that are available in the county is provided, along with a discussion of the county's strengths and assets.

Methodology

The primary purpose of the preliminary needs assessment was to collect information about the strengths/assets and areas of concern in San Augustine County, with the hope that the information would serve as a foundation for future data collection and intervention efforts. Given its purpose, the needs assessment is comprised of the following components:

- Community Profile
 - Community Overview (boundaries, demographics and economy)
 - Community Values
 - Recognizing Differences and Discrimination
- Social Issues
 - Poverty
 - Child Abuse/Neglect
 - Health Care
 - Behavioral Health Care
- Health and Human Services Profile
 - Existing Resources
 - Access to Resources
 - Control of Resources
- Strengths/Assets

Dr. Cooper split the twenty students into four groups of five students and assigned each group a specific component(s) of the needs assessment. The group assignments were as follows: group 1 (community overview), group 2 (poverty and child abuse/neglect), group 3 (health care and behavioral health care), and group 4 (health and human services profile). Each group reported on the strengths/assets relevant to their assigned topic. The students began the needs assessment process by interviewing key informants (government officials and service providers) and collecting available data, including census data, agency reports, and previous community assessments. The information gained from this process

informed a preliminary draft of the needs assessment and guided the generation of questions for the roundtable discussions.

One of the key sources of information for the needs assessment was the community forum, which was held in San Augustine County on March 2, 2012. The event was planned by Judge Johnson and her staff with assistance from Dr. Cooper, Dr. Oliphant and Ms. Price-Mayo. The first half of the event (morning) was dedicated to two roundtable sessions. The participants represented the various stakeholder groups in the community, including government officials, service providers and community members. It is important to note the underrepresentation of stakeholder groups who are directly impacted by the four key social issues. However, plans were made to solicit their input in later stages of the larger assessment project. The roundtable participants were organized into ten groups of 3 to 5 members and assigned to a table. Each table was assigned one topic per session. The topics were assigned based on the participants' area of expertise and experience. The students served as facilitators and met with two different roundtable groups. A schedule denoting the facilitator, topic, and participant assignments for both roundtable sessions is included in the Appendix. The afternoon session consisted of a research café that focused on collecting information about issues related to child welfare services, which will be reported on in a subsequent phase of the project.

After the roundtable sessions were completed, the students analyzed the information for common themes and drafted summary reports of their findings. The reports were reviewed and aggregated by Dr. Cooper, who then distributed the aggregated report to each group. Doing so ensured that each group had access to all of the information when completing their portion of the needs assessment. Each group then revised its report on the assigned component and submitted it to Dr. Cooper for review. Dr. Cooper compiled all of the information into the final report format and edited the report, which included a review of the students' data and analysis. The following sections present the results of this process.

Community Profile

Community Overview

Geographical and political boundaries. San Augustine County is located in a rural region of East Texas that is commonly referred to Deep East Texas. The county is comprised of 592.3 square miles (61.6 square miles of which is water) with a population density of 16.7 people per square mile (Texas Association of Counties [TAC], 2012; United States Census Bureau [USCB], 2012c). San Augustine County is bordered by the following: Shelby County (northern border), Sabine County (eastern border), Sam

Rayburn Reservoir (southern border) and Attoyac River (western border). San Augustine County is divided into 4 precincts, each of which is served by a County Commissioner, Justice of the Peace, and Constable. Residents of San Augustine County are represented by the following state and federal elected officials: Congressman Louie Gohmert (U. S. Congressional District 1), Senator Robert Nichols (Texas Senate District 3), Representative Wayne Christian (Texas House District 9), and Barbara Cargill (Texas State Board of Education District 8). Finally, San Augustine County is served by four independent school districts: Broaddus, Brookeland, Chireno and San Augustine.

Whereas there are many small communities in San Augustine County, only two of them are incorporated: San Augustine and Broaddus. The City of San Augustine is located in the northern end of the county, covers approximately 4.8 square miles, and is the most populated community. The City of Broaddus is located in the southwestern portion of the county and is within minutes of Sam Rayburn Reservoir. Broaddus covers approximately 0.4 square miles. Both cities are governed by a city council.

Demographics. San Augustine County has a population of approximately 8,865, with the City of San Augustine and the City of Broaddus consisting of 2,108 and 207, respectively (Texas State Data Center [TSDC], 2010; USCB, 2012a, 2012b). General descriptions of the demographic characteristics are provided in the following subsections. A more detailed description of the county's demographic characteristics will be provided by the GIS portion of the study, which will be reported on separately.

Race/ethnicity, sex, and age. In terms of race/ethnicity, the predominate group in the county is Caucasians (71.9%), followed by African Americans (22.7%), Hispanic (6.0%) Native Americans and Alaska Native (0.4%), and Asians (0/3%) (USCB, 2010i). The City of San Augustine's population consists of 1,092 African Americans (51.8%), 767 Caucasians (36.4%), 221 Hispanics (10.5%), 1 Native American/Alaska Native, 9 Asians, and 5 persons who self-identified as other (TSDC, 2010). The City of Broaddus' population is made up of 196 Caucasians, 6 Hispanics, and 1 person who self-identified as other (TSDC, 2010).

San Augustine County's population consists of 49.2% males and 50.8% females (USCB, 2010b). The number of males and females in the City of San Augustine is similar, 48.7% and 51.3%, respectively (USCB, 2010a). As for age, the county's population consists of more people 60 years of age or older than those 17 years of age or younger. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2010b), 30.8% of the population is 60 years of age or older and 16.6% of the population is 17 years of age or younger. The City of San Augustine's population is similar in that 25.9% of the population is 60 years or older and 15.6% of the population is 17 years of age or younger (USCB, 2010a).

Housing. The County of San Augustine has a total of 5,342 housing units with 67.9% occupied and 32.1% vacant (USCB, 2010e). Within the City of San Augustine there are 3,105 housing units, 74.6% of which are occupied (USCB, 2010d). The City of Broaddus has a total of 2,237 housing units, 67.9% of which are occupied (USCB, 2010c). The majority of San Augustine County's residents are homeowners. The U.S Census Bureau (2010e) reported 79.0% of the residents are homeowners compared to 21.0% renters. There are fewer homeowners in the City of San Augustine than the City of Broaddus. Specifically, 74.6% of San Augustine's residents are homeowners and 79% of the residents in Broaddus (USCB, 2010c, 2010d).

Employment and education. In San Augustine County, approximately 2,940 residents aged 16 years and older are employed (USCB, 2010h). Of those employed, 25.3% are in management, business, science, and arts related occupations, 20.2% are in sales and office occupations, 20.0% are in production, transportation, and material moving occupations, 17.6% are in service occupations, and 16.9% are in natural resources, construction, and maintenance (USCB, 2010h). The unemployment rate for the county is 10.5% (USCB, 2010h). As for education, of the 6,180 residents who are 25 years of age or older, 29.6% have less than a high school degree, 71.4% have a high school degree or higher, and only 11.9% have a bachelor degree or higher (USCB, 2010h).

Income. In the County of San Augustine, the average household income is \$39,983 and the most common range for household income is \$35,000 to 49,999 (USCB, 2010h). The average household income for the City of San Augustine is \$36,940 and the average household income for the City of Broaddus is \$46,573 (USCB, 2010f, 2010g). The most common household income range for the City of Broaddus is \$35,000 to \$49,999 and less than \$10,000 for the City of San Augustine (USCB, 2010f, 2010g).

Economy. According to the USCB (2010h), the major areas of employment are education, health and social services; manufacturing, agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting, and mining; retail trade; and construction. In fact, 23.7% of the workforce is employed in education, health and social services (USCB, 2010h). During the roundtable meetings, community officials identified the following as the key sectors of San Augustine County's economy: timber, poultry, health care, livestock, law enforcement, professional jobs, retail and currently open restaurants. They noted that locally owned businesses, such as antique stores, restaurants, and the Pinto Pony, are thriving and provide employment opportunities for local residents. The roundtable participants mentioned that the oil and gas industry has recently experienced notable growth. However, they were quick to report that overall, the local community members have received little to no benefit. For example, many of the new jobs

created by the growth are going to individuals from surrounding communities, such as Center, Nacogdoches, and Lufkin. They noted that even residents from Louisiana are obtaining employment in the area. They attributed this to the local residents' lack of skills, training and experience relevant to the open positions.

In addition to job skills and experience, the local economy has been impacted by a variety of factors, such as changes in the regional, state and national economies, as well as the agricultural industry. These changes have crippled industries that once prospered in San Augustine County (i.e., timber, forestry and agriculture). The local economy has also been affected by the recent drought, which has resulted in extremely low lake levels in Sam Rayburn and Toledo Bend Reservoirs. The tourism generated by the lakes, a key element of the county's economy, has recently decreased due to the low lake levels. According to a local fisherman, he and other fishermen cannot fish because of the low lake levels (roundtable participant, personal communication, March 2, 2012). Also, with the number of visitors decreasing, the local restaurants near the lakes are barely surviving. He also noted that some of the stores along the Angelina River (southern portion of the county) have not survived. Other roundtable participants reported that the low lake levels have made it difficult for local real estate agents to sell properties near the lakes.

Whereas the county's economy is able to meet the needs of some of the community members, many residents must travel outside the county to obtain employment, as well as necessary goods and services (S. Johnson, personal communication, February 13, 2012). Unfortunately, this is not a viable alternative for many of the residents, especially given the need for reliable transportation and the cost of fuel. Roundtable participants noted that those who are able to find work in the county may be underpaid, which they attributed to the amount of competition for local employment and the willingness of local residents to accept low wages in order to avoid commuting to a neighboring community. All of the aforementioned factors have contributed to the county's designation as economically disadvantaged. On a positive note, Judge Johnson is working with community members to obtain resources to strengthen the county's economy (J. Smith¹, personal communication, February 12, 2012). In fact, during the roundtable meetings, several participants talked about the importance of vocational training to resolving the high unemployment rate.

¹ This alias was assigned to the interviewee in response to his/her request for anonymity.

Community Values

Values. The predominant values identified in San Augustine County include strong family values, religion, education, outdoor recreation, and the importance of helping others in a time of need. The value of caring for and spending time with one's family members is important among residents, especially given that many families are multi-generational, with some including as many as four generations currently living in the county (S. Johnson, personal communication, February 13, 2012). As noted by roundtable participants, close family ties are valued across ethnic/racial groups (personal communications, March 2, 2012). Furthermore, participants noted that the elderly are highly respected and valued by family and community members. For example, they reported that many families in the county care for their elderly relatives in the home environment. One participant suggested that the high number of out-of-county residents in the local long-term care facilities is evidence of the community's commitment to the elderly relatives.

Many of the predominant values in the county are related to Christianity (J. Smith, personal communication, February 12, 2012). Judge Johnson noted that the importance of education and faith-based home environments are valued by most families in the community, regardless of race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status (personal communication, February 13, 2012). This point of view was supported by information from the roundtable participants, who noted that church affiliation and attendance is important to many community members (personal communications, March 2, 2012). Whereas there are clear racial lines among the various congregations, the shared Christian faith has recently encouraged the development of relationships among some of the predominately Caucasian and African-American Churches in the community (roundtable participant, personal communication, March 2, 2012).

The related value of helping others in their time of need is especially important to the residents of San Augustine County. According to a local elected official, community members will unite to help individuals and families during a time of crisis, regardless of race or ethnicity (roundtable participant, personal communication, March 2, 2012). The elected official provided the following example of an emergency situation encountered after moving to San Augustine County:

A two year child went missing and his family was not able to find him. Within a few hours, about 200 people from the community had showed up to help locate the child, all via word of mouth. Fortunately the child was found asleep under a bed in the family home.

Moreover, people often come together to assist others in a variety ways, including food drives, community service projects, and the Ministerial Alliance, as well as on an individual basis (J. Smith,

personal communication, February 12, 2012). J. Smith noted that San Augustine is a community built on the spirit of giving and helping, and each group within the community is willing to provide assistance to those in need (personal communication, February 12, 2012). Judge Johnson described the residents of San Augustine County as a wonderful group of people who enjoy helping one another (personal communication, February 13, 2012).

Additional values identified via interviews and roundtable discussions include: an overall concern for children; a belief that children should receive a positive education in a constructive learning environment; appreciation for the natural environment; and spending time together while engaging in outdoor activities, such as hunting and fishing.

Differences in values. The degree of diversity in the community is increasing, which is due in part to an influx of retirees from Houston and other areas (S. Johnson, personal communication, February 13, 2012). Whereas one might expect their values to differ from those of the long-term residents, overall there has been relatively little difference (roundtable participants, personal communication, March 2, 2012). However, there appears to be some distinct differences in values along the lines of race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status.

Several roundtable participants stated that some community members still believe in racial segregation (personal communications, March 2, 2012). They noted that such beliefs tend to be held by older members of the community who lived during the times of racial segregation. One roundtable participant spoke directly to this issue and noted that while there are not overt conflicts among racial groups, there is a separation among the races, which was attributed to long memories and old ties within the county (personal communication, March 2, 2012). The participant went on to state that this situation impacts the youth of the community. Specifically, the youth want to associate with one another and are coming together much more now than in years past. However, he feels that older members in the community strive to keep them apart. He believes that the situation could be improved by providing the youth with more opportunities to develop social relationships.

In terms of socioeconomic status, some roundtable participants noted that families who live in poverty may engage in behaviors that are typically viewed as unacceptable as a means of survival (personal communication March 2, 2012). The examples of such tended to focus on criminal activity, substance abuse, and manufacturing/distribution of illegal substances. Whereas there is most likely some degree of truth to these perceptions, additional data was not available to support them. It is also important to note that the majority of the roundtable participants were from middle or upper socioeconomic groups. Along these lines, some focus group participants pointed out that there are

distinct differences when comparing the “haves” to the “have nots” and that members of lower socioeconomic groups are treated differently as a result of their status. For example, several roundtable participants expressed a concern that the power to make decisions for the community was controlled by the “white old money” population and that the generational nature of poverty made it difficult to change the community’s power structure.

Giving and receiving help. Roundtable participants reported that members of the community are open to both giving and receiving assistance (personal communications, March 2, 2012). The most prominent means of assistance appears to be provided via churches. The roundtable participants tend to believe that the majority of community members are open to providing others with assistance, but there are barriers to doing so. For instance, the participants identified the lack of resources and limited information about the services that are available. It is important to note that several roundtable participants and key informants were of the opinion that older adults in the community tend to not be as open to receiving assistance. Judge Johnson attributes this reluctance to the expectation that family members will care for their elderly relatives (personal communication, February 13, 2012). However, she noted that many younger family members have left the community in search of employment and better schools. This has left some of the elderly members alone, living on a fixed income and unable to make ends meet. Whereas they are often eligible for assistance, they tend to be too embarrassed to inquire (S. Johnson, personal communication, February 13, 2012). These issues are compounded by the lack of transportation (public and personal), which makes it difficult to access services, especially services that are located outside the community.

Another roundtable participant felt that a lack of trust creates a barrier for some of the elderly African-Americans in the community. The participant offered the following example:

No one wants their business to be known until they trust you, so the disadvantaged poor will usually not ask for help. For example, there was an elderly African-American lady living in a house that was in bad shape, the ground could be seen through the floor. She would not sign the paper to get a new home because she did not trust anyone. Trust is an issue (personal communication, March 2, 2012).

The participant went on to say that some of the poverty within the community is so extreme that the poor are completely cut off from the community, which makes reaching out for help a difficult, if not impossible task.

Inclusion in community decision-making. When roundtable respondents were asked about the community’s degree of openness to involving all groups in the community decision-making process,

there were some noticeable differences in opinions. For example, one roundtable participant offered this comment:

Most of the community decisions are made by community members who come from the right family, with the right income... it is a clannish town model so you have to force yourself in (personal communication, March 2, 2012).

This point of view was reflected in other roundtable discussions and is consistent with some of the opinions reported on earlier in this section. On the other hand, several roundtable participants noted that the community is open to involving all community stakeholders in the process of making community decisions. In fact, there have been several recent creative endeavors to solicit community input in the decision-making process. One such endeavor is Judge Johnson's "Cobbler Tour," which she created as a means to engage people and listen to their concerns (S. Johnson, personal communication, February 13, 2012). Judge Johnson's husband bakes the cobblers and Blue Bell ice cream is added, providing the right mix of comfort food to open up dialogue with community members invited to the event (S. Johnson, personal communication, February 13, 2012). The first groups Judge Johnson met with were the Volunteer Fire Departments of San Augustine County and the plans for future events include area churches that are spread out across the county (S. Johnson, personal communication, February 13, 2012).

Recognizing and Embracing Differences

Discrimination and oppression. As indicated in the previous section, opinions about whether or not discrimination and oppression are present in the community vary widely. There are those who believe that the community is purposefully held back by certain members, who are willing to actively employ segregation and oppression in order to maintain their power and control. There are other members who believe that segregation is present in the community, but that it is a product of groups choosing to remain separate rather than active discrimination and oppression. This point of view is accompanied by a belief that the situation will correct itself as current and future generations become more accustomed to interaction with members of other racial/ethnic groups. Finally, there are others who believe that discrimination and oppression are not present in the community. Despite the variety of opinions on this issue, most of the roundtable participants agree that separation along racial/ethnic lines exists in San Augustine County. There appeared to be a general consensus that separation negatively impacts community members' efforts to meet their basic needs, participate in the larger community, and to work collaboratively to address community issues. For instance, a roundtable

participant noted that minorities and women often find it difficult to secure loans (personal communication, March 2, 2012).

Separation reportedly occurs along other lines, including gender, socioeconomic status, church membership, and resident status (e.g., “born here” vs. “moved here”). A notable number of roundtable participants reported the presence of separation and oppression based on gender (personal communications, March 2, 2013). Specifically, several participants stated that women tend to be viewed as having a lower social status than males. For example, one roundtable participant’s view is that the common perception of women is that they should be “barefoot, pregnant, and walk 6 feet behind their husband.” These views are believed to be a factor in the difficulties women experience when trying to participate in social and economic aspects of the community. Some of the roundtable participants noted that the stigma associated with being a single-mother tends to amplify these difficulties.

In terms of socioeconomic status, roundtable participants expressed an opinion that such differences are closely tied to respect, power, influence and decision-making (personal communications, March 2, 2012). For example, several participants noted that if you are in a formal position, such as an elected official, and you are not from the “right” group, you won’t be given the respect due to the position. Participants noted that this was typically the case, regardless of race/ethnicity and gender. Another roundtable participant reported that there are certain “old money” families who want to control the local economy so that they can control who and what is in the community. Several participants offered support for this statement and voiced concerns that community members of lower socioeconomic status do not have a voice in community decisions.

Embracing diversity. Whereas the information gathered from the interviews with community members and the roundtable discussions suggest the presence of discrimination and oppression, it is important to remain mindful of the positive aspects of this topic. Many of the roundtable participants expressed a belief that the community has the capacity to address the issues related to separation (personal communications, March 2, 2013). Furthermore, there appeared to be consensus that the community is “close knit” and that members are willing to cross the “lines.” Roundtable participants suggested that a recent interdenominational Bible conference, and other church-related and cultural initiatives, were evidence of such willingness. It is encouraging that many of the participants agreed that a substantial portion of the younger generation understands the importance of integration and will support efforts to address the issues. More importantly, more and more community members are coming to the realization that successfully addressing the issues faced by the county is dependent upon

cooperation among all stakeholder groups. The community leaders' willingness to seek outside assistance in conducting a needs assessment and ensure that all stakeholder groups have an opportunity to participate in the related data collection activities serves as evidence of progress toward inclusion.

Social Issues Profile

Poverty

Poverty is easily one of the greatest challenges faced by the residents of San Augustine County. The prevalence of poverty in San Augustine County is of particular concern because of its relationship with other issues. For instance, childhood poverty has been linked to a higher risk of mortality, greater vulnerability to medical conditions and disease, poor health behaviors, mental health issues, and child neglect/abuse. Approximately 27% of the county's population is living below the federal poverty line, which is substantially higher than the state average of 17% (USCB, 2012c). The following census data for the time period of 2006-2010 offers a detailed look at the percentage of community members whose income within the last 12 months has been below the federal poverty level (USCB, 2012a, 2012b):

- All people
 - All people- 27.2% (state average- 17%)
 - All people under 18 years of age- 40.5% (state average- 24.3%)
 - All people 18 years of age and older- 23.6% (state average- 14.3%)
 - All people 65 years of age and older- 24.4% (state average- 11.4%)
- All families
 - All families- 21.3% (state average- 13.2%)
 - All families with related children under 18 years of age- 34.4% (state average- 19.5%)
 - All families with related children under 5 years of age only- 35.8% (state average- 19.7%)
- Married couple families
 - All married couple families- 9.8% (state average- 7.5%)
 - All married couple families with related children under 18 years of age- 10.8% (state average- 10.9%)
 - All married couple families with related children under 5 years of age only- 14.3% (state average- 9.5%)
- Single-female headed families

- All single-female headed families- 59.9% (state average- 32.7%)
- All single-female headed families with related children under 18 years of age- 68.6% (state average- 40.8%)
- All single-female headed families with related children under 5 years of age only- 82.1% (state average- 46.1%)

The following census data on income provides additional insight regarding poverty (USCB, 2012a, 2012b):

- Median family income- \$41,398 (state- \$60,004)
- Median nonfamily income- \$16,087 (state- \$31,812)
- Median income for males (full-time year-round employment)- \$38,581 (state- \$43,473)
- Median income for females (full-time year-round employment)- \$23,906 (state- \$34,742)
- Per capita income for the county- \$17,510 (state- \$25,548)

It is important to remain mindful that the above rates do not include those who fall above the poverty line, but whose income does not allow them to meet their basic needs. It is extremely likely that a greater percentage of the population is impacted by poverty. For example, during the 2009-2010 school year, 93.9% of the children in the county were eligible for the federal free/reduced price lunch (Annie E. Casey Foundation [AECF], 2012). In order to be eligible for this program, a child's family income must fall below 130% of the federal poverty line (free lunches) or between 130% and 185% (reduced lunches).

As mentioned in the community profile, poverty is largely related to a long-term decline in the local economy. For instance, the unemployment rate has steadily increased between 2006 and 2011: 2006- 6.3%, 2007- 5.5%, 2008- 6.4%, 2009- 10.2%, 2010- 11.1%, and 2011- 12.4% (AECF, 2012; TAC, 2012). Since 2009, the unemployment rate has exceeded the state average. The lack of employment opportunities in San Augustine County forces many community members to seek employment in neighboring counties. However, the expenses associated with traveling for work are prohibitive for many residents (e.g., fuel and vehicle maintenance). Another important factor is the lack of vocational/technical/employment related training. In most cases, residents must travel to Shelby, Nacogdoches, or Angelina County to access vocational/technical training and higher education.

Although many of San Augustine County's residents are eligible for various public assistance programs, there are limited services and resources in the community to assist residents who live in poverty. For example, WIC services (Women, Infants and Children Program) are provided by the Jasper County WIC office, which offers services in San Augustine County one day per week. According to a roundtable participant, many of the eligible recipients face transportation-related challenges that make

it difficult for them to keep their appointments (personal communication, March 2, 2012). Such difficulties are exacerbated by the lack of local public transportation. Despite these barriers, a substantial percentage of children in San Augustine County receive WIC (60.1%) and SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) is used by 38.8% of the children (AECF, 2012). It is important to note that most of the health and human services designed to address poverty are located in another community, which creates barriers that are similar to those faced by residents who must travel to another community for employment.

Child Abuse/Neglect

According to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS), there are 6,663,942 children under the age of 18 residing in the State of Texas (2012). During 2011, 76,895 of the allegations of child abuse/neglect made in Texas were confirmed (TDFPS, 2012). The confirmed allegations involved a total of 65,948 victims, which is less than 1% of the children in Texas (TDFPS, 2012). The largest number of allegations involved children between the ages of 1 and 3 (16,355), which was closely followed by children ages 4 to 6 (13,386) (TDFPS, 2012). In terms of ethnicity, African Americans continue to be disproportionately represented. Whereas African American children account for 12.1% of the children in Texas, they constitute 20.4% of the confirmed victims of child abuse/neglect, 26.2% of the children removed from their home, and 20.7% of the children opened for services (TDFPS, 2012).

San Augustine County is located in the northern portion of TDFPS Region 5. There are 182,115 children under the age of 18 in Region 5 (TDFPS, 2012). In 2011, 6,643 investigations of alleged child abuse/neglect were conducted in Region 5 and 2,168 cases were confirmed (TDFPS, 2012). In 2011, 79 reports of abuse/neglect in San Augustine County were made to TDFPS, 63 of which were assigned for investigation (TDFPS, 2012). The statistics for TDFPS investigations completed in San Augustine County during 2011 are as follows (TDFPS, 2012):

- Number of alleged victims of child abuse/neglect- 106
- Number of alleged victims in unconfirmed investigations- 80 (57 of these were ruled out by investigation)
- Number of alleged victims who received services- 15
- Number of alleged victims who were not provided services- 91
- Number of children removed from the home- 1

Whereas the number of reported incidents appears to be relatively low, one must keep in mind that the number of children under the age of 18 who reside in San Augustine County is 1,866 (USCB, 2010e). Assuming that each of the 106 reports made in 2011 involved different children, 5.6% of the county's children were allegedly exposed to child abuse/neglect and 1.34% were abused/neglected. When considering this information, one should be mindful of the fact that it only reflects incidents that were reported.

Whereas TDFPS's annual report was informative, it did not provide detailed information at the county level. In order to better understand the issue, input was sought from those who are knowledgeable about child protective services in East Texas and San Augustine County. The majority of the child abuse cases in San Augustine County involve Caucasian children who are 13 years of age or younger and live in poverty (S. Holman, personal communication, March 2, 2012). One of the common perceptions among TDFPS employees that 90% or more of the child neglect/abuse cases in East Texas involves parental substance abuse (B. Price-Mayo, personal communication, February 6, 2012). The roundtable discussions, which included TDFPS employees and law enforcement officials, supported this perception and revealed that the majority of reported cases of child abuse/neglect involve physical abuse (personal communications, March 2, 2012). It also became apparent that poverty is perceived as a contributing factor. Several of the roundtable participants noted that many of the families involved with TDFPS have a generational history of the poverty and child abuse/neglect (personal communications, March 2, 2012). Other contributing factors that were identified include substance abuse, domestic violence, criminal activity, unemployment, lack of support, and limited parenting skills.

When asked for their opinions about the relatively low occurrence rates, the child welfare and law enforcement professionals agreed that the rates are low because child abuse/neglect is underreported (roundtable participants, personal communications, March 2, 2012). Some roundtable participants attributed underreporting to the commonly held perception that child and adult protective services are either unwilling and/or incapable of addressing the situation (personal communications, March 2, 2012). Others suggested that the physical absence of protective services in the county contributes to the community's perception that services are completely unavailable (personal communications, March 2, 2012). Roundtable participants also believe that the larger community is undereducated about the issue and unaware of its prevalence in the county. They suggested engaging in efforts to educate the community about recognizing, preventing and overcoming child abuse. They also felt that increasing access to services would be beneficial. TDFPS does not maintain an office in San Augustine County. Rather, services are provided from Lufkin, which is approximately 45 miles west of

the City of San Augustine. CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) services are provided from Nacogdoches, which is approximately 35 miles west of the City of San Augustine. As noted in previous sections, the distance to services is troublesome for many families, especially those who do not have access to reliable transportation. Furthermore, many of the related support services, such as counseling and parenting classes, are not available in the local community. Although the larger community's awareness of the child abuse/neglect needs to be heightened, it is important to note that the community leaders' concerns about child abuse/neglect was one of the key factors in the decision to seek assistance with the county needs assessment.

Health Care

San Augustine County is served by Memorial Medical Center of San Augustine (MMCSA), an 18 bed acute care hospital that is certified as critical care access hospital. The hospital is one of four hospitals that comprise the Memorial Health System of East Texas (MHSET), a private not-for-profit entity that is major health care provider in East Texas. The hospital provides emergency care, diagnostic testing (MRI, CT and digital mammography), and dialysis. San Augustine also has three rehabilitation centers: Twin Lakes Care Center, Trinity Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, and Colonial Pines Healthcare. Twin Lakes Care Center is a 90 bed for-profit facility that has been serving families since 1985 (CiteHealth, 2012). Trinity Nursing and Rehabilitation Center is an 88 bed for-profit facility that was established in 1991 (CiteHealth, 2012). Colonial Pines Healthcare is a 107 bed for-profit facility that was established in 1991 (CiteHealth, 2012). Finally, there are four primary care physicians in San Augustine County (Piney Woods Area Health Education Center [PWAHEC], 2010). Despite the presence of medical services, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) designated San Augustine County as a Medically Underserved Area (MUA) and a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) for primary medical care, dental care, and mental health care. Given the "graying" of the county's population, difficulties related to attracting professional health care service providers are expected to continue (PWAHEC, 2010).

Memorial Medical Center of San Augustine is the primary provider of health care services. Although the hospital offers emergency and diagnostic services, individuals who need surgery, treatment for complicated or chronic health issues, and/or specialized medical services are typically referred to Lufkin or Nacogdoches. Depending on the type of services, residents may have to travel to Dallas, Houston, Tyler or Shreveport (Louisiana). In emergent situations, patients may be transported to another facility via ambulance or helicopter (Life Flight). As noted on several occasions, the distance to

such locations can present a significant barrier to residents. The impact of geographical distance is exacerbated by the lack of public transportation and the costs associated with private transportation (i.e., fuel, maintenance). Most of the roundtable participants expressed a desire to see more health care services offered in San Augustine County (personal communication, March 2, 2012).

Another barrier to receiving health care services is the lack of health insurance. According to the County Health Rankings and Roadmaps Program (CHRRP), approximately 25% of the population does not have health insurance (2012). In 2008, 29.1% of adults ages 18 to 64 were uninsured (AECF, 2012). For the same year, 15.4% of all children in the county were uninsured and 16.9% of the children at or below 200% of the federal poverty line were uninsured (AECF, 2012). In 2009, 25.2% of the residents (ages 0-64) and 16.5% of the children (ages 0-17) were uninsured (Texas Department of State Health Services [TDSHS], 2012). These rates were consistent with those for the State of Texas for the same year, 26.3% and 16.2%, respectively (TDSHS, 2012). In 2010, 5.4% of the children in San Augustine County were enrolled in CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Plan) and 46.1% were enrolled in Medicaid (AECF, 2012). Given that individuals typically either rely on employment for health insurance or a salary that allows them to purchase it independently, the lack of health insurance is directly related to unemployment, underemployment, and poverty.

The combination of poverty and barriers to accessing health care services (e.g., lack of health care insurance, inability to pay for healthcare services out of pocket and distance to services) is a substantial concern. Residents who are unable to access health care services are more likely to forgo preventative care, which often results in a treatable condition becoming more difficult or impossible to treat. As a result, higher rates of heart disease, diabetes, and similar and/or related conditions are typical among members of this population. As previously noted, approximately 27% of the county's population lives below the federal poverty line and 25% is without health insurance (CHRRP, 2012; USCB, 2012c). It is reasonable to assume that these factors contribute to the number of deaths due to heart disease and cancer (all forms combined), both of which are higher than those for the State of Texas (TDSHS, 2012). The county's hospital admission rates for bacterial pneumonia, dehydration, urinary tract infections, high blood pressure, and adult asthma are also higher than the rates for the State of Texas (TDSHS, 2007). It is also important to remain mindful of the many groups, in addition to those who live in poverty, who face unique challenges to accessing health care services. Such groups include, but are not limited to the elderly, veterans, and children.

The use of the emergency room for acquiring prescription medications was one of the most common concerns raised by the roundtable participants (personal communications, March 2, 2012).

Specifically, they reported that the doctors' rotation schedule makes it easy for patients to "doctor hop" for prescription medications. This issue is also exacerbated by the lack of a permanent hospital staff (doctors typically rotate from Lufkin), loose insurance guidelines for prescribing medication, and lack of substance abuse services. In fact, most of the roundtable participants cited substance abuse as a substantial long-term problem in the community (substance abuse will be discussed further in the following section on behavioral health care).

Behavioral Health Care

Residents of San Augustine County face a number of challenges related to behavioral health care, which includes mental health and substance abuse services. The primary concern of residents is the absence of mental health care services. San Augustine County is one of twelve counties served by the Burke Center, a Local Mental Health Authority (LMHA) and provider. Burke Center serves as the gatekeeper for state funded community mental health services and the state hospital system, including Rusk State Hospital. Residents of San Augustine County who meet the eligibility criteria for state funded community mental health services through Burke Center must travel to Lufkin (adults) or Nacogdoches (children and adolescents) to access those services. Residents who are in need of short-term inpatient psychiatric stabilization services may seek assistance from Burke Center's MHEC (Mental Health Emergency Center) in Lufkin. Aside from the MHEC and Rusk State Hospital, all inpatient mental health facilities are located in communities outside the region (i.e., Houston, Beaumont, Tyler, Dallas, and Shreveport). In terms of substance abuse services, ADACDET (Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council of Deep East Texas) provides some education-based interventions in San Augustine County (i.e., alcohol education classes for DWI offenders). However, ADACDET's main office is located in Lufkin and they do not maintain a permanent presence in San Augustine County. Options for outpatient substance abuse services in the county and region are extremely limited and inpatient services are nonexistent. Residents must travel to Houston, Beaumont, Dallas or Shreveport to access inpatient substance abuse services. It is important to note that the absence of behavioral health care services in San Augustine County and the East Texas Region are largely due to substantial and systematic cuts in related state funds over the last 15 years.

The lack of behavioral health care services is an important issue in San Augustine County, especially given the prevalence of mental health, substance abuse, and related issues. For instance, TDSHS (2007) estimated that one out of every seventeen individuals in San Augustine County had a serious mental illness, which is defined as major depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, obsessive

compulsive disorder, panic disorder, post traumatic disorder and borderline personality disorder. TDSHS also reported that mental illness affects one in five families in East Texas (2007). In terms of substance abuse, it was estimated that 553 residents of San Augustine County needed treatment for alcohol use, but were not receiving treatment (TDSHS, 2007). It was also estimated that 185 county residents needed treatment for illicit drug use, but were not receiving treatment (TDSHS, 2007).

The barriers to accessing mental health and substance abuse services are similar to those that interfere with access to health care services. Many of the residents who have a mental health and/or substance abuse disorder are not eligible for state funded services due to the narrow eligibility criteria. More importantly, those who are not eligible for these services are typically unable to pay out-of-pocket for services. Of those residents who are eligible for state funded mental health services, a substantial number are unable to access services due to limited availability and the distance to services. Other barriers to accessing services include: health care providers' lack of knowledge of mental health issues, lack of transportation to services, geographical distance to services, and community members' limited understanding of behavioral health issues. For the most part, barriers to accessing health care services also apply to behavioral health care services.

Whereas most of, if not all, the members who are challenged by mental health and/or substance abuse disorders find it difficult to access services, there are several subgroups that experience a greater degree of difficulty. Military veterans must travel to Lufkin for outpatient mental health treatment. Elderly residents also find it difficult to access behavioral health services due to the previously mentioned barriers, which are typically exacerbated by the lack of a payer source (funds and insurance) and their ability to travel to services. Elderly community members who reside in a long-term care facility typically have access to counseling services, but still have limited access to psychiatric services (i.e., psychotropic medications) and inpatient mental health treatment. Finally, children and adolescents tend to have limited access to behavioral health care services. Untreated mental health issues among children and adolescents can increase the likelihood of academic issues, involvement with the criminal justice system and substance abuse.

The roundtable participants perceive substance abuse as a major community issue (personal communications, March 2, 2012). As previously noted, substance abuse is reportedly a factor in the majority of the county's child abuse cases. Roundtable participants reported that substance abuse issues are often misdiagnosed as mental illness and incorrectly treated with medications (personal communications, March 2, 2012). In fact, they noted a clear link between this issue and "doctor hopping", which was discussed earlier in the report. Roundtable participants felt that offering

outpatient mental health and substance abuse services in the county would be extremely helpful in addressing their concerns (personal communications, March 2, 2012). They also noted the need for anger management related services in the county.

Health and Human Services Profile

Existing Resources

As mentioned throughout the report, there are very few health and human services providers physically located San Augustine County. More often than not, residents must travel to neighboring communities, such as Nacogdoches and Lufkin to access services. Most of the services, whether located in the county or an adjacent county, are limited and unable to adequately address the needs of the county. An overview of the health and human services in San Augustine County follows.

Poverty and housing. As previously noted, poverty is one of the key social issues in San Augustine County. The county is located in Region 5 of the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (THHSC), which is responsible for administering Medicaid, CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Program), Texas Women's Health Program, TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families), and SNAP (Supplementation Nutrition Assistance Program). Residents who are eligible for these services must either apply online or travel to Nacogdoches or Hemphill. It is important to note that many families do not have access to a computer and/or internet and many areas of the county are limited to dial up internet services. Whereas there is a WIC (Women, Infants, and Children nutrition program) Office in the City of San Augustine, it is only staffed two days per week.

Residents may be eligible for assistance from Tri-County Community Action, which offers assistance with utility bills, food, shelter, and clothing. They also provide residential weatherization services. Assistance is also available from Care and Share, a local non-profit program that provides food and clothing. Care and Share is primarily supported by local churches and grants. Other resources for assistance with food include the Senior Nutrition program that provides meals for the elderly Monday through Friday and the local Catholic Church, which provides fresh vegetables on a monthly basis.

In terms of housing, the San Augustine Housing Authority operates an apartment complex with 72 units, including 1, 2, 3, and 4 bedroom apartments. Interestingly, their complex has approximately 20 units open and no waiting list. The staff attributed this to the county's economic situation (San Augustine County Housing Authority staff, personal communication, January 9, 2013). Specifically, many of the families who need housing assistance are unable to afford their portion of the rent. The county

also has an assisted living facility and a privately owned and operated housing facility for senior citizens. Section 8 housing is available through the Deep East Texas Council of Governments (DETCOG).

Employment. As for assistance with employment, the county is served by Workforce Solutions of Deep East Texas (WSDet), an entity that operates under the auspices of Texas Workforce Solutions. WSDet serves the twelve county region that is commonly referred to as Deep East Texas. Whereas San Augustine County is included in this region, WSDet does not have a physical presence in the county. Residents of the county must travel to Center (Shelby County), which is approximately 20 miles north of the City of San Augustine and approximately 38 miles north of the City of Broaddus. In some cases, it would be closer for residents to travel to the Nacogdoches or Lufkin office. Additional employment related assistance is available via the San Augustine Community Center, which offers Job Corps Orientations and computer access for job searches. According to Judge Johnson, the community center is heavily utilized (personal communication, March 2, 2012). However, she also noted that many residents end up traveling to Center, Lufkin, and Nacogdoches for employment related assistance. Several roundtable participants echoed this and added that jobs are available in the community, but many residents lack the necessary experience and/or education (personal communications, March 2, 2012). The most common examples given were jobs in the oil industry. As previously noted, there are limited opportunities for vocational/technical training and higher education in San Augustine County.

Education. Primary and secondary education services are provided primarily by Broaddus Independent School District (BISD) and San Augustine Independent School District (SAISD). Broaddus ISD had a total of 474 students during the 2011-2012 academic year, 81.6% of which are identified as economically disadvantaged (Texas Education Agency [TEA], 2012a). Economically disadvantaged students are those who are eligible for the federal free/reduced lunch program. As noted earlier, a child's family income must fall below 130% of the federal poverty line (free lunches) or between 130% and 185% (reduced lunches). For the same academic year, 65% of the tenth and eleventh grade students passed TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills), with less than 1% of them earning commended status (TEA, 2012a). However, the 2011-2012 pass rate for the exit level TAKS was 97% (TEA, 2012a). The Class of 2011 had a 96.7% graduation rate and 3.3% dropout rate (TEA, 2012a). The following statistics for the 2011 class speak to their readiness for higher education: 22.2% completed dual credit courses, 0% tested for AP courses, 41% met the TSI (Texas Success Initiative) criterion for English and language arts readiness, 31% met the TSI criterion for mathematics readiness, and 44% of the students were deemed ready for college in both English language arts and mathematics (TEA, 2012a).

San Augustine ISD had a total of 839 students during the 2011-2012 academic year, 92% of which are identified as economically disadvantaged (TEA, 2012b). For the same academic year, 66% of the tenth and eleventh grade students passed the TAKS test, with 1% of them earning commended status (TEA, 2012b). However, the 2011-2012 pass rate for the exit level TAKS was 87% (TEA, 2012b). The Class of 2011 had a 90.6% graduation rate and 7.5% dropout rate (TEA, 2012b). The following statistics for the 2011 class speak to their readiness for higher education: 22% completed dual credit courses, 0% tested for AP courses, 49% met the TSI criterion for English and language arts readiness, 63% met the TSI criterion for mathematics readiness, and 21% of the students were deemed ready for college in both English language arts and mathematics (TEA, 2012b).

In addition to the school districts, there are several education related programs in San Augustine County, including:

- Head Start is offered via Tri-County Community Action, Inc.
- Project Hope- This is a faith-based program that provides mentors who serve as role models for youth and their parents. The role models focus on goal setting and community involvement.
- College "GP" Center- This program is operated by Project Hope at the San Augustine Community Center. It provides GED and ESL classes, some college courses through Angelina College, online tutoring, afterschool tutoring and test preparation.
- Brothers in God (BIG)- This is an afterschool mentoring program that helps with homework and provides structured activities.
- Sabine Valley Association- This organization provides a \$1000 per semester scholarship to church involved students. However, there is low participation.
- African-American Society- This organization offers scholarships.

Whereas there are several resources related to education, higher education and vocational/technical training facilities are noticeably absent and access to such is limited by a variety of barriers, including college readiness, finances and geographical distance.

Child abuse/neglect. TDFPS is responsible for investigating reports of child abuse/neglect and intervening in confirmed cases. As previously discussed, San Augustine County is part of TDFPS's Region 5, which includes the Deep East Texas region and extends south to Beaumont. TDFPS does not maintain a physical presence in San Augustine County; rather they serve the county from their offices in Nacogdoches and Angelina Counties. In most cases, TDFPS clients must travel to Nacogdoches for related services, such as parenting and mental health services. Whereas TDFPS assists with

transportation to such services, the lack of local services is a significant barrier for families. It is important to note that San Augustine County does have an active Child Welfare Board, which works closely with the TDFPS workers who are assigned to San Augustine County. In fact, the Child Welfare Board took an active role in planning and implementing several key activities related to the county needs assessment project.

Children who are involved with TDFPS also have access to CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) services via CASA of Deep East Texas (CASADET), which is located in Nacogdoches. CASA volunteers are trained to work with children who have active cases with TDFPS. Specifically, the CASA volunteer is responsible for serving as an advocate for the child's best interest throughout the process, including court proceedings. Although these services are invaluable, they are most likely difficult to provide from a distance. It is reasonable to assume recipients of such services would benefit from a local presence.

A related resource is a CAC (Child Advocacy Center), which offers services for children who have been physically and/or sexually abused. They commonly offer forensic interviewing and a variety of related services that are coordinated by a multi-disciplinary team (MDT). San Augustine County does not appear to be directly served by a CAC, but there are at least two CACs in the region: Harold's House (Angelina Alliance for Children) in Lufkin (serves Angelina and Nacogdoches Counties) and Shelby County Children's Advocacy Center in Center.

Survivors of domestic violence, including women, men, and children, may receive assistance from the Family Crisis Center of East Texas. They provide a variety of services, including shelter, counseling, and crime victim's assistance. However, they do not maintain a physical presence in San Augustine County. Their closest facilities are located in Nacogdoches and Lufkin.

Health care. One of the primary resources for health care services in San Augustine County is Memorial Medical Center of San Augustine. This facility first opened as San Augustine Memorial Hospital in 1948 and was the community's first hospital. It later became part of the San Augustine City-County Hospital District (1971) and was expanded in 1976 and 1991. The 1991 expansion included the addition of a rural health clinic, which was the first of its kind in the State of Texas. In 1996 the hospital district contracted with Memorial Health System of East Texas to operate the facility, which included changing the facility's name to Memorial Medical Center of San Augustine. The change in management was followed by substantial renovations and expansion in 1998, updated imaging equipment (MIR, CT, and X-Ray) in 2007, and opening a ten bed dialysis clinic in 2009. The emergency room is equipped to handle small emergencies, but patients with life threatening injuries are transferred to the nearest

hospital with advanced services via life-flight (helicopter). Admissions to the MMCSA are limited to patients with non-life threatening issues. Surgeries are not performed at the hospital and babies are not delivered at the hospital, unless it is an emergency. However, emergency deliveries do not include C-sections.

As previously noted, the hospital operates a rural health clinic in the City of San Augustine. Three additional family clinics/practices are present in the community: Oglesbee Family Clinic, San Augustine Family Practice and Haley Family Clinic. Access to specialized medical services in the local community is extremely limited. In terms of residential care for the elderly, there are three long-term care facilities in the City of San Augustine and one assisted living center. Residents who experience difficulty in accessing services can seek assistance from ETHAN (East Texas Health Access Network). Their staff are available once a week in San Augustine County and can work with individuals and families to identify needs and relevant resources.

Whereas there are health care services in San Augustine County, many health related services are noticeably missing. For example, THHSC does not maintain a facility in the community (roundtable participants, personal communications, March 2, 2012). Several roundtable participants noted the absence of THHSC limits the availability of information about services related to health care, public assistance, education, housing and employment. For instance, many Medicaid recipients rely on their health care providers and/or other community members for information about changes in procedures and coverage. Given the recent changes in Texas Medicaid and the subsequent issues, the lack of information could be detrimental to clients. As discussed earlier in the report, residents who need specialized health care services for serious and/or chronic health issues typically have to travel to Nacogdoches, Lufkin, Houston, Beaumont, Tyler, Dallas or Shreveport to access services.

Behavioral health care. Burke Center is the LMHA for the Deep East Texas Region, including San Augustine County, and is the primary provider of behavioral health care services for the county. In response to cuts in state funds for mental health services, Burke Center has centralized most of its services in Nacogdoches, Lufkin, and Livingston and maintains a limited number of facilities in outlying counties. They do not operate a facility in San Augustine County; rather residents must travel to Nacogdoches (children and adolescents) or Lufkin (adults) for mental health care services. Whereas Burke Center works with local physicians and providers to meet their clients' needs, they are unable to serve all of the residents who have a mental health issue. Those who are unable to access Burke Center's services are left to pay out-of-pocket for private mental health care services. Unfortunately,

such services tend to be expensive and there are a limited number of private mental health care providers in the county. Furthermore, there are no psychiatrists in San Augustine County.

Other than the services provided by ADACDET, there are no substance abuse treatment services in San Augustine County. ADACDET does offer some services in San Augustine County, but in most cases, clients must travel to Lufkin for services. The closest inpatient substance abuse treatment center is located in Beaumont, Texas. More importantly, state funds for substance abuse prevention, early intervention, and treatment are extremely limited and expected to be reduced further during the next legislative session.

Additional Resources. There are several important resources in the county that do not fit in the previous categories. San Augustine County has a Veterans Services Office, which is open two days per week. The office serves approximately 900 veterans. However, veterans who need health care and/or mental health care services must travel to Lufkin, Houston or Shreveport. The local Lions Club provides assistance for annual eye exams, prescription eye glasses, and prescription medication. The San Augustine Rotary Club offers mentoring for students enrolled in San Augustine ISD. Another organization that focuses on community service is Go Texans, a group that holds fundraisers throughout the year to support college scholarships for students in San Augustine. Finally, it is important to mention Boys and Girls Club, which serves approximately 300 to 400 children between the ages of 7 and 18. They offer a summer program, after school program, tutoring and advocacy for higher education. Although the Boys and Girls Club provides its services at minimal cost to families, the services are reportedly underutilized (roundtable participants, personal communications, March 2, 2012). It is possible that the underutilization is due to the widespread poverty in the county.

Access to Resources

Accessing resources in San Augustine County is problematic. First of all, the availability of health and human services in the county is extremely limited. As noted earlier, San Augustine County is designated as Medically Underserved Area (MUA) and as a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) for primary medical care, mental health care, and dental care. In instances where services are located outside the county, residents face barriers related to transportation. Those who have access to reliable transportation may not be able to afford the fuel and vehicle maintenance costs associated with traveling to services. Given the absence of public transportation, those who do not have access to reliable transportation must depend on family and friends. Whereas occasional assistance from family

and friends may not be an issue, it will most likely present a challenge for those who need transportation on a regular basis.

Several roundtable participants identified the lack of information about services as a barrier to access (personal communications, March 2, 2012). For example, participants noted that residents are not always aware of the available resources. The lack of information is contributed, at least in part, to limited communication among service providers and community officials. In fact, several participants expressed a concern that some members of the community's power structure deliberately limited information about services as a means of maintaining control. Another barrier to accessing information is the limited availability of internet access. This is especially important given the amount of information that is available online and the trend of shifting from face-to-face and telephone to online applications for assistance. Suggestions for remedying the communications issues focused on creating a network of service providers, which could serve as a vehicle for sharing information among providers and with the general public. Several participants noted the importance of churches in disseminating information and suggested that they be included in the network.

Another concern raised during the roundtable discussions is that the lack of resources is a product of an unwillingness of residents and officials to admit that the county is facing substantial issues and needs assistance from outside entities (personal communication, March 2, 2012). It appears that the unwillingness is driven by a resistance to trusting "outsiders" and asking for assistance. Other roundtable participants voiced concerns that some community members and officials tend to place their own interests before the best interests of the community. For example, participants pointed to school officials' emphasis on athletics, despite the overwhelming evidence that students are not being adequately prepared for employment and higher education. Other participants attributed the issues to the lack of involvement or engagement of community members, as evidenced by the low number of community volunteers.

In terms of resources that are noticeably missing from the community, the majority of health and human services are located outside the county. Given that the absence of these services has already been addressed, the focus here is on other resources. Participants placed as much or more importance on the lack of employment opportunities (personal communications, March 2, 2012). Specifically, San Augustine County is unable to meet the residents' need for jobs that pay a living wage and residents have limited access to vocational/technical training and higher education. It is reasonable to assume that the employment and education issues are directly related to the prevalence of poverty in San Augustine County. Another common comment was in reference to the absence of recreational

activities (roundtable participants, personal communications, March 2, 2012). Participants expressed a desire to see entertainment venues in the community (e.g., movie theatre and bowling alley) and more opportunities for youth and families to engage in extracurricular and social activities. A common perception among participants was that an increase in healthy activities for youth would be followed by a decrease in juvenile delinquency, teen age pregnancy and substance abuse.

Strengths and Assets

Although San Augustine County faces many challenges, its residents, leaders, service providers, organizations and communities possess numerous strengths that can be employed to improve the overall quality of life. For example, San Augustine County takes a great deal of pride in their rich history, including their many historical landmarks. The county is genuinely committed to preserving its history, as evidenced by efforts to restore and preserve landmarks and to develop avenues for heritage tourism. Such efforts are capable of generating much needed jobs and revenue for the local communities. Opportunities for tourism and recreation also lie in the county's natural resources, including Sam Rayburn Reservoir, Angelina National Forest and other such attractions.

A common theme that was evident throughout the roundtable sessions and interviews is the importance of relationships. Despite the varying opinions about the presence of oppression and discrimination in the county, most participants agreed that residents are willing to put their differences aside and help one another in times of need. Along these lines, a substantial emphasis is placed on family and kinship relationships. Evidence of such is seen in the use of family networks to address issues and the commitment to caring for elderly family members. It is important to note that relationships often exist within the context of church membership and that such relationships are a substantial source of support (roundtable participants, personal communications, March 2, 2012). For example, residents tend to look to their church in a time of need or crisis and churches often care for elderly members who do not have family support. Finally, existing relationships among service providers, organizations, and community leaders appear to be conducive to working collectively to address the challenges. For example, county officials and residents have actively participated in regional networks and other collaborative efforts, including RETHN (Rural East Texas Health Network), SASNET (Substance Abuse Services Network of East Texas), and the county's Child Welfare Board.

The needs assessment also highlighted the community's willingness to address the challenges. Current efforts were commonly described as "progressive" by roundtable participants and key informants. In fact, most were extremely complimentary of Judge Johnson's efforts to increase the

availability of health and human services in the county. The efforts mentioned included the implementation of a county alcohol and drug referral program, which resulted in drug education services and related community service projects. Roundtable participants were also impressed with Judge Johnson's efforts to develop creative partnerships, such as the one with the School of Social Work at Stephen F. Austin State University and her pursuit of resources to develop a county drug court. On the other hand, Judge Johnson would most likely be the first to point out that the successes to this point are a result of community members working together. Evidence of such lies in their numerous grassroots efforts to address challenges, support of progressive leadership, and willingness to participate in the community roundtable meetings and other efforts. Given this, the community members should also be recognized for their "progressiveness." Their openness to this type of process is especially important given that the solutions to the county's challenges are most likely to be arrived at via creative problem solving or "thinking outside the box."

Conclusion

The residents of San Augustine County have a strong commitment to their community and fellow residents. They place a high value on family, relationships, faith and mutual aid, especially in a time of need or crisis. On the other hand, evidence suggests the presence of tension among racial groups, as well as oppression of minorities and women. Even if this is not the case, the perception of such suggests the need for attention to strengthening relationships among community groups, especially since these relationships are a key element of addressing challenges. Additional issues facing San Augustine County include, but are not limited to, a lack of adequate health and human services, limited employment and economic opportunities, barriers to accessing services, and dependence on neighboring counties. Unfortunately, the county does not have the resources to address these issues without assistance from outside entities. On a positive note, it appears that the majority of the county's residents realize that everyone in the county is either directly or indirectly impacted by the issues. More importantly, it was apparent throughout the needs assessment process that the residents want to see San Augustine County regain its ability to meet the economic, health and social needs of all its residents. In addition to a willingness to address the issues, the residents possess the relationships necessary for such efforts to be successful. Given that the decision to commit to making a change is often the hardest part of the process, San Augustine County is moving in the right direction.

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Appendix

Round Table Session #1 (9:45 am to 10:45 am)

Facilitators: Shanice Talley and Linda Gonzalez

Table#/Focus: 1 – Economic Issues

Community Members:

Samye Johnson, County Judge	San Augustine County
Tracy Cox, Executive Director	San Augustine County Chamber of Commerce
Wood Harrison, President	San Augustine County Chamber of Commerce
Dawn Glover, District Coordinator	State Senator Robert Nichols' Office
Robert Fitzpatrick, Representative	Workforce Solutions of Deep East Texas

Facilitators: Sylvia Dominee, Marleen Elkins and Sasha Cruz

Table#/Focus: 2 – Government

Community Members:

Shirley Parker, Mayor	City of Broaddus
Leroy Hughes, Mayor	City of San Augustine
David Smith, Sheriff	San Augustine County Sheriff's Office
Shelia Ponder, JP Precinct 1	San Augustine Justice of Peace Office

Facilitators: Trish Dueboay and Lee Ann Willis

Table#/Focus: 3 – Child Abuse and Neglect

Community Members:

Rebecca Carlton, Executive Director	CASA of Deep East Texas
Sonya Holman, Caseworker	Child Protective Services
Gary Fountain, Chief of Police	City of San Augustine Police Department
Rev. George Cartwright, Moderator	Sabine Valley Association - Black Ministers

Facilitators: Alicia Manning, Tracey Fletcher and Ranajee Thomas

Table#/Focus: 4 - Poverty

Community Members:

Musetta Hosey, Local Minority Representative	DETCOG
Shirlene Jones, Executive Director Assistant	Shelby County Outreach - San Augustine Senior Nutrition Site
Jerome Clifton	Social Security Office
George Simon, Executive Director	Tri-County
Barbara Wall, Director	WIC Office

Facilitators: Dasha Evans and Brandi McCrary

Table#/Focus: 5 – Behavioral Health Care and Substance Abuse Services

Community Members:

Chris Logan	ADAC of Deep East Texas
David Cozadd, Director of Mental Health Operations	Burke Center
Gary Cunningham, Chief Deputy	San Augustine County Sheriff's Office
Roger Holt, Service Officer	Veterans Service Office

Facilitators: Melanie Penland, Jummy Adedinsewo and Christie Mays

Table#/Focus: 6 – Health Care

Community Members:

Lorei Choate, Director of Marketing	Colonial Pines Health Care Center
Janice Napier, Nurse Practitioner	Haley Family Clinic
Darlene Williams, Administrator	Memorial Health - San Augustine County Hospital
Rev. Clois Rodgers, Pastor	Roberts Baptist Church
Charles Sharp, Fire Chief	San Augustine Volunteer Fire Department

Facilitators: Dixie Daniels, Teressa Foster and Kaila Samford

Table#/Focus: 7 – Education and Children's Services

Community Members:

Shane McGowan, Superintendent	Broaddus ISD
David Parks, Director	San Augustine Boys and Girls Club
Edeska Barnes, Probation Officer	San Augustine County Juvenile Probation
Walter Key, Superintendent	San Augustine ISD

Facilitators: Sarah Nerren and Rachel Berry

Table#/Focus: 8 – Health and Human Services

Community Members:

Tressie Simon, Director	Care and Share
Rev. Amos Horton, Pastor	Reed Chapel Baptist Church
Alana Roberson, Administrator	Trinity Rehab & Retirement
Barbara Vaughn, Eligibility Clerk	WIC Office

Facilitators: Shayna Wareing and Nichole Bordelon

Table#/Focus: 9 – Health and Human Services

Community Members:

LaWandra Smith, Program Administrator	Adult Protective Services
Rev. Rick Russell, Pastor	Grace Church
David Garner, Representative	Sunset Hills Apartment Homes
Carrie Yocum, Administrator	Twin Lakes Rehab & Care Center

Facilitators: Will Windham and Dr. Emmerentie Oliphant

Table#/Focus: 10 – Community Values and Perceptions

Community Members:

Gary Williams, Fire Chief/EMT	Broaddus Volunteer Fire Department & EMS
Rev. Dr. Wayne Barth, Pastor	First Baptist Church Broaddus
Pamela Rodgers	San Augustine Community Club/GO Center
Brittney Johnson, Project Manager	San Augustine County
Linda Gollier, President	San Augustine Garden Club

Round Table Session #2 (11 am to 12 noon)

Facilitators: Shayna Wareing and Nichole Bordelon

Table#/Focus: 1 – Economic Issues

Community Members:

Samye Johnson, County Judge	San Augustine County
Tracy Cox, Executive Director	San Augustine County Chamber of Commerce
Wood Harrison, President	San Augustine County Chamber of Commerce
Dawn Glover, District Coordinator	State Senator Robert Nichols' Office
Robert Fitzpatrick, Representative	Workforce Solutions of Deep East Texas

Facilitators: Will Windham and Dr. Emmerentie Oliphant

Table#/Focus: 2 – Community Values and Perceptions

Community Members:

Shirley Parker, Mayor	City of Broaddus
Leroy Hughes, Mayor	City of San Augustine
David Smith, Sheriff	San Augustine County Sheriff's Office
Shelia Ponder, JP Precinct 1	San Augustine Justice of Peace Office

Facilitators: Dasha Evans and Brandi McCrary

Table#/Focus: 3 – Child Abuse and Neglect

Community Members:

Rebecca Carlton, Executive Director	CASA of Deep East Texas
Sonya Holman, Caseworker	Child Protective Services
Gary Fountain, Chief of Police	City of San Augustine Police Department
Rev. George Cartwright, Moderator	Sabine Valley Association - Black Ministers

Facilitators: Shanice Talley and Linda Gonzalez

Table#/Focus: 4 - Poverty

Community Members:

Musetta Hosey, Local Minority Representative	DETCOG
Shirlene Jones, Executive Director Assistant	Shelby County Outreach - San Augustine Senior Nutrition Site
Jerome Clifton	Social Security Office
George Simon, Executive Director	Tri-County
Barbara Wall, Director	WIC Office

Facilitators: Dixie Daniels, Teressa Foster and Kaila Samford

Table#/Focus: 5 – Behavioral Health Care and Substance Abuse Services

Community Members:

Chris Logan	ADAC of Deep East Texas
David Cozadd, Director of Mental Health Operations	Burke Center
Gary Cunningham, Chief Deputy	San Augustine County Sheriff's Office
Roger Holt, Service Officer	Veterans Service Office

Facilitators: Sarah Nerren and Rachel Berry

Table#/Focus: 6 – Health Care

Community Members:

Lorei Choate, Director of Marketing	Colonial Pines Health Care Center
Janice Napier, Nurse Practitioner	Haley Family Clinic
Darlene Williams, Administrator	Memorial Health - San Augustine County Hospital
Rev. Clois Rodgers, Pastor	Roberts Baptist Church
Charles Sharp, Fire Chief	San Augustine Volunteer Fire Department

Facilitators: Trish Dueboay and Lee Ann Willis

Table#/Focus: 7 – Education and Children’s Services

Community Members:

Shane McGowan, Superintendent	Broaddus ISD
David Parks, Director	San Augustine Boys and Girls Club
Edeska Barnes, Probation Officer	San Augustine County Juvenile Probation
Walter Key, Superintendent	San Augustine ISD

Facilitators: Melanie Penland, Jummy Adedinsewo and Christie Mays

Table#/Focus: 8 – Health and Human Services

Community Members:

Tressie Simon, Director	Care and Share
Rev. Amos Horton, Pastor	Reed Chapel Baptist Church
Alana Roberson, Administrator	Trinity Rehab & Retirement
Barbara Vaughn, Eligibility Clerk	WIC Office

Facilitators: Alicia Manning, Tracey Fletcher and Ranajee Thomas

Table#/Focus: 9 – Health and Human Services

Community Members:

LaWandra Smith, Program Administrator	Adult Protective Services
Rev. Rick Russell, Pastor	Grace Church
David Garner, Representative	Sunset Hills Apartment Homes
Carrie Yocum, Administrator	Twin Lakes Rehab & Care Center

Facilitators: Sylvia Dominee, Marleen Elkins and Sasha Cruz

Table#/Focus: 10 – Community Values and Perceptions

Community Members:

Gary Williams, Fire Chief/EMT	Broaddus Volunteer Fire Department & EMS
Rev. Dr. Wayne Barth, Pastor	First Baptist Church Broaddus
Pamela Rodgers	San Augustine Community Club/GO Center
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