

## Hidalgo County Beat the Heat Initiative Success

Hidalgo County's Beat the Heat initiative was recently awarded a \$10,000 grant that was a collaborative effort between PVAMU Extension's *Family and Community Health (FCH)* and *Community and Economic Development (CED)* programs. Our very own FCH Agent, Joanne Ureste Armijo, secured the grant that provided funding for four South Texas counties. Cameron, Willacy, Hidalgo and Starr counties each received \$2,500 to support their efforts. Together, they successfully brought families, seniors, and community partners together to raise awareness about heat safety during the extreme summer months. The Family Event, held on August 16, 2025, welcomed 120 attendees and focused on hydration, nutrition, physical activity, water safety, and cost-saving strategies for the summer. Similarly, the Senior Event on August 28, 2025, hosted 149 participants, distributing emergency preparedness bags and raffling essential items such as AC units, fans, and generators. Both events received strong media coverage across three local news outlets, ensuring that the reach of this grant award extends far beyond those in attendance.

The impact was clear: 100% of surveyed participants reported they are now more likely to increase their daily water intake, eat more fruits and vegetables to stay hydrated, and apply money-saving strategies for utility costs. Volunteers and community partners played a vital role in the program's success, from registration and outreach to logistics and education. Looking ahead, PVAMU Extension Agents from both FCH and CED plan to build on this momentum by launching a workforce readiness workshop in partnership with Workforce Solutions and Sisters Inspiring Success, furthering their mission to empower and protect Hidalgo County residents.

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