Scranton Community Challenges/Needs:
  - **Building a Sense of Community**
    - Projects to bring us together as a community; people need people; getting to know your neighbors.
    - Developing leadership within the community (on the neighborhood level).
    - Addressing community-wide trauma after the events of the past 2 years.
    - Need to build resilience, social connection, and develop a sense of belonging; “Healthy villages to raise healthy children.”
  - **Working with Youth**
    - Social media [and pandemic] has affected the ability to communicate/collaborate in younger populations (afraid to make phone calls/speak in public/connect with new people). At the same time, youth tired of Zoom and feel isolated
    - Bridge to youth/mentorship programs.
    - Students need mental/emotional health support and services to deal with trauma/PTSD. Youth are sad and feel hopeless; Family stability needed.
    - Foster care kids need connection; need advocates to do things with; assistance connecting to mental health services.
    - Issues/need for resources within schools.
  - **Engagement on Issues of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**
    - How to engage with people who do not want to be a part of this conversation.
    - How can orgs best communicate and engage with diverse populations.
  - **Agency Connections/Collaboration**
    - Build a consortium of directors/operations managers so group can get to know each other and better connect services/coordinate organizational efforts.
    - Share contact list. Have this group meet more often.
    - Active sessions (not just lectures).
  - **Navigating Community Service Sector is Confusing and Challenging.**
    - How to be holistic and connect people with wrap-around services
  - **Support for Immigrant and Refugee Communities.**
    - Education for the immigrant populations.
    - Refugee resettlement services and ongoing support after resettlement period ends.
    - Happiness is having people around you – individual communities need connection/access to larger community.
    - Language and technology services to help with schoolwork; other educational needs.
    - Women feel left behind – had businesses before and don’t know where to start now.
    - Spaces for worship and community connection.
    - Understanding the U.S. financial system and taking on debt.
  - **Support for Aging Population**
    - Mental health, behavioral health therapy across the age spectrum, lack of 60+ services, dealing with grief.
    - Aging population needs ad hoc services/assistance.
    - Isolation: Young people can help address this.
• **Economic Issues**
  - Clean, affordable, accessible housing needed (sense of ownership/belonging).
  - Poverty rate is higher: Economic impact- number of people in need has tripled.
  - Transportation: Busses are unreliable and gas prices exceed pay.
  - Workforce development: Connecting people to their jobs.

*Example of success: Bhutanese Cultural Foundation Association partnered with the University, Kick COVID, and other service agencies to address community health and wellness needs, offer PPE and vaccinations, and to distribute food/other needed supplies. Foundation space in South Scranton serves as a hub for the community.*

**Organizational Challenges/Needs:**

- **Social Media Support**
  - Need support for general outreach.
  - Addressing staff skills gap in utilizing technology, social media/online platforms, apps, and fundraising.
  - Developing marketing and communications plan.

- **Intergenerational Programming** (youth need mentors, aging population facing isolation).
  Mentoring programs needed.

- **Workforce Needs**
  - Space for workforce needs/space for meeting/space for worship and community gatherings.
  - Shared office equipment.
  - Short staffed/understaffed/working with reduced staff at same capacity – need someone to manage volunteers.
  - Interns and more permanent volunteers.
  - Recruiting and retaining BIPOC employees at community agencies.

- **Data/Strategic Planning Needs**
  - Data to support grant applications and grant writing support.
  - County-wide data needed to address local concerns: Correlate/access to identified needs and need to assess communities/ where to start/ what are the needs.
  - Strategic planning and organizational support (where to focus services, how to increase org capacity, how to meet community needs/resources.
  - Growth/sustainable model, research and development, assessment survey creation and implementation.

**Challenges/Needs/Opportunities Working with the University:**

- Social media [and pandemic] has affected the ability to communicate/collaborate in younger populations (afraid to make phone calls/speak in public/connect with new people).
- Student schedules are inflexible at times and difficult to work around. Students want structure but needs are fluid.
- Transportation issues.
- Setting expectations for agency and for students/faculty/staff for partnerships.
- Volunteers: Faculty coordination to help organize volunteers, more sustainable volunteers.
- How can organizations connect with/access faculty/staff at the University?
- Can University offer more courses/classes focused on service needs & advocacy?