**Ivanna Neri, Family Independence Initiative**

**About Family Independence Initiative: (FII)**

* Founded in Oakland California in 2001
* Started in Austin in October of 2018 – Currently has 260 families with a 5 year plan to make it to 1000 families
* 14 Cities Nation Wide, Austin is the newest
* Give Unrestricted Cash to families
* Meet with communities and form cohorts, they journal once a month (UP TOGETHER) and talk about the things they are doing (their interest) and in return they get a 3200.00 stipend to help 2 years per family. We put dollars in their hands to they can begin to move forward. Trying to advocate for people to be seen in terms of their strengths.
* Families form and organize their own cohorts and then investment comes
* Initiative score determines the disbursement of money
* Founder - Mauricio Muller – The Alternative (A book that gives more isight)

**How the Model Works:**

* Families work together to set goals and find solutions for the problems they face
* Families report monthly on their overall progress to FII’s social networking platform, UPTogether
* FII complies and analyzes data from UpTogether to capture trends and share what we learn with the families
* FII’s analysis is used to make capital available to families based on their initiatives
* FII informs policymakers and other funders about what works in order to steer resources directly to family-driven solutions.

**The Why:**

* Invest in communities - social capital and social connections that families have within their communities is what moved families from poverty to middle class. Saw that there were services, but not in investments for those people they found people were able to utilize the resources within the community
* The worst place in the US economy is when exiting poverty is. – The US economy penalizes people and is set up for failure. For someone who is making minimum wage and gets a small pay increase they lose benefits.
* 75% percent of people in poverty move above within 5 years.

**Some of the Specifics about qualifications and outcomes for Programming:**

* Used for clothes, uniforms, financial health, income goes up by 20% and investment goes up as well.
* Once families start the process we have found that families begin to invest in their own communities
* First set of families enrolled in November, but have seen increase in individual family incomes
* AVANCE said that they are able to see the families that they referred have flourish - looking forward to implementing in the workforce development and
* Requirements: They have an email address, and a bank account
* They report on a category (60% goes towards financial capital), Business, housing, saving, transportation.
* Cohort: Can me neighbors in the community but cannot be family members.
* Eligibility: Low income, (not necessarily families in crisis), - Not focused on income, but focused, leaders. –

Questions:

* In some cities they track beyond the two years
* Funded by: SDF, Michale & Susuan Dell, Dallas, Neglly - 5years (as a model for the city to then pock up the model)
* Desire to be funded by TANIF verses foundations- Federal funds to invest in families
* Families connect with them through presentations at different organizations.