2026-27 *i-SPARC* Project Information: Community partner, *Vision Forward*

Challenge: How can ***Vision Forward*** effectively deliver high-quality vision rehabilitation services to individuals who live far from service centers, while maintaining service quality, client outcomes, and financial sustainability?

Project 1. ***Expanding Access to Vision Rehabilitation Services: Using data to understand and support needs for individuals ages 0-18 years with vision disability in Rural and Underserved Areas***

Vision Forward worked with another university previously for big data reports on visual services needs in Wisconsin residents ages 18-64 years and 65 years+. Some databases exist with data for the pediatric population, but these data have not been accessed, analyzed, and interpreted by or for Vision Forward. They are interested in a pediatric report to address this gap in age-related data, for subsequent use to support programming decisions. They are also interested in marketing strategies and materials to serve their expansion initiative to meet the needs of rural Wisconsin's youth with vision disabilities.

Project 2. ***Expanding Access to Vision Rehabilitation Services: Understanding barriers, identifying resources, and growing and leveraging partnerships in Rural and Underserved Areas***

Vision Forward has identified a need for community-based strategies that start with understanding barriers and gaps to accessing vision services, to meet goals of increasing service utilization, strengthening and sustaining community partnerships, and expanding awareness of *Vision Forward's* services to meet the vision needs of rural and underserved communities. The demographic of rural Wisconsin includes populations with educational disparities, reduced health literacy, and lower SES who may not know how or where to access services for low vision and vision loss or who may encounter barriers related to travel, language, or technical access to services. Vision forward is looking to identify culturally-sensitive pathways that have not yet been tapped to build and expand access to services for all in rural Wisconsin.