

**Contra Costa County Employment & Human Services Department
Community Services Bureau
2015 Advisory Body Annual Report**

Advisory Body: Economic Opportunity Council (EOC)

Meeting Time/Location: Every 2nd Thursday of the month/ 1470 Civic Court Ste. 200 Concord, CA

Chair: Ajit Kaushal, Public Sector 4

Staff Support: Christina Reich, Division Manager, Nancy Sparks, Comprehensive Services

Assistant Manager, Mele Tupou, Intermediate Clerk

Reporting Period: January 2015 – December 2015

Recommendation

ACCEPT the 2015 Annual Report of the Economic Opportunity Council Advisory Board.

Activities

- ❖ Onsite monitoring of the recipients of Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funds and their impact on addressing community needs and access to services:
 - ❖ Bay Area Legal Aid
 - ❖ Bay Area Community Resources
 - ❖ Contra Costa Clubhouse
 - ❖ Food Bank of Contra Costa & Solano
 - ❖ Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa
 - ❖ Monument Crisis Center
 - ❖ Opportunity Junction
 - ❖ RYSE, Inc.

Contracts were executed with each of these agencies

EOC members participated in the following community service outreach projects:

- ❖ Armando Morales established the Green Angels Garden Project to involve youth in planting and promoting the importance of community gardens in Oakley.
- ❖ Uche Uwahemu attended the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) meeting in May 2015 in an effort to improve coordination of transportation services in the Bay Area's nine counties.
- ❖ Renee Zeimer participated in the Planned Parenthood's Capital Day in June for the restoring of MediCal reimbursement rates.
- ❖ Jelani Killings attended and presented at Supervisor Federal Glover's 2015 Youth Summit in May.
- ❖ Cesar Zepeda helped form a new group called "Somos Latinos" and was presented with a proclamation by Richmond City Council recognizing September as Latino Heritage Month.
- ❖ Doria Mueller-Beilschmidt participated in the Contra Costa County Homeless Count in January. This information serves as a prerequisite for the county's Federal and State funding and used for developing homeless programs and services.
- ❖ Ajit Kaushal participated in a fundraiser for Nepal following the deadly earthquake in May 2015.

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Accomplishments

During the 2015 calendar year, the EOC and CSB staff celebrated many successes and accomplishments such as:

- ❖ Awarded \$195, 000 Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) dollars to eight organizations in the county in alignment with the 2014-2015 Contra Costa Community Action Plan and priority areas.
- ❖ The Economic Opportunity Council held three Community Action public hearings in west, central, and east locations in the county. The first public hearing was held on March 26 in Richmond. The second public hearing was held on April 23 at Los Medanos College in Pittsburg. The third public hearing was held on May 20 in Pleasant Hill. The EOC received public input on the most pressing needs of Contra Costa's disenfranchised populations. Information gathered was incorporated into the 2016-2017 Contra Costa County Community Action Plan.
- ❖ Successful Community Services Block Grant Program (CSBG) Desk Review conducted by the California Department of Community Services and Development (CSD) to analyze the administrative and programmatic operations for CSBG contract number 15F-2007 in May.
- ❖ Submitted the 2016-2017 Community Action Plan (CAP) to the California Department of Community Services and Development in June. The CAP included results of the community assessment for the next two years and public hearings and established priority areas for CSBG funding and activities.
- ❖ Member, Jelani Killings, completed his MPA program in June.
- ❖ Submitted the Self-Assessment Tool for Public Community Services Block Grant Eligible Entities to the Department of Community Services and Development (CSD) in August.
- ❖ Conducted onsite monitoring visits in August to the eight subcontractors receiving 2015 CSBG funding.
- ❖ Released Request for Information (RFI) #592 in November to community service providers for 2016 CSBG grant proposals. Added an information workshop for prospective applicants and streamlined the grant-making process.
- ❖ 8,560 low-income participants obtained food assistance through our CSBG partnerships with Food Bank of Contra Costa & Solano and Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa.
- ❖ 1,555 low-income participants were provided with Emergency Legal assistance through our CSBG partnerships with Bay Area Legal Aid and Bay Area Community Resources (BACR).

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- ❖ 167 Youth have increased their academics, athletics, or social skills for school success through our CSBG partnerships with Bay Area Community Resources (BACR), RYSE, Inc. and Monument Crisis Center.
- ❖ 1,126 participants in Contra Costa County obtained non-emergency LIHEAP energy assistance through the Low-Income Home Energy and Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

Attendance/Representation

The EOC and CSB staff has made significant strides filling board vacancies during 2015. The increase in representation is largely due to the increased outreach efforts made by the EOC and CSB staff. As a result:

- ❖ Ten general business meetings were scheduled in 2015. Nine of the ten general business meetings achieved quorum.
- ❖ Recommended six new members for appointment: Matthew Bacinskas to the Low-Income Sector seat 1, Vinod Maharaj to Low-Income Sector seat 2, Cesar Zepeda to the Low-Income Sector seat 3, Devlyn Sewell to the Low-Income Sector Alternate seat, Edi Birsan to the Private Non-Profit Sector seat 2, and Kaila Vidal to the Private/Non-Profit Sector seat 3.
- ❖ Joint meeting of the EOC Board Members, HS/EHS Policy Council, and Board of Supervisors occurred on April 16, 2015.

Training/Certification

- ❖ Renee Zeimer attended the Facilitative Leadership Training in Concord.
- ❖ EOC members, Jelani Killings and Armando Morales, and Alicia Prieto, Comprehensive Services Assistant Manager, attended the 2015 Cal/Neva Annual Conference in San Diego.
- ❖ EOC members Ajit Kaushal and Uche Uwahemu, and Thomas Stewart, Administrative Services Assistant III, and Nancy Sparks, Comprehensive Services Assistant Manager, attended the Community Action Partnership Annual Convention in San Francisco.

Proposed Work Plan/Objective for Next Year

- ❖ Award 2016 CSBG subcontractors and allocate funding.
- ❖ Develop the Strategic Plan for 2016-2017. Assuring alignment to the areas of need identified in the 2016-2017 Community Action Plan.
- ❖ Implementation of the 2016 Organizational Standards to enhance framework for accountability and performance management.
- ❖ Certify one Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) trainer.

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- ❖ Increase community involvement, information sharing and strategic partnerships in the areas of need identified in the Community Action Plan.
- ❖ EOC members perform subcontractor onsite monitoring visits in July and August 2016.
- ❖ Further develop and monitor 2016 CSBG zero-based budget.
- ❖ Fill vacant EOC seat(s).
- ❖ Train and empower EOC members to improve functioning of the Board and support the goals of Community Action.