

**Contra Costa County Employment & Human Services Department  
Community Services Bureau  
2016 Advisory Body Annual Report**

Advisory Body: Economic Opportunity Council (EOC)

Meeting Time/Location: Every 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 2016 – December 2016

**Recommendation**

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ACCEPT the 2016 Annual Report of the Economic Opportunity Council Advisory Board.

**Activities**

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- ❖ Executed contracts to the following agencies to provide services that address the EOC's three priority areas of housing/shelter, jobs/employment training & food/nutrition.
  1. Bay Area Legal Aid
  2. Bay Area Community Resources
  3. Contra Costa Interfaith Housing
  4. Contra Costa Clubhouse
  5. Contra Costa Health Services Homeless Program
  6. Opportunity Junction
  7. RYSE, Inc.
  8. Shelter Inc.
  9. STAND! For Families Free of Violence
  10. White Pony Express

Throughout 2016, EOC members and staff participated in various events and in the following activities:

- ❖ The EOC hosted its first Roundtable event on January 28<sup>th</sup> with CSBG subcontractors. The group identified ways to assist one another in achieving and exceeding service outcomes. The event was praised by the subcontractors and planning for a second Roundtable will begin soon.
- ❖ Responded to concerns over cuts in First Five funding for homeless families by developing a letter to the Board of Supervisors (BOS) asking for support given the recent loss of First 5 Contra Costa funding for the homeless population and the high cost of doing business. EOC Chair, Ajit Kaushal presented the letter during the budget discussion at the April 19, 2016 BOS meeting.
- ❖ Armando Morales is a member of the Male Involvement group where he helps fathers stay active in their child's life. The group also started the mosquito safety program at the Los Nogales Childcare center in Brentwood where he teaches children how to be safe from mosquitos during the warm months.

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- ❖ Cesar Zepeda and Neighborhood Councils organized the Food Emporium event at the Hilltop Lake Park in Richmond on October 26, 2016. The goal of the event is to encourage community and a space for families to commune will enjoying live music, food trucks, and games for kids.
- ❖ CSB staff and EOC Members Muller-Beilschmidt and Zeimer held voter education and registration trainings to parents and community members.
- ❖ Mele Lolohea and other CSB staff conducted on-site recruitments at One-Stop Centers to recruit new candidates for the CSB Clerical Assistant Trainee Program.
- ❖ Morales and Zeimer participated in the Project Homeless Connect held at the Antioch Fairgrounds on October 13, 2016. Morales assisted by serving breakfasts to the clients and Zeimer assisted clients with voter registration. The event was a huge success with service providers assisting clients on-site with breakfast, identification cards, haircuts, dental services, medical care, voter registration, and more.

**Accomplishments**

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- ❖ Three EOC members ran for office: Cesar Zepeda for Richmond City Council, Jelani Killings for Pittsburg City Council, and Juan Pablo Benavente for Concord City Council.
- ❖ EOC Chair, Kaushal was invited by California Community Action Agency leaders to run for a seat on the National Community Action Partnership (CAP) Board.
- ❖ At the May 10, 2016 Board of Supervisors, EOC members received a proclamation in recognition of Community Action Month.
- ❖ Triennial Review of the Community Action Program began on October 31, 2016 and concluded on November 4, 2016. Analyst Cha Xiong, from California's Department of Community Services and Development (CSD) spent the week reviewing fiscal and internal program files, fiscal reports, and interviewed both CSB staff and Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) subcontractors. During her visit, the Analyst also attended the 2016 Joint Training, the Economic Opportunity Council (EOC) Executive Committee meeting, and visited 2 CSBG subcontractors. The review concluded with an Exit interview where she praised the work of the CSBG subcontractors and Clerical Assistant Trainee program.
- ❖ The Governance Committee began major revisions to the EOC Bylaws. Committee members sought to clarify the authority and scope of EOC responsibilities and align the bylaws to the most recent federal statutes governing Community Action Agencies.
- ❖ Conducted onsite monitoring visits to all ten subcontractors.

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- ❖ Completed the 2017 RFI process awarding \$394,972 in Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) dollars to the following subcontractors:
  - Bay Area Community Resources – Job Training
  - Bay Area Legal Aid – Housing and Food
  - Contra Costa Health Services Homeless Program – Housing and Food
  - Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa – Food and Jobs
  - Opportunity Junction – Jobs
  - Shelter Inc. of Contra Costa – Housing and Food
  - STAND! – Housing, Food, and Jobs
  - The Contra Costa Clubhouses – Jobs and Food
  - White Pony Express – Food
- ❖ Christina Reich, CSB Division Manager, was elected to the Executive Committee of Ensuring Opportunity, the collaborative effort to end poverty in Contra Costa County by addressing structural causes at the policy level.
- ❖ 205,000 pounds of fresh food was provided to the residents in Contra Costa County residents with CSBG subcontractor, White Pony Express.
- ❖ 885 low-income participants received Emergency Legal assistance through CSBG subcontractor, Bay Area Legal Aid.
- ❖ 2,013 Contra Costa County clients received energy assistance.
- ❖ 385 clients received food assistance through CSBG subcontractors, The Contra Costa Clubhouse Inc., Opportunity Junction, and Contra Costa Interfaith Transitional Housing.
- ❖ 410 clients received emergency shelter and transitioning housing through CSBG subcontractors, STAND! For Families Free of Violence, Contra Costa Interfaith Transitional Housing, and Health Services Homeless program.
- ❖ EOC covered the cost of breakfast at the Project Homeless Connect on October 13, 2016 at the Antioch fairgrounds.

**Attendance/Representation**

- ❖ 10 general business meetings were scheduled in 2016. Nine of the ten general business meetings achieved quorum.
- ❖ Two new members were recommended for appointment: Bhupen Amin to the Private/Non-Profit Sector Seat No.1 and Juan Pablo Benavente to the Low-income Sector Seat No. 2.

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**Training/Certification**

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- ❖ EOC training was conducted on March 5, 2016 by John Health, Executive Director of California Community Action Partnership Association, and Sylmia Britt, Deputy Director of California Department of Community Services and Development. The purpose of the training was to gain a deeper understanding of the role of public Community Action Agencies. At the end of the training and orientation, EOC members were presented with a certificate of completion.
- ❖ On November 2, 2016 Community Services Bureau (CSB), in conjunction with the Board of Supervisors, Economic Opportunity Council (EOC), and the Head Start Policy Council (PC) gathered for the 2016 Joint Training at the Hilton Hotel in Concord. Keynote speaker Jaime Harris, from Interaction Associates facilitated an exercise that demonstrated the importance of Shared Governance and the three dimensions of success.
- ❖ Staff & EOC members, Mueller-Beilschmidt, Zeimer and Sewell attended the CalCAPA 2016 Poverty Summit on March 29, 2016.
- ❖ EOC members Vidal, Kaushal, Zeimer and CSB staff Christina Reich and Mele Tupou attended the CalCAPA Annual Conference in Sacramento, CA, May 11<sup>th</sup>-May 13<sup>th</sup> 2016.
- ❖ EOC member Kaushal and staff Reich and Sparks attended the annual CAP conference in Austin, TX, August 30-September 2, 2016. The conference offered more than 80 educational sessions in program, governance, and management of Community Action Agencies.
- ❖ Strategic Planning Retreat held on August 27, 2016 was attended by 11 EOC members, 6 subcontractors, and CSB staff. The group worked together to identify and affirm strategies, actions, and performance indicators in the three priority areas.

**Proposed Work Plan/Objective for Next Year**

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- ❖ Conduct public hearings throughout Contra Costa County to ensure increased community participation.
- ❖ Develop 2018-2019 Community Action Plan
- ❖ Implement the 2016 Organizational Standards in the areas of accountability and performance management
- ❖ Fill five vacancies on the EOC:

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- 3 in the low income sector,
- 1 in the private/non-profit sector, and
- 1 public sector seat in District III.

The EOC will continue to form strategic partnerships with community based organizations that share their goals and leverage the distribution of Community Services Block Grant Funds. The EOC is also committed to providing training to its members, as appropriate and available, to realize these goals. Finally, the EOC will continue its recruitment campaign to fill its remaining vacancies.