



**El Cajon Collaborative**  
**Newcomer Support Work Group**  
October 1, 2009 - Meeting Notes

**I. Introductions**

Kara Vickery is on vacation, so Lea began the meeting and facilitated introductions. Advocacy for additional resources for newcomers was added as an additional agenda item. It was also requested that a contact list for the meeting attendees is created, Lea said she would have something available by the next meeting.

**II. Follow-up items from September Meeting**

• *ESL classes*

Currently there are 5-6 spaces at the mid-day Naranja Elementary class available, otherwise all classes known to the group are full, with waiting lists. The Collaborative Core Team is hoping to hear more information about this at their next meeting on Tuesday, October 20<sup>th</sup> from 10AM-Noon. First United Methodist Church Pastor, Andy Welch is interested in collaborating but would like more information on the cost of teachers and how long a class cycle is. Lea suggested we get information from both Grossmont Adult School and from Cuyamaca College (which may have different cost structures). Barbara Tucker and Izela Jacobo plan to meet with Phyllis Ruth of Grossmont Adult School to discuss getting more teachers at CVUSD sites. Izela stated that CVUSD is at risk of losing some of their teachers that are currently supplied by Cuyamaca due to budget cuts at the college.

• *Child Welfare Community Training – October 14<sup>th</sup>, 8:30-10 @ 131 Avocado Avenue*

Lea reminded everyone of this training coming up with Neda Rivera from Child Welfare Services on Wednesday, October 14<sup>th</sup>. Any organization wishing to host a presentation at their site should send a representative to get trained on the basics of the child welfare system. Call Lea (619) 447-4380 with any questions.

**III. Discuss Target Areas**

○ *Encouragement respect and understanding of other cultures*

- The "Friendship Fair" is being proposed by the El Cajon library for October, 2010. Most organizations seemed interested in what they might be able to contribute or provide, it was recommended to get in touch with former Mayor Shoemaker who originally started the event to see if she may be interested in supporting in some way. Additionally, it was recommended that we consider working with the student populations to consider how they might participate or even lead planning for the event. Each organization was given "homework" to go back to their organizations and consider how they might be able to contribute or help, we will discuss the ideas at our next meeting.

○ *Parent Education*

Lea talked about the Burmese translation chart created by the Alliance for African Assistance, this is a wonderful resource that Lea will email to the group.

-Attendance Laws for students & current concerns: Tammy Ullsperger (ECVHS)  
We will follow-up on this item at next meeting, Tammy Ullsperger was unavailable.

o *Job Development*

- Debra Palmer of Neighborhood Healthcare is organizing certified interpretation (English-Arabic) training for medical staff. The cost is \$600 for 10 weeks (one class per week for three hours). Lea will forward her phone number, her email address is: [DebraP@nhcare.org](mailto:DebraP@nhcare.org).  
- We discussed development of a letter to businesses asking for their assistance with hiring or training newcomers for jobs. Lea will follow-up at next meeting. The "Welcome Back Center" at Grossmont College was also mentioned as a good place for individuals who have skills and training from other countries and are looking to formalize their training in the United States.

o *Advocacy for additional funding and resources*

Sheryl Ashley of Cuyamaca College announced that the Grossmont Cuyamaca College District is planning a Refugee Summit on Education and Employment on November 6<sup>th</sup> in the morning. The event is currently being planned and the outcome is hoped to be a white paper that will be directed to elected officials to advocate for additional funding and resources for the overburdened service network related to the influx of newcomers. Sheryl will keep us informed on the event as it is developed.

Additionally, Brent Freeman gave information on the current projections for refugees in the United States and San Diego area this coming year. Last year, about 4,000 newcomers came into San Diego, of which 90% come to the El Cajon/East County area. Additional ideas for advocacy included looking at the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) grant opportunity for supplemental services for newly arrived refugees which can be viewed at this website: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/open/HHS-2008-ACF-ORR-RU-0113.html>. Lea encouraged organizations to think of regional and collaborative grant proposals that demonstrate the partnership and commitment to work together. Some organizations shared the contrast they have seen in the number of services they are providing. Lea requested everyone to provide her with more information like this, so that we can use it in our advocacy.

#### **IV. Community Events/Announcements**

Joyce Moore from the Institute for Public Strategies offered her organization's presentation on alcohol abuse, laws and prevention as a resource to any organization that may be interested. She passed around her card and a sample PowerPoint of the presentation she can make available.

Hana Mikhail from Ladies of Hope shared that the Chaldean service clubs and advocacy organizations are forming the "Chaldean American Foundation" to increase the coordination between their efforts.

Izela Jacobo from Cajon Valley Union School District announced the Student Educational Services Provider Fair, which is coming up on October 14<sup>th</sup> from 5-7PM.

#### **V. Next Meeting: November 5, 2009 at 10:30AM**

Workgroup Mission: *Our mission is to encourage respect and understanding of diverse cultures through community education and newcomer service support coordination.*

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**El Cajon Collaborative Vision:** *An El Cajon community working collaboratively to ensure children, youth and families are safe, empowered and thriving*

**Mission:** *The El Cajon Collaborative builds relationships, leverages resources and implements best practices to serve the children and families of the El Cajon Community.*