



**El Cajon Collaborative  
Monthly Council Meeting Notes  
July 5, 2011**

**Purpose of the Council:**

*To engage direct service staff and community partners in resource sharing, networking, joint planning and action around issues that benefit the youth and families of the El Cajon Community, consistent with the mission, vision and priorities of the Collaborative.*

**AGENDA ITEMS/ DISCUSSION**

**I. Welcoming Remarks from New Coordinator-**

**LaVonna Connelly, the new El Cajon Collaborative (ECC) Coordinator**, introduced herself and welcomed everyone to the Council Meeting. She stated that she was looking forward to supporting the good work being done El Cajon, and invited attendees to contact her if they would like to know more about her background/areas of expertise.

**Meeting Participants:** Big Brothers-Big Sisters of San Diego County, Catholic Charities, Chaldean-Middle Eastern Social Services, Crossroads Family Center, Cuyamaca College, El Cajon First United Methodist Church/Bethlehem Pantry, Grossmont Cuyamaca Community College District Welcome Back Center, Grossmont Union High School District International Newcomers Center, Home Start, Inc, Institute for Public Strategies- East County Community Change Project, Jewish Family Service, Laubach Literacy Council, License to Freedom, Molina Healthcare, National Children's Study, Neighborhood Healthcare, Planned Parenthood, Public Consulting Group, Recovery Innovations of CA, San Diego County HHSA East Region/Health Promotion, San Diego County Library El Cajon Branch, San Diego County Library Fletcher Hills Branch, San Diego County Library Rancho San Diego Branch, San Diego County Public Health Nursing, Southern California Tribal Chairman's Association, Woodglen Vista Apartments, Family Health Care San Diego, San Diego Counseling 4 Families, El Cajon Valley High School Family Resource Center, Center for Community Solutions, Child Development Associates and SCTCA- Tribal TANF Program.

**II. Announcements-**

**LaVonna** announced that there would be NO MEETING IN AUGUST. She, however, invited everyone to participate in the Council leadership in a meeting on August 4<sup>th</sup>. The meeting will be to review the Council input and make decisions regarding the upcoming year's educational presentation schedule. **LaVonna** announced that the Little House office building (where the ECC is located) has office space available. She stated that Little House is an ideal non-profit office space with many amenities. If interested contact LaVonna at (619) 447-4380 or [lavonna@elcajoncollaborative.org](mailto:lavonna@elcajoncollaborative.org)

**III. Demystifying the El Cajon Collaborative/ A Brief Review-**

**LaVonna** reviewed the foundational information regarding the ECC:

**Mission Statement-**

The El Cajon Collaborative builds relationships, leverages resources and promotes best practices to enhance the quality of life for children, youth and families in our community.

**Overview-**

The ECC is not a non-profit. It is a project of 24 signed non-profit partners. LaVonna is the single staff person for the ECC project. Her job is to implement the strategy that the ECC leadership sets.

### Organizational Leadership-

Community members and community organizations make up an Executive Council, Core Team, Finance Team and Personnel Team that set the strategy for the Collaborative. The Council, as part of the Collaborative, is guided by the strategic goals that the Collaborative leadership sets. The Collaborative's leadership is inclusive and interested Council attendees are welcome to join.

### Ways to Engage-

Ways to engage with the ECC include:

1. Attend the monthly Council meeting to network and share resources
2. Become a signed partner of the ECC by signing a *Partnership Agreement*
3. Become part of the ECC leadership
4. Participate in an ECC workgroup
5. Commit resources (contribute funds, time or goods or write the ECC into a grant)
6. Volunteer to become the Council Meeting facilitator.

\*\*\*\*\* LaVonna stated that she is looking for a community member/volunteer to serve as the Council leader\*\*\*\*\*

### Core Team Strategic Goals for FY 2011-2012-

With direction from the ECC Executive Team, the ECC Core Team has developed strategic goals:

1. Increase pro-social activities for youth
2. Increase community involvement in Collaborative partnerships
3. Enhance prevention activities for youth using the public health model of universal (what each child needs to be successful), secondary (what "at risk" youth need, in addition to universal interventions), and targeted interventions (what "failing" youth need in order to become successful).

\*\*\* These strategic goals will guide everything that the ECC does in FY 2011-2012, including Council activities.\*\*

### **IV. Strategic Planning & Presentation Topic Brainstorming (for the upcoming year)-**

LaVonna stated that it was time for annual ECC strategic planning. She handed out a document which asked Council attendees for the following input:

1. What did you **like best** about our Council meetings (this past year)?
2. Give **one example** of how the Council meetings have been **valuable to you**.
3. **How can we improve** our Council meetings?
4. What do you see as the **top three issues** for youth and families in El Cajon?
5. What do you see as the **top three challenges for you/your organization** in meeting the needs of your clients?
6. What **presentations** would be most useful to you in the **upcoming year**?

\*\*\*\*\* Council input will be used for planning at the August 4<sup>th</sup> meeting for anyone who is interested.\*\*\*\*\*

### **V. Resource Sharing/ Community Announcements-** (see attached roster for contact info)

Council attendees shared updates/announcements during the Resource Sharing Roundtable.

#### **WELCOMED NEW COUNCIL ATTENDEES:**

**Child Development Associates-** Subsidized preschool program expanding to East County. Openings for at new site in Spring Valley (El Cajon residents welcome to apply). Currently no site in El Cajon, but if successful in Spring Valley, and a high response from El Cajon, possible expansion to El Cajon in future.

**Counseling 4 Families-** Private practice MFT/EC offering counseling to families in East Region. Office is in El Cajon. In the process of opening a family resource center for "peaceful divorce" support. More information to follow as the center is implemented.

**SAVE-A-LIFE EDUCATORS**- Experienced emergency responders offer CPR /First Aid classes at affordable rates. *Currently looking for an agency to host space one Saturday a month, possibly in exchange for CPR/First Aid training at no cost to employees of host agency.*

**Center for Community Solutions**- Offering information and resources in financial literacy at no charge.

**Kal Joseph Charry**- Certified Scientist and U.S. Business Consultant, *seeking motivated partners to engage in low-cost, community-based employment solutions for refugee communities.*

**Casey Nguyen**- USD student in the Non-profit Management program is implementing a Consensus Organizing project in El Cajon. This project, focused on employment issues among the refugee population, will last through the summer. Casey stated that the solutions that the project comes up with may be implemented on an on-going basis through a social service agency after the organizing project ends.

**Catholic Charities**- Offering employment services to homeless, seniors, immigrant and refugee community members.

**UPDATES/ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM REGULAR COUNCIL ATTENDEES:**

**Big Brothers-Big Sisters of San Diego County**- Providing youth mentoring services to San Diego County, including El Cajon. *In need of MALE volunteer mentors, 18 years or older.*

**Catholic Charities**- Is offering resources and information on the effects of second-hand smoke.

**Communities Against Substance Abuse**- Is recruiting high school age youth for a public health internship program.

**Cuyamaca College**- Offering information and support to CalWORKs clients who are college students. Works with EOP.

**East County Refugee Center**- Offering services to East Region refugee community members.

**El Cajon First United Methodist Church/Bethlehem Pantry**- Distributing pantry food items Saturday mornings. Offering dinner on Wednesday nights. *In need of volunteer musicians to entertain during friendly visits to shut-ins at LOHAR Retirement Home.*

**El Cajon Valley High School Family Resource Center**- Offering supportive services to ECVHS families. Maintains a "parent portal" website with information/resources listed for families. Translators available in Spanish and Chaldean.

**Grossmont College Welcome Back Center**- No announcements/updates.

**Grossmont Union High School District International Newcomer Center**- Greeting newcomers, offering assessments of language skills. Orienting newcomer families to American educational process.

**Home Start**- Offering a variety of services to families including Medi-Cal and Health Family application assistance. Reported that applications to these two programs are increasing in numbers.

**Institute for Public Strategies**- Celebrating success in working with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Alliance for Better Business in improving the business climate in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street area. Due to the cooperation and support from the business community, enforcement of law to control alcohol sales will not be needed. Citizens have come together, with the assistance of the IPS, to address the issues that concern them.

**Laubach Literacy Council**- Partnering with Grossmont Adult School to offer free literacy assistance to anyone 18 and older.

**License to Freedom**- Providing newcomers with information and support they need to successfully navigate the American justice system. Offering domestic violence classes (52 week), working with children of families impacted by domestic violence. Translation available in Kurdish, Arabic and Farsi.

**National Children's Study**- Largest longitudinal study on children in the United States. Will follow a child from pre-birth to 21 years old. Will study a large range of factors including air, water, soil and

genetics. Studying 14 neighborhoods in El Cajon. Offering a \$5 gift card to participate in screening. *Requesting that all service providers speak to their clients about this long-term study, to increase acceptance and ensure the success of this important one-of-a-kind study.*

**Neighborhood Healthcare**- Offering parenting classes for parents of children 0-5 years in Spanish. Classes begin Aug 1<sup>st</sup> from 10am-12noon.

**Public Consulting Group**- In the process of restructuring. Cal Learn for pregnant and parenting teens has been discontinued. Teen parents are now responsible for engaging in 32 hours per week of work related activity.

**Recovery Innovations of CA**- Offering mental health services through peer liaison model. Programs offered with wellness /recovery action planning.

**County of San Diego Library/Rancho San Diego Branch**- Offering free Summer Reading Program and international cooking classes.

**County of San Diego Library/ El Cajon Branch**- Offering free nutritional program (prepared meals) to youth through the summer.

**San Diego County Public Health Nursing**- Offering services through the Nurse/Family Partnership. Announced East County Domestic Violence Coalition meetings are the last Thursday of the month from 11:30am at the Santee Town Hall. *Requesting anyone interested in or serving families impacted by domestic violence please come to this meeting to support the ECDV Coalition.* Announced "Hope in the Park", October 8<sup>th</sup> at Balboa Park. This event remembers those domestic violence victims who passed away due to DV-related injuries. Announced that the Friday prior to this event, a domestic violence walk will take place in East County to honor the silent victims of DV.

## **VI. Adjournment/ Networking**

**LaVonna** announced that the next meeting will be September 6, 2011 in the Board Room at the Cajon Valley Union School District. Anyone interested in participating in Council leadership for the August Council planning session, please contact her. (619) 447-4380 or [lavonna@elcajoncollaborative.org](mailto:lavonna@elcajoncollaborative.org)