



**El Cajon Collaborative
Monthly Council Meeting Notes
November 1, 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-

Facilitator, Veronica Mikho, National Conflict Resolution Center, began the meeting at 12:30. She welcomed everyone and gave an overview of the Agenda.

Meeting Participants:

Chaldean Middle-Easter Social Services, Communities Against Substance Abuse, Crossroads Family Center, Cuyamaca College, East County Career Center, El Cajon High School Family Resource Center, Family Health Centers of San Diego, Grossmont Union High School District-International Newcomer's Center, Health Adventures Foundation, Home Start, Institute for Public Strategies-East County Community Change Projects. International Rescue Committee, License to Freedom, Mental Health America of San Diego, Mental Health Systems, Neighborhood Healthcare, Planned Parenthood, Recovery Innovations of California, San Diego County Library-El Cajon, San Diego County Library-Rancho San Diego, San Diego County Public Health Nursing, Sharp Mesa Vista Intensive Cognitive Outpatient Program, Southern California Tribal Chairman's Associations, YMCA Kinship Program-San Diego, San Diego County Health and Human Services-Health Promotion, Public Consulting Group, Center for Community Solutions, Cajon Valley Union School District, Woodglen Vista, Catholic Charities, Cajon Valley Middle School, Childhood Development Associates, UCSD Talent Search, American Red Cross.

II. Collaborative Updates-

LaVonna Connelly, ECC Coordinator, highlighted the Collaborative summary on the back side of the Agenda. She welcomed anyone to contact her if they had questions or were interested in becoming more involved with the Collaborative.

III. Presentation- Preparing for Employment

Phyllis Ruth, East County Career Center, gave an overview of the programs and services offered through the East County Career Center. The Center is a "One Stop Shop" for employment seekers and is open to the community. Staff from several supporting agencies is integrated into the Career Center. GED classes and ESL are offered. The Center offers employment preparation classes and services. Computers and supplies are offered to participants. For more information, go to: <http://eccc.guhsd.net/>

IV. Presentation- CalWORKS Welfare to Work/ Job Club

Alex Kahn, Public Consulting Group, gave an overview of East Region's welfare-to-work programs. All cash aid recipients must participate in work-related activities for 32-35 hours per week. PCG offers services that help orient and prepare clients for work. Computers and phones are available to participants. Clients can choose to enter an educational program, but that program cannot last longer than one year. All clients receive two days of conflict resolution training through NCRC. PCG is

interested in partnering with local agencies, and is currently recruiting work experience sites for client placement. For more information, contact Alex Kahn (contact info posted on roster at: http://www.elcajoncollaborative.org/uploads/1/4/1/5/1415935/nov_2011_council_contact_sheet7novrltext_lv.pdf)

V. Presentation- Employment Transitions for Foreign Degreed Engineers and Medical Professionals
Lorena Quiroz, Grossmont Cuyamaca Welcome Back Center, gave an overview of the services offered by the Welcome Back Center. Lorena shared that it is a process for “foreign-degreed” medical professionals and engineers to transition into their professions once they move to America. The Welcome Back center helps educate professionals about the process. A variety of practical services are available through the Center. For more information, please contact Lorena Quiroz: (contact info posted on roster at: http://www.elcajoncollaborative.org/uploads/1/4/1/5/1415935/nov_2011_council_contact_sheet7novrltext_lv.pdf)

VI. Announcements/Trends/Issues- (see Council Roster for contact information)

Council attendees shared announcements during the Resource Sharing Roundtable.

UPDATES/ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM COUNCIL ATTENDEES:

Public Consulting Group- Do you have STAFFING needs at your agency? PCG shared that they are actively seeking organizations who would like to certify as a “work experience site” (WEX site) for welfare-to-work clients. The process is quick and easy. Contact PCG for more info, or ask LaVonna for the forms and contact info.

Cuyamaca College CalWORKs- Shared that their program provides support to CalWORKs clients enrolled in college courses at Cuyamaca or Grossmont Colleges. They also shared that, due to budget cuts, course offerings have been cut. However, they are adding a vocational ESL course (VESL) that will focus on language skills needed in the workforce.

License to Freedom- Shared that they have hired an MFT and are offering therapy for domestic violence victims. They also have begun offering advocacy services for DV victims to prevent their return to the cycle of violence.

Cajon Valley Middle School- Reported that they are actively collaborating with local non-profits, and would like to expand their collaborative network. They are looking for ideas for linking the middle school students with volunteer opportunities in the community. They also reported that they plan to implement their school community garden in 2012.

Educational Opportunity Program (EOPS)/ Cuyamaca College- Announced that they are working with former foster youth and persons of low-income/educationally disadvantaged to support them in their educational process. If you know anyone you would like to refer to this program, please contact the program directly.

Trio Program Outreach- Shared that they offer college and career advising for students in grades 9-12. The program provides information and opportunities aimed at establishing an educational/career path for students who may not otherwise be considering college due to disadvantage. Trio stated that they are already working in Monte Vista, El Cajon Valley High Schools.

Chaldean Middle Eastern Social Services- Announced that they are hosting a Nutrition and Wellness Fair, November 19th, and that exhibitors were wanted. They also announced that they have begun an online newsletter in English and Arabic that contains information regarding programs and resources. Advertisements will also be included. They invited the community to submit information for inclusion in the newsletter.

San Diego County Library/ Fletcher Hills Branch- Shared that they are offering literacy programs for

the community. They also have story time and crafts for children. The branch is offering a Fresh Start program in which young adults who have fines on their library cards are given an opportunity to “read away their fines”.

Communities Against Substance Abuse- Shared that East Region’s Prescription Drug Take Back Day was a huge success. Eight hundred and forty seven pounds of prescription drugs were collected from La Mesa and El Cajon.

Neighborhood Healthcare- Announced that they are offering application assistance for persons applying for CalFresh, MediCal, and/or other basic services, including the new LIHP insurance program for persons of low-income who have no children.

Catholic Charities- Reported that they have opened their new office in El Cajon at 131 E. Main St. They are offering employment preparation, ESL and immigration services.

San Diego Youth Services- Shared that they are offering mental health services through their East County Behavioral Health Program. They stated that they have an MFT and an LCSW available to assist clients.

San Diego County Library/El Cajon Branch- Announced that they are planning their 3rd Annual Multi-cultural festival (which will be in April). They also announced that Friends of the Library would be hosting an auction/fundraiser at the library on December 2nd, and that their Acoustic Showcase was featuring Coco and Lane on November 13th at 2:00pm.

Family Health Centers of San Diego- Announced that they are offering the application assistance for persons applying for CalFresh, MediCal, and/or other basic services, including the new LIHP insurance program for persons of low-income who have no children.

San Diego County Library/ Rancho San Diego Branch- Shared that they are an excellent resource for job-seekers. The library offers computers and internet, and has computer docents available to assist. Arabic internet is also available. Medicare Advantage presentation will be on November 15th.

Mental Health America- Announced that the Meeting of the Minds event would be on November 10th. The event will feature a wide variety of exhibits by mental health providers as well as mental health educational workshops. They also shared that funds were available to cover rent/mortgage and utilities for persons with mental health challenges who are experiencing a crisis.

VII. **Adjournment/Networking**- Veronica adjourned the meeting at 2:01pm