

East Oakland Community Project Newsline

Spring 2010

Budget Crisis Becomes Problem for the Poor

As of this printing, on April 1, 2010 The Alameda County Board of Supervisors decision to make drastic cuts to the General Assistance program will take effect. The County optimistically claims a savings of \$7 million per year, but the shortsightedness of this decision will cost us much more. A similar wave of cuts was passed in 1997, with the result being an increase in crime, homelessness, and food insecurity. Social advocates statewide have urged the Board of Supervisors, specifically, Supervisors Scott Haggerty, Alice Lai-Bitker, and Gail Steele – who all voted for these cuts – to reconsider.

The net result of the cuts will have a devastating impact on the poor. General Assistance, which currently provides \$336 per client per month for up to a year, will be capped at three months, and further reduced by \$40 if the recipient does not have medical coverage, and in an even more unjust outcome, the cuts will include a shared housing reduction. If a GA recipient tries to save money by entering a shared-living situation, they are as a result penalized by reduction percentages based on the number of roommates.

“If GA cuts go through, the ripple effect it will have on our homeless population will be a legacy of poverty”



“It goes beyond homelessness.”
The crowd rallies together to show support against proposition 11

A UC Berkeley Goldman School of Public Policy study showed that cutting General Assistance in 1997 was a grossly ineffective form of cost shifting. Before the GA cuts in 1997, 95% of those surveyed on GA had stable housing, which declined to 63% after the cuts. 57% of those surveyed lost food stamp benefits. Hospitals and other emergency services saw a rise in usage, and there was an increased reliance on shelters and community-based organizations¹. Based on this study as well as an analysis of GA cuts in LA County, the real and lasting cost to Alameda County - taking into

account the shifting to emergency services - could be as great as 24 million per year². The proposed cuts are also a civil rights issue: 85% of those facing the three-month time limit are people of color, primarily African Americans.

Homeless Action Center (HAC) has proposed an alternate proposal to the GA cuts, based on a pilot study in Los Angeles County, in which 3% of the most expensive users were targeted for supportive housing. By targeting the frequent users, Alameda County could potentially save millions while still making an effort to combat homelessness and preserve the only social safety net available for the neediest population.

Giving Back to the Community at Work

Sunday February 21st brought bittersweet reality to EOCOP. Two of our most valued employees, Dee Hoyle and Nancy Taylor, who have given 8 years in service to homeless people were honored at their retirement celebration. Balloons, gifts, hugs and bubbly drinks did not completely erase the fact that part of our team was moving on. We are grateful for how these two women gave back to the community through their work at EOCOP.

A colleague recommended Dee to EOCOP as a volunteer in 2001. Dee's outpouring of energy and caring became an ongoing blessing to residents when she became

a case manager. She shared with residents a wealth of resources through her network of friends, community and church



Dee Hoyle

affiliations. When asked, what she felt distinguished her as a case manager; Dee replied "I believed in my clients." She recounted that as a child she had two teachers who saw something in her that they nurtured. She said with a smile or praise her teachers let her know that she could do it. Dee gave to residents the gift that was nurtured in her as a youngster.

Nancy Taylor came to EOCOP in April of 2002. EOCOP was thrilled to recruit a long time Oakland resident who cared about the community. Nancy got two job offers in April of 2002, one from Alameda County and one from EOCOP. She chose to work with EOCOP because she wanted

"We wish Dee and Nancy the very best. We know that both of them will be out there making good things happen in the community."

to have a real impact in her community. Nancy, like Dee, came to EOCOP with all of her community resources including her congregation, United



Nancy Taylor

Lutheran Church. Through her church, EOCOP's children can attend a great nursery school, our young adult transitional housing program obtains grant support and volunteers bear wonderful gifts and support during the holidays for our families. As EOCOP's accountant, Nancy helped the organization with its biggest accomplishment in its 20 year history, the construction of its new "green" building, Crossroads.

We wish Dee and Nancy the very best. We know that both of them will be out there making good things happen in the community. ☘

Budget Crisis

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At its most basic level, General Assistance keeps people alive long enough to find stable permanent housing. These cuts seek to balance budget shortfalls on the backs of our most vulnerable population. If GA cuts go through, the ripple effect it will have on our homeless population will be a legacy of poverty and permanent indigence, after which reinstating General Assistance will have a negligible effect. ☘

Notes:

1. *Chimara, Ndubuisi, Alastair Fitzpayne, and Amy Lemley. The Impact of General Assistance Time Limits in Alameda County. University of California Berkeley, Goldman School of Public Policy, Graduate School of Social Welfare. December 4, 1997.*

2. *Daniel Flaming, Patrick Burns, Michael Matsunaga. Where We Sleep. Economic Roundtable, LA Housing Services Authority. (2009).*

Take Action

Please call Supervisors Haggerty, Steele, and Lai-Bitker and voice your displeasure with these cuts.

District 1:

Scott Haggerty (510) 272-6691

District 2:

Gail Steele (510) 272-6692

District 3:

Alice Lai-Bitker (510) 272-6693

District 4:

Nate Miley (510) 272-6694

District 5:

Keith Carson (510) 272-6695

Donate
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www.eocp.net.
We appreciate
your gift!

Our Supporters Help People Overcome Homelessness

September 2009 to February 2010

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Ryan White

Alameda County Behavioral
Healthcare Services

Alameda County Social Services
Agency, CHASS

City of Oakland, Community
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City of Oakland, Department of
Human Services

FEMA

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Urban Development, Housing
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AIDS (HOPWA) via Alameda
County Housing & Community
Development

U.S. Department of Housing &
Urban Development, Supportive
Housing Program

Veterans Administration

Foundation Support

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Evelyn & Walter Haas, Jr. Fund

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the Horizons Foundation
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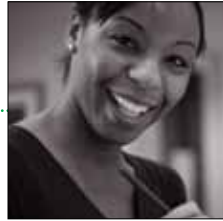
Jacqueline Williams

Timothy Zimmermann



Special thanks to Stubb's
BBQ for generously donating
a delicious meal to our
residents!

MISSION: EOCP empowers homeless individuals and families in Alameda County to regain a life of self-reliance. We provide dignified emergency and transitional housing and compassionate, comprehensive support services that prepare homeless people to successfully transition to well being.



FULL-TIME STAFF

Wendy Jackson, *Executive Director*
 Kim Parrish, *Program Director*
 Denis Chamberlin, *Financial Manager*
 Shirley Gainey, *Substance Abuse/Mental Health Counselor*
 Hotalio Ruiz, *Case Managers*
 Anthony Eldridge, *Case Managers*
 Sharricci Dancy, *Case Managers*
 Tambra Duren, *Family Case Manager*
 Erdem Durgunoglu, *Bookkeeper/Office Manager*
 Lana Choi, *Administrative Manager*
 Askia Muhammad, *Outreach Worker/Transitional Coach*
 Judith Jones-Germany, *Lead Resident Advisor*
 Fate Flenory, *Resident Advisor*

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 Scot Harrison, *Resident Advisor*
 Rhieva Hines, *Resident Advisor*
 Blanca Plazola, *Resident Advisor*
 Tenaya Sims, *Resident Advisor*
 Martha Hercules, *Weekend Relief Worker*
 Andre Green, *Cook*
 Joanne Riley, *Cook*

OUR HOUSE

Linda Fuentes, *Our House Case Manager/Coordinator*
 Babalola Ogunbiyi, *Youth Counselor*
 Gloria Fields, *Youth Counselor*

**MATILDA CLEVELAND/
FAMILIES IN TRANSITION**

Yani Hyman, *Client Services Director*
 Patricia Ramirez, M.S., *Client Empowerment Specialist*
 Lisa Osborne, *House Manager*
 Shariffa Payne, *Housing Specialist*
 Thomas Schow, *MC Cook*

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[Helping Homeless People Transition to Well-being]



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