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## WORKFORCE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The South Bay Center for Counseling's workforce and economic development strategy is aimed at addressing urban poverty and providing families and community residents with opportunities for economic self-sufficiency. SBCC collaborates with various industry employers and public and private agencies to create new approaches to meet regional needs for qualified workers and economic growth.

Over the last few years, SBCC has been a leader in workforce and economic development in Los Angeles County through the Energy Pathways Program, Urban Teacher Fellowship, Earned Income Tax Credit & Financial Asset Building opportunities and Small Business Development strategies.

In 2008, The Energy Pathways Program was recognized as a "Best Practice" by the United Way and endorsed as a preferred "Sector-Based Training Initiative" by the California Employment Development Department for developing innovative, employer driven education and training programs that are among the best of their kind in the nation.

SBCC's ability to create new kinds of partnerships has enabled us to develop industry-focused regional, and statewide initiatives in the high-wage, high-growth energy industries.

SBCC has also created new pathways to higher education to provide access to college and professional careers to disenfranchised populations.

Additionally, our grassroots approach to community development strategies has allowed us to create an innovative micro-lending and small business program that will help low-income populations access financial resources.

### Workforce Development

The goal of SBCC's workforce development strategy is to ensure that low-income residents have fair access to good jobs and the ability to qualify for them.

SBCC, along with many advocates for job development (especially those coming from an urban equity perspective) view workforce development as a central issue in stabilizing neighborhoods and addressing poverty.

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By training and/or retraining individuals to meet the workforce development needs of existing local industry SBCC provides career pathways that have the potential to change people's lives.

## **Energy Pathway Program**

### **Program Description**

The Energy Pathway Program (EPP) is focused on preparing residents of South Bay communities for employment in energy-related industries. EPP operates programs that provide career-focused training to over 100 men and women per year. SBCC, in partnership with area oil refineries, Los Angeles Harbor College, Los Angeles Harbor Occupational Center, and WelltechSafety creates programs to train community residents as refinery workers. Our core value is to provide residents who reside in communities surrounding the refineries with access to high quality training and access to high-wage careers.

The major South Bay refineries, BP, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, Exxon Mobil, Tesoro, and Valero employ approximately 5,000 workers. Most are in high paying jobs with annual wages over \$70,000, plus excellent benefits and retirement packages. In addition, contractors such as WelltechSafety employ more than 1500 additional workers to assist in refinery operations, major maintenance overhauls, and new construction.

According to local and national surveys, as much as 25-50% of the refinery workforce will retire within the next five years, creating a pressing need for trained workers. To fill this gap, refineries are seeking to create a younger, more diverse and better educated workforce. To address this need, EPP has created training programs for four (4) career pathways in the energy industry:

- Process Plant Technology
- Welding
- Safety Attendant/Mechanical Helper
- Instrumentation Technician

### **Program Goals (2007-08)**

- Build on the success of the EDD-funded pilot program by expanding to two cohorts per year for the Process Plant Technology program.
- Expand the program by launching training cohorts for Welding, and Safety Attendant/Mechanical Helper.
- Create an Instrumentation career pathway for the refineries.

### **Program Activities (2007-08)**

- Screened over 400 applicants for the Process Technology program. Applicants were selected through an interview, and a reading and math assessment. Candidates with assessment scores at a minimum of 9th grade reading and 9<sup>th</sup> grade math were placed in a Harbor College "bridge"

program that focused on increasing basic reading and math skills. Applicants who scored far above the minimum were placed directly into the training cohort, bypassing the bridge component. Courses included "industry-contextualized" reading and math, process technology, financial literacy and personal development. Students received 10 months of training, which included a paid internship at the local refineries.

- Screened over 100 community residents interested in the career opportunity in structural and pipe welding. These applicants were interviewed and administered a reading and math assessment. The minimum assessment score for these applicants was also 9<sup>th</sup> grade reading and 9<sup>th</sup> grade math. Students

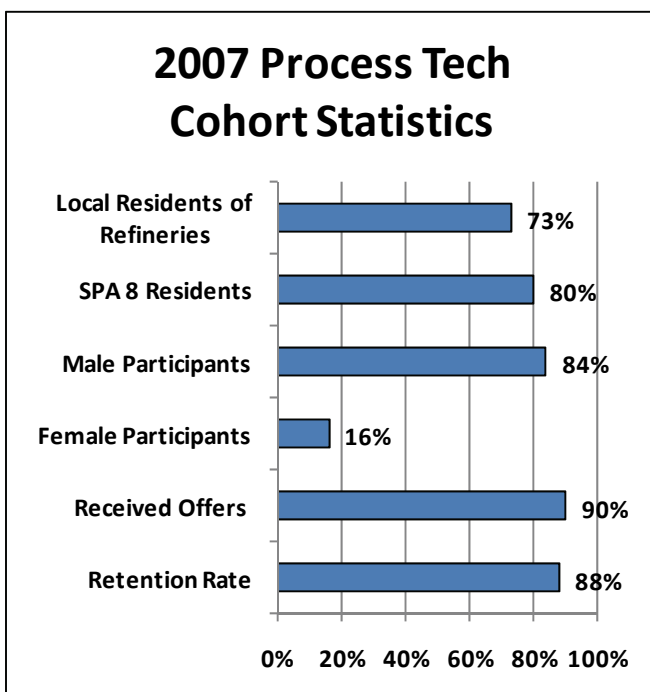
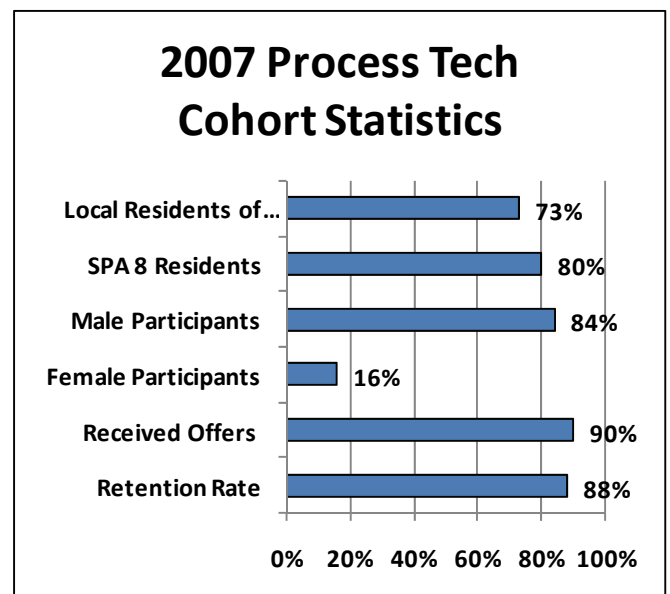
received hands-on training six days a week at the welding shop at Harbor Occupational Center.

- With the assistance of industry experts, created a training program for Instrumentation Technician. These highly skilled technicians are responsible for repairing, calibrating and performing maintenance on highly sophisticated valves and gauges in a refinery.
- Screened over 60 individuals for the pilot cohort for the Instrumentation Tech Program.

- In the first half of 2008, the Energy Pathway Program conducted two Process Technician cohorts. In the first cohort, 28 of 35 participants graduated, an 80% retention rate. A total of 25% of this cohort were women, 11% were foster youth, 85% live in SPA 8, and 15% live in low-income communities immediately adjacent to refineries. In addition, 82% received internships or full time employment as a result of the training and skills they were provided through the Energy Pathway Program.

**Program Outcomes (2007-08)**

- **Process Technician**
  - In the second half of 2007, 38 of 43 participants graduated from the Process Plant Technology cohort, an 88% retention rate that was 10% higher than the 2006 cohort. In addition, 90% received offers for paid internships or full-time employment in the industry, 16% were female (substantially higher than the industry average), 80% live in SPA 8 and 73% live in local communities surrounding the refineries.



- **Welding**
  - In the second half of 2007, our first welding cohort consisted of 88% men, 12% women. The average annual income of the participants was \$20,000-\$25,000. A combined total of 84% of the students live in SPA 8 cities surrounding the refineries. A total of 52% were between the ages of 26-35 years old. Students earned 2g, 3g, 4g and 6g certificates in welding which provided them access to jobs that require the various certifications in multiple energy producing fields. A total of 22 out of 25

students graduated with certificates of completion in welding.

- In 2008, the Energy Pathway Program made adjustments to the design of the welding program. We recognized that applicants were not prepared for the level of math and geometry that refinery welding required. Students who scored below 9<sup>th</sup> grade reading and math were required to attend a 2-month math bridge program to learn the math basics so that the core instruction could flow in a more cohesive pattern. 72% of this group was between the ages of 18-25 years of age, including a staggering 33% considered “at risk youth.” Prior to the training, these students were unemployed or earning salaries that ranged from \$20,000- \$26,000. After earning a welding certification in pipe and structural welding these students had the potential to earn \$25-\$30 per hour.
- **Safety Attendant/Mechanical Helper**
  - In 2007-2008, a total of 146 mechanical helpers/safety attendants were trained and placed in “turnaround jobs” (major maintenance overhauls) at the local refineries. A total of 40-50% of these groups was unemployed. The turnaround job is an entry-level contractor job that is a gateway to full-time employment in a refinery.

- **Instrument Technician Program**
  - In 2007-2008, the first pilot Instrument Technician cohort that the Energy Pathway Program trained placed 14 out of 21 individuals in refinery jobs earning over \$55,000 per year. This cohort consisted of 81% minorities who live in the communities surrounding the refineries. The program was such a success that industry requested a second cohort, which began September of 2008.

#### Goals & Activities (2008-09)

- Recruit, train and place recently separated veterans and veterans in all of our career pathway programs.
- 50% goal for veterans in the Process Technician cohort scheduled for March 2009.
- Recruit and train 60 safety attendants/mechanical helpers for the summer 2009 turn- around season to supply industry demand and provide immediate work for veterans.
- Recruit and screen candidates for the 1<sup>st</sup> Q 2010 cohorts for Process Technology, Instrument Technician and safety attendant/mechanical helper.
- Design new pathways for:
  - Environmental Technician
  - Machinist

### Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans Program

#### Program Description

The program is designed to place recently separated veterans, through the Veterans Bridge to Employment Program, into career pathways leading to high wage jobs in high growth sectors including energy, and education.

All clients are assessed by SBCC for literacy, math, and communication skills, work readiness, and potential personal and family barriers. Special attention is paid to clients with physical and mental health issues and specific housing and transportation barriers to employment.

All veterans receive individualized assistance to ensure readiness for career pathway programs. Assistance includes career and personal counseling, assistance with financial aid needs, life skills counseling and needed tutoring and other supports. In addition clients receive specialized assistance with housing, employment, and other support issues linked to newly independent living. Cash resources for emergency needs are also available. Veterans with learning disabilities receive specialized counseling.

After this primary step, veterans judged by SBCC staff as ready for education and training are referred to a career pathway program.

- **Process operator career pathway:** Building on the successful Los Angeles Energy Career Pathway model, Bridge graduates transition directly to LAHC process operator training, leading to potential placement with partner refineries BP, ConocoPhillips, Exxon Mobil, Shell/Tesoro, and Valero. Training includes a 500-hour 30-credit certificate program incorporating applied math, physics, chemistry, and introduction to process plant systems, troubleshooting, safety, and business communications. Most participants will also have the opportunity for paid internships during training.
- **Instrument technician career pathway:** Participants will receive 1,000 college credited hours of training in applied math, chemistry, physics, principles of instrumentation, electricity, safety, communications and writing provided by LAHC leading to attainment of skills required for certification and employment. At the same time, participants will work as paid interns with partner employers for 20 hours per week while attending class. At the completion of training, participants will qualify for entry-level instrument technician positions offered by BP, ConocoPhillips, ExxonMobil, Valero and other employers.
- **Teaching/after school career pathway:** Building on the established LAHC teacher preparation program, SBCC has created an expedited four-and-a-half year teacher preparation learning community at LAHC for Bridge program graduates leading to both multiple and single subject programs at Cal State University Dominguez Hills. In addition, vets in this career pathway will receive training for the after school work force and will be placed in after school jobs averaging \$10-12 per hour, 25 hours per week.
- **Safety attendant/mechanical helper career ladder pathway:** Veterans with limited skills will have access to a 120-hour Safety Attendant class and a 200-hour mechanical helper class. All classes will feature industry participation in design and development and instruction by teachers with industry experience. Classes will combine industry-defined skills and competencies with key foundational and applied skills.

Training graduates meeting WelltechSafety standards will be placed in safety attendant positions at wages of \$10-12 per hour, up to approximately \$1050 per week with overtime. Qualified graduates of mechanical helper will be placed in positions with WelltechSafety.

Mechanical helpers will receive wages of \$12-16/hr or up to \$1400 per week.

#### **Program Goals (2007-08)**

- Submit proposal for EDD Veterans RFP

#### **Program Goals (2008-09)**

- Secure and implement contract in November/December 2009
- Recruit first cohort in January/February 2009

#### **Program Activities and Outcomes (2008-09)**

- To recruit recently separated veterans, SBCC outreached to various organizations such as U.S. Vets and Veterans Affairs, along with the Employment Development Department's veteran representatives.

SBCC also used internet based employment websites to advertise the program opportunities. To date, SBCC has a waiting list of over 200 veterans.

- Currently there are 25 veterans in the Process Plant Technology program which commenced on March 5, 2009.

#### **Program Goals (2009-10)**

- Create a teacher pathway at El Camino College for veterans who are interested in becoming vocational instructors. Veterans who have 5+

years of field experience will qualify for the expedited credential program. Participants will be able to obtain a degree in their technical field of experience and teach in a vocational setting.

### **Urban Teacher Fellowship**

#### **Program Description**

The Urban Teacher Fellowship is designed to prepare disadvantaged youth and adults for employment in the after-school workforce, and create career pathways leading to teaching careers in Los Angeles County.

Before being considered for the program, participants undergo a screening process which includes a math and literacy assessment, a 30-question interview designed to assess the individual's ability to become an effective teacher and a one page motivational essay describing their desire of becoming a teacher.

After the individual has been selected, they are referred to the Bridge program, a three month, college credited program designed to raise student math and English levels.

Upon completion of the Bridge, students undertake training for jobs in after-school workforce, a 40-hour training focusing on skills needed to work in the after-school workforce.

Bridge graduates then transition to continuing college training leading to a four and a half year teacher career pathway.

The pilot program is delivered as a learning community model, with students moving through the program as a cohort. In addition, a full-time counselor works with the students to provide academic and social support.

#### **Program Goals (2007-08)**

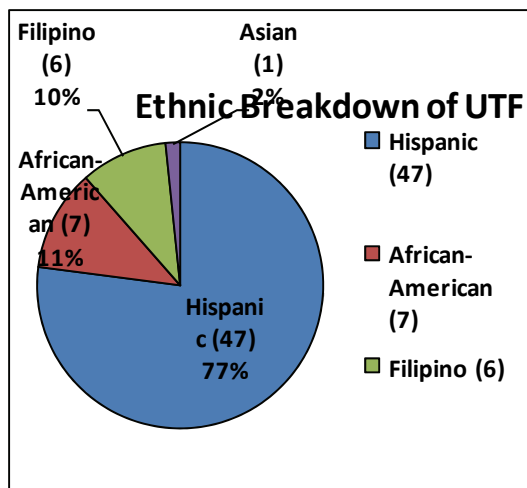
- Design the program curriculum
- Recruit the first two cohorts for the bridge program

#### **Program Activities (2007-08)**

- SBCC, in partnership with Los Angeles Harbor College, and Cal State University Dominguez Hills,

collaborated to devise the teacher pathway curriculum, including the bridge component and after-school training component.

- In spring of 2008, UTF initiated the recruitment of its first two cohorts. The pilot program attracted the interest of 180 individuals from SPA 8 and the Housing Authority of City of Los Angeles. 61 were selected to participate in the program which began in April of 2008 at Los Angeles Harbor College. The class consisted of 51 females and 10 males. The age ranged from 18-36 years. Forty-seven Hispanic, seven African-American, six Filipino, and one Asian.

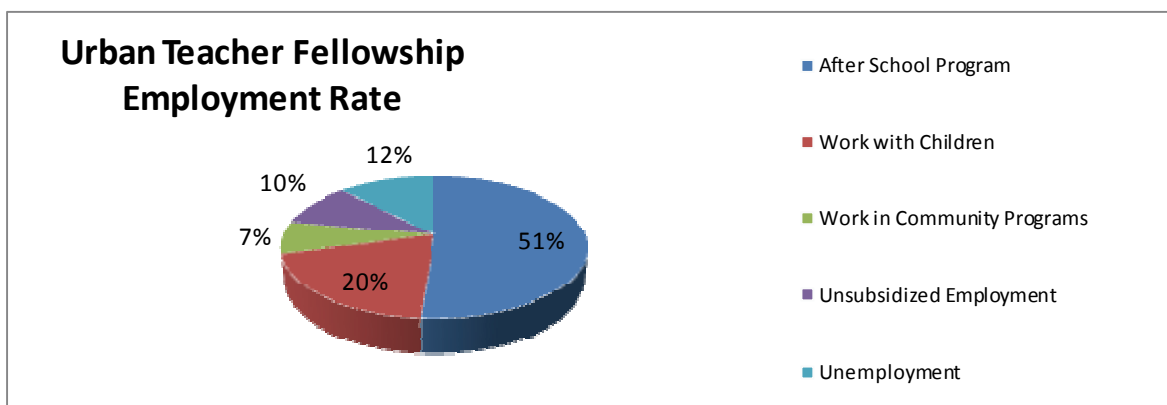


- After completion of the Bridge, 53 participants transitioned to the teacher pathway AA degree program.
- After completion of the Bridge, the assessment scores improved by 2 grade levels in reading comprehension and 1 grade level in math. The largest increase by a participant was 6 grade levels in reading and 5 grade levels in math.
- Employment outcomes included:
  - 21 participants working in the after-school workforce with: LA's Best, LA's All Stars, Richstone Center, Carson Parks and Recreation Center, and various Boys and Girls Clubs.
  - Eight (8) participants work with children in some form of school setting other than an after-school program.
  - Three (3) participants work within the community for a non-profit CBO.

**Goals & Activities (2008-09)**

- Expand the teacher pathway program within the community colleges in Los Angeles:
  - In fall of 2009, SBCC will start a teacher pathway at Los Angeles City College, and El Camino College.
  - In spring of 2010, Compton Center will have in place a teacher pathway.
  - The goal is to target dis-advantaged youth,

**Program**



**Outcomes (2007-08)**

foster care youth, and recently separated veterans

## Economic Development

The primary mission of SBCC's economic development strategy is to facilitate community development within the South Bay cities of Los Angeles County by providing programs structured to revitalize the physical, economic and social life of the community. In order to realize this objective, SBCC has developed and implemented a comprehensive approach to community economic development that includes business development, technical assistance and training, and career pathways development and training.

SBCC's Workforce & Economic Development Department invests heavily in Community Economic Development, which is the process by which local community residents build organizations and partnerships that interconnect profitable businesses and industries with other interests and values - for example, skills and education, health, housing, and the environment.

Community Economic Development allows for a larger number of people to become involved in improving their communities by describing how their communities should function and change. Additionally, by investing in wealth creation in the form of small business development, Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and high-wage career pathways training, more organizations will look for ways to make their actions and investments reinforce the wishes and intentions of the community. Consequently, Economic Development becomes a means to accumulate wealth and to make the local way of life more creative, inclusive, and sustainable.

At its most effective, SBCC's economic development strategy is characterized by:

- A multi-functional, comprehensive strategy of on-going activities, in contrast to individual economic development projects or other isolated attempts at community betterment.
  - An integration or merging of economic and social goals to bring about more far-reaching community revitalization.
  - A base of operating principles that empower the broad range of residents for the governance of development organizations and their community as a whole.
  - A process guided by strategic planning and analysis
  - A businesslike financial management approach that builds both ownership of assets and a diverse range of financial and other partners and supporters.
  - An organizational format that is nonprofit, independent, and non-governmental, even though for-profit or governmental entities are closely linked to its work
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## **The Greater Los Angeles Economic Alliance**

Research has demonstrated the large economic impact the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) has in cities throughout the U.S. For instance, Los Angeles County residents received over \$2.5 billion in EITC in 2008, and nearly one out of every four families received an average credit of \$1,750. According to Internal Revenue Service, for the 2007 tax filing season the County of Los Angeles lost an estimated \$500 million dollars in unclaimed EITC refunds for its residents. The IRS estimated that approximately 20 percent of eligible individuals are not claiming the EITC. This figure represents thousands of families and millions of lost monies to Los Angeles County's economy and working poor households.

Many tax preparation services offer not only assistance in preparing and filing returns, but also refund anticipation loans and other products intended to help taxpayers obtain cash quickly. For these services, tax filers pay dearly; for example, for refund anticipation loans the interest rate is an average of 150 to 200 percent. Further, individuals are paying an additional 5 to 7 percent in check cashing fees. The high-cost tax preparation and check cashing services and products can significantly diminish the economic benefits of the EITC – both for low-income working families and for the neighborhoods in which they live.

### **Program Overview**

SBCC, in partnership with the Los Angeles County Children's Council, the Los Angeles County SPA Council and Quantum CDC, to operate the "Greater Los Angeles Economic Alliance" (The *Alliance*), which provides assistance to low- and moderate-income working families and individuals in understanding and claiming the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). The program provides free income tax preparation services to people who live or work in the Greater Los Angeles community, connecting them to mainstream banking services, financial literacy workshops, and other financial supports and asset building opportunities. Additionally, the *Alliance* will also provide utility rebate and credit information, weatherization services and other needed community programs.

This collaborative is a grassroots vehicle that targets many community residents (and non-residents) who have traditionally not been aware of or educated on these services. The *Alliance's* community organizers will reach out to the vastly underserved communities within Los Angeles

County, which represent approximately 28% of all U.S. families that do not file for EITC. This amounts to approximately \$280 million of unclaimed federal funds, which would otherwise be inserted into the local community.

The goal of the *Alliance* is to file 3,500 tax returns and open 350 new bank accounts during the 2009 tax season. Through this program, the *Alliance* will provide alternative options for the low-income working families of Los Angeles County who struggle to make ends meet, allowing these individuals to keep their full tax refund and save hundreds of dollars in high-cost fees.

### **Program Activities**

The *Alliance* began work in the community in January 2009. With funding support from Wells Fargo Bank and the Los Angeles County Children's Council, the *Alliance* opened 30 free tax site locations. These sites are open several days per week from February through April.

The *Alliance* will work closely with the SPA NACs (Neighborhood Action Councils), and local community-based organizations, as well as churches to integrate the tax assistance program into their existing operations. Past experience has shown that this form of programmatic integration is well received by community residents and serves as an enhancement to the operations of the partner agencies and organizations involved.

### **Program Outcomes**

To date, more than 1,200 tax returns have been prepared, generating millions of dollars in tax refunds and helping low income families save thousands of dollars in high-cost fees. Additionally, Wells Fargo is on-site at many locations, opening

FREE bank accounts for un-banked individuals. Within the first month of operation, we opened nearly 100 bank accounts.

In January 2009, the *Alliance* hosted the LA Tax Day at the Crenshaw Christian Center in South Los Angeles; the event was full to capacity. On this one day, staff and volunteers prepared over 130 tax returns. Clients were able to have current and prior year returns prepared, as well as apply for an ITIN (Individual Taxpayer Identification Number). Not only were tax preparation services made available, but Wells Fargo Bank was on site to open FREE bank accounts and provided valuable information and hosted mini workshops on financial matters.

### **South-Bay Entrepreneurial Lending Fund (SELF)**

Small businesses and microenterprises have an important role to play in low- and moderate-income communities. Often they are the engines of growth in these neighborhoods. The SELF program was designed to provide capital for individuals who wish to start their own businesses and for small disadvantaged business owners who are looking to expand or are in need of temporary financial assistance to compete in the market place. The program was also designed to assist these individuals in gaining access to federal and private procurement markets.

The focus of the program is to provide business development support, such as mentoring, procurement assistance, business counseling, training, financial assistance and other management and technical assistance.

### **Program Overview**

SELF's goal is to contribute to the revitalization of LA County South Bay communities by providing full and part time permanent jobs for low income residents, expanding the community's tax base, and giving disadvantaged individuals more control over their lives through ownership of businesses. The program will assist community residents in starting their own businesses and in preparing small disadvantaged business owners for procurement and other business opportunities.

### **Program Goal**

SELF expects to graduate 30 residents per year and help implement or grow 10 small businesses within the same timeframe.

### **Program Description**

SELF, in collaboration with Quantum CDC and the PACE Women's Business Center, offers small business development training and support services, which include personal and motivational training, personal counseling, and case management. The 10-session small business development course is for residents of LA County Service Planning Area 8 (SPA 8) and covers all aspects of business development, ranging from mission statement development and goal setting,

to business plan design and budget, and cash management and allocation.

The curriculum is presented as follows:

- Session 1: Entrepreneurial Keys to Success
- Session 2: Intro to Business Plan: Defining Mission and Setting Goals
- Session 3: Market Analysis: Customers, Competition and Industry
- Session 4: Marketing: Product/Price
- Session 5: Marketing: Place/Promotion
- Session 6: Legal Aspects: Choice of Entity and Contracts Business Insurance and Risk Management
- Session 7: Small Business Taxes (BOE, IRS, EDD)
- Session 8: Recordkeeping/Accounting for the Small Business Understanding Financial Statements
- Session 9: Budgeting and Cash Management  
Cash Flow Projections  
Break-Even Analysis
- Session 10: Access to Capital: Financing Your Business

### **Business Plan Development**

As part of the training, participants are required to complete a business plan. This document is a business planning tool and it is needed to secure business financing. Participants begin their business plans during the second session of training. Participants complete their plans during the ten weeks and following the end of the classroom training. SELF's Training Counselors assist each participant in completing their business plans.

In addition to the training, SELF also offers a "Small Business/Entrepreneurial Support Services" program. The program is offered to SELF graduates and provides consulting, technical assistance, and additional training. Services include access to shared office space and conference rooms, a receptionist with answering service, and use of computer equipment with business software and Internet access. Assistance with accounting and record keeping activities, small business tax preparation, and business formation and compliance are also available. The program provides additional connections to financial resources including access to mainstream business banking, business credit and financing, and IDAs (Individual Development Accounts) for micro-enterprises. Additionally, the program will host several topical workshops on key business matters and ongoing networking mixers to connect small business owners with opportunities and other resources to build and grow their businesses.

### **Business Implementation**

Upon completion of the training program, all participants who met all requirements and sustained an attendance record of 80% or higher will be eligible to apply for a small business loan/microloan for business implementation or expansion. Microloans for small business development are capped at \$1,000 per applicant, while small business loans can up to \$5,000 per applicant, depending on cash flow, business plan and liquidity.

Additionally, SBCC may also offer business owners mini-grants to access "virtual office" services at Quantum CDC and/or additional small business services.

For individuals who are starting a new business, SBCC will assist with location scouting, advertising (through SPA network) and other technical assistance. For those who are attempting to grow their business, SBCC will provide technical assistance and support.

**Program Activities**

Participants Alejandra Tepatl and Joaquin Salazar recently created their business plans. Both are in the process of opening a restaurant once they meet certain city requirements such as licensing, etc. Mr. Tepatl and Mr. Salazar are being provided with technical assistance through the SELF process, which will guide them through the permit and licensing process. During the next phase, their instructor will meet with them at least once per week, to assist them with implementing their business plans.

**Program Outcomes**

- SELF has 20 individuals currently in training and one graduate.
  - Martin Padilla, a graduate of the first program cohort, recently opened his restaurant "Mi Pueblito San Juan Restaurant," located in Wilmington. To-date, the restaurant is in good financial condition and is host to many local functions.
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## CLINICAL SERVICE PROGRAMS

### Counseling Services Program

#### **Program Description**

This program is designed to deliver quality counseling and psychotherapy services to individuals, families and children in the community on a sliding fee scale. Therapeutic services are delivered by MFT and MSW graduate interns who are working toward licensure and under the direct supervision of a licensed therapist.

#### **Program Activities and Outcomes (2007-08)**

- 20-30 trainee/intern therapists who provide services onsite. Each therapist held a caseload between 6-10 clients. In 2007 approximately 300-350 families were served.

#### **Program Goals and Activities (2008-09)**

- 20 trainee/intern therapists who provide services onsite. Each therapist has a caseload between 6-10 clients. This year approximately 200-300 families will be served.

### Parents and Children Together (PACT)

#### **Program Description**

This program was created to prevent child abuse and neglect. It is funded by the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services. Primary, secondary and tertiary prevention modalities are utilized to impact the community

and families. Through this program, we are able to go out into the community and offer a variety of services. For example, intern/trainee therapists are placed on various school campuses throughout Los Angeles Unified School District, and provide in-home counseling and family therapy and parent instruction.

Through the PACT program, parenting classes are offered that are DCFS approved. Because the program is comprehensive, often many units of service are able to be provided in-house and therefore families have the benefit of meeting many of their needs within one agency.

#### **Program Goals and Activities (2007-08)**

- 9 intern therapists whose case loads range from 15-32 clients. The PACT program served 150-200 families in various types of intervention.
- Therapists were onsite at SBCC, North Torrance High School, 186<sup>th</sup> St. Elementary School, 153<sup>rd</sup> St. Elementary School, Zela Davis Elementary School, Wilmington Park Elementary School, Fries Elementary School, and William Green Elementary School.
- Parent Education Classes, Social Skills groups and Parent Support Groups were offered for families with children identified as functioning on the Autistic Spectrum.

#### **Program Goals and Activities (2008-09)**

o 7 intern therapists whose case loads range from 15-30 clients. The PACT program will serve 150-200 families this year in various types of

intervention through this program with approximately 1900 units of treatment.

## **Department of Mental Health (DMH)**

### **Program Description**

SBCC provides school-based counseling services through our community partner PACS (Pacific Asian Counseling Services). Through this program, intern therapists are placed at various elementary, middle and high schools throughout Service Planning Area 8 of Los Angeles County. These services are offered to families who have a child covered by Medi-Cal. Intervention is available to the child and family through collateral support. While the identified child must attend one of the contracted school sites, multilevel intervention can take place in the family home or onsite at SBCC. Identified children have the opportunity to receive psychiatric services if needed and ongoing follow up and consultation with the PACS staff psychiatrist is available to treating therapists in order to provide high quality intervention.

### **Program Activities and Outcomes (2007-08)**

- o 8 intern therapists whose case loads ranged from 20-30 clients. Approximately 200 families were served throughout fiscal year at various schools including, William Green Elementary, Franklin D. Roosevelt/Kit Carson Elementary, Zela Davis

Elementary School, Wilmington Park Elementary, Lennox Academy High School, Will Rogers Middle School, 153<sup>rd</sup> Elementary and Fries Elementary School.

### **Program Goals & Activities (2008 – 2009)**

- o 7 intern therapists whose case loads range from 10-30 clients. Approximately 200 families will be served this fiscal year.

## **Teen Recovery Intervention Program (PACT)**

### **Program Description**

This program was designed to intervene with the growing number of adolescents who are experimenting with and/or using drugs and/or alcohol. Service delivery is in group format where teens come to explore and receive psycho-education on their use. Each group is tailored to fit the needs of group members and teens have an open forum to discuss the issues and stressors that lead to their use. They work closely with the intern therapists who co-facilitate the group and also the youth mentor who is a former graduate of the TRIP program who has achieved and maintained abstinence from drugs and alcohol. Through this program, SBCC has been integral in the lives of many teens who have continued

on to higher levels of intervention or abstinence.

### **Program Activities and Outcomes (2007-08)**

In 2007-2008 the TRIP served many youth throughout surrounding communities. Youth are referred to this program primarily from Torrance Juvenile Division of Los Angeles Municipal Court. Groups of 5-9 adolescents who were referred for intervention attend the groups for 15 weeks during which time exploration of current and historical drug use/abuse was discussed. Parents were also educated on the continuum of addiction and at the end of the 15 week period parents were integrated into treatment to discuss progress and plan for each youth individually.

In 2007-2008 there were consistently 3-5 ongoing groups that ran simultaneously each 15 weeks which served approximately 150 youth. Of the youth who completed the guidelines of the program, approximately one-third went on to a higher level of care and intervention such as intensive out patient drug treatment, detoxification or inpatient rehab, one-third completed the TRIP program successfully and received a completion certificate, while the remaining third were to a new TRIP

group or did not complete the

program.

### **Lawndale School Support Program**

#### **Program Description**

This school-based counseling program is provided by funding through the Lawndale School District. Intern therapists are placed at the elementary schools within the district to offer mental health support to children who are referred by parents or teachers.

#### **Program Activities and Outcomes (2007-08)**

- 7 intern therapists whose case loads range from 10-30 clients. Approximately 200 families will be served this fiscal year.

- 6 full time therapists whose caseloads range from 25-35 clients. Approximately 300-350 families will be served this year.

#### **Program Activities (2008-09)**

### **Compton School District Program**

#### **Program Description**

This program provides an intern therapist at Compton High School to work with children identified as “emotionally disturbed,” and to discuss community issues related to violence, drugs, poverty and gangs. Many of these identified children are in the foster care system. Youth are connected to the Social Services and Economic Development departments within the agency as they transition out of high school and the foster care system. Links are made for the youth within the community and they are supported through the process of tapping into resources that are offered within the agency and community.

#### **Program Activities and Outcomes (2007-08)**

The program began late 2<sup>nd</sup> Q of 2008 and as of yet there are no outcomes to report.

#### **Foster Youth Program**

#### **Program Description**

This program provides coaching/mentoring for youth “aging out” of the foster care system. This group of children often “age out” of the system without internal coping skills and belief in themselves, or the external resources available to them to become productive, successful members of the communities in which they reside.

#### **Program Activities (2007-08)**

- SBCC has taken a special interest in serving this population not only by linking foster youth to

resources, but partnering each youth with a “mentor/coach” who is a mental health provider. These mental health providers (SBCC interns/trainees) view their clients from a very strength-based, holistic approach. While attending to the mental health needs of the youth, therapists take on a multi-purpose role in the youth’s life as case manager, mentor, advocate and support person.

#### **Program Goals (2008-09)**

- The SBCC mentor/coach will be an integral part of each of the career pathway programs to which the youth are assigned and will stay with them throughout the duration of the program until they have graduated and transitioned into their careers.

## CHILD-ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAMS

The prevention programs utilize an asset-based approach to preventing child abuse. The programs help strengthen families and communities by focusing on four interconnected goals: safety of children, parent resilience, social connections, and economic stability. The prevention programs also integrate into the program economic stability, community organizing, and access to family support services strategies to create sustainable change for families.

Thirteen years ago SBCC recognized that to accomplish the agency's core mission we needed to integrate community organizations with government services. Toward that end, the Family Support Collaboration was created to provide a comprehensive approach to family/community strengthening.

The Collaboration meets monthly to discuss the progress of the program, share information, promote opportunities for leveraging resources, and establish sustainability strategies. Typically, 25-30 institutional partners attend these meetings.

Over time, the Collaboration integrated individual residents from our Neighborhood Action Councils (NACs) as partners; and the Family Support Collaboration has evolved into the umbrella organization for a variety of discrete prevention programs, and serves as a vehicle to incubate new programs as community needs dictate.

### **Family Support Program**

#### **Program Description**

Family Support serves all residents who have identified the support/resources they need to strengthen their family and community. Family Support is built on the principles of family empowerment, a commitment to capacity building for local communities and the belief that families are better served when they can easily access needed services in their own communities.

#### **Program Goals (2007-08)**

- Offer workshops to assist with job-readiness skills

- Offer classes/workshops to increase knowledge in parenting skills and child development
- Offer services to assist families with daily life necessities

#### **Program Activities (2007-08)**

The following examples are illustrative of the type of activities that contributed to the success of the Family Support Program by offering families the opportunity to engage in family friendly programs that helped to promote and support family relationships.

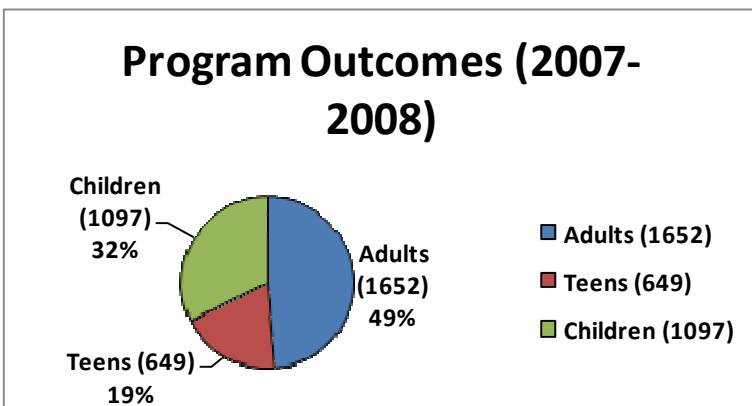


- Inglewood’s CHP Car Seat Giveaway educates families on the importance of safety.
- Parenting Development workshops which included such topics as “How to Help Your Child with Homework,” “How to Help Your Child with Math” offered by the LB YMCA; Health and Parenting Workshops offered by

- Richstone Center; and Parent Support groups offered by the South Bay Youth Project all presented parents with the opportunity to increase their confidence and competence in their parenting abilities.
- The Long Beach Center for Families and Youth offered family fun activities including their 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Family Party/Adopt-A-Child/Family Gift program. This program adopted a total of 158 children and teens for the holiday season.
- The South Bay Young Marines program, offered through the City of Carson, provides outcomes that not only affect the youth but the parents and family as a whole. Parents report that when their son/daughter started the program, they were disrespectful and selling drugs, but were pleased to report a noticeable change at the end of the program.

**Program Outcomes (2007-08)**

**Residents served**



**Success highlights**

- ESL classes have given parent a sense of empowerment because they feel they are more employable when they are fluent in English.
- The Inglewood program is particularly proud of Patricia M., who participated in the

Welfare to Work Skills Development Program. Ms. M. received training necessary in order for her to be ready to return to the workforce and was working very hard at trying to find a job, yet grew discouraged due to the lack of job opportunities. The staff continued to work with her and when a job at the City Clerk’s office opened, they helped her with mock interviews. Ms. M. interviewed and was offered the job on the 11<sup>th</sup> of December, just in time for the holidays.

- Connections for Children reports that a previous Riley school student came back to speak to the current class. She talked about her experiences as a young mother, a student at Riley and an active participant in the workshops. She encouraged the young parents there to take advantage of the services offered to them

**Goals & Activities (2008-09)**

- Collaborate with the Career Pathway Program
- Collaborate on the EITC Campaign
- Insure that nutrition workshops contain a fitness component

## PREVENTION INITIATIVE DEMONSTRATION PROJECT (PIDP)

### Program Description

PIDP is a partnership between the Department of Children Family Services (DCFS), the SBCC Family Support Collaboration, and the faith-based community. This innovative prevention program has integrated three strategies to achieve the outcomes of this strength-based approach for child abuse prevention: *Economic Development, Community Organizing, and Accessible Community Resources.*

### Program Goals (2007-08)

- Increase community organizing activities throughout SPA 8
- Enhance families connections to others in their community
- Increase family economic opportunities
- Increase parental resilience
- Improve capacity of County department(s) to work in partnership with community-based organizations to achieve objectives

### Program Activities (2007-08)

- 16 New Neighborhood Actions Councils established, each connected to an institutional partner. The NACs provided resident opportunities to enhance their

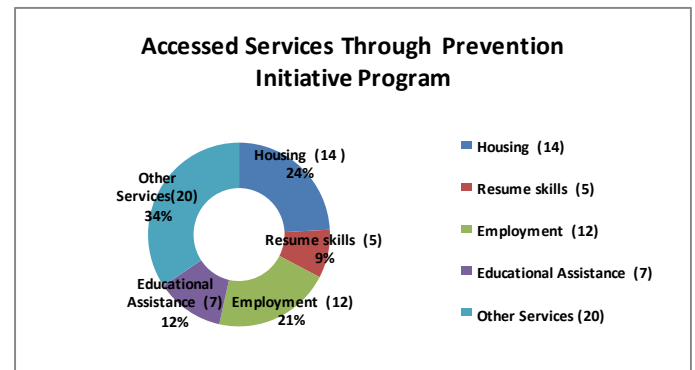
families' connections to others in their community and decreasing social isolation.

- Examples of NAC membership:
  - Birth parents whose children are placed in foster care
  - Women/children transitioning from substance abuse recovery homes
  - Pregnant/parenting teens
  - Asian Pacific Islander youth
  - Intergenerational Native American parents
  - Caregivers (grandparents as parents, adult caring for a parent)
  - Residents of City Housing Developments
  - Former youth graffiti taggers recruited and trained by SBCC staff

### Program Outcomes & Success Highlights (2007-08)

- PIDP was implemented in February 2008 and has served 650 residents.
- Two (2) pilot DCFS Visitation Centers opened in SPA 8:
  - Designed to enhance the quality of parent –child relationships, and expedite family reunification.
  - DCFS Torrance Office and DCFS South County Regional Office have each partnered with a church in the community.

- The churches have provided space for parents to visit with their children in a home-like visitation environment rather than meeting in the local DCFS office lobby or at the McDonalds.
- Parents can now make meals with their children, and spend time in a comfortable setting.
- There have been 12 NAC kick-off events; some have attracted close to 200 residents resulting in more residents joining the NAC.
- Residents of the Carmelitos Housing Project broke down racial barriers at their Kick-off event. Latino and African American women were initially on separate sides of the room but by the end of the event, they were sharing personal stories and offering one another support.
- Kellye A., an active member of the Parents in Motion, Creating New Beginnings NAC was hired as a part-time Community Organizer. Kellye's leadership skills and her personal life experiences as a woman in recovery made her a good fit for the organizing job with the New Beginnings NAC which is comprised of women in recovery living in transitional housing.
- Three (3) NAC members were hired to work at the Tax Center Sites that were established by the SBCC EITC Campaign: Jessica and Jacky, teen moms from Top Notch Teens NAC; and Gabriela M., the daughter of one of the moms in the New Beginnings NAC.
- SBCC hired a Family Financial Assistant who has assisted community residents in accessing housing, GED prep, employment training, and job placement. 48 residents have accessed assistance: 14 for housing, 5 for resume skills, 12 for employment, 7 for different educational topics and 20 for other services (legal referrals, small business plans, etc).



(A total of 48 individuals received assistance. Some participants received multiple services.)

- The PACE Women's Business Center conducted a Small Business Development Workshop for NAC members and their families. The 10 week program covers:
  - The Business Person (analyze yourself and your business idea)
  - Developing your business idea. Introduction of business plans: mission/goals
  - Evaluation of your business: your competition and your clients
  - Your products/services...how to price your items
  - Marketing and brands: strategies on attracting clients
  - Legal aspects, business insurance and managing risks
  - License and permits
  - Recordkeeping /Accounting  
Understanding the finances of your business
  - Taxes for small businesses (EDD/IRS)
  - Financing your business: Access to resources
- SBCC established a micro-loan program for NAC members completing the Small Business Training; Martin Padilla successfully completed his business plan and has opened his family restaurant, "Mi Pueblita San Juan" in Wilmington.
- The youth from the Urban Arts Academy designed the artwork for the 2008 School

Readiness Conference and have orders to

design logos for t-shirts, bags and hats.

### **Program Goals (2008-09)**

- Create a Strategic Plan for 2008-2009 to participate in the Greater Los Angeles Economic Alliance EITC Campaign that will offer free tax preparation, financial literacy and banking opportunities to residents in SPA 8.
  - Campaign will occur intensely through April 2009
  - Tax Center Sites will be established in SPA 8 by SBCC.
  - Traveling tax teams to serve families that have no or limited access to the identified tax center sites.
- Create 10 additional Neighborhood Action Councils
- Continue to offer PACE Small Business Development Workshop Series as well as the Micro-Loan Program. SBCC Family Financial Assistant will continue to collaborate with PACE staff as well as PACE participants.
- Family Financial Assistant (FFA) will maintain communication with residents for follow-up. FFA will also create relationships with area businesses in order to refer residents for employment. FFA will create relationship with local community colleges in order to refer residents for school.

### **Partnership for Families (PFF)**

#### **Program Description**

This program serves: a) families with Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) unsubstantiated cases; and b) pregnant women that have experienced substance abuse, domestic violence, and/or mental health issues. The SBCC asset-based approach to decreasing family risk factors and enhancing the protective factors contributes to the success of this program.

#### **Program Goals (2007-08)**

- Connect families/pregnant women/teens to social networks to decrease social isolation
- Reduce the re-referral rate of DCFS families and referral rate of high-risk pregnant women/teens to the child abuse hotline
- Serve DCFS referred families with children 0-5
- Serve 100 high-risk pregnant women/teen
- Increase effective communication between collaborative agencies

#### **Program Activities (2007-08)**

- The continuation/expansion of pregnant teen support groups at local high schools and a teen father support group have enhanced parental knowledge of child development.
- Teen support group members developed a newsletter which created an opportunity for the teens to improve communications skills and broaden social connections.
- One community had a Domestic Violence Awareness Walk, a partnership between residents and institutional partners.
- Community Development projects planned and implemented by the NACs. The NAC members presented these

projects as workshops at the School Readiness Conference.

- Community-Building Projects Program established to provide an opportunity for Neighborhood Action Councils (NAC) members to use their talents to design, implement, and evaluate a community project. Grants were awarded for SPA 8 projects in one of three categories: community safety, capacity building and child abuse prevention. The projects were designed to support one of these three categories in the group's community, neighborhood, or host organization such as a school, child development center, faith-based organization or youth club. Two groups worked together to present the "Keeping Kids Safe in the Community" workshop at the School Readiness Conference in June 2007.



Gardena Teen Group Event December 2008.

- Long Beach Center for Families and Youth held a "Cinco de Mayo with Pride" community fair in May 2008, to promote alcohol-free festivities on Cinco de Mayo, which the alcohol and beer industry uses to target the youth and Latino community.
- In-home Outreach Counselors/Case Managers continued providing services to pregnant women/teens and families with children 0-5 who are at high-risk for child maltreatment. Families receive in-home case management services, intensive services for family needs (domestic violence counseling/support groups, mental health, and/or substance abuse), referrals and linkages to community supports, emergency basic support services, and family support services. Case managers emphasize connecting families to social network groups such as parenting classes, pregnant/parenting teen support groups, anger management groups, and Neighborhood Action Councils.
- The support groups at Gardena and Riley High Schools continued to provide a critical support network in the community for pregnant and parenting teens during 2007-2008. Pregnant/parenting teens received weekly on-site case management providing coordination of population specific resources, advocacy, and linkages to community based organizations. Teens received individual counseling support and support group facilitation from two on-site therapists. The support group lessons focus on early care and education, attachment and bonding, parenting skills,

- PFF sponsored the Lennox School's 2<sup>nd</sup> annual *Domestic Violence Awareness Walk* in October 2007. The *Domestic Violence Awareness Walk* is an effort by the Lennox community to address the longstanding issue of domestic violence.

life skills, and providing concrete support. The teens participated in the development of the Mother-to-Mother newsletters providing a forum for the pregnant and parenting teens to share experiences and support each other. The soon-to-be fathers of pregnant teens also participated in a separate male therapist-led support group. Trainings such as *Financial Literacy*, *Inter-conception/Contraceptives*, *Understanding Infant Cries*, *How to Soothe your Baby*, and *Car Seat Safety* trainings were specific to pregnant teens.

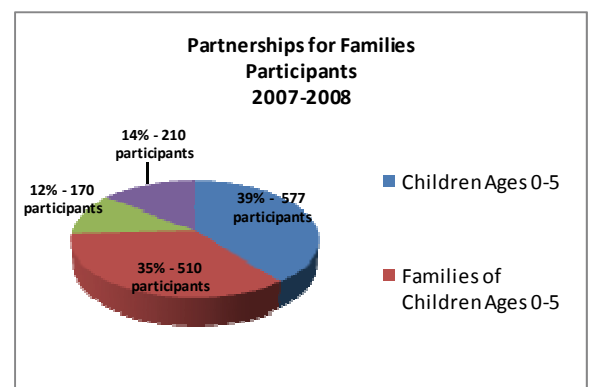
- Connections for Children presented childcare provider workshops to 210 early childcare and education providers to increase the capacity of early care and education programs, using national best practice program strategies to build the protective factors known to reduce child abuse and neglect. The trainings taught strategies to strengthen parenting, respond to family crisis, link families to services and opportunities, facilitate children’s social and emotional development, and observe and respond

### Program Outcomes (2007-08)

- SBCC has the lowest DCFS re-referral rate among the PFF collaborations in L.A. County, 5.6% compared to the average rate of 13.2%.
- During the 2007-2008 grant year the Partnerships for Families (PFF) Program served:
  - 577 children ages 0-5
  - 510 families of children 0-5
  - 170 high-risk pregnant women/teens;
  - 210 Early Care and Education providers

to early warning signs of child abuse or neglect. Providers were provided with video instruction, written educational materials, and resources specific to providing parents with social connections, concrete, and knowledge of parenting and child development.

- Community capacity building trainings were provided to 12 groups of parents and community residents with children ages 0-5 throughout SPA 8 on topics such as: *Conflict Resolution and Mediation*; Casey Family Programs *Powerful Families Financial Literacy*; *Impact of Domestic Violence on Children*; and the *Community Leadership Institute (Parent Leadership)*. These groups of parents were taught skills needed to model how to solve problems without violence learning impulse control and anger management.
- PFF partnered with the SBCC School Readiness Program to leverage financial literacy trainings for pregnant and parenting teens.



- PFF implemented and coordinated
  - 5 community-building projects
  - 12 community residents capacity building workshops & trainings

- 5 Capacity building trainings for collaboration

- **Success story:** *Irene, 17 years old, participated in the PFF Teen Pregnant/Parenting group at Gardena High School. Upon entering the PFF teen pregnant/parenting group Irene was immediately connected with a PFF teen mom who had completed the PFF program and was still participating in the support group. Irene's boyfriend/father of her child also participated in the support group for teen fathers. During Irene's time in the teen pregnant/parenting group she and the father participated in trainings provided to the group such as; "Understanding Infant Cries"; "Family planning and Inter-conception"; "How to bond and soothe your infant"; She also received assistance with coordinating graduation requirements which enabled her to graduate a year early from high school. Irene was connected with SBCC's Urban Teacher Fellowship Program*

*which enable students to earn their Associate of Arts degree, Bachelor of Arts degree, and teaching credential, while also connecting them to paid part-time employment to gain experience in child development and/or teaching. Currently, Irene is finishing her Associate of Arts degree and will be transferring to Cal State Dominguez Hills to begin her Bachelor and teaching credential program in fall 2009.*



### **Family Support School Readiness Centers**

#### **Program Description**

Family Support School Readiness Centers work with families, schools, and community organizations to assure that children under five have opportunities that promote school readiness. SBCC believes that building on the knowledge, skills, gifts and talents of parents of children under five will ensure they can create such opportunities and support their children's development.

School Readiness Centers are designed to build capacity within schools and communities to enable school readiness to be sustained. School Readiness provides workshops for parents, child care providers and

community residents in early care and education, parenting, community building, improving economic stability, health and social services.

### Program Goals (2007-08)

- Work together with families, schools, and community organizations to assure that children are provided educational opportunities through the provision of: Early care and education, Parenting and Support Services, Health and Social Services
- Strengthen parent engagement in schools and neighborhoods
- Increase the capacity of schools to prepare children for school success
- Create a program infrastructure that supports school readiness in the community
- Develop a network of community residents who take ownership of their neighborhoods/ schools
- Improve economic capacity of parents
- Increase access to health and mental health services
- Enhance parents' knowledge of early child development
- Improve communication between schools and families

### Program Activities (2007-08)

- School Readiness Conferences were held in November 2007 and April 2008. These were the

### Program Outcomes (2007-08)

- The evaluation data for *Preschool on Wheels* (see chart on next page):
  - 93% of parents reported that they learned things that will help them help their child prepare for kindergarten.
  - 91% reported that they have a clear understanding of what their child needs to know before they enter kindergarten.
  - 90% indicated that the preschool program is helping their children acquire the skills they need to be ready for kindergarten.
  - 97% of parents indicated that their child's self-confidence has greatly increased since participating in the program.
  - 90% of the parents stated that participating in the *Preschool on Wheels* program has helped them become more comfortable at the school.
  - 88% of parents report a higher level of social support and connection with the

eleventh and twelfth in a series of bi-annual community conferences.

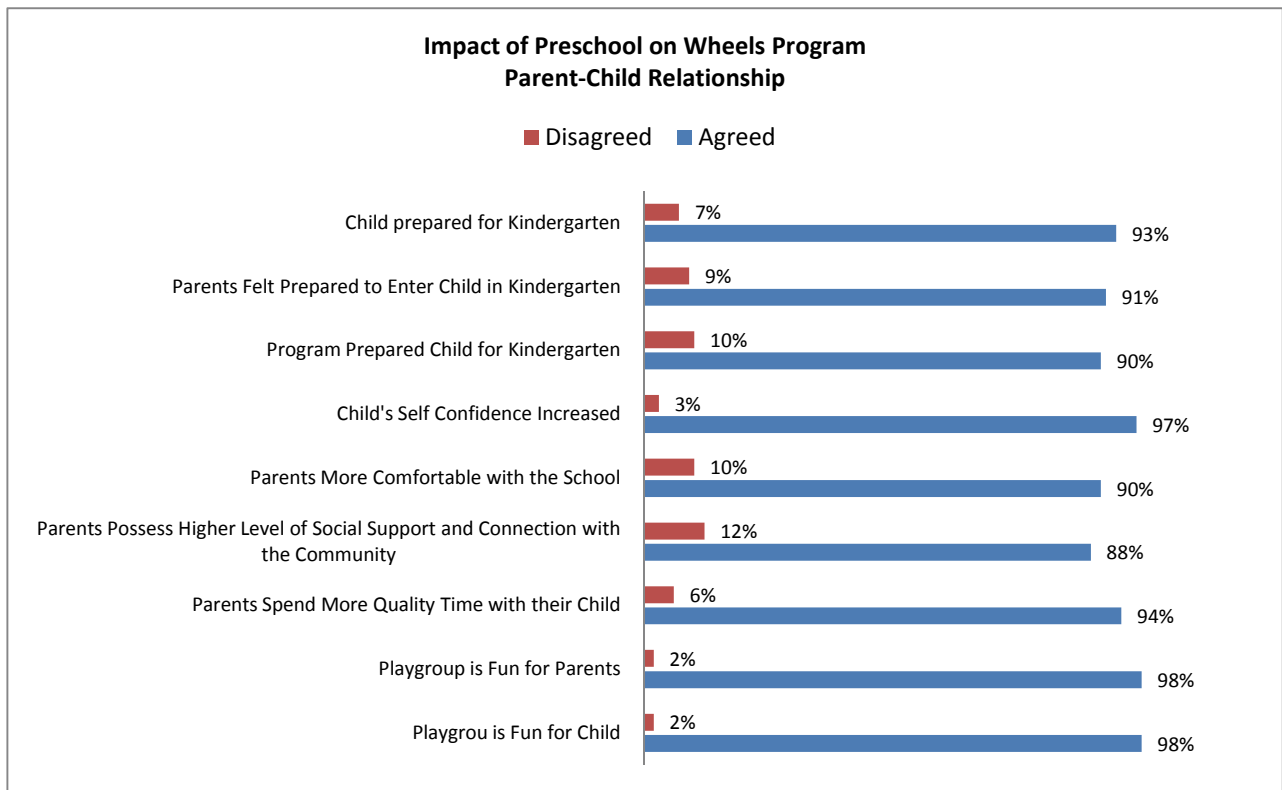
- More than 800 community members attended each of the conferences. Participants included community members, child care providers, kindergarten and elementary school teachers, school administrators, parents, children, teenagers, community-based agency personnel, and community and civic leaders.
- In November a Youth Conference was held in tandem with the School Readiness Conference. The conference provided the opportunity for youth to address the issues they feel are most relevant
- One of the most popular activities is our *Preschool on Wheels*. This component is for both parents and children and simulates a day at preschool. It offers parents the opportunity to learn skills that will promote parent-child bonding and help them learn ways to facilitate the growth and development of their children prior to entering kindergarten. It also offers young children a safe and secure way to experience preschool.

community as a result of participating in the Preschool on Wheels program.

closer to their child now than they did before they participated in the program.

- 94% of parents stated that they spend more quality time with their child and feel

- 98% of parents said the playgroup is fun for them and their child.



- A survey of participants in School Readiness Programs reported that (76%) of the respondents indicated that their child is more ready for Kindergarten than before participating in the program activities; 82% strongly agreed that they feel better prepared to share information that they learned with their neighbors and friends; and 85% strongly agreed that they feel comfortable working on community project as a result of what they learned.
- The 9-week Financial Literacy “Powerful Families” has given parents a better understanding of bank accounts, savings, credit, loans, budgeting and investments. They learn the basic skills they can use to become economically self-sufficient and build personal wealth/assets.
  - 65% of participants attended all the workshops and graduated from the program.
  - 83% reported that enhanced their ability to meet their family’s needs.
  - 88% believe they now have more control of their life.
  - A significant increase occurred in the number of children that now have health insurance. Weekly health enrollment days at each school site have helped families manage the red tape associated with getting health insurance.

**Program Goals (2008-09)**

- Develop an early care and education training model to raise quality of the ECE field
- Community liaison to assist parents with small business development
- Implement the California Community Foundation Preschool Advocacy initiative

## **The Wilmington Empowerment Project (WEP)**

### **Program Description**

The Wilmington Empowerment Project (WEP) is a placed-based strategy for community empowerment and change. The mission of the project is to impact Wilmington in three primary areas: educational outcomes, economic development, and basic needs/family well-being. WEP is an asset-based community organizing model that engages and empowers residents to leverage their strengths and talents to change their neighborhoods and community institutions.

### **Program Goals**

- Increase youth and parent Neighborhood Action Councils (NACs)
- Increase families economic stability opportunities
- Develop community and business partnerships
- Support youth leadership and development

### **Program Activities and Outcomes (2007-08)**

- WEP served:
  - 102 middle school age youth
  - 202 high school age youth
  - 404 youth ages 18 to 24
  - 1325 adults ages 25-64
  - 233 adults and youth received leadership training and participated in advocacy planning
  - 200 youth participated in youth development and leadership training
  - 482 participated in literacy programs
- WEP leveraged funding from the SBCC Energy Pathway Program to provide residents access to high wage career opportunities: process technician, instrumentation technician, welding, safety attendant, and mechanical helper in the energy industry.

- 63 Wilmington residents entered the SBCC Urban Teacher Fellowship Program which is collaboration between SBCC, Los Angeles Harbor College, and California State University at Dominguez Hills to place local residents in a program that results in a teaching certificate and job placement in Los Angeles Unified School District.
- WEP institutional engagement and community organizing efforts directly impacted over 300 individuals.
  - The core of WEP advocacy efforts was the creation of Neighborhood Action Councils (NACs): resident groups empowered to work collectively on projects and public policy issues of their choosing within their community.
  - WEP has four active adult resident groups, representing the geographic diversity of Wilmington and consisting of over 133 adults.
  - In addition, the project has created 6 youth NACs comprised of over 100 Wilmington youth.
  - Typical NAC activities:

- SeEd of Life” is working on public safety. The NAC has regularly attended a monthly with the LAPD. The group has become an official and recognized volunteer body for the LAPD. In addition to advocating for community based policing and resident engagement by the LAPD, SeEd of Life has organized public safety events and street beautification projects.
  - The Chosen Generation, a youth NAC, played a significant role in supporting a community meeting to address local violence. In response to three LAPD shootings in three weeks, Chosen Generation worked collaboratively with the LAPD to pass out flyers and recruit 150 residents to participate in an emergency meeting.
  - Youth Leaders of Wilmington, a middle school NAC, initiated a series of actions to raise awareness about the difficult transition between middle school and high school; in addition, this group organized a school-wide beautification project.
  - WEP implemented an institutional engagement strategy that engaged local city agencies, businesses, the City Attorney’s Office, Harbor LAPD, Mahar House, Volunteers of America (VOA), Success by 6 Early Learning Initiative, the Wilmington Park Elementary School, the Wilmington Community Organization, and the ConocoPhillips Refinery.
  - The 233 active NAC members received leadership and advocacy training.
  - A group of 20 parents participated in “Coming Together to Leave a Legacy,” a research-based parent leadership curriculum.
  - WEP delivered two 20-hour culturally relevant leadership trainings for youth and adults.
  - Thirty (30) youth participated in “Fulfill the Dream,” a research-based nationally recognized youth development curriculum.
  - A major of the “Fulfill the Dream” was the creation of the Urban Arts Academy, a research-based curriculum that utilizes the elements of the urban arts to develop fine art skills. The curriculum focuses on youth who are influenced by graffiti art and are aware of the realities of vandalism, in the hope that many of the youth who tag could move into the artistic aspects of aerosol art. The goal is to empower young artists with skills and experience, and giving them a wide range of options in careers in the arts such as entrepreneurial opportunities which include fashion art, merchandising and art services.
- Program Goals (2008-09)**
- Increase parent involvement in middle school education
  - Increase the number of Neighborhood Action Councils
  - Provide access to economic stability opportunities
  - Develop alternative activities for community youth

## RELATIONSHIP BASED COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

Relationship Based Community Organizing is a core strategy of SBCC in its work with residents in Spa 8. Relationship based organizing is a model developed by SBCC for community engagement and community building in poor and under resourced neighborhoods. This model is based on work done in Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) by John Mc Knight at Northwestern University.

"For nearly three decades John McKnight has conducted research on social service systems, health policy, community organizations, neighborhood policy, and institutional racism. (<http://www.northwestern.edu/ipr/people/mcknight.htm>)

Based on his research, McKnight came to the conclusion that the social service infrastructure designed to help communities has actually made them more dependent on institutions to solve their problems- but those institutions were in fact failing to do that. Despite all the money allocated to 'fixing' broken neighborhoods, things were not getting better. McKnight also saw that because the funding is needs - based and institutions and agencies must tally all the deficits of a community to prepare funding requests, those deficits often become a community's identity. Both the people living there and those looking in from the outside define those communities by their 'deficit data'.

By researching successful community building effort around the nation The ABCD Institute identified key elements at work when a community grows strong and healthy. Those elements involve communities defining themselves by what they have (their assets) not by what they don't have. Communities bring those assets together to improve community life. SBCC has taken that fundamental framework and created an implementation plan for the ABCD

model which is relationship based organizing.

Relationship based organizing uses all the assets of a neighborhood: The gifts and talents of local residents, the power of neighborhood associations, partnerships with local institutions and the physical and economic resources of the neighborhood to partner with residents to improve the quality of their life.

Relationship based organizing strengthens a set of protective factors that when present in neighborhoods support healthy family and community life. Research by the Center for Social Policy in Washington DC and the Annie E Casey Foundation has identified these protective factors to be: parental resiliency of hope and personal power to act to improve oneself, one's family and community, knowledge of parenting and child development, social connections, concrete support in times of need and children's social and emotional development.

These protective factors which emerge from a relationship based organizing strategy create a sense of social connectedness, civic engagement and sense of community.

In the relationship based organizing work, SBCC is working in neighborhoods with residents and families to create groups of residents in each neighborhood who have powerful relationships and bonds with each other who are utilizing their own gifts and talents and the power of their group to work on issues that they care about that will strengthen their community and improve the quality of their daily life. These groups are called Neighborhood Action Councils.

The Neighborhood Action Councils are formed around a community asset a school, church a local park neighborhood association, business or local community based agency. They meet every week to build strong relationships. They determine what their core values and group

identity will be. SBCC provides an organizer and resources for the Neighborhood Action Council to implement projects that the residents have determined will improve their family life and their neighborhood. There are 43 Neighborhood Action Councils supported by SBCC in Spa8. They are located across the spa in diverse ethnic socio economic communities.

These relationship based resident groups also create a network of groups across spa8 that regularly come together to convene a community conversation focused on interests and projects that they all have in common. This network has

the capacity for community engagement beyond each specific neighborhood that will impact all of Spa8. This network of residents groups is building a movement of evolving partnerships that has the power to impact social policy issues that effect their quality of life. Consequently the neighborhood serves as the unit of action for linking individual behavior to broader influences and trends that are driven by factors beyond an individual's control such as economic trends , housing, health and human service policy decisions.

## SBCC Community Organizing Program

### Program Description

Relationship-Based Community Building is an approach to strengthening communities through relationships and collective action, operating from an asset based perspective of individuals and communities. This approach focuses on creating groups called Neighborhood Action Councils (NACs) where community members can build relationships around shared values and then design and implement projects, programs and events to improve their lives and the life of the community. This program empowers the individual, strengthens the family and positively impacts the community.

Many members of the NACs and/or a family member have participated in SBCC's Energy Pathway Program as an economic development strategy that complements the community building work the resident is participating in and moves their family out of poverty.

### Program Goals

- Work with residents and families to create groups of residents in each neighborhood who have powerful relationships and bonds with each other. These resident groups will utilize their individual gifts and talents and the power of their group to address issues that they care about in their neighborhood. Their work will strengthen their community and improve the quality of their daily life.
- SBCC, in partnership with SPA 8, will:
  - Build and sustain relationship-based resident groups
  - Build and sustain networks of affiliated relationship-based resident groups
  - Build partnerships between the resident networks and resident groups with service providers, public entities, and the business and philanthropic community
  - Build and sustain a movement of evolving partnerships that will ultimately impact the health, economic well-being, social well-being and education of our residents and thus achieve positive social change

### Program Activities & Group Development Process Overview

- Group Creation (10-25 residents) (1-3 months)

- Relationship Building (2-5 months)
  - Group development utilizing icebreakers, team-builders, discussions and group decision-making (group name, colors, logo, t-shirt design, etc.)
- Develop Core Values Statement (2-4 weeks)
  - After the relationships are strong, the group identifies their core values utilizing the “Values Exercise”
- Project Development (1-2 weeks)
  - Group generates a list of projects based on their core values
- Project Planning (2-3 months)
  - Group plans and implements their first project utilizing a 10-step planning process
- Ongoing Group Action
  - Implementing project activities
  - Working with other Neighborhood Action Councils
  - Participating in SPA-wide projects.

### Program Outcomes

#### SBCC/SPA 8 Neighborhood Action Councils

##### Padres Uniendo Corazones

**Number of members:** 20

**Core Values:** To create educational opportunities for toddlers and preschool aged children in the

community.

**Focus of group:** The main focus of the group has been to work on the planning of school readiness activities for their children. There is a lack of preschool opportunities in the community, so the group plans and implements their own educational opportunities each week for their children. In 2008 the group completed their first a mini-grant project. The group created an educational field trip to Travel Town at the Griffith Park for the families of preschool children. The group members led activities and taught the children about numbers, letters and travel. It was a very special experience because in addition to planning the trip, none of the group members had ever been there before.

#### Parents to the Rescue

**Number of Members:** 21 members

**Core Values:** Parents to the Rescue value their children’s education by getting involved in their school, and community events that are beneficial to their children.

**Focus of group:** The group has worked very hard with keeping their school a safe, clean and healthy learning environment. The parents designed and implemented a school garden project with the families at the school and they continue taking care of the school garden and teaching the children how to care for the garden and learn responsibility. The group also organized and implemented a

literacy event at Jefferson Elementary School to make parents aware of how literacy can better a child’s life. It was a literacy night where over 200 parents and children engaged in interactive literacy activities created by the group.

#### Guardian Angels

**Number of Members:** 20 members

**Core Values:** The Guardian Angels value the well being of the children in their neighborhood in the foster care system.

**Focus of group:** In 2008 the Guardian Angels worked very hard putting together a one-year program for Foster Youth that consists of monthly activities, some fieldtrips, a community project, family activities, birthday celebrations, motivational activities and many other activities that will help the NAC families and foster children become one big family. The group has been working in Collaboration with the DCFS office in Torrance to identify foster youth that want to participate, as well as providing the group with training to assist them with this project. This project began at the beginning of 2009.

#### Parents Advocating for their Children

**Number of Members:** 22 Members

**Core Values:** This group values parents having good communication with their children

and being involved in their children's education.

**Focus of group:** The group's main focus is on parent/child communication. The group created and presented a workshop on how to communicate effectively with your teen for the 15<sup>th</sup> semiannual SBCC/SPA 8 School Readiness Conference in November of 2008. Based on the extremely positive response to their workshop, the local high school, Hawthorne High, asked the group to put together a presentation for the parents about communicating with your children about drug use.

#### **Miracle Group**

**Number of Members:** 20 Members

**Core Values:** The Miracle Group value each other's talents and being able to share them with one another, building relationships and supporting their community.

**Focus of group:** The seniors continue having their weekly activities at the senior center such as bingo, knitting, exercise, and healthy cooking. During these activities the seniors use their creativity and share their talents with each other, and enjoy every part of it. They gave each other moral support and support other community members as well. Since all of the members are grandparents, participation in the group and their ability to feel more connected to the community and see themselves as valuable has had a very positive impact on their families as well.

#### **Saving Hearts**

**Number of Members:** 25 Members

**Core Values:** The Saving Hearts NAC shares the value of having a healthier community. They believe creating awareness of healthy lifestyles and promoting eating healthy and exercising will create a healthy community.

**Focus of group:** The group is working on a health and nutrition program for community members and the children in their neighborhood. The parents are interested in reaching all those parents who forget that their children's nutrition is important and that they as parents are responsible for their family's nutrition. The group is doing research on everything related to nutrition and proper exercise programs for children and adults. They will get educated on the topic before they can teach it to someone else. They hope to begin their series in the spring of 2009.

#### **Leaders in Action**

**Number of Members:** 23

**Core Values:** The group seeks to create a healthy, drug-free environment where youth can meet to create friendships, guide each other and talk about issues pertinent to them.

**Focus of group:** They hold their meetings every Friday and continue to work on relationship building activities and discuss

topics pertaining to them as youth. As a result, the group members have formed very strong bonds. The group hosted an event for the other SBCC/SPA 8 youth NACs entitled "Bourbon Street Rave." The purpose of this Mardi-Gras themed event was for all the youth groups' members to get to know one another so that when they are working collaboratively to put on the Annual SBCC/SPA 8 Youth Conference, the process will benefit from the strong bonds they have developed. The event was a success, with many other members from other youth NACs attending and their friendships greatly benefited the 3rd Annual SBCC/SPA 8 Youth conference planning process.

#### **William Green Women's Exercise Group**

**Number of Members:** 21

**Core Values:** The Women's Exercise Group's main value was health, but in 2009, they have decided to include their children's education and safety as additional core values.

**Focus of group:** Over the past year the group has focused on creating projects for the benefit of their community. In 2008, the group did a 10-week exercise and nutrition series for the parents in Lawndale where they were able to workout and learn ways to use household items in an exercise routine, as well as 10 nutrition workshops on topics such as: maintaining a

healthy weight, diabetes, cholesterol and many others.

### Madres Unidas

**Number of Members:** 25

**Group Values:** As parents and members of the community they are working together so that their children and family will live in a safe and healthy environment (Safety, Health, Unity).

**Focus of group:** The group's focus has been around recruitment; and during the summer the focus was to keep the children in the community engaged in summer related activities, so that they would be occupied and not be wandering around the neighborhood doing things that are not good for their community. The group designed and implemented a summer long program 4-days a week that included sports activities, arts and crafts and cooking/healthy eating activities. They have also participated in more school activities so that they will have open communication with the teachers, school and administrators to work together as a team for the good of their children and neighborhood.

### Madres Activas

**Number of members:** 25 members

**Core Values:** Health, Fitness and Sexual Education

**Focus of group:** By being members

of the community, educators, advocates and the voices of their children, the focus is to impact their community with the core values they have committed themselves to. The group designed and implemented a health fair in 2008 that was attended by hundreds of parents and children from the neighborhood. Activities included a demonstration of healthy cooking, simple exercises and games families can play to get more exercise, and information on obesity and diabetes prevention.

### Young Leaders of Wilmington

**Number of members:** 32

**Core values:** school and community beautification, poverty awareness, going to college.

**Focus of group:** The Young Leaders of Wilmington held a Beautification Day at their middle school where over 300 volunteers came to support and participate in cleaning the school, planting trees, painting the walls of many buildings, bringing in new trash cans and planting hundreds of flowers. The group has also held a Poverty Awareness Day with the participation of many youth, teachers and parents. The youth shared their thoughts about challenges our community faces and how we can overcome them. This group has also participated in many workshops to better their knowledge and take the right steps to go to college. The group also participated in a summer program to help promote education in an

interactive program using the elements of Hip-Hop.

### Chosen Generation

**Number of members:** 25

**Core Values:** violence prevention, gang prevention, beautification in the community, acts of kindness for the community.

**Focus of group:** In 2008 Chosen Group participated in a partnership with the City of Wilmington, an Assistant L.A. District Attorney and the LAPD in beautification projects in Wilmington. The youth group also held an event called The Hip-Hop Revival, a celebration of peace, unity and respect using Hip-Hop culture as the bridge to unite youth with adults. This event brought rival gang members from different parts of the city together for a day of unity and peace. Over 350 people attended this event including adults, children and youth. Chosen Generation has also dedicated their time to acts of kindness in their community including holding dinners for families who cannot afford to eat at an expensive restaurant, and giving away bags of food and resources to homeless people.

### Urban Arts Academy

**Number of Members:** 20

**Core Values:** gang prevention, beautification, small business.

**Focus of Group:** This group was

formed by ex-taggers and gang members who decided to begin a new life using their artistic abilities to create paintings and murals inspired by their surroundings and leave their past vandalism behind. The Urban Arts Academy in the last year created a mural for the city of Wilmington and received a certificate by the Congress of the United States for their efforts. This group also partnered with Chosen Generation in The Hip-Hop Revival by creating an Art Gallery of their own art. Another great accomplishment is that they began selling their artwork and ultimately opened an art store in the city of Wilmington where they sell their art, paintings, t-shirts and even their own music. This group continues to focus on creating more murals for the city and helping other youth leave a life of vandalism and become artists.

### Media Arts

**Number of members:** 20

**Core Values:** Performing Arts, Small Business, Jobs

**Focus of group:** This group's focus has been teaching youth how to use the latest technology in graphic design, filmmaking and music production. The youth have begun to obtain jobs in these areas using what they have learned including creating the logo for the 15<sup>th</sup> semiannual SBCC/SPA 8 School Readiness Conference and the logo for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual L.E.A.D (Leadership, Education, Action & Drug Awareness), SBCC/SPA 8

Youth Conference. This group has also begun teaching graphic design to youth in other cities in SBCC/SPA 8 and using careers in the arts to give hope and practical training to youth who live in poverty.

### Vermont Freedom Fighters and Lost Angels

**Number of Members:** 22

**Core values:** substance abuse prevention, violence prevention, mentorship

**Focus of group:** The main focus of these two youth groups located at a local high school for youth who have not been successful in a traditional school environment is to impact other youth to stay away from drugs. In 2008 the groups gave workshops at their high school on drug abuse and its effect on youth. They have also made it a goal to mentor middle school youth to stay away from drugs by having an anti-drug campaign. The youth have also presented a workshop at Wilmington Middle School on alcohol abuse. This group also held a youth workshop about how kids can use dance as a way to have fun instead of taking drugs. This workshop was presented at the 14<sup>th</sup> semiannual SBCC/SPA 8 School Readiness Conference in April of 2008.

### Willard NAC

**Number of Members:** 21 members

**Core Values:** Supporting different learning styles/differences, beautification, and safety

**Focus of group:** This group has been working together for many years and is one of SBCC/SPA 8's original groups. This group created a workshop for the 14<sup>th</sup> semiannual SBCC/SPA 8 School Readiness Conference in April of 2008. The workshop focused on different learning styles and how parents can support their children's educational development and advocate for their children at school. The group has also been planning an extensive beautification project looking at the links between beautification and health, race, and poverty. They will implement this project in 2009.

### Cesar Chavez Mothers Brigade

**Number of Members:** Members 20

**Core Values:** Educational Values/School relationships (staff, students, and parents); Safety Values/Sexual Abuse Prevention and Awareness; Community Building/moral values

**Focus of group:** Cesar Chavez Mother's Brigade is one of SBCC/SPA 8's original NACs. This group has done many projects impacting their community over the last 5 years. In 2008, this group became a partner in SBCC's

Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project (PIDP). The group has a passion for preventing child abuse so as a part of the PIDP they created a three-part Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Workshop for their community. The group spent several months doing research and planning the workshop. This group is comprised of monolingual Spanish speaking mothers and they really wanted to look at child abuse prevention in the Latino community. They felt that there was a lot of silence and denial in the community about child abuse and they wanted their workshops to break the silence and help people to access resources if they were experiencing abuse situations. The three workshops on Emotional, Physical and Sexual Abuse Awareness and Prevention were presented for the first time in December of 2008. The workshops were very successful, so they group will continue to present them in 2009.

### **Community Partners Council**

**Number of Members:** 20 members

**Core Values:** Health/mental health, Safety/safety education for adults and children, and Community Building Values/participation in community life

**Focus of group:** The main focus for this group is community relationships. They have 7 subcommittees which work directly with many community agencies. The subcommittees are

Public Safety, Aztec Dancing, Ballet Folklore, Youth Development, Health and Housing, Mental Health, Fundraising. The group works with community agencies such as The Children's Clinic, Long Beach Alliance for Children with Asthma, Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy, their local Long Beach District Council representative, the Police Department, the Lung Association, as well as and other local government. Most of these agencies are represented at their monthly meetings where the group can let the agencies know how they can support the work of the group. The group works through their subcommittees to impact and advocate for any issues that may be directly affecting the community. In 2008, the group held a Safety Fair, in addition to workshops and programs related to their subcommittees.

### **High School Task Force**

**Number of Members:** 25

**Core Values:** Substance Abuse Education, Safety, intergenerational community relationships.

**Focus of group:** This youth group meets at Gardena High School. They also put on different events in the school like Red Ribbon Week activities, the Great Smoke-Out and ALABAZZA where they promote a Drug and Alcohol free life-style for teens. They also raise awareness about the subject at different elementary and middle

schools in Gardena. H.S.T.F. also participated in helping to put on 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual L.E.A.D (Leadership, Education, Action & Drug Awareness), SBCC/SPA 8 Youth Conference.

### **Parents United**

**Number of members:** 20

**Core Values:** Beautification, Education & Family Relationships

**Focus of group:** Parents United is a new group that began in 2008. They got off to a great start by planning and implementing a project to promote recycling in the City of Long Beach. The group created a fun, interactive family day including arts and crafts activities, carnival games and a scarecrow-making contest, all done with recycled products. The group got most of their supplies from Trash for Teaching, a local organization that collects recycled materials for use in teaching and art projects. They also handed out important information about recycling and disposal of large trash items.

### **Beach Cities on T.A.P.**

**Number of members:** 20

**Core values:** The group's focus is on the issue of communication between teens, adults, and parents in the Beach Cities. They want to open up the conversations about

issues that are predominant in their communities and eliminate barriers to working together to improve their community.

**Focus of group:** This is new group that started in 2008. This is a group in the South Bay Beach Cities where there are a lot of opportunities for people to get involved in community life. Therefore, this group really wanted to focus their work on something that no one else in their community was doing. This is a group of adults and teens that really felt that teens and parents don't talk openly about serious topics such as sex, substance abuse and stress. After talking openly in their own meetings about these topics and seeing the value of honest intergenerational communication, they decided that this is what was missing in their community and what they wanted the focus of their group to be. The group then decided to create a series of community dialogues for adults and teens at a local coffee shop for people to really talk about these taboo subjects.

### Youth Pledging Peace

**Number of members:** 20

**Core Values:** The group's values are education, in particular going to college, safety and unity in the community.

**Focus of group:** This group's mission statement is "Education is Empowerment," and "Resolution

Equals Contribution." The youth are focused on going to college and building unity among all ethnicities and genders in the community and in particular for youth in the Inglewood area. This is a new group that started in 2008. After building strong relationships the group has turned their focus to a project to create unity in their community. They are going to have an event where they create a mural of their group logo where community members help paint the mural, the youth share poetry they have written about unity and they have some fun activities for community members from different racial backgrounds to get to know one another.

### Parents in Motion, Creating New Beginnings

**Number of Members:** 25

**Core Values:** Creating a safe environment for their families and children.

**Focus of group:** This is a group of parents whose children were removed from their home by the Department of Children and Family Services. This group has been able to offer each other a lot of support and guidance about how to work hard and make necessary changes in order to be reunified with their children. Since the group began in May of 2008 three families have been reunified with their children. The group also planned a trip to John's Incredible Pizza to have a special visitation with their children instead of the sterile

office environment where most visitations take place. The group also wants to create workshops for both DCFS social workers and other parents whose children are in the system.

### Cheerful Givers from the Heart

**Number of Members:** 20

**Core Values:** Health education in the community and safety in the community

**Focus of group:** This group is interested in providing relief, support and resources for caregivers and to make sure those caregivers are educated about health and being healthy in order to be better caregivers. This group began in 2008 and their initial project was a Dinner Theater event where the group put on a play that one of the members had written about caregivers. In addition to the play, caregivers were treated to a sit-down dinner served by local youth and booths designed to pamper the caregivers, such as a hugging booth.

### Top Notch Teens

**Number of Members:** 20

**Core Values:** Their future, education, employment and their children

**Focus of group:** This is a group of pregnant and parenting teens that

is based in La Vida North, a local school for pregnant and parenting teens. This group started in 2008 and has primarily focused on relationship building and group development. The group provides each other with support to stay in school once they become teen parents and complete their education. They are also very interested in their future (life after high school) so that is always a topic for discussion.

### **Wednesday Play**

**Number of Members:** 20

**Core Values:** Family relationships; spending time with family and friends

**Focus of group:** This is a group of elementary school aged children who are between 6-10 years old. This group demonstrates that all members of the community can do community building. There is no minimum age for caring about your community and having an impact. This group started in 2008 and focused on relationship building and leadership development. The kids also planned and implemented a food drive in November and a project to make Christmas baskets for families that were struggling in December of 2008. They are planning a larger community project for 2009, which will focus on family relationships and will allow for positive interactions for family members as well as connecting families within the community to develop stronger bonds.

### **NEW GROUPS IN DEVELOPMENT**

The following groups were in development at the end of 2008. Residents have been recruited to create the groups in Partnership with SBCC. The residents will work together to create a “kick-off” event for their new group to invite other community members to join them in their efforts to improve their community.

#### **Childcare Providers, North and South SPA**

**Location:** SPA Wide

The Childcare Providers NAC is composed of childcare providers who discuss various topics relating to their field of work.

#### **New Beginnings**

**Location:** Carson

New Beginnings is a group in development. The group is being created by a group of women in recovery that live together in a transitional housing facility. They want the focus of the group to be moving forward after becoming clean and sober. Helping women get on track with housing, education and employment opportunities.

#### **Native American NAC**

**Location:** San Pedro

This is a new group being developed by a group of Native Americans who want to share their American Indian culture and as one member stated, “To let people know that we are here.” They are currently planning a “kick-off” event to invite the Native community in the South Bay to join them.

#### **The Inspirers**

**Location:** Hawthorne

This is a new elementary school aged group. It is being started by a youth group that wants make their community, parks, schools a safer and nicer place to be.

#### **We Unite For the Child**

**Location:** Long Beach

This is a new group being developed by of parents, young adults, teens and children who live in a housing project in Long Beach. They want to work on race relations and striving to build a better community through projects that will engage community members.

#### **Leading Out Loud aka: L.O.L**

**Location:** Long Beach

**Core Values:** Drug Awareness, Cultural Awareness, and Child Abuse

**Focus of group:** This is a teen group being developed by teens in Long Beach. The group wants to focus on learning about and educating on different cultures, child abuse and drug abuse.

**Program Goals and Activities  
(2008-09)**

- SBCC/SPA 8 Neighborhood Action Councils will design and implement projects around their core values. Most groups will complete 2-4 projects that impact their communities on issues such as Health, Education, Safety, Child Development, Family Relationships, Economic Development, Access to Quality Jobs, Jobs in the Arts, Child Abuse Prevention, Substance Abuse Prevention and the prevention of all forms of violence.
  - Representatives from all the SBCC/SPA 8 groups will be working together on a project to promote stronger family relationships in all the communities in SPA 8. A planning body, made up of representatives from all the groups will work together for 3 months on designing and implementing a series of "Family Relationship Days" to support our families in creating stronger bonds.
-