

General Plan

Overall Strategy: Youth, Reentry, Green Jobs

Recovery Act projects for economic growth and employment opportunities at ACAP will build upon existing ACAP programs. The projects are targeted towards youth and reentering men and women. The programs will combine with augmented asset development programs in order to allow those we serve to learn important strategies to preserve their income thereby enhancing family self-sufficiency.

Programs Needs Assessments

Youth

Alameda County has long battled juvenile delinquency, youth violence, and crime among young adults. Most notably in the city of Oakland, but also in other cities along the Interstate 80/880 corridor, in unincorporated areas, and, increasingly, in more middle-class cities in the southern and eastern parts of the county, crime related to organized street gangs and loosely affiliated “posses” has turned many neighborhoods into what residents describe as “war zones.”

Oakland has no monopoly on gangs and crime in the county. Hayward and San Leandro, the unincorporated Eden Area, and Union City, Fremont and Newark all have serious and growing issues. In 2006, there were 2,261 felony arrests of juveniles ages 10-17 in Alameda County; of these 442 were in Hayward, 323 in Fremont, 216 in San Leandro, and 209 in unincorporated areas. There were also 3,088 juvenile misdemeanor arrests county wide; 796 for assault and battery. Children as young as 10 are increasingly perpetrators and victims of crime and violence in these cities. A San Leandro teen was shot on his way to a football team victory party; a Union City 8th-grader was killed just off campus on a school day in late 2007.

One of three 2006 homicides in unincorporated Alameda County was gang-related. In 2007, the Union City Police Department reported five gang-related shootings in a six-week period in November-December, in addition to two gang-related homicides earlier in the year. An August 2006 *Oakland Tribune* article stated that “Alameda County Sheriff's Sgt. Colby Staysa has seen gang violence worsen in the unincorporated flatlands during each of the six years he's worked in gang prevention, especially now that Southern California gangs are taking over Bay Area territory.” Instances of mid-level gang crimes are “very high” in unincorporated Alameda County, Staysa said. In an October 2007 community forum held by the Eden Area Livability Initiative, gangs and gang violence were more frequently cited as a threat to safety than any other factor.

By and large the dominant gangs in Hayward, such as the Latino Nortenos and Surenos, are based on and spread along racial/ethnic lines and thus are not bound by neighborhood, city or even county borders. Rather, membership and recruitment stretches across the Bay Area and even the state, from Los Angeles and San Jose to Oakland, San Francisco, Richmond, and other cities in the Bay Area where pockets of impoverished, disconnected youth are concentrated. Some of the region's gang activity is directed by groups outside of the city. A side effect of our cities' large ex-offender population is the influence and reach of prison gangs, including the notoriously violent "EME" and La Nuestra Familia, to recruit youth and adults for gang-related crime.

Hayward's gang issues cross over city borders and affect the neighboring cities of Fremont, Newark, and Union City. The police departments of these cities, along with the Alameda County Sheriff's Office, are members of the Southern Alameda County Gang Violence Suppression Task Force (SACGVSTF), which investigates organized gang violence. SACGVSTF has a list of over 2,500 gang members in the Tri-Cities area, predominantly Nortenos and Surenos, as well as Crips and UCV, a Vietnamese-American gang.

The fragmented nature of re-entry from juvenile and adult correctional and detention facilities is a contributing factor to criminal behavior among young people. While county leaders have stepped forward to more effectively serve young people in juvenile facilities, re-entry coordination is still in its beginning stages, and there are significant service gaps, particularly in the areas of effectively returning young people to school, non-probation case management, employment, and utilization of behavioral health services.

Effects of the problem on the target population and larger community.

Poverty and unemployment are often predictors of gang and crime activity in a neighborhood, and statistics for Oakland, Eden, and Hayward fit this pattern. In many of the County's hardest-hit areas, law enforcement and social services are seeing multigenerational involvement and the normalization of gang culture within families and peer groups. Young people grow up without a vision for their future, often lacking stable family situations and relationships with caring adults. They develop untreated mental health issues due to family stress, exposure to violence and trauma, and the fear of violence at home, in the neighborhood, and/or at school. Gang violence creates a toxic environment for children and youth in these neighborhoods. Whether victimized by violence or witness to it, our youth are at high risk for post traumatic stress disorder and substance abuse, as well as for involvement in delinquent activity in the future.¹

Previous or current attempts to address the problem

¹ Youth Victimization: Prevalence and Implications. *Research in Brief*. Nat'l Inst. of Justice. 2003.

A number of CalGRIP (Gang Reduction, Intervention and Prevention) programs and other anti-gang initiatives have been implemented in cities and unincorporated areas in Alameda County and the Bay Area; however, the scope and degree of the problem far exceeds current efforts and resources. In short, while fires are being put out in one community others continue to burn and even spread elsewhere. In order to stem, much less turn, the tide on escalating gang activity and youth violence it is imperative to approach the problem systemically and comprehensively with a high degree of coordination and collaboration among city and county and even state agencies.

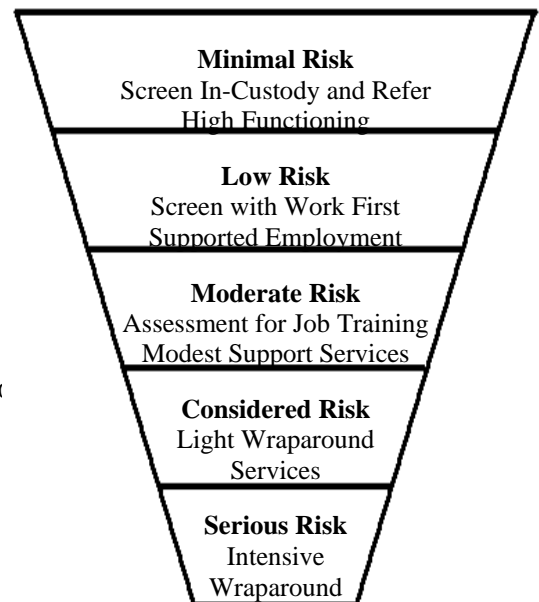
Ex-Offender

With over 15,400 adults currently on parole or probation, Alameda County is more severely impacted by reentry issues than 12 states together.² The Reentry population consists of approximately 11,695 probationers, and 3,795 parolees. The county’s Santa Rita Jail houses approximately 3,500 male and 500 female inmates in minimum through maximum security levels. Santa Rita, the third largest correctional facility in California and fifth largest in the nation, is the only California facility accredited by the American Correctional Association. State prisons house approximately 4,700 inmates from the county.

ACAP in partnership with the partners incorporated in the newly founded Reentry Network (RN), an Alameda County reentry task force, plans to increase services to Santa Rita inmates and those released from prison through the state early release initiative. We are targeting a variety of inmates as determined by the court’s evidence-based sentencing report, which includes the LS/CMI³ risk assessment. The population under Probation supervision is disproportionately comprised of males of color, particularly African Americans, who make up 52% of probationers in the county, but only 13% of the overall county population. In contrast Latinos comprise 21% of the county and 19% of the probation populations.

Crime statistics for Alameda County indicate high levels of crime and violence, particularly in Oakland, but also in other cities and unincorporated areas along the Interstate 80/880 corridor. *Basic components of local collaborative.* The Reentry Network consists of a large number of state, county, and city agencies, nonprofits, faith-based organizations, organizations representing the formerly incarcerated and victims of crime; foundations, labor, and business. In January 2008 the Reentry Network includes: **The Reentry Network Coordinating Council (RNCC)** the hub through which information is exchanged throughout the Network. The RNCC produces the Annual Plan and Mid-Year Reviews. The RNCC determines the goals, objectives, initiatives, and/or activities to be undertaken by the Re-Entry Network.

The Decision Makers Committee: meets twice a year to approve the Annual Plan and provide a Mid-Year Review. **The Implementation Committee**



² US DOJ Bureau of Justice Statistics, accessed at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/dtdata.htm#corrections>

³ Level of Service- Case Management Inventory: the m evidence-based risk assessment.

works to improve implementation of current reentry initiatives and expand effective reentry initiatives. **The Networking and Professional Development Committee:** a vehicle for service providers and others to network and identify/provide professional development activities. Ad hoc **Community Forums** allow for dialogue between the reentry network and the community. Ad hoc **Reentry Task Forces** collect data and information, identify promising practices and policies, and develop recommendations.

Continuum of services corresponding to individual's risk and need assessment: In order to maximize numbers served and overall impact, the Graduated Risk/Graduated Support continuum⁴, on the previous page, provides services that are tailored to the risks and needs identified by the in-custody assessment process. Inmate risk, as determined by the LS/CMI, discussed below, and assessments by providers of specific services (e.g. substance abuse, health care, etc.), will receive focused intensive wraparound services, starting with case management throughout their sentence; educational programming to the extent feasible based on inmate classification, keep separate status, etc.; job readiness training; transitional housing; substance abuse services both inside and outside; and health care services.

Moderate risk inmates will be provided targeted wraparound services based on specific criminogenic needs. Lower risk inmates will be provided with screening, health services via the Single Stop Centers, and employment services, with referrals to the One-Stop career center system and its RESCUE program in the balance of county, and the Oakland Measure Y-funded re-employment services in Oakland, which include the One-Stops and a network of contractors such as America Works, Allen Temple, Volunteers of America, and the Mentoring Center.

Current risk and need assessments The LS/CMI assessment is a quantitative survey of inmate attributes and life situations that are relevant for making decisions about levels of supervision and treatment. The elements of the LS/CMI are based on legal requirements and include relevant factors for making decisions about risk level and treatment based on “criminal history, education/employment, family/marital, leisure/recreation, companions, alcohol/drug problem, pro-criminal attitude and orientation, and antisocial pattern.” Probation officers will complete the inmate interview.

At Santa Rita, ACAP Reentry Coordinator James Brown provides *transition planning* for inmates returning to “balance of county” locations. *Pre-release programming* comes under the auspices of Inmate Services, a division of the Sheriff's Office. Services include cognitive behavioral work, substance abuse programming using the DEUCE (Deciding, Educating, Understanding, Counseling, and Evaluation) program, provided through the Tri-Valley Regional Occupational Program. Other substance abuse programs and services include Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous groups, and the East Oakland Recovery Center, all of which also offer post-release groups. Research from the Project Choice evaluation indicates that 45% of recidivating participants were arrested on drug-related offenses (possession or use), so we are aware that drug treatment is of paramount importance in lowering the recidivism rate. Other pre-release programming includes the TALK (Teaching and Loving Kids) parenting program, anger management; English as a Second Language; Adult Basic Education (GED prep), and Independent Study for inmates

whose risk classification does not allow them to take classes in the educational center; monthly GED testing; literacy tutoring; and occupational programs through the Regional Occupational Program. Vocational programs at present include Food Service, Cosmetology and Barbering, resulting in industry certificates; and Bakery, which provides marketable skills in commercial baking. Employability classes teach resume preparation, interviewing skills, answering the criminal history question on an application or at an interview, and other “soft” skills. MOMS (Maximizing Opportunities for Mothers to Succeed) is a class in healthy parenting and family reunification in the female division of the jail. Case Managers assist mothers to transition from a custodial setting to the community, and housing opportunities are available for women who successfully complete the program.

County inmates returning to the balance of county, including Hayward and the unincorporated areas are eligible for services through ACAP’s RESCUE programming at the Eden Area One-Stop in Hayward, whether or not they have been part of ACAP’s Prisoner Reentry Initiative-funded pre-release programming. RESCUE (Reentry Service Center for Unemployed Ex-Offenders) provides integration services, transitional housing, cognitive therapy, financial literacy and credit counseling, employment training, anger management, mental health, support services, mentoring, microenterprise training and access to other necessary services. The Sheriff’s Office, Probation, the Eden Area One-Stop Center, the Oakland Private Industry Council, Hayward Adult School, and the California Dept. of Corrections and Rehabilitation are all partners in this program, joined by the East Bay Community Law Center and. The Alameda County Reentry Subcommittee acts as the advisory board for RESCUE, which is funded through the federal Prisoner Reentry Initiative and Probation.

Summary of need for project. While ACAP and our partners have made many strides, we still identify several important gaps in service: coordination with Sheriff’s personnel at jail regarding inmate risk factors and programming needs; coordination between Oakland and balance of county to more effectively serve inmates in a neighborhood-based approach; persistent legal and institutional barriers to reintegration, and a shortage of substance abuse treatment resources. Based on our experiences working together, we are learning what works and what needs improvement and how to communicate effectively across jurisdictions and agencies. Reentry Network has a number of key pieces in place and the buy-in of many key decision makers. What we need now is to strengthen structures, and the proposed demonstration project provides a catalyst for this.

Project 1. Rising Sun Energy Center – California Youth Energy Services

ACAP is entering its second year of working with Rising Sun Energy Center (RYEC), an organization whose mission is to “*build healthy communities through climate solutions and green career pathways.*” They do this by:

- Educating the community about sustainable behaviors and technologies
- Offering free residential audits and services that save energy and water
- Providing workforce development training for youth and young adults with barriers to employment

RSEC is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization that was founded in Santa Cruz, California in 1994. The primary objective of RSEC was to provide a demonstration site and education center for renewable energy and conservation techniques.

In 2000, RSEC moved to Berkeley, California and expanded its objectives to include direct services, green workforce development, and youth employment. Their programs now include:

- Direct installation of efficiency hardware
- Training and employment of young people ages 15-22 years old as Energy Specialists

RSEC and ACAP work together to create a summer site in the ACAP service area and to select youth who are responsible and conscientious to participate in the program. All youth recommended for employment have attended ACAP's Bayfair Employment Training Academy (BETA) 6-week training before being considered for the CYES program.

During the course of the RSEC 'green house call', the youth will:

- Check the water meter and water pressure.
- Inspect all the faucets and toilets for efficiency and check for leaks.
- Install free water-saving faucet aerators and can install free high-pressure efficient showerheads.
- Install free energy-saving compact fluorescent lightbulbs wherever it is possible to replace old incandescent bulbs.
- If the client has an energy-wasting halogen floor lamp they switch it free for an efficient fluorescent version.
- Check the attic, if there is one, to see if the client might qualify for Rising Sun's special subsidized attic insulation program.
- If there is a yard, they can mount a free retractable clothesline
- Provide an energy and water conservation education and the Energy Specialists will craft a personalized energy-saving plan, including recommendations to save on energy bills.

ACAP will use Recovery Act funding to expand the RSEC programming to year round operation.

The program will have a strong educational component as well. Youth 17 ½ years of age or older who have not received a high school diploma or GED will be encouraged to enter the ACAP GED program. ACAP will also work with the local community colleges to provide all of the youth regardless of age, who successfully complete the CYES program with college-level educational credits.

RSEC has several sites within the ACAP service area as follows:

- Emeryville
- Hayward
- San Leandro
- Livermore
- Fremont

ACAP will connect the site with services at their two existing youth employment centers, BETA (San Leandro/Unincorporated Alameda County) and Tri-CETA (Fremont/Union City/Newark). Additionally, we will create a new training center in the Livermore area in partnership with the City of Livermore and the Tri-Valley Community Foundation.

Project 2 Alameda County CREW (Community Reinvestment Employment Workcrew)

The Alameda County CREW (Community Reinvestment Employment Workcrew) is a transitional jobs model, through which returning ex-offenders may earn a wage and complete educational goals, while gaining meaningful and lasting employment training. Positive outcomes of this fast-tracked job component would decrease the number of ex-offenders reentering the community without income opportunities or services. This will be key for lowering the recidivism rate, which in turn lowers the costs associated with incarceration for the local governments and the state.

The program has four (4) key components. They are:

Job Training:

Transitional Jobs are a unique source of opportunity for individuals placed within the CRU program. CRU provides an employment model where participants can:

- Learn by experience in the routines and ethics of working consistently
- Acquire on the job training preparing them for careers after program completion
- Establish an Employment History- Many ex-offenders have limited if any work history, which prevents them from having a Resume and/or Employer References, which increases the difficulty of attaining a job.
- Have the ability to continue their education/training in fields other than those offered by the CRU program.
- Continue to search for outside employment while working within the CRU project

With renewed knowledge regarding employment capabilities and options, participants will increase their competitiveness and their belief in them that they have other options in society opposed to recidivating.

CRU members will become used to maintaining and receiving a weekly stipend placed on a debit card.

CRU members will become used to maintaining and receiving a weekly stipend placed on a debit card. This encourages the participants to utilize the skills learned in resource classes in financial literacy and budgeting. With support necessary from case managers, participants should begin to transition, to full-time and permanent employment.

Life Skills training:

Due to the fact that the populations we are serving typically exhibit the need for general life skills training, it becomes necessary to focus on skills needed to succeed in life as well as resolving challenges presented while at work. CRU members will attend classes related to the issues they face daily. These classes will provide training in several of the following areas:

- Conflict Resolution/Anger Management
- Narcotics Anonymous /Alcoholics Anonymous components
- Employment Skills i.e. Resume Skills, Interviewing, Applications etc
- Workplace Behaviors
- Financial Literacy
- Career Planning
- Job Searching techniques

Case Managers will also be responsible for the assisting with integration of these skills into daily activities. All classes are designed to provide valuable resources in areas that clients will likely encounter on a daily basis.

Education:

CRU Case Managers and Staff will provide assistance in connecting CRU participants with community resources to acquire their GED as well as vocational training certification in a field associated with labor.

Building on the Vocational Training and GED attainment, CRU will implement a competency-based structure for the educational and vocational components of the program. This will include two levels of training; each designed to provide assistance to each participant as it reflects within their individual action plans and the overall goal of the CRU program. Success.

Pre-Release- Participants incarcerated within Alameda Counties Santa Rita Jail will participate in Tri-Valley ROP program, which offers employability training in various fields, but will service CRU participants specifically in the Construction trade. Participants will begin Construction training through ROP within 6-12 months before their release.

Level 1 Training would include: Remediation efforts to establish Reading/Math levels towards completing GED testing requirements. Informal certification in fields of interest including but not limited to vocational trades as well as basic finance, educational and literacy training. Life skills training and Behavioral Training will provide participants with skills that will enable them to act accordingly both while working and within daily living.

Level 2 Training would include: Formal Certification in chosen field or profession while within the CRU program. Training can include resource classes that would serve as additional

training or education within a different field from those primarily offered within the CRU program such as: CPR training, Culinary Training, Maintenance Training, Property Management.

The full Training curriculum will be offered by the AC CREW program and in coordination with various community Partners. This new structure will allow us to serve approximately 100 people per session. AC CREW has the possibility of having enormous growth within the next two years to possibly serve over 500 people by 2010.

Connection to Support Services:

AC CREW has developed employment opportunities with various county agencies such as Public Works and the General Services Agency. Other employment relationships will be developed and expanded with Recovery Act monies including the partnership with our local energy provider, Spectrum. The following is the proposed partner matrix:

<p>General Service Administration- Provides jobs to AC CREW participants who have exhibited trustworthy behavior will have the opportunity to drive shuttles to and from the Juvenile Justice Center. As well as General Contracts for external work for participants.</p>	<p>Public Works- Will serve as a contractor that provides jobs within various offices to AC CREW participants.</p>
<p>Child Support Services- Will work in conjunction with AC CREW program to develop individual plans to assist clients with paying fines or lessening fines due to incarceration. As well as avoiding garnishments of Participant wages while working within the program.</p>	<p>Private Contractors- These privately owned businesses will serve as a conduit between the client and AC CREW program by providing jobs free of financial obligation to AC CREW participants. AC CREW participants will be paid from the AC CREW program for all jobs performed at outside agencies. Participants will gain helpful On the Job Training as well as job resources and referrals from Job Site staff. Contractors will be asked to provide weekly evaluation of employees</p>

District Attorney- Will work in conjunction with AC CREW Program to provide reviews of restitution vs. time spent within the AC CREW program.	Sheriff Department- Will provide referrals from Santa Rita Jail and allow for pre-release services to be performed by ACAP
Probation/Parole- These agencies will serve as funnel directly into the AC CREW program based on their referrals of incarcerated clients.	Community Development Agency- Will partner with AC CREW on their Bridgeway project (<i>proposed</i>) to rehabilitate housing in Alameda County neighborhoods.-
California Community College Foundation – Will provide connection from AC CREW to Ohlone College or other local community colleges for additional education and training.	Tri-Valley ROP- Will provide program Participants with Construction training while incarcerated through their Occupation and Employability Program that offers job training and preparation already in place at Santa Rita Jail.
Public Health- Will provide CRU participants with access to the Health Care System to ensure all clients are physically able to perform tasks required within the CRU program and are in Good Health	Behavioral Health- Will partner with AC CREW to provide access to screening and assessment of clients entering into the AC CREW program.
Social Services Agency- Will assist in Providing AC CREW clients with key support services.	Spectrum - Will work in tandem with ACAP to provide employment opportunities and green jobs training opportunities..

Participants will be responsible for working up to four (4) days per week for up to six (6) months. Working according to this reduced weekly schedule, will allow the participant time to meet other obligations necessary during the transitional phase. AC CREW also offer an educational component designed to assist participants in gaining their GED while in the AC CREW and a payment schedule of weekly compensation. Weekly compensation urges participants to open bank accounts and be responsible for budgeting funds and expenses.

While in the AC CREW, job developers will work with the program participants to secure permanent jobs. Studies show that ex-offenders who have an implemented training program can significantly decrease the cost attributed to the State and Federal Justice systems, by allowing ex-offenders the opportunity to become productive citizens, thereby lessening the need to recidivate, which leads to increased incarceration costs, based on monetary need or opportunity.

The Alameda County AC CREW project exemplifies the resources needed within the Re-Entry community. By providing individuals with adequate resources, CRU provides the stability necessary to provide preparation for the transition into functionally living without re-offending.

Project 3 Americorps

Approximately 35,000 people live in the unincorporated communities of Ashland and Cherryland, which make up the core of the unincorporated Eden Area. More than 5,000 of these are between the ages of 14 and 24. Forty percent of the 12,574 households had incomes below \$30,000 and 5% of adults over 25 were unemployed; both of these statistics are significantly higher than the overall county rates. Per capita income is \$17,652, 19% below the county average. The largest ethnic groups are Latino (35%), White (31%), African American (16%) and Asian/ Pacific Islander (13%). Forty-three percent speak a language other than English at home, indicating recent immigration status. Many adults work multiple low-wage, no-benefit jobs to support their families. An additional 85,000 people live in unincorporated San Lorenzo and Castro Valley, which, while more affluent overall, also have large pockets of poverty, high crime and low opportunity. Parts of Hayward and San Leandro are also part of the greater Eden Area. These neighborhoods are also diverse, poor, and lacking in opportunity in ways that are parallel, though not as severe, as the Ashland and Cherryland communities. Even with these neighboring territories, the “heart” of the Eden Area is geographically compact, approximately three miles north/south and two miles east/west. The socio-economic and demographic facts of the Eden Area mean that our youth do not have the access to jobs, sports, recreation, and leadership activities enjoyed by their more affluent counterparts. While we are not naive enough to believe we can fully alleviate poverty through the Heart of Eden AmeriCorps program, we believe that these background data establish the need for greater youth engagement.

Of the county’s approximately 22,000 re-entering adult and juvenile ex-offenders, the Sheriff’s Department estimates that at least 8,000 live in or within three miles of Ashland/Cherryland. High school age youth have to attend schools outside the neighborhoods, in San Leandro, San Lorenzo or Hayward, as there are no high schools in the area. There are few after-school programs, no libraries, teen centers, or teen-centered businesses. Ashland and Cherryland have so little economic base that the surrounding cities are unwilling to incorporate them and provide services. The initiatives that do exist need support and human power to help them survive and grow.

Gangs from neighboring East Oakland are spilling southward into San Leandro and unincorporated Ashland and Cherryland and leaving violence in their wake. A San Leandro teen was shot and killed when he got lost on the way to a football team’s victory party in October 2007. San Leandro police state that the area of 77th Avenue and Ruidsdale street is “known for violent drug activity,” according to the *Oakland Tribune*. In addition, gangs that used to be confined to Hayward are now moving northward and claiming affiliates in San Leandro and unincorporated areas. Inspector John Lage of the Hayward Police Department states that there is “definitely an upswing in overall violence” related to this phenomenon. In 2006, according to the Alameda County Probation Department, 447 youth were on probation in Hayward, San Leandro, San Lorenzo, Castro Valley, Ashland and Cherryland combined, accounting for 25% of all juvenile probationers in the county.

While district-reported dropout rates often do not reflect the realities on the ground, the school districts targeted by the Heart of Eden do show significant dropout rates. In Hayward Unified School District, the four-year derived dropout rate is 14.6%. The reported rate for San Leandro USD is 7.2%; for San Lorenzo 10.1%. According to the Alameda County Health Care Foundation, Latino youth have the highest drop-out rate of any ethnic group within the county (24.3%), followed by African-American students (21.9 %). In the high schools in our targeted areas, Latino and African American students often make up the majority of the student population

****The need for greater community engagement in the Eden Area****

Without a civic identity of its own, the Eden Area suffers from a lack of opportunities and structures for productive community engagement. Voter turnout is historically low, and, while residents and small businesses have talents and energy to contribute to building a better community, the few organizations that can focus this energy on the Eden Area are small and under-funded. The Cherryland Association, for example, consists of about 20 members, while the Ashland Community Association has only “about two handfuls” of members and is now nearly defunct. (Oakland Tribune, Ashland residents voice concern about crime, blight, 6/19/2006) The nearest service clubs (Rotary, Kiwanis, etc.) are in neighboring cities and have historically focused only on those cities’ needs. The Ashland Community Center is under-funded and offers only a fraction of the programs it could offer if the volunteer sector in the area were more robust. Finally, almost 40% of respondents to a survey of Eden Area youth said that they did not feel valued by adults in the community. The Eden Area Livability Initiative (EALI), launched in 2007 by County Supervisor Nate Miley, is beginning to engage citizens in dialogue about how to create a greater sense of community as well as how to bring much-needed services to the Eden Area. Also recognizing the need for greater civic unity in the Eden Area, the San Francisco Foundation made this issue the focus of its 2008 Koshland Community Fellowship program, investing \$300,000 over five years in leadership training. This is a terrific development; however, all this dialogue needs consistent, energized follow-up from within the community to make the vision a reality. A volunteerism program in the Eden Area, with youth integrally involved in its leadership and operation, would increase civic engagement among adults and youth, while creating an environment where all groups can value each other’s contributions and strengths.

Another aspect of community building is connecting low-income residents in the greater Eden Area (including San Lorenzo and parts of North Hayward and San Leandro) to needed services. These might include health care, mental health services, child care, financial counseling, income tax services, services that result in lower energy costs for residents, and services that help reintegrate ex-offenders into civil society. While ACAP and its partners have programs that provide these services, AmeriCorps members can assist in reaching more clients; help clients to utilize services; and, in doing so, help often-marginalized individuals to become part of a larger community. Poverty, unemployment, and hopelessness are not conditions which foster a strong community. Individuals who are working their way out of poverty and who see their community

working for them are, in our theory of change, more likely to work for their community and make it a more livable place.

****Why these needs were chosen****

A 2007 survey of nearly 200 Eden Area youth revealed 61% of youth say they don't feel their community is safe, 40% don't feel valued by adults, and the majority see gangs, drugs and alcohol as the leading causes of violence amongst youth. The academic literature on social disorganization theory and the asset development model has consistently shown that a lack of social cohesion and trust among residents is linked to inadequate external assets, such as structured opportunities for youth, and leads to a higher risk of deviancy and crime. There is a growing consensus that identifies supportive relationships in youth's lives as a key factor in promoting resilience and healthy development.⁵

Those services that have been launched with the aid of ACAP and its partners need additional support in order to have greater impact. For example, ACAP Youth Leadership Council (YLC) founded in 2005 to help develop leadership opportunities for low-income youth, has played a major role in the planning of the Eden Area Livability Initiative process and the decision at the county level to create a Youth Center there. However, the Council's ability to take part in countywide activities such as Police Activities League conferences, planning meetings, and community events is limited because our youth development coordinator is responsible for many programs and lacks adequate time to support the youths' participation. The recently approved Youth Center needs individuals to follow up on planning activities, coordinating partners, performing community outreach, and facilitating the design of engaging, meaningful youth programming. In another example, the Deputy Sheriffs' Activities League (DSAL) has partnered with ACAP to launch a sports program at several Eden Area schools; however, budget cuts at the Sheriff's Department mean that deputies have to leave the sports activities almost daily to answer law enforcement calls. The program needs additional human power to stabilize and grow. The rocky economy is taking its toll throughout the area. The Hayward Area Recreation and Parks District (HARD), which serves the Eden Area, has indicated they have no funds to pay for or supervise youth activities, though they can provide space.

Participants in the April 2008 community meeting conducted by the Eden Area Livability Initiative prioritized 24 issue areas on which they wanted to see followed up. Number three on that list is youth violence prevention, which includes the creation of structured, positive opportunities for youth, while number five is the creation of the Youth Center to serve the unincorporated areas. The Youth Leadership Council, comprised of 30 middle- and high-school age youth, has also made youth and community engagement its top priorities.

⁵ Rhodes, J. *A Critical View of Youth Mentoring: New Directions for Youth Development*, Number 93, May 2002.

Our partnership decided to focus on the twin needs for greater opportunities for youth to be positively involved in their communities and for stronger overall community engagement because (a) these needs were targeted by youth and adult residents, and (b) **these two needs are closely interrelated. As more youth become involved in community service, recreation, jobs, work experience and other activities, they make connections with other youth and the adults in their community.** As we recruit adult and youth volunteers for a “Heart of Eden” volunteer program, we simultaneously engage youth and adults in activities that build community: coaching sports, raising funds for civic improvement projects (not for ACAP or partner programs, which would fall under prohibited activities), volunteering in after-school programs, and organizing to address local problems at the neighborhood level and with local elected officials.

****How Need was Identified and Documented****

Eden Area residents were actively involved in identifying and prioritizing their needs. Senior, adult and youth residents, representatives of community-based organizations, and public officials all took part in the Eden Area Livability Initiative needs identification process, culminating in the community planning meeting where 238 residents prioritized their needs using English- and Spanish-language ballots. The needs for more positive activities for youth and greater community engagement are documented in EALI planning documents. The Eden Youth Leadership Council developed a youth survey and collected 191 survey responses from youth aged 12-18. Survey responses highlighted the need for things for youth to do besides “hang out and get into trouble.” ACAP also examined public health data, as well as engaging in continuous dialogue with its partners: HARD, Rising Sun Youth Energy Services, United Seniors of Oakland and Alameda County, the San Lorenzo Unified School District, Operation Helping People, Alameda County Probation Department, Alameda County Sheriff’s Department and the offices of County Supervisors Nate Miley and Alice Lai-Bitker, among others. These partners will be integral in implementing Heart of Eden, as hosts and supervisors of AmeriCorps members, providers of space and matching resources, and sources of community input.

****Description of Activities and Member Roles****

AmeriCorps members’ assignments will be determined by ACAP’s Heart of Eden AmeriCorps Coordinator in cooperation with our partners in the public and nonprofit sectors. Members will be placed either with ACAP programs, with county agencies, or with nonprofits looking to expand their services in the Eden Area. Two full-time members will be primarily involved in volunteer recruitment and organizing, setting up the Heart of Eden volunteer program under the supervision of the DSAL. Member activities will be broadly grouped as follows:

****Increasing Youth Engagement in the Community****

Member activities at ACAP’s Bayfair Employment and Training Academy (BETA) will include developing paid job openings and unpaid work experience opportunities such as job shadowing and internships, teaching workplace readiness skills, career exploration workshops, financial literacy, and entrepreneurial skills, and acting as peer mentors and counselors to youth aged 14-24. Preparing young people to be responsible, productive employees and helping them to develop an educational and career plan that includes

volunteerism and community service are two important ways that we can help engage youth in the community. We also plan to engage the business community and public agency staff to volunteer to host workplace tours and job shadowing; mentor youth, and participate in career fairs.

Another group of members will be based at the Hayward Area Recreation and Parks District (HARD), and the United Seniors of the East Bay. Activities for these members will focus on youth development through sports and recreation, community organizing, and youth leadership activities. Members will support and facilitate the work of the Eden Youth Leadership Council and the multi-generational after-school classes in conjunction with the United Seniors. Members will also work closely with HARD and the local school districts to develop youth-inspired, youth-led programming and activities at the Ashland Community Center and other local venues. We intend that these activities will blend educational enrichment and recreation (dances, poetry slams, art classes, and music) with leadership, such as researching a community issue and presenting youth recommendations to the Eden Area Livability Initiative leadership team and the Board of Supervisors. Adult and senior volunteers will be essential to supporting members in this work.

A third group of members will be providing community outreach, education, and direct services through placements with local programs serving low-income youth, adults, and families. These members will support the programs in building their service capacity as well as furthering multiple objectives: providing needed services, educating youth, adult, and senior residents about community activities and recruiting them to participate in these activities, and demonstrating that youth are a valuable asset to the community. Our AmeriCorps members, aged 17-24, will be recruited from within the ranks of our partnership's existing programs and services and will be local to the Eden Area. Therefore, these members will themselves be both service providers and direct beneficiaries of our strategy to engage youth in the Eden Area. For example, members will be trained to provide mentoring to children of re-entering prisoners, energy audits for low-income residents, income tax assistance, and financial literacy and economic empowerment workshops.

Finally, members will work to build the Heart of Eden volunteer program, which will engage youth, adults, and seniors in one-time and ongoing activities that build community. This element of our AmeriCorps design will be discussed in more detail under "Community Outputs and Outcomes." However, the volunteer program will tie in with all our strategies to create positive opportunities for youth and build community engagement. We will look to the volunteer program for support in creating youth activities and classes, and work experience opportunities. We will recruit volunteers among the youth who participate in our recreational, leadership, and employment activities, as well as among their families. We will also recruit volunteers from among the recipients of community services, so that they can give back as well as receiving support.

In the Heart of Eden AmeriCorps program, members will be on the front lines of community contact. Whether they are leading sports activities; organizing community

service projects and recruiting volunteers; or assisting young people in exploring careers; members will be the face and continuity of our AmeriCorps program. We intend to recruit our members from the Eden Area, so that they will be highly visible as local young people playing a leadership role. Our vision is that at the end of the program, members will have the training, experience, wealth of contacts, and commitment to service that they need to continue to be local leaders.

Heart of Eden and partner staff will supervise members; provide program structure and resources; and support and facilitate the work of members through personal coaching, coordination amongst the partners to ensure that members' service has maximum impact, and liaison activity with other public and private agencies. Volunteers will support the program in a variety of ways: through one-time or ongoing service projects; as providers of work experience and internship opportunities; as mentors for area youth; and as resources for youth activities (e.g. leaders of enrichment activities, recreation and other activities at schools and at the Ashland Community Center).

Members will serve both at ACAP and other partners' sites. Two full-time and 11 half-time members will be based at ACAP's Bayfair office. Two full-time and three half-time members will be engaged in activities related to work experience and employment for youth, while eight half-time members will be primarily out in the community, performing energy audits both as a service to the community and as a way to build relationships and reach out to residents about volunteer opportunities, services, and community events in the Eden Area. Another two full-time and two half-time members will be based at ACAP's main offices in the Eden Multi-service Center, assisting with services to low-income Eden Area residents. Members will be assigned in pairs to serve as co-leaders of after-school classes with the United Seniors of the East Bay, and facilitators of youth-designed, youth focused activities at the Ashland Community Center and other local sites. Two full-time and two half-time members will be assigned to supporting the Heart of Eden volunteer program through volunteer recruitment and training, identifying volunteer opportunities, and helping to coordinate volunteer assignments.

All half time members will provide direct services or volunteer services on the same general schedule: four days/week, three hours/day, Monday-Thursday, for 36 weeks during the school year (September-June). During the summer, they will serve for ten weeks, eight hours/day. Full-time members will serve four days/week (8 hours M, W, F and 4 hours T, Th) for 36 weeks during the school year (September-June) and for ten weeks, eight hours/day during the summer. All members will participate in member development on Tuesdays and Thursdays, for either four hours/day (full-time) or two hours/day (half-time).

By and large, we are planning to assign full-time members to positions that require coordination and planning work as well as leading activities and performing community outreach. Half-time members will generally be involved in providing direct services for almost all their service hours. By utilizing full-time positions and half-time positions we hope to provide opportunities for a broad range of members: those who are able to commit to full-time service, those who are in secondary or post secondary school but able

to serve part-time during the school year and more intensively during the summer; and those who are participating in vocational training or part-time employment that will allow for them to devote 900 hours to service throughout the course of the year.

We plan to focus on training, development, and thoughtful supervision for our members. We will be asking young people to take on significant responsibility in working with peers and younger youth, with partner representatives, and with the public. As described below, we will train members in communications and team-building skills, conflict mediation, creating and implementing work plans, recruiting, supporting and supervising volunteers; cultural diversity awareness, and other skills and knowledge they will need to succeed. These “soft skills” will make members more effective in their service and prepare them for future careers, education, and lifelong service. Since our members are engaging in a variety of service activities, we will also be conducting (along with our partners) intensive site- and program- specific training, so that members working with youth employment learn the fundamentals of work readiness and how to work with employers; youth activities organizers will learn how to develop and implement activities in accordance with youth development principles, etc. Ongoing member development will focus at first on the skills and knowledge that members will need to succeed in their service placements. After the first quarter of the service year, member development will begin to focus more on longer-term growth and skills development, education and career planning, and the ethic of lifelong service.

Member supervision will emphasize youth development and leadership – both in empowering members to develop ideas and implement activities based on their own creativity, and in supporting the youth that members work with to contribute their voice, ideas, and energy to projects.

Training for members, staff, and placement site supervisors will include information and role play activities designed to ensure that everyone involved with the program understands which activities are prohibited. In our program, one danger area is likely to be the boundaries between supporting a community in becoming more engaged and aware and advocating for legislation that addresses community issues. Fundraising for partners’ programs is another area for concern. ACAP will take responsibility for ensuring that all partners and members know the regulations around fundraising.

Using AmeriCorps members to help address our identified community need is an appropriate strategy for four reasons. Firstly, ACAP and our partners experience more demand for community services projects than we can currently meet. Secondly, recruiting and developing members from the youth population of the Eden Area also addresses the identified need of providing more positive opportunities for area youth to engage in the community. AmeriCorps would provide stipended community service and workplace experience for 35 young people annually. It would also provide extensive member development and assistance in continuing members’ education, and it matches ACAP’s core competencies in youth development. Thirdly, building a cadre of young leaders from within the Eden Area also helps to meet the need for greater community and civic engagement. Finally, AmeriCorps members participating in a wide variety of service

activities will help to form a network and strengthen coordination among those activities, leading to a greater sense of cohesion and community within the area.

We hope that when Eden Area families realize that clearly visible and identifiable Heart of Eden AmeriCorps members are coaching their children's after-school sports, preparing their tax returns, and planting trees on their street corner with Heart of Eden volunteers, they will see that our partnership values the Eden community enough to blanket that community with AmeriCorps members and volunteers. And in turn, we expect that residents themselves will come to value and to add value to their community. As we stated above, the member service activities of creating positive opportunities for youth engagement and creating a community volunteer program are synergistic. We will be counting on the participation of caring adults to help create opportunities for youth, and we will be counting on the youth we serve to help build bridges among generations. Youth will have opportunities to serve with and provide services to adults and seniors, allowing these generations to interact in a way that benefits both. Whether youth volunteer to serve adults, or adults volunteer to serve youth, the overall goal of creating a more livable Eden is served.

****Positive opportunities for youth engagement in the community****

Outputs: We will create a cumulative total of 310 new jobs, internships, and work experience activities; recreational activities for at least 500 youth, and engage at least 175 adults in volunteering or engaging with youth in programs. Our long-term outcome is that youth are skillfully engaged in the community through community service, work/work experience, sports and recreation.

****Volunteerism****

Outputs: Members will recruit a cumulative total of at least 310 community volunteers through the Heart of Eden volunteer program. These volunteers will serve a total of 8,900 hours over three years. Outcome: Heart of Eden residents will report a stronger sense of community engagement.

****Member Development****

Output: Members will receive a total of 8,600 hours per year of development and training. Outcome: Members will attain or exceed the skill and performance levels required by their position description and will increase their skills in areas of leadership, project management, and communication.

ACAP is experienced in tracking common measures of outputs and outcomes in collaboration with multiple partners for the California Department of Community Services and Development's Community Services Block Grant Program. ACAP will develop common forms for tracking member service hours and activities, volunteer hours and activities, and member development. All member placement sites will submit these data on a monthly basis, and the data will be compiled by the Heart of Eden AmeriCorps coordinator. To track service outcomes, we will utilize surveys of youth and adults who come in contact with the AmeriCorps program, whether as participants in activities,

volunteers, or recipients of services. Independent evaluation consultants will assist in evaluation and instrument design, data gathering strategies and data analysis.

****Plan for Self-Assessment and Improvement****

The Heart of Eden partnership Steering Committee will meet monthly to evaluate progress. Semi-annual reviews of data will be available from our outside evaluator to identify areas of success and challenge, potential problems, and analyze the feedback we are receiving from members and individuals served.

The Steering Committee will gather input from members, their supervisors, the Heart of Eden AmeriCorps program coordinator, and partner agencies. The AmeriCorps program coordinator will be conducting frequent site visits and will be in constant communication with everyone involved with the program. The coordinator will be gathering feedback at weekly member development sessions, and ACAP's Youth Development Coordinator will also participate in many of these sessions. We also plan to set up a Facebook site for members and will encourage them to share triumphs, challenges, and comments on their day to day experience.

If conflicts arise during the course of the program, we are committed to resolving them through a modified consensus process, in which all members of the partnership have a voice as we endeavor to reach a workable solution. Members' voice and experiences will always be respected in working through any problems that arise. If technical assistance and training are needed by partners or program staff, we will work with the California Volunteers AmeriCorps program staff as well as with fellow AmeriCorps/CNCSservice providers in the Bay Area to arrange for training or technical assistance.

****Community Involvement****

Adults, seniors and youth were involved through the Eden Area Livability Initiative, with initial input into the top needs of the community and in the planning meeting prioritizing those needs. The Youth Leadership Council developed, distributed and collected surveys of youth needs and presented their findings to the EALI. All the partners in the Heart of Eden AmeriCorps program were also involved, as were Supervisors Nate Miley and Alice Lai-Bitker.

The Eden Area Livability Initiative will continue to provide a public forum for community interface with the Heart of Eden AmeriCorps program. The EALI holds public forums at least twice per year, and a range of working groups and task forces meet regularly. These include the Ashland Teen Center Working Group, the Safe Schools and Neighborhoods Working Group, the Neighborhood Atmosphere and Beautification Task Force, the Community Engagement Task Force, and the Joint Leadership Working Group. These groups include direct AmeriCorps partners, additional community organizations, and individual community members, as well as the staff of County Supervisors. The Youth Leadership Council will play a special role in engaging young people throughout the Eden Area, continuing to report on youth needs, questions, and contributions to the EALI as well as to ACAP's Governing and Community Advisory Boards.

****Relationship to other National and Community Service Programs****

We will collaborate with the Alameda County Office of Education (ACOE), which has a school-based Learn & Serve America program, to involve young people and adult volunteers in service-learning through schools. ACAP's gang prevention program already works with the violence prevention and service-learning team at ACOE. We will coordinate with the East Bay Habitat for Humanity AmeriCorps program to match volunteers to opportunities in construction. Experience Corps of the Bay Area does not operate in Eden Area schools, but we will reach out to them as a potential resource. The RSVP of Alameda County launched in 2007, matching volunteers 55 and older to organizations serving seniors throughout the county. The Heart of Eden volunteer program will reach out to RSVP to try and build multigenerational volunteer opportunities. Girls Inc. of Alameda County has a relatively new AmeriCorps program in San Leandro, and we would like to coordinate with them and with the BAYAC and OCASA AmeriCorps programs around national days of service.

****Potential for Replication****

Our program is designed to be replicable throughout ACAP's service area. While we are beginning our efforts in Eden, one of the highest need areas in Alameda County, we aim to create a program that can be replicated with similar partnerships in areas such as South Hayward, which has an ongoing problem with gangs and youth violence, the Tri-Cities (Union City, Fremont, and Newark), which has a growing youth violence problem, and Livermore and the Tri-Valley area, which is home to a growing pocket of poverty.

B. Member Outputs and Outcomes

****Member Recruitment and Support****

We plan to recruit our members as much as possible from within the Eden Area, using our pool of BETA program participants and graduates, the Youth Leadership Council, graduating seniors from area high schools; college students, and recent college graduates. We will work closely with HARD, the Workforce Investment Board and One-Stop System, and our community and faith-based partners to broaden the pool of recruits. Our work with area youth and young adults indicates that interest in having a positive life option for a year, with a living allowance and education award and the opportunity to help build a stronger community, is high enough that we will not experience difficulty in recruiting enough applicants. Recruiting primarily from within the Eden Area, one of the most diverse parts of the county, will help ensure that our members reflect the community they serve.

Members must have a demonstrated passion for working with youth the expressed desire to serve in the Eden Area and be available for full-time or half-time service, including a 10-week period in the summer when service and member development will run for 40 hours/week. Applicants for positions of greater responsibility (coordinating youth activities, supporting Youth Leadership Council) will need to display evidence of

leadership ability/experience. All applicants must be able to pass a background check and TB test.

ACAP staff will screen each application. Partner representatives (HARD, United Seniors, Rising Sun), ACAP staff, and a representative from the Youth Leadership Council will review qualified applications and determine placements by consensus. Full-time member recruitment will occur from September to March each year. Interviews will occur from April to August until all positions are filled. The selection process will end on August 31. Most half-time positions will be filled on the same schedule; with the exception of members who can begin their service later in the year and serve more intensively (e.g. 900 hours between January and August).

Member Retention and Recognition: Recognition is key to member retention and also to recruitment for future program years. We will organize a midyear celebration which includes members' families, beneficiaries of services, and public officials, and an end of year graduation ceremony, featuring honors from county supervisors, music, and awards. We will also organize publicity through local media outlets and recognize members on ACAP and partner websites. The coordinator will do a brief interview monthly with each member to ensure all is going well, identify issues, and develop strategies to correct problems. The coordinator will ensure that members get the training and supports they need to thrive through the ups and downs of service, including but not limited to: access to child care; referrals to family supports such as income support, job training, and continuing education; stress reduction activities; and conflict management tools.

Members will have the opportunity to build skills in a variety of areas, as described below.

Member Development, Training and Supervision:

Our member training will prepare members to serve the public at a high level of quality, integrity and responsibility, to gain the maximum benefit from their AmeriCorps experience, and to realize the importance of public service. Training will begin with an orientation to AmeriCorps (8 hours), which includes introduction to AmeriCorps; a celebration of service; living on their AmeriCorps allowances; community and team-building exercises; policies/procedures; paperwork; and an introduction to the training calendar, events, and National Days of Service. Pre-service orientation will take place in August of each year.

Following orientation, members will undergo a program-wide skills-building training (20 hours). This will involve building members' skill and knowledge in areas that are necessary for working in a community service capacity: communication, problem-solving, conflict resolution, planning and executing a project, documenting work, cultural diversity, stress management, and working effectively with volunteers. All members will also receive a half-day introduction to youth development principles and practices. We will use curricula developed by the Community Network for Youth Development and training developed in house.

Finally, members will participate in site-specific training (20 hours for full-time, 10 hours for half-time) to prepare them for the specific circumstances of their placement. For example, members serving in the BETA office will be trained peer coaching and youth development and by BETA Manager Mary Devine in job training and career development for youth. Members organizing recreation/enrichment activities will be trained by HARD and ACAP staff, etc. All members will be trained sufficiently to succeed during their term of service.

Ongoing member development will take place twice per week. During the first three months of the service year, development will focus on strengthening the skills that members need for AmeriCorps service in general and at their specific placements. The members will meet as a whole for certain development activities, such as communications skills and leadership; in groups of full-time or half-time members where appropriate; and in placement-based groups for developing skills and knowledge that are relevant to particular placements. Partners supervising members will play a role in ongoing member development, as will additional partners with whom we work. For example, the Alameda County Fire Department can provide first aid and disaster preparedness training, while counselors at the Sheriff's Youth and Family Services Bureau can provide training in effective conflict management.

Our AmeriCorps coordinator will work with all member supervisors to ensure strong supervisory relationships. All supervisors will receive a supervision package outlining responsibilities and expectations, and containing a contract for supervision that all members and supervisors will fill out together. Most members will be supervised by ACAP staff and/or placed at ACAP facilities. Our coordinator will check in with all supervisors at least monthly at member sites. Supervisors will hold weekly member development meetings and check-ins with their members, following the protocols in their supervisor packet. The coordinator will interview each member at least monthly to ensure all is going well, identify issues, and to develop strategies to correct problems.

****Ethic of Service and Civic Responsibility****

Each member development session will build in a time for reflection, sharing, and learning from service. Group discussions may include themes such as "What am I learning about myself through service?" "How do my 'normal' world and my 'service world' relate to each other?" "In what parts of my service do I feel most effective?" "How am I affecting the people I encounter in my daily service?" Members will be asked to keep a journal throughout the service year, either online or in hard copy, with themes for reflection each month. We also plan to create a Facebook or similar social networking page where members can share experiences, post photos and video, links to other sites of interest, and connect with each other on a less formal level. Members will all receive training in appropriate use of the site, which will be monitored by the coordinator and open to all program and partner staff. We believe it is important that members have a forum to express themselves in ways in which they feel comfortable. Our mid-year and end-of year celebrations will include activities designed to promote reflection and inspire a lifelong commitment to service.

C. Community Outputs and Outcomes

****Sustainability****

We are anticipating working with partners to generate additional cash match in future years. We will work actively to secure support for the program at the County level and from local school districts through federal 21st Century and state After School Education and Safety funding. Supervisors Miley and Lai-Bitker have always supported youth opportunities in the Eden Area and are strongly behind this proposal. If our program is able to show strong positive outcomes, we would request additional support from the County not only to sustain the Heart of Eden but to expand it to other high need areas within our service area.

The rapid growth of our youth employment and training programs also gives room for optimism that we can leverage additional workforce development funds to sustain and grow members' work in that field. Nanette Dillard, the ACAP Executive Director, now sits on the Alameda County Workforce Investment Board and is in a position to assist the WIB in applying for state and federal monies that could sustain the roles that members will be playing at the BETA office and expand to similar programs county-wide.

While we recognize that the current economy offers little hope that county budgets will be expanded this year or next; there is room for optimism down the line. The East Bay is home to a rapidly expanding "green revolution," with hundreds of green technology and service companies forming a nexus of opportunity. We hope that this next wave of Bay Area innovation, combined with a strong volunteer base built through Heart of Eden and a new generation of community leaders trained through Heart of Eden, will provide a framework for continued and expanded service to the Eden community and beyond.

****Volunteer Recruitment and Support****

Volunteer Recruitment: As noted above, one of the community-identified needs we plan to address is a lack of community engagement in the Eden Area. The Heart of Ashland volunteer program, a partnership among ACAP, the Sheriff's Department, and the Ashland Community Association (launching in 2009) will start to reverse this trend by focusing first on Ashland, the area with the least infrastructure for recruiting and supporting volunteers. Two full-time members, supported by the ACAP youth development manager and supervised by the AmeriCorps coordinator, will work with Sheriff's deputies to recruit a minimum of 125 volunteers for community-defined projects. Projects will be chosen by the Heart of Ashland Steering Committee based on importance to the community, feasibility, and availability of matching resources (supplies, tools, etc.). Heart of Ashland will recruit both adult volunteers and youth volunteers. Volunteers may provide mentoring, support, and homework assistance after school; help lead group activities, present special events, organize or chaperone dances and other events, assist with community cleanup and graffiti removal, and other roles as determined by the Steering Committee. We will recruit volunteers both for ongoing service (weekly homework help, neighborhood watch, etc.) and for episodic service such as tree-planting, building repair, park cleanup, etc. Volunteers will be recruited from among seniors, students (college and high school), parents, and baby boomers looking to

give back. We are aiming to provide at least 1600 hours of service in Year 1 (1000 for ongoing activities, 600 for one-time activities) and raise that number to 3900 hours by Year 3.

Volunteer Support: AmeriCorps members will take the lead in supporting volunteers. Members will review volunteer applications that list interests, and skills of each volunteer. The members (supported for the first three months by the AmeriCorps coordinator), will interview each volunteer and determine an appropriate match. All volunteers will receive an orientation, either before their project begins or at the project site. Members will coordinate volunteers' participation in episodic projects, and will check in with long-term volunteers on a monthly basis to ensure that the placement is working. Members will help develop strategies to increase volunteer participation, keep records of volunteer training and service hours; and create cost effective strategies for volunteer recognition. Members will supervise volunteers where appropriate: e.g. at one-day projects and in after-school programs. For long-term volunteers in other situations, e.g. senior facilities, neighborhood watch, etc., supervision will be provided either by Sheriff's deputies or staff, facility staff, or Heart of Ashland members. Members will be responsible for checking in at volunteer assignments to ensure that volunteers are receiving appropriate supervision and reporting any need for improvements to the AmeriCorps coordinator. Two Heart of Ashland members will spend 80% of their time in volunteer recruitment and support; while other members will spend approximately 5-10% of their service time in these activities.

Project 4 Green Jobs Training

Alameda County sits in the middle of the so-called Green Jobs Corridor. ACAP plans to work with Alameda County agencies, Civicorps, Spectrum, and private industry notables to provide job training and access to new jobs offered through numerous county-run projects throughout Alameda County.

Civicorps, formerly the East Bay Conservation Corps, is youth focused and offers educational remediation coupled with green jobs through their very own charter school. The graduates of the Civicorps charter school earn high school diploma's, not GEDs. The job opportunities offered through Civicorps are broad in nature and are located throughout Alameda County.

There are many projects being forwarded by several Alameda County agencies. Projects with an eye towards upgrading homes and buildings throughout the County with energy efficient amenities as well as large scale features such as solar panels or upgraded water collection systems.

Project 5 WIA Youth Programming/Youth Leadership Council

Leveraging Workforce Investment Act funding with Recovery Act funding will allow for accelerated job creation through strategies designed to provide youth with job training and educational remediation. Furthermore, WIA partnered funding projects will provide

opportunities for youth to obtain admission into key apprenticeship programs in a broad range of construction and green areas.

Project 6 Asset Development

ACAP proposes to expand our Asset Development program, which includes Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA), Individual Development Accounts (IDA), Credit Counseling, Pre-and Post-Foreclosure Counseling, and Homeownership training to provide an integrated volunteer management network and three coordinated service sites working together to provide a higher level streamlined, year-round service delivery system.

To date, we have opened 486 IDA accounts and assisted 18 families to purchase homes including clients who are on Section 8 housing assistance. Additionally, we have assisted 15 clients to complete education or job training, and 4 clients to capitalize their own small business. This program also includes financial literacy training, credit counseling, and free tax preparation through VITA. Power Up! was initiated in 2005 and is funded by a \$500,000 federal Assets for Independence (AFI) grant. The IDEAs are funded by the Federal Home Loan Bank and are offered in partnership with Washington Mutual and Citibank. Business management training is offered in partnership with the Small Business Administration/SCORE.

Move Up! – Financial Counseling and Free One on One Credit Counseling. Low-income folks have less of a cushion when it comes to their finances, but many do successfully save funds to improve their life situation. By becoming financially pro-active, low-income people can improve their credit, get better jobs or housing, learn to live a life without subsidies, and experience release from the stresses of debt and poor credit. Clients attend an initial financial counseling workshop, Finances 101, prior to enrolling in the program. After attending the workshop, the clients meet with our credit counselor to review spending, discover areas where monies may be saved, and create a monthly spending plan. The credit counselor also assists the client to pull their free credit report, digest the information, and create an action plan to eradicate any derogatory information it may contain. The credit counselor is a certified VITA tax preparer and can prepare a client's taxes back to tax year 2005. We can also refer to one of our associates who can prepare taxes back to tax year 2003. The credit counselor is trained in assisting clients facing identity theft, foreclosure, or the threat of foreclosure, to get back on their feet. Finally, the credit counselor prepares taxes for those who wish to access their Economic Stimulus Rebate.

Banking the Unbanked in Partnership with Citibank. ACAP uses monthly meetings with our sub-contracting organizations to glean information about the needs of their clients and those clients' barriers. One of the main barriers noted was lack of access to traditional financial resources. As a result, ACAP built upon its relationship with Citibank, our IDA program banker, to provide free checking and savings accounts for our clients, even if they are on ChexSystems. Additionally, Citibank maintains a site in our VITA sites that offers free accounts so they can receive their EITC electronically. To date, Citibank has opened 734 accounts for ACAP clients.

VITA Power! – Free Income Tax Preparation with Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Child Tax Credit. ACAP has been preparing taxes in the cities of Emeryville and Livermore since 2005. ACAP provides tax assistance at facilities provided by the

cities, we also provide a “roving” VITA operation that takes tax preparation into the community, going to agencies where clients may not be able to exit to get their taxes done or where they may be loath to leave. These agencies may have clients battling drug or alcohol addiction, domestic violence victims, or people living in shelters. In 2008, we began offering our services inside Santa Rita Jail and plan to expand this service in 2009. Statistics for VITA Power!

Alameda County Community Asset Network (AC CAN). ACAP is a founding member of AC CAN, a collaborative of asset development organizations providing a comprehensive system to build the financial assets of Alameda County citizens. The collaborative is based on the successful “Bank on San Francisco” model and has produced banking and financial tools for use by the collaborative participants. The tools are made available at www.alamedacountyacn.org.

Income Patching Services: LifeLine and PG&E CARE In order to help clients maintain their budget, ACAP also offers “Income Patching” services. These services include LifeLine, a low cost phone service subsidized by the California Public Utilities Commission, and CARE, a program offered by Pacific Gas and Electric that reduces clients’ energy bills by 20%.

Season of Sharing (SOS) offers a one-time grant of up to \$1,500 to families, seniors, and disabled individuals who have suffered an unpredictable financial crisis. This service has assisted people to retain housing, gain housing, or pay childcare or medical bills. In order to gain this assistance, the client must fit into one of the categories mentioned above and provide evidence that this one-time infusion of funding will resettle them and no further assistance will be needed.

Youth Development Services. ACAP has several programs which target at-risk and gang-involved youth, especially in the Unincorporated Eden Area of Alameda County, a severely depressed area with the highest rate of teen pregnancies in the county. The *Bayfair Employment Training Academy (BETA)* program, funded by federal Workforce Investment Act and county resources, provides employment training for at-risk youth. To date, BETA has assisted 220 at-risk youth to become employment ready, helped 123 to find and retain employment, and provided critical support services to 54 youth. In 2008, ACAP assisted nine youth in becoming trained tax preparers for Jackson Hewitt in San Leandro. The youth provided stellar service and received a large boost in their self-esteem. Health disparities are rampant in the Eden area and few services are available.