

Jomsky, Mark

From: Jeanette Mann [jxmann@pasadena.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2009 8:43 AM
To: Jomsky, Mark
Subject: Support of recommendation to Re-establish a City Council Youth Commission

Dear Mark,

Please forward this email to the Mayor and the members of the City Council.

I have carefully read the Pasadena Gap Analysis Final Report and am writing in support of the recommendation to re-establish a youth commission to provide leadership in the area of services and supports for children, youth & families. Such a commission would also serve as a means of ensuring that every issue addressed by the Council is evaluated in terms of the effect it will have on children, youth and families. That this is not now the case is clear from a review of the City's mission statement. Children, youth and families are conspicuous by their absence. City employees are included, residents are included; children and youth are not. Children and youth are even excluded from the city's definition of its most important resource: people. "People are our most important resource. We value the people who live and work in Pasadena as our greatest asset"—in other words, adults.

The value that the city places on children, youth and families is also apparent in the standing advisory boards, commissions and committees. There are twenty of these advisory bodies: three for transportation and parking, one for urban forestry—none for children, youth and families. To me a very clear indication that the city apparently places more on trees than it does on children and young people.

As a member of the Board of Trustees of Pasadena City College for twenty-six years, of the former Youth Development and Violence Prevention Committee, and of innumerable committees, projects and task forces addressing challenges faced by young people in our community, I have worked diligently to improve the quality of life of our children and young people. I sincerely believe that the City Council's re-establishing a youth commission would be a major step toward this goal.

Thank you for your consideration of this request,

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THE PASADENA-ALTADENA

INITIATIVE

launched by Councilmember Jacque Robinson

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RECEIVED

November 11, 2009

Bill Bogaard
Mayor
City of Pasadena
100 North Garfield Avenue, S228
Pasadena, CA 91109

Subject: Analysis of Youth/Young Adult Service Delivery Gaps and Recommendations for Gap Resolution

Dear Mayor Bogaard:

We are a coalition of community members and community groups focused on stopping violence by working with the highest risk, highest need and gang-impacted youth, young adults and families. We are committed to addressing the conditions that nurture gang activity and violence. In focus groups convened by Flintridge Operating Foundation, parents and youth reported:

"Gang violence is happening in front of youth; it's like a war zone."

"There is violence around the schools and youth are afraid of getting jumped or beat-up in and out of school."

"Small kids are exposed to violence and are being traumatized."

"Youth are participating in fighting, bullying, stealing and other self-destructive behaviors."

The 2007 multi-jurisdictional Ad Hoc Committee on Youth Development and Violence Prevention recommended a study of service delivery gaps. This year, the Council's Youth, Families and Neighborhoods Ad Hoc Committee, co-chaired by Councilmember Jacque Robinson and Steve Madison, commissioned Harder

and Co. to conduct the recommended research on the service delivery gaps. The report provided recommendations, including:

- Council: provide leadership for policy and funding and accountability for an ongoing initiative.
- Council: support an institutional home for the initiative.
- Institutional home: continue to build the capacity of grassroots organizations and other programs.
- Council and institutional home: promote collaborations among programs and institutions involved in the initiative.
- Institutional home: articulate coordinated service roles for the City and key agencies.
- Institutional home: ensure realistic benchmarks.

The research report provides a solid structure for action, and the coalition agrees with its recommendations. In particular, our coalition agrees that City Council should designate and support a community-based institutional home for the nonviolence initiative. The institutional home should:

- Have strong ties to Pasadena government and to grassroots organizations in Pasadena and Altadena.
- Be committed to collaborative leadership,
- Relate well with government and highly impacted communities
- Exhibit good planning and management skills and the ability to serve as a fiscal sponsor as needed.

The role of the institutional home is to establish a working collaborative among programs and institutions involved in violence reduction. The coalition recommends that the agency selected as the institutional home for the nonviolence initiative take responsibility for reviewing and finalizing the list of agencies listed in the report. Some of the agencies listed are not involved in nonviolence work, and other agencies that are involved are not listed.

Further, the coalition urges Council to form a new commission focused on violence prevention. The institutional home would work closely with this new

commission. Details of such a commission include:

- Using a public health model¹ and actively engaging parents, the new commission's key priority would be to focus on highest risk, highest need and gang-impacted youth, young adults and families.
- This commission would advise Council's Public Safety Committee and work to fulfill the committee's focus and vision of child and family public safety to include proactive prevention. Fulfilling the focus will involve including proactive violence prevention. This is supported by Municipal Code, which states that the Public Safety Committee shall ". . . review matters relating to public safety, including police and fire services and crime prevention programs."²
- The commission would also have a broad advisory role regarding issues of children, youth and families.

During this time of budget deficits, investing in a lead agency that establishes a working collaborative and forming a commission to focus on proactive approaches to violence prevention may save the City millions of dollars in tangible and intangible costs. The U.S. Department of Justice reports that the tangible costs of one murder amount to more than \$1 million, and the intangible costs to victims of one murder are three times that amount. An effective commission and engaged community can work to prevent violence in Pasadena and Altadena and avoid the tremendous costs that occur after violence, including avoiding the social toll exacted by violence.

We recommend that the new commission:

- Be composed of youth representatives and experts in public health, youth development and violence intervention/prevention.
- Represent the diversity of the community.
- Consider and include Altadena's concerns and participation, as violence that affects Pasadena includes activity in Altadena.

¹ The public health approach involves a four-step process: (1) define the problem (data that demonstrates frequency, trends, victims, perpetrators, etc); (2) identify risk and protective factors to determine where prevention efforts should be focused; (3) develop and test prevention strategies; (4) ensure dissemination so that successful strategies are adopted and effectively used.

² MC 2.05.190 Council Public Safety Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input. We look forward to continuing to work together to make Pasadena a healthy, safe community for all of its citizens. We look forward to a future in which children and youth feel safe in and out of school. We look forward to a future in which children, youth and families thrive in peaceful neighborhoods.

Sincerely,

Florence Annang, Director of Community Programs, Harambee Christian Family Center

Horacio Arroyo, Director of Organizing/Civic Engagement Coordinator, Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA)

Perry Bennett, business owner, Perry's Joint

Brian Biery, Director of Community Organizing, Flintridge Operating Foundation

Myra Martin Booker, Ph.D., Dispute Resolution Mediator

Raul Borbon, Community Organizer, IDEPSCA

Pixie Boyden, community member

Kathleen Hiyake Chuman, Program Manager, World Vision, Southern California, US Programs

Prentice Deadrick, PDD Consulting

Karen Evans, Director of Program Development, Five Acres

Porfirio J. Frausto, Crew Leader, Outward Bound L.A.

David Guizar, Community Member, Vision 20/20

Tim Kelly, Director, DePree Public Policy Institute

Terry Liepmann, Executive Director, Fuller Psychological and Family Services

Pastor Kerwin L. Manning, Senior Pastor, Pasadena Church/Future in Focus

Anthony C. Massengale, Sr., Co-President, Civic Organizing Foundation

Lorna Touryan Miller, Director, Office for Creative Connections, All Saints Church

Gary L. Moody, Executive Director/CEO, Crown Cities Community Development Corp.

Jaylene Moseley, President, Flintridge Operating Foundation

Eddie Newman, Retired PUSD Administrator and Current Principal of Learning Works!
Charter School

Angela Oh, Executive Director, Western Justice Center Foundation

Constance L. Rice, Co-Director, Advancement Project

Lidia L. Romero, Community Organizer, Teens in Action, IDEPSCA

Tarik Ross, Program Director, Amer-I-Can Foundation

Charles Thomas, Jr., Executive Director, Outward Bound Los Angeles

Christy Zamani, Executive Director, Day One

Susana Zamorano, Community Organizer, APPLE/IDEPSCA

cc: Pasadena City Council