

**Agenda Item 8  
October 7, 2015**

**DATE:** September 25, 2015

**TO:** Children and Families Commission of Orange County

**FROM:** Christina Altmayer, Executive Director 

**SUBJECT:** 2015 Capacity Building Grants

**ACTION:** Receive sustainability update and authorize negotiations with Capacity Building cohorts selected to receive technical assistance

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**SUMMARY:**

The Children and Families Commission of Orange County's Strategic Plan includes the goal category of Capacity Building which is focused on promoting an effective and quality delivery system for young children and their families. The Capacity Building programs include AmeriCorps, Capacity Building Grants, Fund Leveraging and Sustainability, and Evaluation. This agenda item includes updates on the sustainability efforts and identifies four cohorts that are recommended to receive technical assistance through the Commission's Capacity Building Grant program.

**DISCUSSION:**

Since the Commission's June 2014 Annual Planning meeting, staff has worked closely with the Commission's fund development consultant, Anne Olin of The Olin Group. This work has focused in two primary areas: 1) researching federal and national funding opportunities specific to Commission priority investments; and 2) assisting Commission staff in developing a strategy to leverage the Commission's Capacity Building granting process to strengthen nonprofit organizations' capacity to compete for national funding. Updates and recommended actions for each of these strategies are included below.

**Funding Opportunities**

Commission staff has worked with The Olin Group to regularly identify and vet national and federal funding opportunities that align with Commission priorities. As outlined below, the strategies employed to identify federal funding opportunities differ from the strategies to identify private foundation grant opportunities. Over the course of the last 12 months, The Olin Group and Commission staff has been able to refine strategies and identify the next steps for each category.

*Federal Funding Opportunities*

As grant opportunities have been identified, The Olin Group prepares "opportunity briefs" that are designed for quick review and for easy forwarding to potential partners and grantees as identified by Commission staff. Commission staff then reviews and prioritizes potential projects that may be pursued by the Commission directly, in partnership with other grantees, and/or referred to other agencies or research institutions.

Since implementing this process, multiple grant opportunities have been prioritized and referred to partners. The Commission has provided letters of support to several local community health centers as they pursued additional federal awards for increased health access points and health infrastructure based on the grant briefs that have been distributed to partnering agencies. Understanding the requirements of these funding opportunities over the last year has helped identify areas within the county and with funded partners that could strengthen the response, such as developing partnership with academic and individual research institutions, developing a process by which opportunities can be vetted quickly by interested agencies to leverage strengths, and encouraging collaborative proposals when possible.

#### *Private Foundation*

The Olin Group has conducted an analysis of private foundations that routinely give more than \$50,000, provide grant opportunities within the Commission's priority areas and have a track record of granting within Orange County. They also documented whether the foundations solicited grant proposals or were invitation only. This data will be used to develop increased regional awareness about the funding opportunities and providing technical assistance to funded agencies and collaborations that are well positioned to pursue funding.

The Olin Group will provide both grant writing assistance, as directed by Commission staff, as well as maintaining a database of large grants identified, grants pursued, and grants awarded to measure the progress the Commission and funded partners are making in identifying and pursuing these opportunities.

#### **Capacity Building Grants**

The Commission's 2015 Capacity Building program is designed to support cohorts of local nonprofit organizations focused on strengthening the service delivery system through the use of collective impact strategies. The Capacity Building program is designed to improve the non-profit sector's ability to use collective impact strategies to be more competitive nationally.

Specifically, the funding opportunity is focused on making impacts in Commission priority areas by:

- Increasing the cohort's ability to pursue research, evaluation and system improvement grants on behalf of regional projects
- Supporting the expansion and sustainability of proven interventions
- Promoting evidence-based models and tools
- Enhancing shared measurement systems and use of available data to support outcomes reporting
- Minimizing duplication and redundancies in services
- Strengthening regional indicators by focus area and support the creation of regional needs statements
- Bolstering coalition efforts focused on strengthening Commission priorities

The Capacity Building application was released in June, and staff is recommending four applications for support. A description of each of the recommended cohorts for funding is included in Attachment 1.

Over the next two months, Commission staff will meet with each selected cohort to develop work plans that include a schedule for major deliverables, technical support needed to complete

deliverables, and cost estimates. Authority to enter into agreements with each cohort will be requested at the December meeting. In addition, the selected cohorts will be directly connected with the funding opportunities identified by The Olin Group, who will support their efforts to apply for funding.

**STRATEGIC PLAN & FISCAL SUMMARY:**

The proposed action has been specifically reviewed in relation to the Commission's Strategic Plan and is consistent with the Commission's Capacity Building goals. The total funding to support the Capacity Building grants is \$500,000 which includes \$250,000 carry forward from FY 2014/15 and \$250,000 from FY 2015/16.

**PRIOR COMMISSION ACTIONS:**

- May 2015- Approved Releasing the Capacity Building Request for Application
- February 2015- Capacity Building program update
- September 2014- Update on Sustainability Strategies
- March 2014 – Capacity Building Goal Area Update

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**

1. Receive update on Commission sustainability efforts and provide direction to staff.
2. Authorize Executive Director or designee to enter into negotiations with each of the selected Capacity Building cohorts to support the request for technical assistance and the identified outcomes as identified in Attachment 1. Direct staff to return with final set of terms and conditions for Commission approval in December.

**ATTACHMENT:**

1. Recommended Capacity Building Cohorts

**Contact:** Kim Goll

## Recommended Capacity Building Cohorts

Cohort Focus	Cohort Members	Proposed Activities/Milestones	Cohort Objective
Children's Mental Health	CHOC Children's Foundation Orange County Department of Education Regional Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare asset map</li> <li>• Identify additional cohort partners</li> <li>• Analyze childcare provider survey results</li> <li>• Develop Theory of Change</li> <li>• Develop strategies to align services and systems</li> </ul>	Improve mental health and behavioral health outcomes for children in Orange County. The cohort will improve its understanding of the needs in the county and how it can effectively address those needs through the creation of a county wide system of supports for early learning providers and parents.
Early Learning	Center for the Study of Social Policy Delhi Community Center El Sol Academy Orange County Labor Federation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze Early Development Index profile for Santa Ana Schools, health data, family economic well-being</li> <li>• Develop a landscape and network analysis of organizations, civic leaders and other stakeholders focused on early childhood</li> </ul>	Begin a collective impact process that focuses on ensuring Santa Ana young children are healthy and ready to learn when they enter school. Focus of cohort will be to engage members in a shared agenda, to identify stakeholders that can address gaps that exist in school readiness rates in Santa Ana and to conceptualize strategies for cohort deployment.
Developmental Screening	CHOC Primary Care Clinics American Academy of Pediatrics Blind Children's Learning Center Cal Optima Orange County Child Abuse Prevention Center Regional Center Orange County Family Support Network MOMS Orange County Orange County Department of Education Pretend City Providence Speech and Language The Center for Autism Western Youth Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop cohort evaluation framework</li> <li>• Conduct network analysis of stakeholders focused on developmental screenings</li> <li>• Develop cohort case for investment</li> </ul>	Strengthen the existing regional developmental screening network and attract new members. This will be achieved by developing a regional theory of change, identify funding that will sustain and expand screening services and systems, and develop an evaluation framework to guide the cohort's efforts to measure impact.
Homeless Families	Mercy House American Family Housing Family Assistance Ministries Families Forward Pathways of Hope South County Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop cohort Theory of Change</li> <li>• Identify system enhancements</li> <li>• Identify additional cohort partners</li> <li>• Analysis of existing data collected in the County's Homeless Management Information System</li> </ul>	Establish a common agenda for family homeless service providers targeting shared measurements, comprehensive analysis to inform system changes, and ultimately open channels for new funding opportunities to support the continuum of care for homeless families in Orange County.