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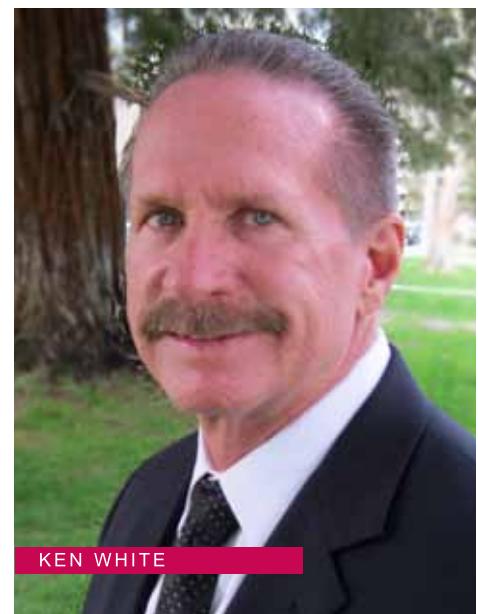
New Food Bank Manager

Community Action Partnership of Kern is delighted to announce the appointment of our new Food Bank Manager, Ken White. Ken and his family moved from Tampa, FL, where he was employed by Metropolitan Ministries for six years, first as Operations Manager and later as the Vice President of Operations. Ken also has a 20-year history with Verizon where he directed logistic activities throughout Florida and managed warehouses in three states in his role as a Senior Consultant.

Ken joined the CAPK Food Bank in the middle of December 2013. He has since reached out and established contact with key stakeholders in the community: Golden Empire Gleaners, Kern Food Policy Council, Bakersfield Homeless Center, Greater Bakersfield Chamber of Commerce, and United Way, among others.

Ken brings his extensive experience in strategic planning, project management, optimizing operation efficiency, team building, and overseeing daily operations, such as maintenance, warehouse, transportation, and property management. With our increased capacity for food storage at the Food Bank and Ken's expertise in operations efficiency, we will be able to maximize the amount of food we accept and distribute. In addition to 102 food distribution sites and existing programs such as Kern Nutrition on Wheels (KNOW) and BackPack Buddies, the Food Bank plans to launch more advocacy and education initiatives for a healthy Kern County.

"I don't like to see people go hungry — it's not right." —Ken White



KEN WHITE

CAPK to strengthen financial empowerment efforts for Head Start parents

In late 2013, CAPK was one of only five Community Action Agencies from among a total of 70 applicants across the country to receive a technical assistance grant from the Corporation for Enterprise Development (CFED),

which works at the local, state, and federal levels to create economic opportunity that alleviates poverty.

The grant comes in the form of a \$5,000 year-long contract, and basically pays

CAPK to learn. Throughout 2014, Child Education & Development Services (CEDS) staff will receive advice on how to better provide financial empowerment services to Head Start families. CAPK is already one step ahead of the game, as its program offering includes valuable community resources such as Volunteer Income Tax Assistance and access to Earned Income Tax Credits; Green Energy Assistance/Home Weatherization; Women, Infants & Children Supplemental Nutrition; "Making Every Dollar Count" financial

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Financial empowerment for Head Start parents

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education, classes and more.

CAPK staff will have an opportunity to learn from CFED technical assistants as well as fellow 2014 grant recipients in Kentucky, Michigan, Texas, and Nevada via regularly scheduled teleconferences, and will also attend an in-person learning group event in Washington, D.C. during CFED's Assets Learning Conference later in the year.

CAPK's Director of Planning, Research & Development, Ralph Martinez, whose vision is to integrate the agency's many financial empowerment services to help client families attain self-sufficiency, said, "Studies have shown that financial empowerment is an effective tool in helping individuals and families advance toward self-sufficiency by accumulating wealth, making more informed choices in spending, and setting self-improvement goals such as advancing their education, securing health services or seeking and keeping a job—and, of course, by helping them gain knowledge on how to access and utilize available financial resources in the community."

Applying for this grant was strongly encouraged last fall by

the National Office of Head Start, which, in a circular, stated that "children are more likely to thrive if their family environment is economically stable."



CAPK Director of Child Education & Development Services, Yolanda Gonzales, introduces Corporation for Enterprise Development Technical Advisor Tony Banegas to a room full of Head Start parents and staff during his Feb. 6-7 visit. Mr. Banegas was here to provide assistance and advise on financial empowerment.

Friendship House & Shafter Youth Center Empower Girls with Pre-Employment Skills

In 2013, CAPK's Friendship House Community Center and Shafter Youth Center introduced pre-employment programs for adolescent girls (ages 14-18) to help them gain career and interpersonal skills as they prepare for the workforce.

The program was piloted at the Friendship House, in collaboration with the Kern High School District Career Resource Department and with funding from the Women & Girl's Fund of Kern County. The program provided 50 girls with a two-week pre-employment workshop followed by three months of job shadowing at CAPK's Migrant Childcare Alternative Payment Program, 2-1-1 Kern County, and the Friendship House Community Center.

Teenaged participants received training in pre-employment and job skills such as: résumé preparation, how to conduct job searches and fill out applications, interviewing techniques, computer skills, and skills for interacting professionally with people on the phone and in person.

The program culminated in a "College & Career Day" at the Friendship House, with attendance from: CSUB, DeVry University, Bakersfield Adult School, Kaplan College, Stop the Violence, Greater Bakersfield Legal Assistance, and the State of California Employment Development Department.

The Pre-Employment Resource Program for Girls was replicated at the Shafter Youth Center, where 16 participants were provided with pre-employment workshops, followed by one month of job shadowing at the Shafter Youth Center and at the Shafter Recreation and Park District.



After the job shadowing experience, the California College of Vocational Careers hosted a "College & Career Day" for the Pre-Employment Resource Program in Shafter. The participants were received a campus tour, an introduction to vocational careers in health care, and information about the standardized California Basic Educational Skills Test—administered throughout the state for individuals interested in teaching at public schools.

We are seeking additional funding to help grow these efforts to prepare young women to become successful working professionals.

Kern Nutrition On Wheels

The CAPK Food Bank implemented the Kern Nutrition on Wheels (KNOW) Program at Lost Hills Elementary School in September 2013. Over a three-month period, the KNOW team visited the school six times and distributed over 9,000 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables to 610 students.

During each visit, Karen Bayne of the University of California Cooperative Extension talked to students about the importance of healthy eating and the nutritional benefits of various fruits and vegetables. Each student then went through the distribution line and received up to two pounds of fresh produce.



At the end of the program at Lost Hills Elementary, each student submitted an essay on what he or she had learned and received two toys, such as jump ropes, Frisbees, volleyballs, etc., that would encourage outdoor physical activity.

On January 10, the KNOW program held its first session at Casa Loma Elementary School where 836 children learned all about spinach.

FREE Tax Preparation Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)

CAPK's VITA program provides free tax preparation and e-filing services to low- to moderate-income individuals, families, and seniors. Last year we completed almost 4,000 tax returns and helped Kern County residents claim over \$2.5 million in Earned Income Tax Credit, which were brought back into the county.

Our new VITA office is located at 1002 Wible Road, Suite "J", in Bakersfield. To schedule your appointment, please call (661) 834-1724 or dial 2-1-1 to find the nearest VITA location.

ITEMS TO BRING FOR YOUR TAX PREPARATION APPOINTMENT:

- Picture ID
- Social Security Cards or ITIN's
- W-2's, 1099's, gambling income and losses, social security benefits
- Interest & dividends statements
- Bank routing & account numbers for direct deposit
- Day care provider information, if applicable
- If married, and filing jointly, both spouses must be present

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From our Executive Director

I am excited to inform you that I am the Chair of March of Dimes' March for Babies 2014. CAPK's programs such as WIC, Head Start, and Early Head Start are directly aligned with the March of Dimes' mission, as they strive to ensure healthy child development.

If you are a parent or relative of one of the 14,416 babies born prematurely in Kern County over the last year, your family benefited from the work of the March of Dimes through specialized care in the NICU. March of Dimes strives to prevent birth defects, premature birth and infant mortality through research, community service, education, and advocacy all across the United States.

CAPK will be actively supporting the March for Babies 2014 through sponsorship and by forming walking teams. If you are interested in walking or donating to this worthy cause, please visit www.marchforbabies.org, or call Swathi Venkatesh at (661) 336-5236, ext. 1105.

The 2014 March for Babies will take place on Saturday, April 12, from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm at Liberty Park in Bakersfield.



JEREMY T. TOBIAS



March for Babies Executive Leadership Team (from left): Kim McCarley, March of Dimes; Ralph Martinez, Director; Yolanda Gonzales, Director; Jeremy Tobias, Executive Director; Garth Corrigan, CAPK Board Member; Fred Plane, CAPK Board Member; and Gabriela Mello, Wells Fargo (not pictured).

I would also like to add that last December CAPK updated its profile on the Kern Community Foundation's website, www.kernfoundation.org, so that potential funders could see it and get inspired about giving to CAPK. I was asked for a personal statement, and this is some of what I've shared with the community:

CAPK is highly visible and transparent. Our annual detailed audits are reviewed and vetted publicly by our 15-member Board of Directors, which is made up of three equally represented sectors of the community: Elected officials; Private Industry; and Low-Income. Monthly Board meetings are open to the public and follow the California open meeting law. This results in an operation that is a gold standard and beyond reproach...

CAPK is committed to the promise of Community Action, which 'changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities and makes America a better place to live'...

To continue our efforts, it is imperative that we review how we operate, re-examine our priorities and strategies, and strive to be innovative in the use of our resources and delivery of services...

In that spirit, we will be working throughout 2014 to prepare for our 50th Anniversary next year. Stay tuned for many good things to come!

East Kern Family Resource Center

The newest addition to CAPK's array of programs is the East Kern Family Resource Center located in Mojave. The center provides case management services to low-income families in need and school readiness services to prepare children to enter school.

For more information or if you're interested in receiving services, please contact the center at (661) 824-4118 or visit us at 15862 "K" Street in Mojave.

CAPK SPOTLIGHT

SHAFTER YOUTH CENTER SURVEY

Are you a current or former resident of Shafter, CA? Help the Shafter Youth Center understand what kinds of programs and services you and your family would like to see offered.

Please visit www.capk.org and answer our short survey before February 28. (Also available in Spanish)

2-1-1 KERN COUNTY

2-1-1 Kern County, a program of CAPK, provides comprehensive information and referral services that link local residents to community health and human services and support. Callers seeking assistance can simply dial 2-1-1 toll-free to be connected with Information and Referral Specialists who use a resource directory to research and provide the information they need. The Resource Directory is also available online so anyone may find up-to-date information and referral resources. Visit www.capk.org/211kern to access the directory.

SHAFTER COMMUNITY AWARDS

On January 23, CAPK's Angie Velarde was honored at the 66th Annual Shafter Community Awards in the Youth Development category. Keep up the good work, Angie!



ANGIE VELARDE

Green Energy Program Weatherization and Home Energy Assistance

Community Action Partnership of payment assistance.

Kern Green Energy's 2014 Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) commenced on February 1. Green Energy aims to assist 500 Kern County residents with weatherization services; 300 residents with propane assistance; and 7,000 residents with utility

To find out more about the Green Energy Program or see if you qualify, please dial 2-1-1.

Big Bear WIC Office Moves

Our Big Bear WIC office recently moved to the Brenda Boss Family Resource Center, located at 41820 Garstin Drive in the city of Big Bear Lake. The Center was created by the Bear Valley Health Care District to provide health care services and community resources in one convenient location. CAPK WIC continues to share facilities with the Mom and Dad Project, which provides services to young families.

This new site allows our participants to attend their WIC appointments, visit their health care providers, and access any additional social services all on the same day and at one location. Additionally, this central location facilitates better communication between WIC staff and the health care providers who serve the WIC participants.

Services are offered on Mondays and Tuesdays from 7:30 am to 6:00 pm. For more information, please contact the main WIC office at (866) 327-3074.

CAPK's Increased Participation in 2014 Homeless Census

Every January the Kern County Homeless Collaborative (KCHC), which includes CAPK, conducts a census of Kern's homeless men, women, and children—whether they are living in a shelter or on the streets. Traditionally, Kern's census was conducted every two years; however, in 2013 the KCHC committed to conducting a yearly count. Funded by Kern County Mental Health, the census enlisted more than 100 volunteers who fanned out over Kern's 8,200 square miles during a 24-hour period (from Jan. 22 to Jan. 23), hitting the streets, alleys, parks, campsites, homeless and domestic violence shelters, and budget hotels and motels to count as many homeless persons as possible.

The Homeless Census serves two purposes: 1) to gather information that helps understand local homeless trends and needs; and 2) to meet a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requirement to provide homeless data used in calculating millions in federal funding dollars allocated each year to assist in the fight against homelessness.

In 2014, CAPK's participation in the Homeless Census was greater than in previous years.

Dennis Hendrix, CAPK's HIV/AIDS Prevention and Testing Program Manager, served as the KCHC's Census Committee Chair and was the leader in this tremendous effort.

Jim Wheeler, North Kern's Low-Income Representative on CAPK's Board of Directors, is beginning his second year as the KCHC's Steering Committee Chair and also helped with the census.

Louis Medina, a new Administrative Analyst in CAPK's Planning, Research & Development Division (PRD) and the former KCHC Homelessness Project Manager, updated the 2014 Homeless Census survey, translated it into Spanish, and provided planning support to Dennis.

PRD Administrative Analyst Brady Bernhart created maps for census volunteers to use while conducting the census.

"New HUD requirements call for collecting data on homeless children's age, gender, race, and ethnicity instead of just recording the number of sheltered and unsheltered homeless children," Medina said. "This new information will assist children-and-family-focused agencies like CAPK to better assess the state of child and family

homelessness in our community."

The results of the 2014 Homeless Census are still being tabulated and will be released to the community sometime in February. KCHC is hoping for another year of reduced homelessness, following decreases of 4% from 2009 to 2011 and 20% from 2011 to 2013.



UPCOMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY 26, 2014

FREE flu shots for children ages 9 and older provided by Walgreens
9:00 am - 2:00 pm @ the Friendship House, 2424 Cottonwood Rd.

MARCH 1, 2014

Head Start, Early Head Start, and State Programs enrollment begins
For more information, contact the enrollment hotline at 1.800.701.7060

MARCH 21, 2014

Stuff the Bus Food Drive
4:30 am - 6:00 pm @ Sears parking lot, corner of Ming Ave. and Wible Rd.

MARCH 26, 2014

FREE childhood immunizations provided by San Joaquin Community Hospital
9:00 am - 2:00 pm @ Friendship House, 2424 Cottonwood Rd.

APRIL 12, 2014

March for Babies 8:00 am - 12:00 pm @ Liberty Park

MAY 5, 2014

Friendship House Summer Program registration begins
Forms will be made available Monday-Friday from 2:00 pm - 6:00 pm

MAY 8, 2014

2014 CAPK Humanitarian Awards Banquet & Fundraiser
6:00 pm @ Petroleum Club of Bakersfield



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