

THE COMMUNICATOR

SPRING INTO SUMMER 2024



Empowering Neighborhoods

THE POWER OF STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS



A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT & CEO

Dear Friends,

I am excited to share with you our Spring into Summer 2024 Newsletter. As summer quickly approaches, we are witnessing mounting economic pressure in the communities we serve. With new families actively seeking support, I am reminded of the strong community CAP OC has built to help address this growing demand. In the wake of new financial barriers, our efforts to prevent and end poverty are reaching new heights, increasing capacity, and creating opportunities for those who need them most.

In this issue you will learn about exciting programs being implemented with the help of county leaders like CalOptima and Children's Hospital of Orange County. From housing to healthcare, our network is continuing to grow and evolve to meet the needs of our community, especially at our family resource centers. By bringing new essential resources into the fold, we can provide holistic support to address immediate needs and build healthy, resilient neighborhoods.

This time of year also welcomes summer vacation for our youth and teens. Continue reading to learn about our new youth programming curriculum, Empowered to Thrive, that encourages young people to improve their well-being and change their future trajectory. With traditional learning out of session, you will also find information on our 2024 Backpacks for Success Program. I encourage you to explore how you can help to ensure every child feels confident in their educational journey by supporting this year's campaign.

As we work to combat increasing poverty levels across our region your partnership and support are critical. We are incredibly grateful to have a strong network of cross-county partners and supporters working together to achieve our mission. Together, we can create lasting positive change across Orange County.

With Gratitude and In Service,



Gregory C. Scott
President & CEO
Community Action Partnership of Orange County

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REACHING CAL AIM MILESTONES

In partnership with CalOptima, CAP OC is actively integrating California Advancing and Innovating Medical (CalAIM) assistive services to support families facing adverse environmental health effects. Through our Asthma Remediation and Environmental Accessibility Adaptations (EAA) programs we are addressing negative health outcomes head-on through home modifications and upgrades. To date, we have helped many individuals, but had not experienced a case in which multiple family members needed support. That is, until we met the Sanchez Family.

Living in a multigenerational household, five family members were diagnosed with severe asthma and two family members also experienced mobility limitations that required EAA support. As the most intensive case we have undertaken since offering these services, our team knew it would require additional coordination to ensure the Sanchez family received as much assistance as possible across programs.

After a thorough assessment, we equipped the home with new vinyl and ceramic flooring to eliminate carpet

and padding in three rooms, replaced fabric curtains with vinyl blinds, installed mechanical ventilation in the living room and kitchen, repaired a shower leak, installed a range hood with a fan, and patched and painted walls in two bedrooms. Additionally, the family received standard and handheld HEPA-filtered vacuums, a dehumidifier, two air quality monitors, two air purifiers, pillow and mattress covers, dusting sprays, and other asthma-friendly cleaning supplies.

Through EAA, we were also able to install grab bars in one of their bathrooms to assist with ongoing mobility issues. Our team will be conducting another assessment in hopes of installing additional EAA support this year.

Within a few weeks of the home modifications being complete, the Sanchez family shared that they have enjoyed noticeable health benefits. “Everyone notices a difference in here” said the grandmother, “We can all breathe easier,” noting that they have experienced significantly less wheezing and sneezing and the children’s school attendance has improved dramatically.

We are thrilled to have been able to help the Sanchez family live more comfortably in their home and are proud to offer these much-needed services in partnership with CalOptima. Our ability to provide these improvements strengthens our agency’s mission and ensures a healthier home for those who need it most.



INTEGRATING ENHANCED CARE MANAGEMENT

In January 2024, CAP OC launched its Enhanced Care Management (ECM) initiative, the newest addition to the portfolio of programs supported by CalAIM. With this new service, we are now able to provide qualifying individuals with wrap-around services including physical, behavioral, dental, developmental, and social support to stabilize and sustain themselves and their families.

In partnership with CalOptima, ECM is offered through in-person case workers who ensure participants have access to essential resources. While in its preliminary implementation phase, this holistic program is designed to eliminate barriers and ensure community members have the tools they need to thrive. As of March 31, 2024, we have enrolled 15 unique individuals into the new ECM program and are increasing participation as we build capacity.

To further leverage our ECM implementation, we are also identifying eligible participants across CAP OC services to utilize this assistance program. We are excited to offer this program to our high-need families and will continue to seek opportunities to expand services as we fully implement ECM at CAP OC.





OC DIAPER BANK POTENTIAL FUNDING LOSS

Four years ago, CAP OC set out to support families facing a commonly overlooked aspect of poverty: Diapers.

With steadfast support and advocacy from Senator Tom Umberg and former Assemblymember Tom Daly, CAP OC received state funding to officially launch Orange County's first Diaper Bank program in March 2020. Now servicing 10,000 infants monthly with the help of 80 program partners and two stork-themed distribution trucks, the OC Diaper Bank is a vital component of the agency's mission to eradicate poverty.

However, with a new state budget looming, ongoing financial support is at risk. If funding is not approved, the OC Diaper Bank will not operate at its current capacity beginning July 1, 2024.

This program's unique approach to alleviating financial burdens placed on low-income families has allowed parents to confidently shift their budget to include other essentials like food, clothes, and childcare services. For example, Kim* shared that while being a full-time student her child visits a daycare, and she must provide the facility with diapers each day. Receiving diapers from the OC Diaper Bank has helped

her family financially and given her the ability to utilize childcare services.

Partner organizations alike have shared meaningful sentiments of community building and support like that of the TIYYA Foundation, "It's a wonderful feeling to know that our diaper donations significantly alleviate the financial strain on these families. The Diaper Bank of Orange County has transformed Tea & Tots into a welcoming community hub, where families gather to socialize while their kids happily play, all while picking up their much-needed diapers. Thank you, Diaper Bank."

As we work to secure long-term funding for the OC Diaper Bank, we extend our most sincere appreciation to every community partner, volunteer, and donor who has been a part of CAP OC's inaugural program. The impact of the Diaper Bank is palpable throughout the County and serves as a driving force towards positive change.

To make a donation in support of the OC Diaper Bank, please visit capoc.org/donate and select Diaper Bank as your designation.

*Pseudonym used

BRINGING CHOC TO OUR CENTERS

We are thrilled to announce a brand-new program bringing health and well-being resources to our family resource centers (FRCs)! In partnership with Children’s Hospital of Orange County (CHOC), our FRCs will begin hosting Wellness on Wheels mobile clinics this summer.

Bringing resources, education, and services directly to communities in need, CHOC’s mobile clinics offer a variety of advanced health screenings, wellness check-ups, guided play and physical activities, health education on nutrition, obesity prevention, asthma screenings, mental health support, and more. This new program focuses on being a neighborhood-based, culturally and linguistically proficient service that promote community engagement and family resilience. CHOC’s state of the art mobile clinics are staffed by a team of doctors, nurses, licensed clinical social workers, community health workers, and patient care representatives, ready to provide care without barriers like travel, wait times, or high-costs.

This new opportunity will not only grant access to necessary health resources at our three FRC locations but will further our efforts to build resilient neighborhoods. Bringing in CHOC’s Wellness on Wheels program will allow each site to address



Photo Credit: CHOC

family well-being and offer access to health services on a routine basis. As we begin implementing mobile clinic visits, our FRC staff will work closely to navigate new services and refer families to the support they need.

Our ongoing collaboration with CHOC highlights the incredible impact program partnerships have on our mission to end and prevent poverty. We are excited to begin offering additional resources to families as we strive to provide integrated services to stabilize, sustain, and empower people with the support they need when they need it. Be sure to keep an eye out this summer as CHOC’s mobile clinics begin visiting our FRC sites!



PRODUCE AS **PRESCRIPTION**

CAP OC recently launched its OC Produce Prescription program in partnership with St. Jude Neighborhood Health Clinics, Northgate Markets and SunTerra to help adults with diabetes lower their blood sugar and improve their health. Through fruit and vegetables vouchers as well as produce boxes delivered twice a month at no-cost, participants receive the support needed to address health concerns and create healthy habits. Participants are also provided with informative nutrition classes and activities including “Walk with a Doc” and grocery store tours to help learn more about healthy eating choices.

The program is a three-year research study, awarded through the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP) and administered through the US Department of Agriculture, to support projects that evaluate the impact of fresh fruit and vegetable prescriptions on reducing food insecurity and healthcare usage. CAP OC is delighted to work with our partners to help individuals actively address and improve their health outcomes.

DONOR SPOTLIGHT: MISSION COCKTAILS

Meet Mission Cocktails, a premium ready to pour cocktail brand driving philanthropy with every bottle sold. Beginning just last year, founders Amit Singh and Marcin Malyszko took a unique approach to their business. Focused on quality-local ingredients, their efforts to lead locally expand beyond the cocktails they sell.

Partnering with CAP OC, Mission Cocktails launched its 5% give-back initiative. In 2023 alone, the company provided an impressive 26,277 meals to the Orange County Food Bank. As they continue to grow, Singh and Malyszko have an even bigger goal: to provide 100,000 meals to Orange County families in 2024.

As our partnership expands, we are excited to share that all new Mission Cocktail products will include packaging elements that highlight CAP OC and their ongoing support. We are incredibly grateful for the support Mission Cocktails provides in our efforts to end poverty.

Learn more about Mission Cocktails at missioncocktails.com

Photo Credit: Mission Cocktails



ALLEVIATING FOOD INSECURITY WITH FARM 2 FAMILY

In our continued efforts to eliminate food insecurity through the OC Food Bank, CAP OC's Farm 2 Family program redefines the expectations of a traditional food distribution. Through meaningful partnerships with local farmers, distributors, agencies, and donors, our produce distribution efforts are expanding, giving us the opportunity to offer fresh fruits and vegetables to Orange County families in need.

As part of this program, CAP OC's Giving Farm at Westminster High School continues to have a substantial impact. Now in its 7th year of distribution, the Giving Farm has just surpassed 1 million pounds of produce harvested for the OC Food Bank! This significant milestone emphasizes the incredible support as well as demand we are experiencing for fresh produce resources.

Coupled with other fresh food items like chicken, milk and eggs purchased through donated dollars, Farm 2 Family has significantly

increased the OC Food Bank's capacity to provide nutritious meals and is quickly becoming an essential part of our operations. Just last year, the OC Food Bank distributed an impressive 5,682,910 pounds of produce, accounting for almost 40% of all food distributed in 2023. With families actively requesting additional produce distributions, the OC Food Bank has also begun partnering with CalOptima and the Orange County Social Services Agency to host "produce only" distributions to meet our community's increasing need.

Through dynamic partnerships and ongoing monetary support, the Farm 2 Family program has flourished, allowing us to provide local families with nutritious food beyond traditional canned and boxed goods. As the program expands, we are confident that the additional resources provided to families will aid in the OC Food Bank's ongoing goal to eliminate food insecurity in Orange County.



EMPOWERING YOUTH TO THRIVE

Developed by our passionate youth services team, our new Empowered to Thrive program is creating lasting positive impacts on the lives of Orange County youth and teens. This one year, trauma-informed and culturally empowering program provides young community members ages 7-17 with a meaningful curriculum designed to grow their knowledge of themselves and their family to help change their future trajectory.

During the program, youth and teens are exposed to a variety of important topics such as Maslow's Hierarchy, emotions, mindfulness, identity, dreams, and civic engagement. To assist with this extensive curriculum, we are fortunate to partner with Western Youth Services to provide their 4-week Resilient Youth Program as well as Youth Thrive, a nationwide research-informed framework on youth well-being designed to better support healthy development.

As of March 31, 2024, Empowered to Thrive has served over 100 kids and teens across Orange County. When asked, Daniel Ramos, our Youth Service Program Manager, shared that in conversations with teens about why they continue to come and participate in the Empower to Thrive program there has been a resounding response of, "I feel safe here."

Outside of the educational experience we are



providing, the safety of our youth and teens is paramount and Daniel's team has worked hard to create an environment that teens feel comfortable in. To assist in this effort, we have utilized funding through the Elevate Youth Grant (Prop. 64) to revamp our teen areas with new books, games, televisions, and more picked out by teens for teens at each site.

Hosted in an inclusive, safe space, Empowered to Thrive provides youth and teens with the framework to change their lives for the better. As we work to fight and end poverty in Orange County, this work is essential to ensuring a better future for our local communities. To learn more about how you can help support our Youth Programming please contact Daniel Ramos at dramos@capoc.org.

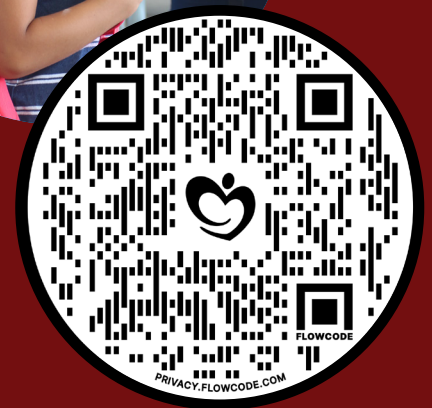
SUPPORT BACKPACKS FOR SUCCESS

As rising inflation significantly impacts the cost of essential school supplies, your support is pivotal to providing low-income children with the resources they need to feel confident in their educational journey.

Help us meet our goal of providing 1,200 backpacks to students in need before June 30, 2024. **Donations up to \$10,000 will be matched thanks to the support of a generous donor!**

To learn more and help make a difference in a student's learning,

VISIT [CAPOC.ORG/BACKPACKS](https://www.capoc.org/backpacks) TODAY!



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Contributions listed are from **September 1st, 2023 – March 31st, 2024** and are \$250 and above. The Philanthropy department has done our best to ensure accuracy. If you have questions or concerns, please contact LMaze@capoc.org.

Thank you for your incredible support of Community Action Partnership of Orange County!

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The Huggy Heart club is a monthly giving group who provide ongoing support to help sustain our operations. Huggy Heart Club members receive invitations to exclusive volunteer events, special recognition in our newsletters and an invitation to our annual Huggy Heart Club exclusive luncheon with our President & CEO.

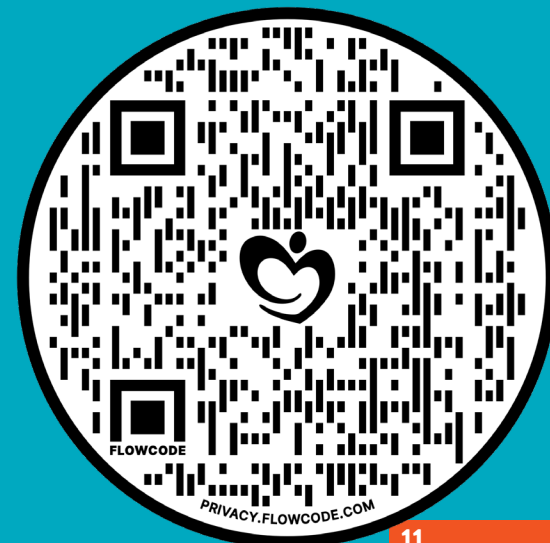
Learn more at
capoc.org/huggyheartclub



For questions or assistance,
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THIS IS WHERE POVERTY ENDS

mission

We seek to **end and prevent poverty** by stabilizing, sustaining and empowering people with the resources they need **when they need them**. By forging strategic partnerships, we form a powerful force to improve our community.

vision

We see generations of healthy communities where **poverty ceases to exist**.

HELP US TO END POVERTY IN ORANGE COUNTY. VISIT CAPOC.ORG TODAY AND HELP WHERE YOU CAN.