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KINGS COMMUNITY ACTION ORGANIZATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Elsie Barba  Todd Barlow  Art Brieno  Richard Fagundes
Leticia Gamez  Danyuell Hicks  Alicia Jacobo  Raymond Lerma
Stuart Lyons  Pat Nolen  Greg Ojeda  Jacob Sanchez
Cheryl Silva  Melissa Whitten  Don Wright
KCAO has had the honor of serving the people and communities of Kings County since 1965. Today we stand as an agency in constant pursuit of enhancing our capacity and furthering our impact. To effectively address the issues of poverty in our communities it takes a plan of action that prioritizes our resources, extends our partnerships, and builds our internal capacity. We embarked on the development of a new strategic plan in latter part of 2019 to have an agency-wide plan that would serve as a road map for our agency over the next three years. As part of the process to develop a strategic plan we looked both internally and externally on ways to improve our agency, respond to our community with greater effectiveness, and strengthen our team of dedicated board members, staff, volunteers, and community partners.

I want to thank our Board of Directors, members of our Senior Staff and Employee Advisory Committee, and all other team members who contributed to the development of our new strategic plan. Working as a team, we are ready to embark on the next chapter in our agency’s history and to continue our journey of helping people and changing lives.

Jeff Garner
Executive Director
COMMUNITY ACTION PROMISE

Community Action changes people’s lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

MISSION STATEMENT

Working as a team, KCAO will seek and provide programs that develop self-sufficiency in individuals, families, and communities within Kings County.
CORE VALUES

Excellence          Diversity         Commitment

Integrity         Teamwork

VISION STATEMENT

Kings County residents and communities will achieve self-sufficiency through the high-quality and client-focused programs of KCAO.
Kings Community Action Organization (KCAO) is the federally-designated anti-poverty agency for Kings County. KCAO is a private, non-profit organization that was established in 1965 pursuant to the Economic Opportunities Act of 1964 and is completing its 54th year of service to the residents of Kings County. The organization has service sites located in Armona, Avenal, Corcoran, Hanford, Home Garden, Kettleman City, Lemoore and Stratford. Hanford serves as the county seat and the largest city in Kings County. KCAO’s mission: Working as a team, KCAO will seek and provide programs that develop self-sufficiency in individuals, families, and communities within Kings County.

The agency reaches out to low-income people to address their multiple needs and administer a full range of coordinated programs designed to have a measurable impact on poverty. Of the clients served about 99% are low to moderate income. KCAO envisions a future where Kings County residents and communities will achieve self-sufficiency through the high-quality and client-focused programs of KCAO.

KCAO carries out its mission through a variety of means including, but not limited to, the following:

• community-wide needs assessment of needs and strengths;
• comprehensive anti-poverty strategies;
• provision of a broad range of direct services;
• mobilization of financial and non-financial (in-kind) resources;
• advocacy on behalf of low-income people; and
• partnerships with other community, state, and national organizations.

Since its establishment in 1965, the agency has adapted, revised and added programs to serve the changing social, educational and economic needs of low-income members of the community.
Kings Community Action Organization receives CSBG (Community Services Block Grant) funds from the Federal Office of Community Services and it is administered by the State Office of Community Services Department (CSD) in California. Since 1994, the Community Action network has used an evaluation tool called R.O.M.A. (Results Oriented Management and Accountability) in order to ensure funds align with network goals and local efforts. In 2011, local agencies were introduced to the Theory of Change as a way to establish the internal process of how an organization expects to achieve its intended impact. The thinking process essentially answers the question “How will this agency the movement of people with low-incomes to stability and economic security?” and also, “How will it affect the well-being of the community?”

The Three National R.O.M.A. Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal 1.</th>
<th>Individuals and Families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.</th>
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<td>Goal 2.</td>
<td>Communities where people with low incomes live are healthy and offer economic opportunity.</td>
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<td>Goal 3.</td>
<td>People with low incomes are engaged and active in building opportunities in communities.</td>
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Using the ROMA goals to identify crucial components of the plan, Kings Community Action Organization reviewed their internal capacity, outcomes, and other factors in order to compile the finalized strategic plan for 2020–2022. KCAO Board of Directors, agency directors and staff gathered together over three sessions to develop all parts of this strategic plan.
Before any towns existed within Kings County, a handful of pioneers called it home. The Landmark tree, a huge sycamore located on Lacey Boulevard near Avenue 18-3/4, stood as a beacon to guide early settlers over the otherwise barren valley floor. Cattlemen and gold miners initially settled along the Kings river; and farmers, storekeepers and oilmen later followed. In 1877, the tracks of the Southern Pacific Railroad brought additional growth and new arrivals from around the world. In 1893, local voters approved the formation of a new county when a portion of Northern Tulare county was divided. Kings County is bordered by Fresno, Tulare, Kern, San Luis Obispo, and Monterey Counties. The US Census Bureau reports in 2010 a population of 152,982.

Demographics: Kings County is comprised of primarily 55.5% Hispanic or Latino population. Kings County racial composition is comprised of 51.9% White, 6.2% African American, 4.1% Asian, 1.7% American Indian and 5.2% reporting two or more races. Hispanics or Latinos can be of any race, ancestry, or ethnicity. (Kings Partnership for Prevention).
Income and Employment: The unemployment rate in Kings County was 7.0% in August 2019, down from a revised 9.8% in January 2019, and below the year-ago estimate of 7.7%. This compares with an unadjusted unemployment rate of 4.2% for California during the same period (State of California Employment Development Department, October 2019).

The median household size in Kings County is 3.17 per household, with a median income of $49,742, in comparison to California’s median income of $67,169. The county’s poverty level is 19.5% of the population, in comparison it is higher than the state poverty level at 16.8% and the national poverty level average of 15.8%. (US Census Bureau, 2017).

Households by Income
County: Kings

Claritas, 2019. www.kfp.org
The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines food insecurity as not having consistent, dependable access to enough food for active, healthy living. Approximately one in five U.S. children live in food-insecure households. Food-insecure children are more likely to experience a host of health issues, including developmental, cognitive, behavioral, and mental health problems. Among pregnant women, food insecurity is associated with physical and mental health problems, as well as birth complications. Children and communities of color are disproportionately affected by food insecurity.

Food assistance programs, such as food stamps (i.e., SNAP, or CalFresh in California), the Supplemental Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs, provide a safety net to help ensure that low-income children, expectant mothers, and families get adequate nutrition. These programs have been shown to reduce poverty, improve birth outcomes, and improve children’s health in general. Student participation in the National School Breakfast Program also is associated with improved school performance and cognitive functioning.
Health: Out of 58 California counties, Kings County ranked 25th in length and quality of life and 30th in health factors such as, behaviors, care, social/economic and physical environment (Countyhealthrankings.org, 2018).

Housing: The median house cost is $258,450 in Kings County (California Association of Realtors, 2019) while the median gross rent is $876 versus the median gross rent for California at $1,447. The owner-occupancy is 54.2% (US Census Bureau, 2019).
Currently, the agency provides services, which are funded through a variety of federal and state programs, through five major departments:

**Child Care Assistance**
- Cal WORKs Stages I, II, & III
- Child Care Initiative Project
- Child Care for Foster Children
- Community Resource Center
- Resource and Referral
- Child Care Food Licensed Program (CCFP)
- Subsidized Child Care Assistance
- Kettleman City Family Resource Center
- Toy Lending Library

**Head Start & Child Development**
- Regional Head Start (Ages 3-5)
- Migrant & Seasonal Head Start (Ages 0-5)
- Early Head Start (Ages Prenatal – 3)
- Early Head Start & Child Care Partnership (Ages 6 weeks – 4)
- Full Day Preschool (Ages 3-5)
- State Preschool Programs (Ages 3-5)

**Home and Energy**
- Air Conditioning and Heater Repair/Replace
- Utilities Assistance
- Weatherization
Intervention, Prevention and Supportive Services

- 24-Hour Crisis Hotline 877-727-3225
- Assistance in Tax Filing – Earned Income Tax Credit
- Barbara Saville Shelter
- Domestic Violence Services
- Elder Abuse Services
- Sexual Assault Forensic Exam (SAFE)
- Housing Assistance – Permanent Supportive & Rapid-Rehousing
- Human Trafficking Services
- Rape Crisis Services
- Summer and Afterschool Program for Youth (Youth LEAD)
- Teen-Parent Services
- Temporary Restraining Orders
- Victim Services Center

Nutrition Education & Hunger Prevention

- Child Care Food Program
- USDA Food Distribution
- KCAO Food Bank
- Summer Food Services for Children
- Nutrition Education (SNAP-Ed)
Kings Community Action Organization partnered with the California Community Action Partnership Association (CalCAPA) to begin its strategic planning in 2019 for the agency’s three-year plan. In order to gain a better understanding of the current state of poverty in the county, the agency identified many key trends through the planning meeting, as well as assessing current demographics, housing, employment, and analyzing data reports. Along with the strategic plan identify the goals of the agency, KCAO also completed a community needs assessment as part of the 2020-2021 Community Action Plan.

The strategic planning effort was led through facilitation with a CalCAPA consultant, agency staff, and board members to gain a better understanding of the current state of poverty in Kings County. The Kings Community Action Organization Board of Directors and staff are pleased to develop a responsive plan to meet the needs of residents in Kings County.

Addressing the causes of poverty have become more challenging as individuals and families are facing high-rising prices in housing, lack of employment, low-levels of educational attainment to meet the demands of the workforce, access to nutritious food, access to affordable child care, and job development opportunities. KCAO is responding to the needs of residents within the county through impacted programs and the need to develop new initiatives, higher performing programs and lead impactful community-based services as a response to the local gaps and needs faced by vulnerable and low-income populations in the county. Funding is critical in a time of an uncertain federal landscape and the agency is facing a need to establish internal capacity to evaluate performance, measure results and sustain services to decrease the poverty rates in Kings County.

The Board and Agency Staff identified five key strategic goals for the next three-year period to continue providing essential and effective services for the community. The five strategic goals also align with the 2020-2021 Community Action Plan. These goals will also enable the agency to assess future funding and programmatic decisions.
GOAL 1

KCAO will operate programs which align with our mission that are effective, efficient and focused on low-income, eligible, vulnerable individuals in need and the communities in which they live.

National Community Action Goal: Individuals and Families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.
Organizational Performance Standards: Categories 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 & 9

On-going Strategies

- KCAO Staff will be trained and internal collaboration will be increased.
- KCAO Staff will assist clients with effective and efficient system designs to understand and access programs offered by KCAO.
- KCAO Staff will make a connection with clients to fully understand their needs.
- KCAO Staff and Board of Directors will conduct community outreach and advocacy.
- KCAO Staff will continue to utilize survey results to enhance services and address community needs.

One-time Strategies

- KCAO Staff will create new forms of prevention services that addresses reduction of poverty, revitalization of low-income communities, and empower community members to become more self-sufficient.
GOAL 2

KCAO will have well-trained team members who feel appreciated and committed to the mission of the organization.

On-going Strategies

- KCAO Staff will be trained at all levels.
- KCAO will be more focused on staff involvement in planning, programs, etc.
- KCAO will promote self-care among staff.
- KCAO will promote the mission, vision, and core values to staff through meetings, letterhead, email signatures, etc.
- KCAO will host employee appreciation events/days.

One-time Strategies

- KCAO will modify existing evaluation to include Individual Performance Plans and Performance Development Plans to be used throughout the agency.
- KCAO will seek to expand staffing levels through the use of substitute positions and/or job training placement programs in order to support program operations.
GOAL 3

KCAO is committed to responsible financial stewardship.

National Community Action Goal: Individuals and Families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.
Organizational Performance Standards: Categories 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9

On-going Strategies

- KCAO will include staff in budget development process and report out budget details through year.
- KCAO will increase grant application submissions to support current and new programs.
- When considering a new position, KCAO management will look within the agency first.
- KCAO will maintain time, attendance, and accountability for all employees.
- KCAO will attempt to leverage funding and collaborate between internal programs for maximized funding.

One-time Strategies

- KCAO will improve facility management and develop an agency-wide facility management plan.
- KCAO will review budget policies to strengthen budget processes.
GOAL 4

The Board of Directors will be active participants committed to fulfilling the mission of KCAO.

National Community Action Goal: People with low incomes are engaged and active in building opportunities in communities.
Organizational Performance Standards: Categories 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 9

On-going Strategies

- KCAO shall increase relations between Board Members and Staff members through various ways.
- KCAO Board of Directors will represent KCAO and help further KCAO’s mission by attending meetings, community events, and volunteering in their communities.
- KCAO Board of Directors will advocate on behalf of KCAO.
- KCAO Board of Directors will learn about programs offered by the agency.
- KCAO Board of Directors will attend trainings related to the roles and responsibilities of being a board member.

One-time Strategies

- KCAO Board of Directors will be assigned to specific programs within the agency to advocate for and educate the community on the program.
GOAL 5

KCAO is committed to build awareness through partnerships to advocate and respond to community level needs.

National Community Action Goal: Individuals and Families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.
Organizational Performance Standards: Categories 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9

On-going Strategies

- KCAO Staff and Board of Directors shall educate communities on poverty through outreach efforts, “pop-ups”, hosting public awareness campaigns, etc.
- KCAO Staff and Board of Directors shall promote the agency through use of social media, newsletters, presenting at public meetings, etc.
- KCAO Staff shall encourage program participants to seek and obtain other services provided by KCAO and/or community partners.
- KCAO Staff and Board of Directors shall participate in collaborations in the community.
- KCAO will invite community partners to link to KCAO services by utilizing KCAO facilities.

One-time Strategies

- KCAO will update and maintain a communication plan.
- KCAO will improve and increase volunteer opportunities.
- KCAO will support community awareness of the 2020 U.S. Census and encourage participation from community members to complete the Census.
The Strategic Plan 2020-2022 was developed through a facilitated process which included board members, management and staff to develop a 3-year plan that meets the needs of our Kings County residents. It is a pleasure to support our community through effective programs and services.

For any questions on Kings Community Action Organization and our 2020-2022 Strategic Plan, feel free to contact our organization at (559) 582-4386.

This plan was completed by Lucy Hernandez Consulting with support from California Community Action Partnership Association (CALCAPA).