

2021 Sacramento CoC Annual Meeting

Wednesday, May 26th, 2021 || Breakout Room 3 Discussion Notes



SACRAMENTO
STEPS FORWARD

Ending Homelessness. Starting Fresh.

Objectives	By focusing on populations facing the greatest inequities during this time of striking threats from COVID-19, structural racism, and basic humanitarian needs, we can uplift existing efforts and co-create those that will carry us into the future. In this break-out session, we will have the opportunity to explore several community-driven efforts to advance racial equity and re-imagine our homelessness system as being fully inclusive, anticipatory, and responsive.
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Panelists

Pixie Pearl (CoC Board Secretary, California Homeless Youth Project)

Pixie Pearl holds a Masters of Social Work degree from California State University, Sacramento, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and Human Services. They assisted in launching Sacramento's first LGBTQ+ focused shelter and formal host homes program for youth experiencing homelessness. Pixie is the youth service provider representative and Secretary on the Sacramento CoC (Continuum of Care) Advisory Board, and is a member of Sacramento's Dream Team for the A Way Home America Grand Challenge, which is a two year national initiative to end homelessness for LGBTQ+ youth and youth of color, setting the path to ending homelessness for all youth. Pixie strives to utilize their lived experience to mindfully operate from a foundation of empowering and amplifying youth voices to create a pathway for change.

Fatemah Martinez (CoC Board Member, President, South Sac HART, CCHP Volunteer)

Fatemah Martinez is a founding member and President of the South Sacramento Homeless Assistance Resource Team (HART) where she works unsheltered community members to connect them with resources and them with supplies essential for survival. She is also a member of the Sacramento Continuum of Care (CoC) Board and its Racial Equity Committee. She graduated from California State University of Sacramento with a master's in Social Work in 2018, and has extensive background providing services to and developing programs for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Fatemah is a native to Sacramento who is dedicated to working collaboratively to address homelessness, and provide support and resources to at-risk, vulnerable, and underrepresented communities.

Zuri Colbert (SSF Partner, Community Lead Advocacy Program, CCHP Volunteer)

Zuri K. Colbert is Founder/Lead of CLAP Community Lead Advocacy Program. Zuri and those who are with CLAP lived and worked in the Sacramento community for the majority of her life. She has a background in human services, trauma-informed care, and community building. She is a member of Sac Services Not Sweeps and SAC Soup and various other advocacy organizations for our unhoused and communities that lack. CLAP was created due to the racial trauma, lack of representation, and lack of adequate food, housing, and wellness resources for marginalized Sacramento community members. CLAP believes the best communities are led by the community so our resource support and reach-outs are geared around the needs and wants of those most impacted. CLAP services all community members whether sheltered or unsheltered but due to the insurmountable amount of unsheltered being of the Black community, CLAP includes Black/POC hygiene items for pertinent hair and skin care needs as well as resource connections that are culturally competent for all community members.

Session Notes

Welcome and introductions Panel Discussion

Pixie Pearl

1. Please tell us what the Grand Challenge is and what inspired Sacramento to pursue it.
 - a. Targeted universalism is one of the principles of Grand Challenge
 - b. Ended the 100 day challenge with Homeless Youth Passport but there are still gaps/cracks. So how do we support/lean into this?
2. How has this effort mobilized our community around LGBTQ+ youth, and particularly around youth of color?
 - a. Homeless passports include a lot of collaboration from providers as it allowed for other service agencies/providers to come in. The Grand Challenge also allowed for leveraging each other and collaborating.
3. What has this effort made possible that was not happening before?
 - a. Funding is always an issue, everything needs money to fix what money broke.
 - b. There's low funding and splitting where service providers were competing for funding to continue the work until the work was no longer needed.
 - i. We need to help agencies who've received funding and allow them to thrive as this affects youth. It may be useful to apply to funding

together with providers that would allow for more equitable funding disbursement.

4. Help folks realize that we're not each other's competitors
 - a. Funders don't divert to non-youth provider to provide youth services since providers have been taking lead
 - i. Providers haven't received support. Then there's the education piece where these conversations may be facilitated but the exchange isn't being heard.
5. Where do you continue to see challenges?
 - a. Conversations are had but not heard; things seem like checking things off a list
 - b. No representation from juvenile justice
 - i. CPS - if you're under 18 they aren't necessarily going to pick you up
 - ii. Healthcare systems and providers need to work together
 - c. Capacity
 - i. Providers are pushed to do so much in one position
 1. Leads to compassion fatigue
 2. Funding can support changemaking within these organizations
 3. People want to help/change but there's no more capacity to address it
 - a. Funding not enough/no time to support change in a quality way
 - d. Intersectionality
 - i. It's not just one thing there are other needs/issues
 1. ADA accessible is needed
 2. Having programs with policies that can wraparound and fully support
 - a. We think we're doing a housing model approach but doesn't align with ACEs/trauma/violence/mental health/substance abuse
 - e. Outreach/language accessibility
 - i. Can people even access services
 - ii. We're focused on CE
 - iii. Can people who don't speak English access these
 - iv. We have Youth Health Network as sources but it's not street outreach
 1. We don't see all the youth and we can't reach and ensure they're aware of what's available
6. How would you like to see further involvement from the CoC board, community members or policymakers?

- a. We need to recognize youth as their own experts and compensate them. Are we paying folks with lived experience for sharing their expertise and helping them not burnout?
- 7. What is your ultimate vision that you think we could all support?
 - a. How can we integrate data/confidentiality?
 - i. Why are we not using the same IT systems? We're creating gaps since these IT systems are not communicating with each other.
 - b. Ensure that there's true accessibility
 - i. Accessibility/education/access
 - ii. Clear information is needed. We need to ask if the info is actually accessible and not get our hopes up after completing something, then not receiving something in return.
 - iii. Language changes perception
 - iv. No one teaches us to adult and youth are being shamed
 - v. We need to support youth and not shame them. We also need more funding dedicated to our youth.

Fatemah Martinez

- Pull together a volunteer network to meet the basic needs of community, especially with the pandemic
- 1. How long have you been in service to the homeless community, and what has that looked like over the years?
 - a. Working with unsheltered for ~8yrs; began as intern at Sac Self Help Housing
 - b. Didn't give too much thought about this sector but went to Loaves & Fishes doing intake
 - c. Helped people get rooms to rent with small amount of money
 - d. Predominantly/visibly in homeless in River area/Stockton
 - i. Reason why this is where she's centered her energy
 - 1. What are you most proud of or motivated by in this work?
 - i. Ability to work and serve in the community
 - ii. Working with other more financially affluent appearing communities
 - 1. Compassion fatigue but had a desire to make change
 - iii. Being able to work, live and serve in this community
 - iv. Resiliency of our participants
 - 1. We're not what we've been through
 - 2. What we've been able to endure is amazing
 - a. All we need is a little support
 - b. Allow them to share their POV/dissatisfaction
 - i. Help them allow to actualize their dreams
 - v. When Fatemah became a social worker, you meet people during the worst times of their lives

2. What would you say to others who want to make an impact on homelessness but cannot work or volunteer in this field full time?
 - a. Do what you can, don't underestimate what influence you have, and if you can't do any of these things, you can support agencies that are doing the work financially by donating. Little things matter and everyone has a role to play no matter what your capacities are.
3. What are the greatest challenges or roadblocks that we face as we confront homelessness?
 - a. It's not a problem of homelessness, it's a problem of affordable housing. We need to create housing across the board that people can afford. But we don't know what that looks like yet. We need to restructure and revitalize. We need to rent to the agency vs the participant/tenant who are having troubles. We need to control/implement CE a lot better.
 - b. We need to have a 50yr longitudinal study to understand/evaluate what we've done well and adapt how we're addressing issues. We're currently recycling ideas and need to work to minimize duplicative efforts.
4. How do you see the racial equity landscape taking shape in Sacramento and where is there room for improvement?
 - a. Racial equity needs to have tangible/actionable items
 - i. Honoring the original caretakers of this land; integrating BIPOC/LGBT/etc in conversations; take multidimensional approach
 - ii. Acknowledging issues and taking action and centering on those most impacted
 - b. In social work, there are many areas/causes in which you're looped
 - i. There needs to be a deeper dive

Zuri Colbert

1. Please tell us about CLAP and the work you do through the organization.
 - a. Seeing disparities among BIPOC and amplified by COVID crisis
 - b. Began with a few volunteers/family members/community leaders
 - c. Idea behind CLAP is to provide resource support and reach out services
 - i. Impacted communities understand these needs most
 - ii. Most impacted are unhoused/unsheltered
2. How did you get involved with Sacramento Steps Forward and the CoC?
 - a. SSF has been a staple here in Sacramento
 - b. SSF navigators provided links to housing
 - c. During COVID, CLAP joined the VN to do food/supply distribution
 - i. Gained support with sleeping bags/tents and assist with reach outs
3. What have you been able to accomplish through the COVID-19 Outreach Project?
 - a. CLAP ensured that efforts are community led
 - b. Marginalized didn't have access to vaccines

- i. Lack of access to vaccines/technology/transportation
 - ii. CCHP focuses on training encampment champions which fits CLAP's module where everything is designed community
- 4. How can others be inspired to become a part of the homelessness system of care?
 - a. It's saddening to see the city to have such an increase in despair, decrease in affordable housing
 - b. Triggers urgency
 - c. Any community member can take part to make change and decrease despair
 - i. Call in city council requesting for more programming for unhoused
 - ii. Write in and use your own voice
 - iii. Disparities within Sac County zip codes
 - iv. Participate in food distributions in 95828 and 95823
 - v. There's always help needed
 - vi. CLAP is offering social transits for those who don't have access to regular resources, food deserts, underserved areas
- 5. What more do we need to do to develop trust and partnerships with BIPOC-led and BIPOC-serving organizations?
 - a. Inviting smaller/larger organizations within Sac to the table
 - b. Not a lot of funding so bring in orgs doing "boots on the ground"
 - c. Amplify voices of most impacted folks
 - d. SSF navigators/Dennis provides representation and community experience of some of our BIPOC folks, unhoused folks
 - i. Continuing to provide representation
 - ii. Being accountable
 - iii. Elevate small orgs who have heart and soul
- 6. What is your vision for racial equity in the Sacramento region?
 - a. Connection to housing and viable resources that fit community members' need
 - b. Speaks to the lack of viable resources and best fit resources like housing retention
 - i. Ensuring that there's community support once housing is secured
 - ii. Navigating resources are one of the very key things for racial equity

Open Discussion

- Any time people receive info from those who appear trustworthy
 - It's not always easy to resonate with folks there and we need to use plain language when speaking with communities.
- When hiring
 - Calling out people with lived experience and finding those who have the best fit for the work.

- Rooms/conversations don't equal power
 - We're not actually in the rooms that actually have the power.
- Homelessness issue is going to continue expanding
 - We need to look into those who are living along the freeways in "canvas condominiums."
 - See more funding to go into those areas and reduce the numbers.
- Ideas around equitable access
 - Tangible goal for community
 - Reduce police interactions
 - Access to services (self-referral, community referrals) to help them get into these programs
 - Sanitation services beyond June

Other/next steps

- Please visit us at clapsac.com if you would like more information about our organization. You can also contact us at CLAP if you have any questions: clap@clapsac.com or complete the CLAP CONNECT form: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1b9O6oPwO-p44Llq1b6WBJHBm-iv5flO-vM5b5M9MTEo/viewform?edit_requested=true