



District 5 Summer Newsletter

Supervisor Keith Carson

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The Fifth District includes the cities of Albany, Berkeley, Emeryville, Piedmont, and West Oakland, North Oakland, Rockridge, Grand Lake, and portions of the Fruitvale, Manzanita and Dimond District neighborhoods.

Where Is the Light at the End of the Tunnel? The Saga of Alameda County's 2010-2011 Budget

On June 25, the Alameda County Board of Supervisors passed a budget which closed a deficit of \$ 152.4 Million dollars with a combination of one time savings, program cuts and numerous long time employees losing their jobs. This is the 18th consecutive year when Alameda County has been required to close a budget deficit, and the cumulative cut over that time is over \$1.6 Billion. As bad as the situation is, it could have been worse. Our department heads and administration have been prudent in their budgeting all year. In addition, many of our labor unions have agreed to concessions, because they realize we are all in this together. To date Alameda County has been able to avoid furlough days as a result of the collaboration between labor and County administration.

The deep cuts will be felt in all aspects of county services. The county will continue to limit General Assistance clients to aid for only three months out of the year; an initiative I continue to oppose. Furthermore, the Social Services Agency is facing an additional \$8-\$9 million dollar deficit, as a result of the Federal Government's reduction in their Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP).

The Probation Department will continue to bank cases; over 12,000 adult cases including violent offenders, and 50 juvenile cases. Banked cases are people that receive no services or supervision. This is the first year we are implementing this practice for juveniles. Our consortium of health care clinics are forced to take a 25% reduction in all services funded by Measure A, a ½ cent sales tax passed in 2004, due to a decline in sales tax revenue.

While Alameda County's 2010-2011 Budget will continue to eat away at our safety net, the sluggish economy and the aptly titled jobless recovery will continue to cast a dark shadow over Alameda County's economic future. This year was the first time that the value of homes on Alameda County's assessment role has decreased since 1958; that includes 1980, the first year after Proposition 13. The unemployment rate continues to hover over 10%, which means sales tax, business taxes and payroll taxes are down. These are all vital funding sources for local government. So at a time when people are in greater need of services, there is less revenue gen-

erated to provide them.

The enormous elephant in the room is the exploding cost of retirement and health care benefits. While the Alameda County Retirement Association (ACERA) has

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Applications for the Adult Leadership Academy are due August 27, 2010.

[Click here for more information](#)

Peralta Community College District Receives \$2.9 million grant

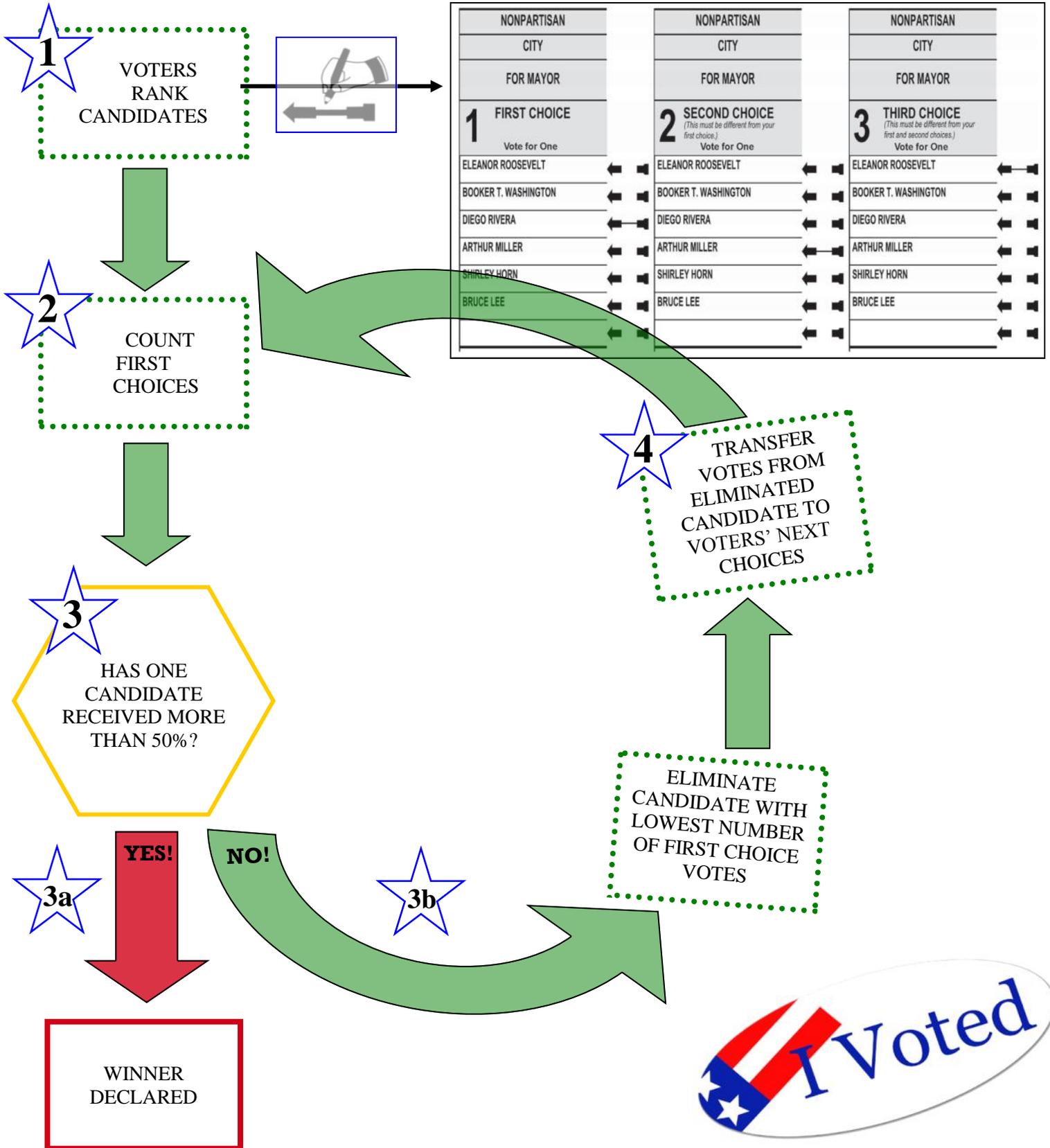
At a time when the unemployment rate remains high across California, the Peralta Achievement Collaborative (PAC) is a beacon of hope for Alameda County residents. The Collaborative offers a set of wrap-around, comprehensive educational and employment services for chronically underemployed populations in Alameda County, primarily former offenders, dislocated workers, the long-term unemployed, and limited English proficiency (LEP) individuals.

Congresswoman Barbara Lee recently announced that a \$2.9 million grant will be awarded to the Peralta Community College District (PCCD) to fund PAC through the U.S.

Department of Labor's Community-based Job Training grants program. My Chief of Staff Rodney Brooks was instrumental in bringing together the stakeholders who crafted a collective vision to address the high rates of unemployment in Alameda County, with a particular focus on the City of Oakland. With Merritt College as the lead agency, those partners include: The Oakland Private Industry Council, Berkeley Youth Alternatives, Alameda Health Consortium, Turner Construction, The Scotlan Center and other community-based organizations and companies.

The collaborative seeks to brighten some of the county's grim employment statistics. As

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Ranked-Choice Voting comes to Berkeley, Oakland and San Leandro

When voters in three Alameda County cities open their ballots this November, they will be presented with a new way of choosing some elected officials. In recent years, residents of Berkeley, Oakland and San Leandro approved the use of ranked-choice voting (RCV), also called instant run-off voting (IRV). This November, the new system will be employed in those three cities in races where a single person is elected to office, for example Mayor. (RCV will not be used to elect County, State and federal officials or to approve or reject ballot measures). The system allows voters to rank a first, second and third choice candidate, eliminating the need for a separate run-off election. If no single candidate receives more than 50% of the vote, an instant run-off takes place.

(See Chart to the left and table to the right for a step-by-step explanation of the process).

Depending upon the number of candidates in the race, further rounds may be necessary. The elimination process continues until one candidate has received more than 50% of the vote.

The RCV system allows municipalities to elect officials by majority vote without incurring the cost of a separate run-off election. Special run-off elections usually result in lower voter turnouts, which some argue undermines the democratic process. Advocates also argue that RCV will lead to more choice for voters and a more civilized campaign culture. If voters have the option to rank their top three preferences, then candidates must appeal to a wider range of voters, not just the core supporters who would help them achieve a plurality.

RCV can also help avoid what is called the “spoiler” effect. In some elections with three or more candidates, third party candidates have been accused of “stealing” votes from mainstream candidates. A famous example of this phenomenon is the 2000

U.S. Presidential election in which Green Party candidate Ralph Nader won 2.7% of the popular vote. With less than one percentage point separating Democrat Al Gore and Republican George W. Bush, some observers believed that Nader contributed to Gore’s loss. With RCV, voters can feel comfortable ranking a third party candidate as their first choice, knowing that their second choice will be taken into account if there is no majority in the first round of counting.

Opponents of RCV are concerned that the new method of ranking candidates will lead to confusion among voters as they navigate the federal, state, local and ballot measure races. The Alameda County Registrar plans to avoid that problem by using a separate ballot card for the city races. Others argue that the cost to implement the system and educate voters about the process outweighs any future savings from avoided run-off elections. The process will be cost neutral for Alameda County; all costs are being shared by the three cities in proportion to their population. According to the Alameda County Registrar of Voters,

the total cost of implementation should total approximately \$1.5 million. Officials will use the same voting machines and only had to purchase a new type of software to implement the system.

ROUND 1

Step 1: Voters fill out their ballot and mark their first, second and third choice for each office. There is also a space for qualified write-in candidates.

Step 2: All of the first choices are counted.

Step 3: Election officials determine if a candidate has received more than 50% of the first choice votes.

Scenario A: If so, a winner is declared.

Scenario B: If no candidate receives a majority, the candidate with the least number of first votes is eliminated from the race.

Step 4: Each vote cast for the eliminated candidate will be transferred to the voter's second choice.

ROUND 2

There is no need for separate ballots or a new election.

Step 2: Using the same ballots, votes are counted for the remaining candidates, including votes transferred from the eliminated candidate.

Step 3: Election officials determine if a candidate has received more than 50% of the votes.

Scenario A: If so, a winner is declared.

Scenario B: If no candidate receives a majority, the candidate with the least number of votes is eliminated from the race.

Step 4: Each vote cast for the eliminated candidate will be transferred to the voter's next choice.



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Alameda County’s largest city, Oakland is responsible for 27% of the county’s labor force. Yet the city’s unemployment rate is currently at 17.7%. Many Oakland residents face multiple barriers to employment, including low English proficiency. Over 25% of Oakland’s adults have not obtained a complete high school education and the city is also the point of re-entry for many formerly incarcerated individuals.

Participants who enter the program will receive basic skills education tailored to their field, vocational training, internship opportunities, case management and career counseling. The programs are designed to maximize job placement and retention in fields that are known to accommodate LEP individuals, the formerly incarcerated and other chronically under-employed populations.

What makes PAC unique and successful in the community is its utilization of Merritt College’s Career Advancement Academy model, which provides students with high levels of peer and faculty support, basic skills education that is pertinent to students’ career goals, and comprehensive support services exclusively adapted to fulfill the needs of the target populations. A recent evaluation of this model revealed retention rates of 90% and course success rates (defined as a pass or above C grade) of 75%. The Department of Labor grant allows the PCCD to expand the Career Advancement Academy to serve the populations that are in greatest need of employment services.

According to Richard de Jauregui, Planning Manager at the Oakland Private Industry Council, the model that PAC uses is particularly successful in moving Oakland’s growing re-entry population into meaningful and sustainable employment. “In the past, the focus was on pushing re-entering individuals into any

sort of employment, which often turned out to be entry-level jobs that cannot sustain these individuals for more than short periods of time,” de Jauregui noted. “PAC is unique because this grant allows us to offer support services such as transitional housing, childcare, transportation, fees for training and vocational programming, and even on the job training, to sustain the re-entering individual in better preparing for long-term, meaningful employment in a growth industry of his or her choice - with placement in such a job as the ultimate goal of the program.”

PAC has identified and targeted four high-growth industries with pre-existing training programs within the PCCD:

- **Green Construction, Energy Management, & Environmental Habitat Restoration:** This is the fastest expanding area of the construction industry, with a definite need for entry-level employees. The PAC program centers around training in energy efficiency and ecological sustainability with an emphasis on internships and hands-on learning. Potential occupations include laborers, construction apprentices, carpenters and administrative personnel, as well as positions in sustainable landscaping and related fields. According to a study by the East Bay Community Foundation, employers are more inclined to hire individuals with community college training and/or job experience through on-the-job training or internships.
- **Logistics and transportation:** The Port of Oakland is the fourth largest port in the United States and controls 99% of the containerized traffic in Northern California. The California Employment Development Department (EDD) predicts that 2,420

jobs will open for truck drivers and that employment within the trade, transportation, and warehousing sector will increase by 30,000 jobs between 2006 and 2016. Program participants can choose between three certificate programs: warehousing, transportation and logistics.

- **Social and Human Services:** EDD projects that between 2006 and 2016, the number of Social and Human Service Assistants in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties will increase by 20.1%, adding 590 positions. Community members are advantageous for such positions because of their ability to empathize with the backgrounds of their clients. Prospective employees will require training in basic skills, computer literacy and counseling.
- **Allied Health Care:** The regional healthcare sector expects to see a 5% business growth over the next 5 years and plans to hire 180-200 entry level employees in the next year. In recent surveys, employers described a high demand for medical assistants, especially bilingual workers capable of interfacing with the diverse population in Alameda County. Health care is an appropriate sector for limited English proficiency individuals if they receive the appropriate support to reach sufficient levels of English proficiency.

Over the three-year grant period, PAC will serve a total of 300 students. The creation of the Peralta Achievement Collaborative is an important step in reducing the unemployment rate and giving the residents of our county renewed opportunity to be self-sustaining, productive professionals and contributors to the community.

[Click here for more information](#)

County Budget... continued from page 1

done an exemplary job of managing our retirement funds, they have not been untouched by this economy. If retirement investments do not yield the returns to pay for the healthcare costs and pensions of the Alameda County's aging workforce, the County will be forced to significantly increase its contributions, which seems certain in the future. The increased contributions to our retirement accounts will gravely impact our ability to deliver services for those in need in the future.

As of July 19, 2010, the State of California has not passed its budget for the next fiscal year, and the writing on the wall spells less revenue for counties and other local governments. The State is talking about "realignment," which means transferring the responsibility for providing services from the State to counties. Of course the question is: How much revenue will be identified/allocated to pay for providing the services? The assumption is not enough. Yet we in local government need to pick our poison. If we refuse realignment, the state will just take a hatchet to funding for local government services. If we do agree to realignment, then we can try and negotiate the best funding sources and look for flexibility and savings by providing the services locally. Many in Sacramento don't imagine the budget deal getting done until August or September when the State starts to run out of money. It looks like a long hot summer of negotiations and the forecast calls for pain in the fall.

[Click here for County budget info](#)

Solano Avenue Stroll

36th Annual Solano Stroll
"A Global A-faire"

Sunday, September 12, 2010
10 am—6 pm

SAVE THE DATE!

[Click here for more information](#)

Ranked choice voting... continued from page 3

Here in Alameda County, the Registrar of Voters has embarked on a public education campaign to raise awareness of the changes. They will be conducting workshops and public demonstrations for community groups and public officials. For more information, please call (510) 272-6933.

Click here to see interactive videos about the ranked-choice voting process:

<http://www.acgov.org/rov/rcv/video.htm>

Click here for brochures in English, Spanish and Chinese:

<http://www.acgov.org/rov/rcv/media.htm>



ALAMEDA COUNTY YOUTH LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

A program For High School Juniors and Seniors

[Click here to apply](#)

The Youth Leadership Academy (YLA) is held each fall: five free 3-hour Saturday morning sessions from 9 am – noon are held in various facilities throughout Alameda County. Each session provides an opportunity to meet County officials and staff, learn about the county and develop leadership skills.

[Click here for more information](#)

East Bay Unemployment News

- ✓ A new report from the state Employment Development Department shows the Bay Area lost 10,300 jobs in June 2010
- ✓ 3,800 (or 37%) of the jobs lost were in the East Bay, the worst hit region
- ✓ Since March 2007, the East Bay has lost 112,000 positions
- ✓ With the April 2010 closing of the NUMMI plant in Fremont, the East Bay lost 4,700 jobs
- ✓ Since January 2010, Alameda County has maintained unemployment rates above 11%, the highest percentage in the last 20 years
- ✓ Private sector industries have been sluggish in hiring, especially construction
- ✓ Thousands of temporary Census jobs are gone
- ✓ Some industries added jobs in California during June: mining and logging; manufacturing; trade, transportation and utilities; professional and business services; educational and health services; and leisure and hospitality

Sources: [EDD report](#), [Contra Costa Times article](#)



EARTH DAY ACTIVITIES 2010



Montclair Tennis Courts and Park
Saturday, April 17th District 5 staff helped weed and clean a hillside next to the tennis courts.

Rebuilding Together Oakland
Saturday, April 24th District 5 staff helped rehabilitate a senior's home in West Oakland.

Weathering the Storm

On May 17, over 100 representatives from local community based organizations gathered at Beebe Memorial Cathedral in Oakland to receive updates from county, state and federal officials about the state of the economy. The event was organized by the Socially Responsible Network and featured presentations from Congresswoman Barbara Lee, Assemblymember Nancy Skinner's Chief of Staff Frank Russo, and County Administrator Susan Muranishi. Participants also enjoyed two workshops on fundraising and strategic planning for nonprofits.

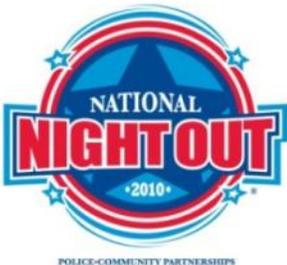


Top Left: Over 100 local nonprofit leaders attended the event.

Bottom Left: Congresswoman Lee addresses the crowd.

Top Right: Workshop participants learn about strategies to navigate the economic downturn.

UPCOMING EVENTS



The 27th Annual National Night Out will take place on Tuesday, August 3, 2010. Click on the link for more information or click on your town to see events near you!

[National Night Out Website](#)

[Albany](#)



[Berkeley](#)



[Oakland](#)



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