



District 5 Fall Newsletter

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

Supervisor's Message

Dear District 5 Residents,

In this season of gratitude, I wish to remember the victims of Hurricane Sandy and give thanks for the strength and resiliency of those who survived. See page 3 for ways you can help the recovery effort. Here in Alameda County, there are many people who need a helping hand to put food on the table, find housing or get medical help. Please consider donating what you can to one of the many community based organizations that provide food, shelter and health care to residents in Alameda County.

Thanksgiving is right around the corner and below is a list of holiday meal and food resources in Northern Alameda County. All events and resources are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted. There are many opportunities to volunteer as well. Please share!

ALAMEDA COUNTY COMMUNITY FOOD BANK

7900 Edgewater Drive
Oakland, CA 94621

If you need food, call the Emergency Food Helpline at 1-(800) 870-FOOD (3663)

Please call (510) 635-3663 or visit

<http://www.accfb.org> for volunteer opportunities and to donate.



Thanksgiving...continued on p. 6

Alameda County Joins First Lady Michelle Obama's Let's Move! Campaign



Laura Lloyd-Jenkins, Supervisor Carson, County Administrator Susan Muranishi and two employees of Revolution Foods celebrate Let's Move! at Lighthouse Community Charter School in Oakland.

Alameda County on Wednesday, October 31, 2012 became one of the first counties in California to adopt First Lady Michelle Obama's Let's Move! campaign to fight childhood obesity. Supervisor Carson and County Administrator Susan Muranishi joined representatives of Oakland-based Revolution Foods at Oakland's Lighthouse Community Charter School to push the new initiative, which focuses on healthier food choices and exercise as key components in the fight to end childhood obesity.

Let's Move!...continued on p. 7

Holiday Party and Food Drive

Thursday, December 13, 2012, 5:00 PM—8:00 PM
Suite 410 (formerly Geoffrey's Inner Circle)
410—14th Street, Oakland, CA

Please support our community by bringing a donation of the following to the party: Canned Vegetables & Fruits, Canned Meats & Fish, Pasta & Tomato Sauce, Beans, Rice, Peanut Butter, Cereal/Oatmeal, Powdered Milk, Nutritional Beverages & Snacks. Food will be donated to the Alameda County Community Food Bank.

Please click here to RSVP:

<http://leeandcarsonholidayparty2012.eventbrite.com/#>

Subscribe to our News and Updates!

http://www.acgov.org/form_app/board/district5/involved.jsp

For more information visit:

<http://www.acgov.org/board/district5/>

County News

County Employees: Be a Volunteer Tax Preparer

The Social Services Agency (SSA) is now recruiting Volunteer Tax Preparers for the upcoming **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance/Earned Income Tax Credit (VITA/EITC) program**, which is in its 12th year of operation. The program will run from January 12 through April 13, 2013 on Wednesdays, 5:30 - 8:00 PM and Saturdays, 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM.

The Social Services Agency is providing **FREE Tax Preparation training** to all interested County employees who want to volunteer to prepare taxes for low income individuals and families. You don't have to have an accounting background or be good with numbers—you simply need to have the desire to help those who need this service.

Most volunteers started with no previous tax preparation experience.

Last year, Alameda County Social Services Agency Volunteer Tax Preparers returned \$1.5 million dollars to low income individuals and families. The average tax refund amounted to \$875.00.

Join the Alameda County Social Services Agency's effort to help low income individuals and families **Earn it! Keep it, \$ave it!**

Go to the SSA website to sign up for training:

http://alamedasocialservices.org/public/features/eitc/volunteer_form.cfm

AGEnts for Change

A volunteer advocacy group for older adults

Thursday November 29, 2012
10:30am – 12:00pm

North Oakland Senior Center
5714 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way

RSVP recommended, or for more information contact Scott Weinzirl at (510) 318-6113 or send an e-mail to sweinzirl@bayareacs.org

Pension Reform: What it Means for you

After much political skirmishing and finger-pointing, the California Legislature passed a last-minute pension reform deal at the end of August that included significant changes for county retirement systems.

With a deadline of January 1, 2013 to implement the new law, the Alameda County Employee Retirement Association (ACERA) and County officials are working diligently to make sense of the nuances of the statute and explain to employees how their retirement benefits may be affected.

The law, called the California Public Employees' Pension Reform Act (PEPRA), mostly affects new hires as of January 1, 2013. Those new employees will enter into a new tier of retirement benefits, will be subject to new limits on pensionable income, and will be prohibited from including sick leave, vacation sellback and terminal vacation pay in their final pensionable salary.

These measures were enacted to control the costs of providing pension benefits and to prevent abuses such as spiking, which means enhancing an employee's salary for the sole purpose of augmenting his or her pension. Salaries may be "spiked" in the final year of service by adding vacation sellback, uniform allowances, car allowances and other benefits to the base salary. These benefits are often referred to as "Ventura Benefits" after the 1997 California court decision that allowed their inclusion in pensionable salary.

Certain aspects of current County employees' benefits remain unchanged. Employees who are near retirement, however, should carefully consider the impact of two important alterations to the County retirement law that might affect their decision about when to retire.

1. Changes to Ventura benefits

AB 197, a companion piece of legislation to PEPRA,

See the chart below for a list of changes to **current** employees' Ventura benefits **after** January 1, 2013.

BENEFIT	AFTER JANUARY 1, 2013
Sick Leave Hours—Cash out (limited to Sheriff's Department)	ELIMINATED
Vacation Hours Sellback	ACERA will include hours earned and payable (and actually paid) during the Final Average Salary Period (i.e., Vacation Sell/Sellback) in calculation of retirement allowance. The maximum depends on the employee's MOU.
Vacation Hours—Payoff at Termination	ELIMINATED

changes the definition of "compensation earnable" for current employees. If a current employee retires after January 1, 2013, the payment for unused vacation that can be included in the retirement calculation will be limited. This could lead to a reduced retirement benefit over the course of the employee's retirement.

For example, if an employee earns 5 weeks of vacation annually, and may 3 sell weeks of vacation during the Final Compensation Period, ACERA will include only 3 weeks of vacation when calculating the retirement allowance, if the employee sells it. Previously, employees were allowed to include all 5 weeks in their retirement calculation.

A comparison of Ventura benefits for current employees before and after pension reform can be viewed here:

[http://www.acera.org/downloads/publications/Side By Side Comparison - Pension Reform.pdf](http://www.acera.org/downloads/publications/Side%20By%20Side%20Comparison%20-%20Pension%20Reform.pdf)

For more information about Ventura benefits, click here:

[http://www.acera.org/downloads/publications/Ventura Benefits and Pension Reform.pdf](http://www.acera.org/downloads/publications/Ventura%20Benefits%20and%20Pension%20Reform.pdf)

2. Restrictions on Retirees Returning to Work

At this time, County employees may return to work

immediately after retirement and work up to 960 hours in one calendar year. Under the new law, those annuitants must wait 180 days before returning to work unless their employer certifies that the employee is filling a critically necessary position. Public safety employees are also exempt.

Any recent retiree or employee planning to retire soon would need to return to work on or before December 31, 2012 or be subject to the 180 day wait requirement.

Most current employees must stop working on or before Friday, December 28, 2012 if they want to retire now under the current system. As many as 900 Alameda County employees, or almost 10% of the workforce, may be affected by these changes and could potentially retire by the end of the year.

Every worker's situation is different. Talk to your HR manager or attend a pre-retirement seminar. For more information, please call ACERA at 510-628-3000 or toll free at 1-800-838-1932 or visit ACERA's website:

http://www.acera.org/pension_reform/index.php

County Disaster Relief Fund Re-opened for Hurricane Sandy Victims

In light of the loss of life and disruption caused by Hurricane Sandy, Alameda County has reactivated the Disaster Relief Fund.

The Alameda County Disaster Relief fund was activated in 2001 after the events of September 11th and has been reactivated for the South Asia Tsunami/Earthquake, Hurricane Katrina, the Haiti and Chile Earthquakes, and the Northern Japan Earthquake/Tsunami.

Cash donations may be contributed by sending a personal check payable to:

The Alameda County Disaster Relief Fund
 c/o the Auditor-Controller Agency
 1221 Oak Street, Room 249
 Oakland 94612

County employees also have the option to donate up to 5 days of their accrued vacation time, compensatory time and/or holiday in-lieu time. Please check the Alameda County website, <http://alcoweb.acgov.org/main/disaster2.htm> for more information.

WORKFORCE TRAINING NEWS

Free Youth Green Jobs Program

The **Spanish Speaking Citizens' Foundation** is recruiting for the **SEE Green Careers program**, which provides free training to Oakland young adults age 18 to 21 to assist them in preparing for careers in green technology. SEE Green Careers is a stipend program and will pay each student up to \$650 to actively participate.

The SEE Green Careers program is 8 weeks of training to include:

- Building Energy Efficiency certification
- Basic Construction
- Solar Panel Installation
- OSHA10 certification
- CORE training
- First Aid certification
- CPR certification
- Lead Paint 101
- 6 weeks internship
- Placement assistance



The program will start in January, 2013.

Criteria:

- Between the ages of 18-21
- Have Employment Eligibility
- Low-Income Oakland Resident
- Willingness to learn!

For more information, please contact Mark Alexander, Program Manager at (925) 470-5829 or malexander@sscf.org.

Click here for a flyer in English:

<http://www.scribd.com/fullscreen/113160444>

Click here for a flyer in Spanish:

<http://www.scribd.com/fullscreen/113160469>

Veterans Retraining Program



Veterans and community members celebrate Veterans Day in front of the Alameda County Administration Building on Tuesday, November 13, 2012.

In 2011, the President signed the **VOW to Hire Heroes Act**, which includes the **Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP)**. VRAP offers up to 12 months of training assistance to unemployed Veterans.

The criteria for the program are as follows:

- Are at least 35 but no more than 60 years old
- Are unemployed on the date of application
- Received an other than dishonorable discharge
- Are not eligible for any other Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) education benefit program (for example, the Post-9/11 GI Bill, Montgomery GI Bill, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Assistance)
- Are not in receipt of VA compensation due to unemployability
- Are not enrolled in a federal or state job training program

The program is limited to 54,000 participants from October 1, 2012, through March 31, 2014. Participants must attend full-time in order to receive up to 12 months of assistance at \$1,564 per month. The Department of Labor will offer employment assistance to every

Veterans Retraining...continued on next page

Veterans Retraining Program...continued from previous page

Veteran who participates upon completion of the program.

Participants must be enrolled in a VA-approved educational program offered by a community college or technical school. The program must lead to an Associate Degree, Non-College Degree, or a Certificate that trains the Veteran for a high demand occupation.

VRAP will provide training for educational programs that lead to a high demand occupation, as determined by the Department of Labor. Click here to see a listing of high demand occupations: http://benefits.va.gov/vow/docs/VRAP_High_Demand.pdf.

If you know a Veteran who can benefit from this time-limited program, please have him or her visit [eBenefits](#) to apply:

https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits-portal/ebenefits.portal?_nfpb=true&portlet.async=false&pageLabel=ebenefits_myeb_vonapp1

For a Veteran to complete the application, he or she will need to know his or her direct deposit information (bank routing number and account number), the name and location of his or her school, the program she or he wish to pursue, and the applicable [high demand occupation](#).

For more information on this or other Veteran Services programs, please contact Tamyra Simpson at (510) 577-1926 or tsimpson@acgov.org

Resources:



Alameda County
Social Services
Agency

http://www.alamedasocialservices.org/public/services/elders_and_disabled_adults/veterans_services.cfm

Operation Dignity

<http://operationdignity.org/>

**California Employment
Development Department**

http://www.edd.ca.gov/jobs_and_training/services_for_veterans.htm

Grant Seekers!

The **San Francisco Foundation's** 2012-2013 **Open Application** Cycle opened on November 12, 2012.

The deadline to submit an application depends on your Program Area:

Monday, January 7, 2013: Education and Arts & Culture

Monday, January 14, 2013: Community Development, Community Health, and Environment

To prepare, organizations are encouraged to visit the Foundation's website and review the following resources:

Program pages: Read each Program Area's goals and objectives to see how your organization aligns with the foundation's priorities. <http://www.sff.org/programs/>

How to Apply Workshops: Workshops are designed to assist grant seekers with the application process. In addition, they are an opportunity to meet the Program teams. To sign up for one of the upcoming sessions focused on your Program Area, please visit:

<http://www.sff.org/grantseekers/applying-for-a-grant/workshops-for-grantseekers/>

Apply for a Grant Online page: Read the detailed application guidelines and access other relevant application information.

<http://www.sff.org/grantseekers/applying-for-a-grant/apply-for-a-grant-online/>

Grantee Center: Log in to Grantee Center after November 12th to complete and submit your online application.

[https://granteecenter.sff.org/\(S\(0clpyu55bppdzvwtfrd1zryh\)\)/granteeLogin.aspx](https://granteecenter.sff.org/(S(0clpyu55bppdzvwtfrd1zryh))/granteeLogin.aspx)

If you have any questions, please contact Maria Healey at mxh@sff.org or (415) 733-8572.

ALBANY SENIOR CENTER

Thanksgiving Dinner
 Wednesday, November 21, 2012, 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM
 846 Masonic Ave., Albany, CA 94706
 Cost: \$5.00

FREE MEALS:

BERKELEY FOOD AND HOUSING PROJECT

Thanksgiving Meal
 Thursday, November 22, 2012, 2 PM
 2362 Bancroft Way, Berkeley CA 94704
 For more information or to donate, please call (510) 649-4965 or visit www.bfhp.org. To volunteer at the meal, please email Linda Mcardell at lmcardell@bfhp.org.

BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SELF-SUFFICIENCY (BOSS)

2065 Kittredge Street, Suite E, Berkeley, CA 94704
 For information about homelessness resources, to make a donation or to volunteer, please call (510) 649-1930 or visit <http://www.self-sufficiency.org/>

CITY OF OAKLAND 21ST ANNUAL THANKSGIVING DINNER

Tuesday, November 20, 2012, 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM
 Oakland Marriott City Center, 1001 Broadway
 For more information, please call (510) 238-2077 or visit:
<http://www2.oaklandnet.com/Government/o/DHS/s/CommunityHousingServices/index.htm>

COLLEGE AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Thanksgiving Meal
 Thursday, November 22, 2012, 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM
 5951 College Avenue, Oakland, CA
 If you wish to donate or sign up to volunteer for preparation or day-of shifts, please call the church office at (510) 658-3665 or register online at capcoakland.wordpress.com.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL OF ALAMEDA COUNTY Thanksgiving Day Meal

Thursday, November 22, 2012, 10:45 AM - 12:45 PM
 675 - 23rd Street, Oakland, CA 94612
 Free Dining Room Serving Hours all year round:
 Tuesday - Saturday 10:45AM - 12:45PM
 For more information, please call (510) 451-7676 or visit <http://www.svdp-alameda.org/>

LAKE MERRITT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Thanksgiving Day Meal
 Thursday, November 22, 2012, 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM
 1330 Lakeshore Ave., Oakland, CA 94606
 If you are interested in volunteering or donating time, food or money, please contact the Office Manager at (510) 465-4793 or office@lakemerrittumc.org.

TWO STAR MARKET (OAKLAND'S DIMOND DISTRICT)

10th Annual Thanksgiving Day Celebration
 Thursday, November 22, 2012, 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM
 2020 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland, CA 94602
 For more information, please call (510) 531-3576 or visit <http://www.2starmarket.com/>

Please Note: This is a partial list.



Albany Toy Barrels & Food Donation Locations

Isong Orthodontics, 1301 Solano Ave. (510) 528-2229
Mechanics Bank, 801 San Pablo Ave. (510) 558-2321
YMCA Albany, 921 Kains (510) 525-1130

Building Opportunities for Self Sufficiency (BOSS)

Annual Holiday Gift & Donation Drive
 The drive will collect gifts, gift cards, food, warm coats, holiday trees & décor for BOSS' programs serving homeless families and individuals. To get involved, contact BOSS at (510) 649-1930.

Rockridge District Association "Rockridge in the Snow"

Saturday, November 24, 3:00 PM—6:00 PM
 Rockridge BART station, 5660 College Ave.
 Children's play area with snow. Live holiday entertainment. Visit with Santa and his helpers.
Donations will be collected for "One Warm Coat" and "Toys for Tots." Free Admission

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At the event, children worked with the staff of Revolution Foods to make healthy fruit and yogurt snacks during the school lunch hour. Alameda County is partnering with Revolution Foods, a local company that serves more than 120,000 nutritious school meals across the country each day.

Let's Move! is a comprehensive initiative that was launched by the First Lady in 2010 and is dedicated to solving the problem of obesity within a generation. The participants in the campaign seek to ensure that children born today will grow up healthier and better equipped to pursue their dreams.

In the United States, more than 72 million people – and 16% of children—are obese. Since 1980, obesity rates for adults have doubled and rates for children have tripled. Here in Alameda County, 53.2% of adults are either overweight or obese and 29.1% of school aged children are considered overweight or obese.

Alameda County's *Let's Move!* campaign has many goals, including:

- To provide children with a healthier start by incorporating best practices for nutrition, physical activity and screen time into early care and education programs.
- To provide healthy food in schools by increasing participation in the School Breakfast Program and the School Lunch Program.
- To improve access to healthy, affordable foods by implementing healthy and sustainable food service guidelines in all County venues that serve food.

Supervisor Carson hopes to use his position on the executive board of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) as a platform to persuade other California counties to join the *Let's Move!* campaign to build a comprehensive plan to decrease rates of childhood obesity.

More information about the *Let's Move!* campaign can be found at <http://www.letsmove.gov/>.

For more information about the Alameda County Public Health Department's "Healthy Living for Life!" Initiative, please click here:

<http://healthylivingforlife.org/>



Making Connections
Merritt College



In May 2010, more than 300 people representing dozens of organizations met at Merritt College in Oakland to check in about the state of the African American community in the Bay Area.

Following the success of **African American Organizations Making Connections** in May 2010, a group of community members have come together to plan a follow-up event in February, 2013.

Like the original event, **Making Connections 2013** will serve as a meeting place for organizations that work with African Americans in the Bay Area. In 2013, organizers will focus on employment and mentoring opportunities, especially for youth and young adults.

Organizers would like attendees to leave the event having made commitments to mentor young people and energized to connect job seekers with employment resources and opportunities in the community.

In dynamic workshops, participants will delve into topics about personal development—how to mentally and emotionally prepare for life, career and family. Groups will also network and explore options for entrepreneurial growth in various business sectors.

The 2010 **Making Connections Resource Guide** will be updated to reflect new organizations and businesses in the area.

For more information about participation, sponsorship and volunteer opportunities, please contact LaNiece Jones at laniecejones@gmail.com.

Ancestry Project Update

Imagine you have never met your grandparents. Maybe they died before you were born. Or maybe you have been in foster care, like the participants in Laney College's **Beyond Emancipation** program.

Imagine then the excitement of seeing your grandfather's and great-grandfather's names on the 1940 U.S. Census. Imagine knowing where they lived, what their occupations were, who lived with them, and where their parents were born.

All nine Beyond Emancipation students who recently visited the Oakland Family History Center with the **Ancestry Project** found family members on a U.S. Census. Many of them were able to trace ancestors



Alvis Ward (right) of the Ancestry Project teaches a group of Laney College students how to use genealogical resources at the Oakland Family History Center on November 7, 2012.

back three or four generations. And one young man of Chinese descent worked with a volunteer genealogist to find Chinese records listing his ancestors.

The **Ancestry Project** is a program for youth and young adults that was initiated in February, 2011 by Supervisor Carson with the help of the African American Genealogical Society of Northern California. More than 200 young people in the East Bay have received training in genealogical research, interviewing techniques and multi-media documentation. The program is now run by Alternatives in Action, a nonprofit

youth development organization.

This fall, a group of 8th graders at **Berkeley's Midrasha, a Jewish Sunday school**, are also taking part in the Ancestry Project. Their teacher is Janice Sellers, a professional genealogist with the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society.

All participants and their teacher happen to be half Jewish, which has led to rich discussions about cultural heritage and identity.

One student was curious to learn more about his ancestors after hearing stories about a great- great-aunt on his mother's side who was a KGB spy.

Another student has more than 30 first cousins and is curious to learn more about their background.

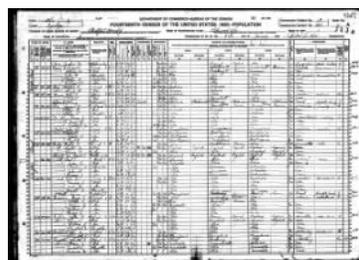
The Midrasha youth were treated to a visit in September from Rabbi Shalom Bochner, Director of Life Long Learning at Berkeley's Congregation Netivot Shalom. Rabbi Bochner shared his own journey of family discovery, which led him to remote towns in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland.

He described the trials and tribulations of doing research in a foreign country, and the joy of stumbling across gems of information.

In one small town in Poland, he went to every single grocery store in the town inquiring if the owners knew the location of the Jewish cemetery. At the last store, the clerk directed him to a grove of trees in the middle of a cornfield. There he found gravestones and a memorial to residents who had died in the world wars.

He hopes to inspire the Midrasha youth to one day travel to their ancestral homelands and continue to research their own family stories.

For more information about the Ancestry Project, please visit <http://keithcarson.org/Education>.



Left: A 1920 U.S. Census page from Cuyahoga County, Ohio.