

## FUND LEVERAGING IN CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

Sherri Brooks\*

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I selected Contra Costa County for my BASSC Internship because this county offered the opportunity to learn about leveraging funds with Community Based Organizations and Foundations and because in the last few years I have heard of numerous projects and new programs that they have embarked upon. This internship afforded the opportunity to gain a better understanding of the contract process, leveraging funds, and the relationship between the county and the service provider. In addition, I was able to take a closer look at innovative practices within the Children and Family Services Bureau which include regionalization, contract operations, and leveraging of funds.

### REGIONALIZATION

Offices in Contra Costa County are regionalized as a result from threats of action by legal advocates who alleged that services were not assessable to clients due to location and transportation barriers. Changing demographics has required the re-examination of services needs.

- Department staff has stated that the upside of regionalizing is that clients do not have to travel as far for services and in some cases can have more than one service need met in one location.
- A downside to regionalizing is that not all facilities have Program Managers on-site to oversee staff and day to day operations that can affect continuity of services. Also when staff is scattered it becomes difficult to ensure that staff at

each location is performing their job duties in a manner that is consistent with the Agency's Mission.

### CONTRACT OPERATIONS

The contracts unit is composed of the Contracts Administrator, three Administrative Services Analyst; two staff in contract positions who perform job duties similar to the Administrative Services Analyst and three Clerical Assistants.

When a department is in need of a contract for services, the department takes the following steps:

1. Identifies need
2. Enters into the program develop process and determines what service is needed
3. Communicates with fiscal staff
4. Informs contract department of service need
5. Puts together a package
6. Works with contract personnel to develop a contract or Request for Proposal (RFP)
7. Works with contract staff to develop scoring guidelines
8. Conducts bidder's conference in conjunction with contract staff
9. Selects a review board
10. Reviews proposals in conjunction with contract staff
11. Announces winner
12. Gets Board of Supervisor's approval
13. Develops service plan

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\*Sherri Brooks is a Program Specialist in Children & Family Services with Alameda County's Social Services Agency.

Contra Costa County's contract staff suggest the following process for air tight RFP:

1. run an ad in the local newspapers for ten days
2. mail out your RFP announcement the same day the RFP hits the newspaper
3. hold a mandatory bidder's conference
4. allow thirty to forty-five days for a response
5. select staff at management level and above if utilizing county staff on your review board,
6. select management from other counties when possible and,
7. brief your agency director regarding the specifics of the RFP before the RFP goes to the Board of Supervisors.

### LEVERAGING FUNDS

“Leverage” means the mechanical advantage gained by using a lever. In the funding world, one source of funds becomes the lever to gain other funds. This is also referred to as “drawing down” funds from another funding source.

Plain and simple, leveraging funds is a way of increasing a program budget by sharing and utilizing other funding sources.

The Family Enhancement Collaborative: Kinship Care Program, is an excellent example of leveraging funds with community-based organizations and foundations. In 1997, the State of California provided funding for a pilot for Kinship Support Services Programs for families in Kinship care.

Program requirements: 40% of the foster children placed in out of home care had to be in placement with a relative.

### Funding Sources

- State \$150,000 through Title IV-B
- Additional \$150,000 from state due to lack of interest from other counties

Contra Costa County contributed a combined total of \$90,000 to this effort via the CFS Services budget and TANF dollars. The \$90,000 from the county served as a match and was then leveraged to draw dollars from other funding sources.

- RFP went out and was awarded to Families First, Pittsburg Preschool and the Youth Services Bureau. Families First, donated in-kind administrative services.
- In addition, Pittsburg Preschool applied for a foundation grant from the John Muir Foundation of Mt. Diablo. Pittsburg Preschool was awarded the \$30,000 grant, which was leveraged with county dollars, \$15,000 from the county and \$15,000 from the foundation.
- The county contributed a portion of their State Family Preservation allocation, \$210,000 in which county dollars were used to leverage the State Family Preservation dollar at a 30% county, 70% state, share.
- Finally, FACT dollars which is Child Abuse Prevention money was applied for and awarded in the amount of \$75,000. This funding source also required leveraging which in some cases could be a county match or in-kind services from a CBO.

### SIGNIFICANCE

- The fact that Contra Costa County was able to leverage dollars for this program is significant because if the State Kinship Pilot dollars were the only dollars used, the county would have

only had half the program, \$300,000 verses \$645,000

- Contra Costa County has two times the Kinship program they could have had. Instead of one center, the county is able to offer Kinship Services at three locations throughout the county.

### **OBSERVATIONS**

Contra Costa County is an agency with a vision that includes leveraging funds. This vision has become part of the agency culture. It begins with the Director of Employment & Human Services, John Cullen, and trickles down the line to other agency staff. Other observations include the use of media to educate the public about the department's functions and services. I was also fortunate to meet with a number of staff persons from the Children and Family Service Bureau to learn of new programs and services that are available to families.

### **IMPLICATIONS FOR ALAMEDA COUNTY**

1. Our Agency would benefit from a streamlined RFP process. Each department has their own process or lack of, when an Request for Proposal needs to be completed. There needs to be increased communication between departments regarding the type of services that have existing contracts with CBO's so that one department does not replicate a contract that is held by another county department. There is currently a county effort to list RFP's on the internet.
2. The Agency should also,
  - move towards creating an environment that supports leveraging funds. Such an a change would result in unimaginable funds for programs;
  - Educate staff regarding the benefits of leveraging to encourage buy-in;
  - Add positions in each department that can research various funding sources;
  - Hire grant writers. Government and private funding require proposals. An Agency grantwriter is likely to be more cost effective than contracting out grantwriting positions whenever a grant becomes available. The Board of Supervisors would likely support such an effort, as it should result in additional funding for services to clients;
  - Incorporate the use of media in our way of doing business. Contra Costa Counties use of media has resulted in remarkable responses in recruitment efforts for foster and adoptive parents. The Department of Children and Family Services is greatly in need of tools to increase the number of families available to care for our children.
  - Regionalize our offices in the Social Services Agency which would allow for better services to our clients. Child Welfare and Adult and Aging Services offices remain for the most part in areas that are not where are clients are located such as the downtown areas and the industrial park areas.

## **FUND LEVERAGING IN CONTRA COSTA COUNTY**

**Sherri Brooks**

### **INTRODUCTION**

I selected Contra Costa County for my BASSC Internship because this county offered the opportunity to learn about leveraging funds with Community Based Organizations and Foundations. In addition to my interest in leveraging funds, I choose Contra Costa County because in the last few years I have heard of numerous projects and new programs that they have embarked upon. I consider Contra Costa to be a truly innovative County. I was fortunate to have as a mentor, Charles Couch, the Contracts Administrator for the Administration Services Section of the Employment and Human Services Division. Couch is a former BASSC participant. During my internship, I also worked closely with staff in the Children and Family Services Bureau.

This internship afforded the opportunity to gain a better understanding of the contract process, leveraging funds, and the relationship between the county and the service provider. In addition, I was able to take a closer look at innovative practices within the Children and Family Services Bureau.

Contra Costa County is a large, diverse county with over 916, 000 residents in 19 different cities and 201 districts. According to the Director of Employment and Human Services Department, John Cullen, Contra Costa County is currently in a "year of realignment". Last year in September 1999, the Department changed its name from Contra Costa County Social Service Department to Employment and Human Services Department following a merger with the Private Industry Council

(PIC) and JTPA. The department is absorbing the work previously conducted by PIC and is continuing to make the necessary changes to respond to welfare reform. Bureaus have moved from one section to another. Some of the projects the department is currently focusing on include crossover services, centralizing emergency shelter care, using performance outcomes and leveraging funds. Performance outcomes are being developed for each bureau and will be presented to the Board of Supervisors. The use of media has been an important venue for the county.

The Employment and Human Services Agency consist of four service areas including Children and Family Services, Workforce Services, Aging and Adult Services, and Administrative Services. In addition, the Workforce Investment Board, Public Information Officer, Organizational Development Manager and Cultural Diversity Coordinator are under the direction of the John Cullen, Director of Employment and Human Services. Please see the attached organizational chart.

### **REGIONALIZATION**

Today, offices in Contra Costa County are regionalized. Offices have been regionalized for a number of years now resulting from threats of action by legal advocates who alleged that services were not assessable to clients due to office locations and transportation barriers. The demographics of the county have changed throughout the years as has the services needs of clients. As a result, the Agency has had to change the way it does business. The Employment and Human Services Agency now

has offices in a number of districts. Some of the offices are combination facilities serving Child Welfare and Welfare to Work clients while other facilities may be dedicated to one service area.

The majority of the facilities designed to serve clients are located in Central County (Concord/Walnut Creek), East County (Antioch/Pittsburg), and West County (Richmond). The Department of Children and Family Services has offices in all three of these regions.

According to a former Plants Facility Manager in the Agency, future offices are likely to be dedicated to one service area, as the multi-service offices have been costly. East County (Antioch/Pittsburg) is expanding rapidly and will need new facilities, one of which will likely be the home of a Service Integration Team consisting of employment services, child welfare and aging services. Department staff has stated that the upside of regionalizing is that clients do not have to travel as far for services and in some cases can have more than one service need met in one location. A downside to regionalizing is that not all facilities have Program Managers on-site to oversee staff and day to day operations that can affect continuity of services. Also when staff is scattered it becomes difficult to ensure that staff at each location is performing their job duties in a manner that is consistent with the Agency's Mission.

## **CONTRACT OPERATIONS**

The contracts department is located within the Department of Employment and Human Services under Administrative Services. The contracts unit is composed of the Contracts Administrator, Charles Couch, who is also the supervisor of the unit. The unit is also composed of three Administrative

Services Analyst; two staff in contract positions who perform job duties similar to the Administrative Services Analyst and three Clerical Assistants. The contracts personal have a range of experience including experience with block grants for County Costa County and legal backgrounds.

There are a number of key players involved in the development and awarding of contracts including but not limited to contract department staff, program staff including Program Analyst and Division Directors, the community based organization, the Board of Supervisors, the review board, and last but not least, the Director of Employment and Human Services. In some cases a major player can even be the Director of a Bureau such as, Dana Fabella who heads the Children and Family Services Bureau. A case example will be utilized in the latter portion of this paper which has a focus on contract development and leveraging funds for the Children and Family Services Bureau.

When a department is in need of a contract for services, the department takes the following steps:

- Identifies need
- Enters into the program develop process and determines what service is needed
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- Puts together a package
- Works with contract personnel to develop a contract or Request for Proposal (RFP)
- Works with contract staff to develop scoring guidelines
- Conducts bidder's conference in conjunction with contract staff
- Selects a review board
- Reviews proposals in conjunction with contract staff

- Announces winner
- Gets Board of Supervisor's approval
- Develops service plan
- Monitors process independently or in conjunction with contract staff

Contra Costa County's contract staff suggest the following process for an air tight RFP:

1. Run an ad in the local newspapers for ten days.
2. Mail out your RFP announcement the same day the RFP hits the newspaper.
3. Hold a mandatory bidder's conference.
4. Allow thirty to forty-five days for a response.
5. If utilizing county staff on your review board, select staff at management level and above.
6. Select management from other counties when possible.
7. Brief your Agency Director regarding the specifics of the RFP before the RFP goes to the Board of Supervisors.

### LEVERAGING FUNDS

*"Leverage" means the mechanical advantage gained by using a lever. In the funding world, one source of funds becomes the lever to gain other funds. This is also referred to as "drawing down" funds from another funding source. In most cases it is the county's required match which leverages State funds or the combined State/County funds that leverage federal funds. Outside of funding for the required welfare programs, a county's willingness to commit an amount of its own funds might be used to leverage grant funds that require a local share.*  
(Brenman, Julie. 1999, SF County)

Plain & simple, leveraging funds is a way of increasing a program budget by sharing and utilizing other funding sources.

The Family Enhancement Collaborative: Kinship Care Program, is an excellent example of leveraging funds with community-based organizations and foundations. In 1997, the State of California provided funding for a pilot for Kinship Support Services Programs for families in Kinship care. This collaborative is one of many innovative programs that have been implemented by the Children and Family Services Bureau.

*Kinship care—the full-time care of children by relatives or other adults who have strong family relationships to those children- has existed for centuries. Today, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and other relatives continue reaching out to children in their families who are separated from their parents for various reasons. But very little support reaches kinship caregivers. Most receive limited support from the child welfare system.* (McKinley, Sharon. Gordon, Amy. Satterfield, Mattie. 1999, "Voices of Kinship Caregivers" in Children's Voice)

In order for the county to receive funding for the program, 40% of the foster children placed in out of home care had to be in placement with a relative. The dollar amount available to Contra Costa County from the State was \$150,000. The State funding for this program was through Title IV-B, a block grant to states for social services to children. Since very few counties expressed interest in participating in the pilot, including Alameda County, Contra Costa County's state portion was doubled to \$300,000. Sources in Contra Costa County stated that they were thankful Alameda County Department of Children and Family Services did not apply to be part of the pilot because it provided their county with additional funding.

Contra Costa County contributed a combined total

of \$90,000 to this effort via the Children and Family Services budget and the Employment and Human Services budget via TANF dollars. The \$90,000 from the county served as a match and was then leveraged to draw dollars from other funding sources. The Employment and Human Services Department contribution of TANF money is an example of a county's willingness to commit its own funds to draw others.

The Children and Family Services Bureau worked with the Contracts Administrator to put out a RFP utilizing the previously mentioned steps and suggestions. The contract was awarded to three community-based organizations that formed a collaborative. The community based organizations were Families First, Pittsburg Preschool and the Youth Services Bureau. Families First, donated in-kind administrative services.

In addition, Pittsburg Preschool applied for a foundation grant from the John Muir Foundation of Mt. Diablo. Pittsburg Preschool was awarded the \$30,000 grant, which was leveraged with county dollars, \$15,000 from the county and \$15,000 from the foundation. The collaborating CBO's contributions have been numerous, including staff time to seek additional funders and the donation of supplies and services utilizing their connections with other agencies.

In addition, the county contributed a portion of their State Family Preservation allocation, \$210,000 in which county dollars were used to leverage the State Family Preservation dollar at a 30% county, 70% state, share. Finally, FACT dollars which is Child Abuse Prevention money was applied for and awarded in the amount of \$75,000. This funding source also required leveraging which in some cases could be a county match or in-kind services from a CBO.

## SIGNIFICANCE

- The fact that Contra Costa County was able to leverage dollars for this program is significant because if the State Kinship Pilot dollars were the only dollars used, the county would have only had half the program, \$300,000 versus \$645,000. A program utilizing \$300,000 would have served a very limited number of clients. As mentioned previously, at least 40% of the foster children in the county are with relative caregivers. The State Kinship grant as a sole funding source would have resulted in limited access to many relative caregivers.
- Contra Costa County has two times the Kinship program they could have had. Instead of one center, the county is able to offer Kinship Services at three locations throughout the county.

In terms of service, that meant the program was able to reach more families and expand the type of services offered. Staff was able to make a difference in the life of the isolated grandmother who is raising four grandchildren plus her own son. The grandmother that received a TANF grant that was only \$100 per month more than her rent and left her with little to pay utilities and buy food. The same grandmother that in her decade of living in California, never had a phone in her home because of the perceived cost and the one who rarely left the house for any reason. This was the grandmother and the kids who were noticed by staff at the neighborhood Kinship Center. This is the grandmother that now has a part-time job, respite, a telephone, and ongoing support from the Kinship Center. This is the grandmother who received assistance in locating a part-time job, in getting a telephone hooked up and with childcare for the kids from her neighborhood Kinship Center. She is but one of many who will be served.

## OBSERVATIONS

During my internship at Contra Costa County, I had the opportunity to meet with a number of staff in various departments that had been involved in leveraging funds in one way or another. I found that staff had different perceptions and opinions about leveraging. Some felt that leveraging funds was the best thing since the computer. Others felt that leveraging is over-rated! Yet when I spoke with the individuals about their various assignments and programs, they all had leveraged funds in their work and those were the very programs that they seemed to be the proudest of.

One staff person stated, *“The County is in infancy in regards to leveraging funds”* and that *“Leveraging is everyone’s responsibility.”* That statement spoke very much to what the staff at Contra Costa County does.

Contra Costa County is an Agency with a vision that includes leveraging funds. This vision has become part of the Agency Culture and can be seen whether you are on the inside or outside. It begins with John Cullen, the Director of Employment & Human Services and trickles down the line to other agency staff. From the example of leveraging funds above, that vision of leveraging trickled down to Dana Fabella, Director of the Children & Family Services Bureau, then to her staff, Division Directors, Debbi Moss, to her assistant, Paul Buddenhagen, and to the CBO’s with whom they work. I know this because I met with the two of the three CBO’s involved in the Family Enhancement Collaborative. They believe they are partners and that it is their responsibility, also, to find new funding sources where county dollars can be leveraged.

Staff also stressed the importance of teamwork and having good working relationships with your fiscal, contracts and program staff. When the working relationship is not optimal, it can result in a barrier to a sound contract or in a program that does not run smoothly. This is a county with an RFP process which seems to work very well. Meaning that there is a consistent process that is followed which lends itself to very few inquiries from the Board of Supervisors or the community.

Other observations include the use of media to educate the public about the department’s functions and services. I was also fortunate to meet with a number of staff persons from the Children and Family Service Bureau to learn of new programs and services that are available to families.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR ALAMEDA COUNTY

- Our Agency would benefit from a streamlined RFP process, as there doesn’t appear to be such a process in place. Each department has their own process or lack of, when an Request for Proposal needs to be completed. In addition, there needs to be increased communication between departments regarding the type of services that have existing contracts with CBO’s so that one department does not replicate a contract that is held by another county department. There is currently a county effort to list RFP’s on the internet.
- The Agency should move towards creating an environment that supports leveraging funds. Such a change would result in unimaginable funds for programs.
- Educate staff regarding the benefits of leveraging to encourage buy-in. Every staff person is a resource and may be aware of additional funding sources.



- Add positions in each department that can research various funding sources.
- Hire grant writers. As the county strives to be more innovative and the federal and state government has begun offering additional funding for innovation, the Agency needs to be prepared to respond to given deadlines. Government and private funding require proposals. An Agency grantwriter is likely to be more cost effective than contracting out grantwriting positions whenever a grant becomes available. The Board of Supervisors would likely support such an effort, as it should result in additional funding for services to clients.
- Incorporate the use of media in our way of doing business. Contra Costa Counties use of media has resulted in remarkable responses in recruitment efforts for foster and adoptive parents. The Department of Children and Family Services is greatly in need of tools to increase the number of families available to care for our children. In addition, CCC has been able to develop strong relationship with their local media. We can create positive messages and use media to tell the good stories and be able to send our message when there is a “bad” story as well.
- Regionalizing our offices in the Social Services Agency will allow for better services to our clients. Currently, the employment services programs have begun moving out in the community but other service programs have not. Child Welfare and Adult and Aging Services offices remain for the most part in areas that are not where are clients are located such as the downtown areas and the industrial park areas. Very few of are clients live in these locations. While relocation of staff is often a union issue, staff often is willing to change location on their own.

These seven implications while not all directly related to one another, could probably be implemented within six months to a year. As our agency is working on the implementation of the five year Strategic Plan we can determine if any of these recommendations should be incorporated. This opportunity to observe another county system was truly invaluable.

**FAMILY ENHANCEMENT COLLABORATIVE  
Kinship Support Services Program**

**Overview**

Since July 1, 1997, the Kinship Care sites in West and East Contra Costa County has served 290 families (838 children); these numbers exceed the targeted numbers of 120 and 150 families during the two years. Approximately one third of the families served are involved with Child Protective services. Kinship services have evolved from providing (limited) case management, information and referral, support groups and workshops, limited recreational activities and financial assistance, to providing a full scope of supportive services which met the needs of relative caregivers and the children in their care. These services include case management for all involved families, advocacy, in-home support services, support groups, workshops, a full recreation/respice program (for the children and caregivers), information and referral, pre-ILSP (for non-dependent children), mentoring/tutoring, financial and household necessities assistance, and transportation. In addition, the Kinship families and others receive copies of the program's newsletter.

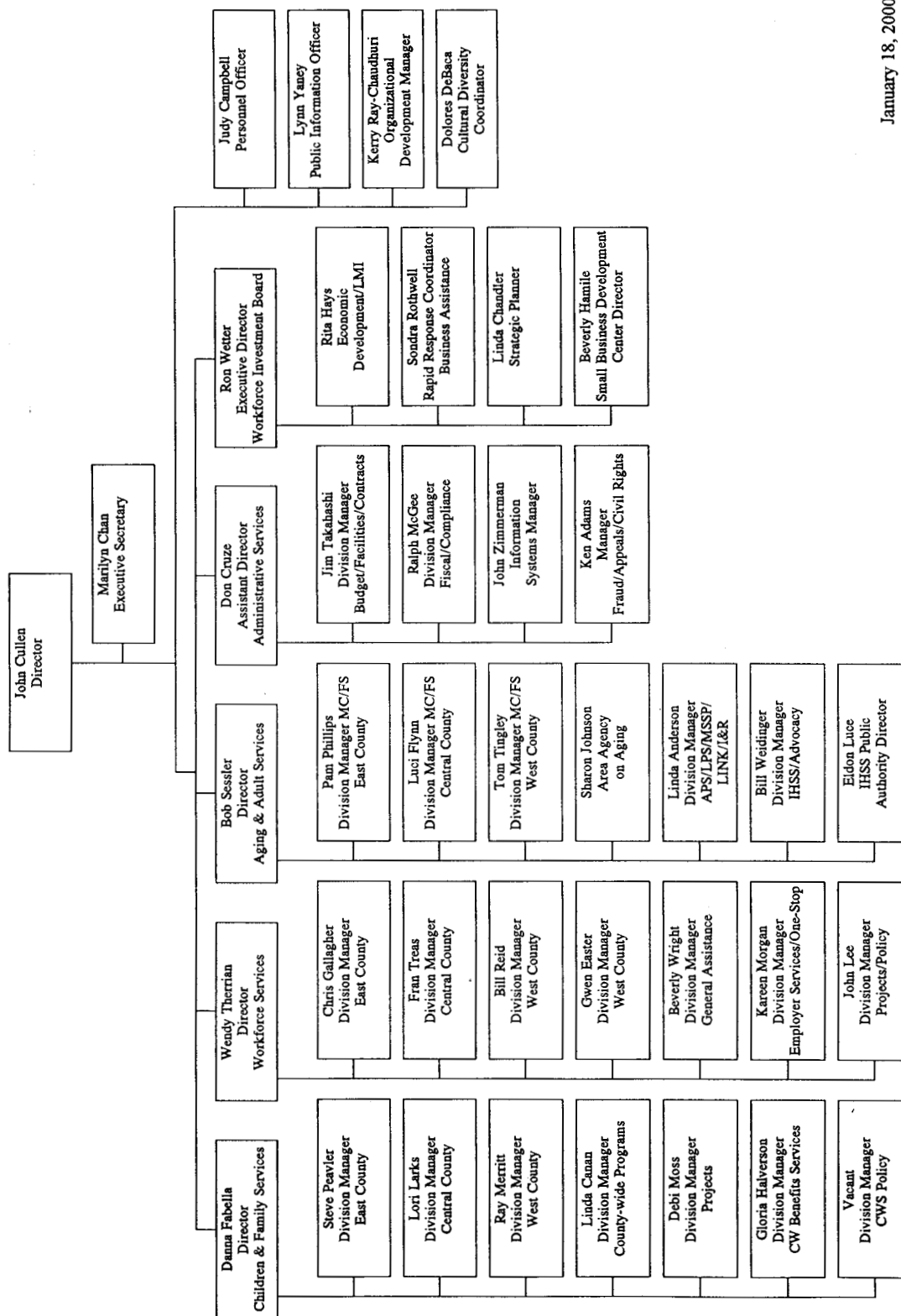
**Accomplishments**

- ◆ June 1998 both sites received State Kinship Support Services Program money at a rate higher than was requested. The proposals were rated number one in the state.
- ◆ June 1998 both sites purchased vans to meet client related transportation needs.
- ◆ Site visits conducted by the State Dept. of Social Services resulted in rave reviews by the evaluators. The FEC's program has been described as a model program with many of the program's ideas being replicated by other KSSP funded sites. Lillian Johnson (Edgewood, San Francisco) has recognized the program as having "stellar" qualities.
- ◆ Program staff received "excellent" reviews after presenting the program model at the CSC Key Strategies conference (April 1999). The program staff will also present the collaboration aspects of the program at the CWLA annual kinship conference in August 1999.
- ◆ The West County site has purchased a building in Richmond; this will become their Kinship Center. Occupancy is scheduled for July 1999. The East County site will be building additional space onto their existing building; this will become their Kinship Center. Occupancy is scheduled for late fall 1999.

**Challenges**

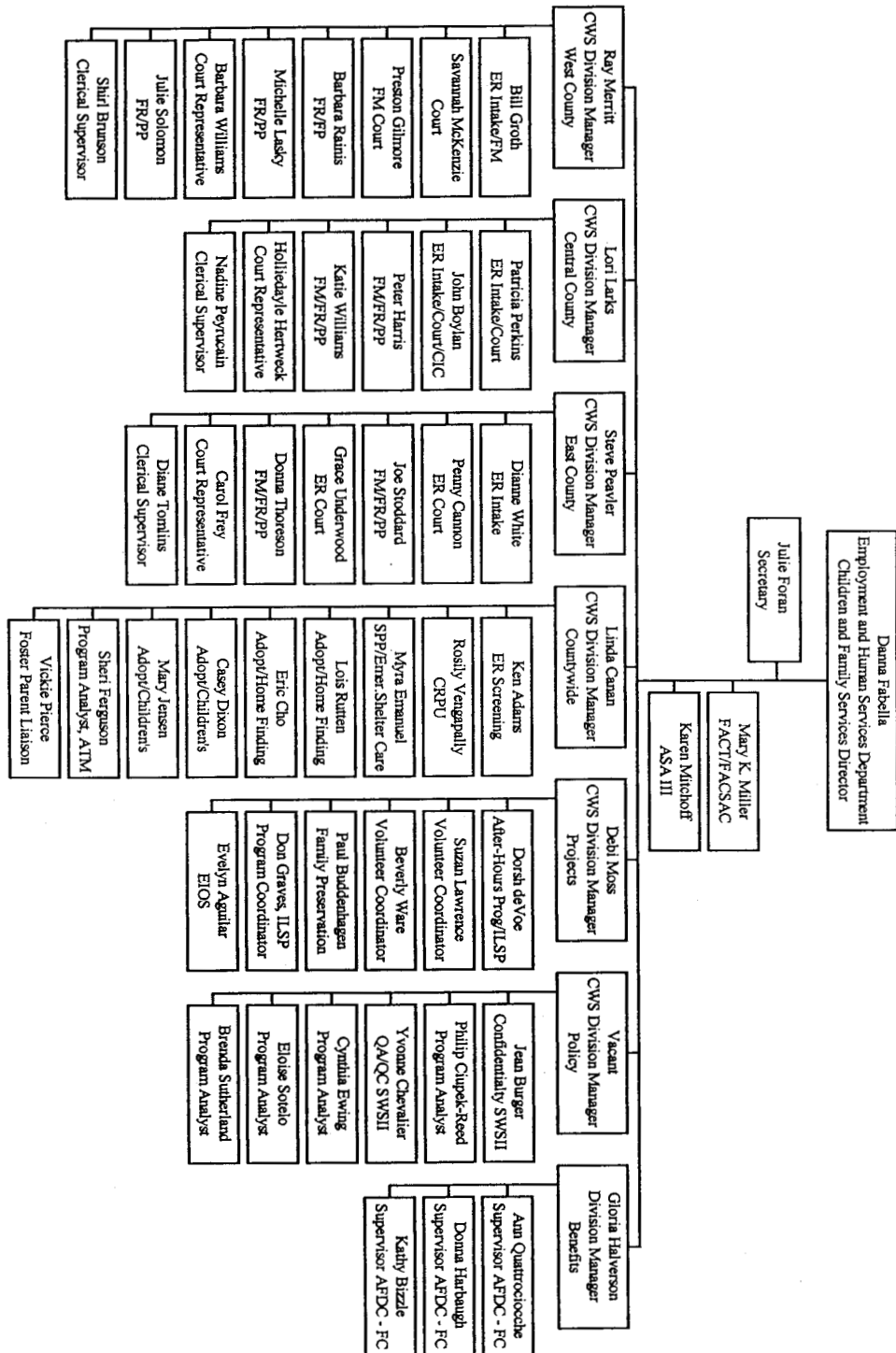
- ◆ Mentoring the service providing agencies has had mixed results. The mentoring has occurred in the following areas: staff hiring and training, program development, implementation of contracted services, community outreach, collaboration (internal and external), securing hard and soft funding, contractual compliance (county and State program requirements), maintaining a uniformed program skeleton across the two sites, and communication across sites.
- ◆ Maintaining the collaborative nature of the program is an ongoing issue. The Program Coordinator often has to intervene and clarify the intent of providing joint activities and cross site communication (it has been perceived as a threat). A critical role for the Program Coordinator has been to assure both sites that they are receiving the same information and access to similar resources.

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY  
EMPLOYMENT & HUMAN SERVICES



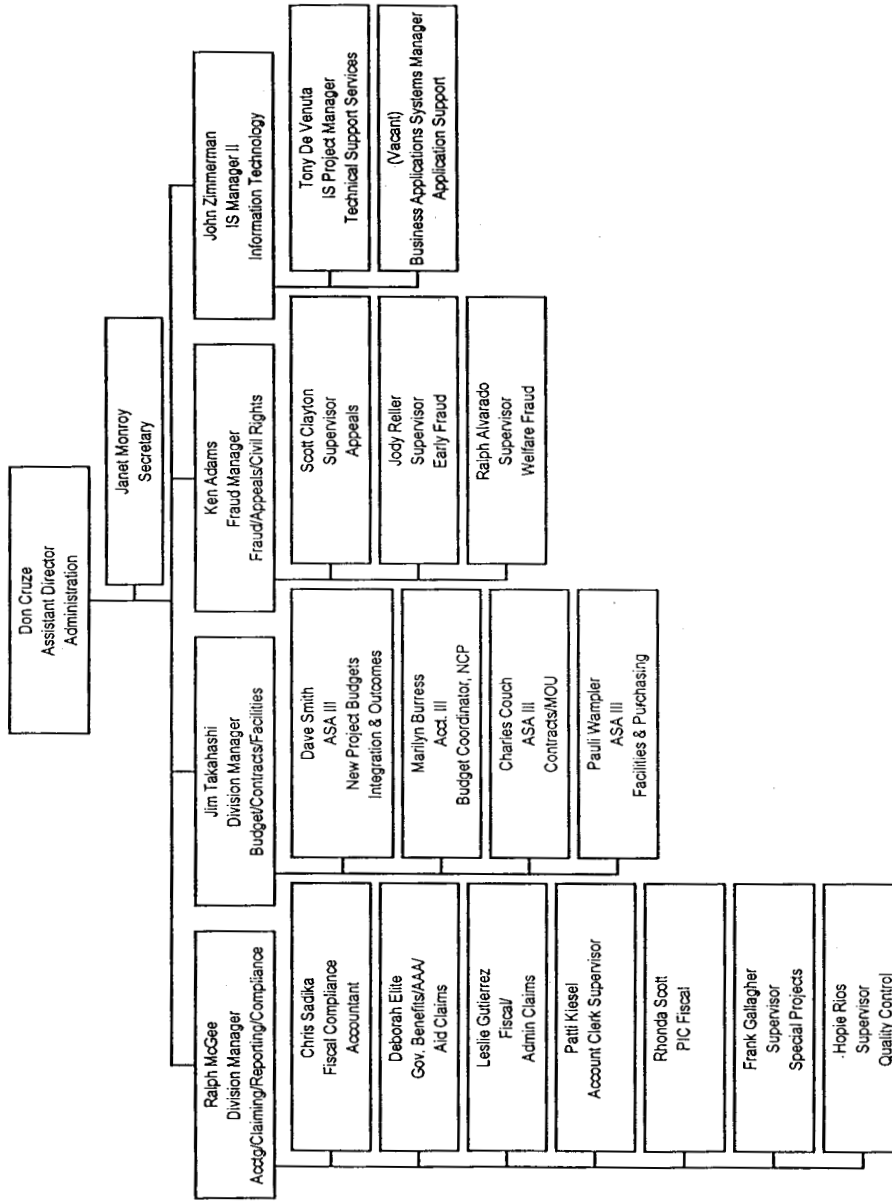
January 18, 2000

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY



January 25, 2000

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**Contra Costa County  
Employment and Human Services Department  
AGING & ADULT SERVICES BUREAU**

