

PREFACE

This casebook is very unusual. It represents the experiences of county human services managers. It seeks to capture the daily pressures and opportunities to promote innovations and organizational change. The cases reflect the changing economic and political environment in California over a twenty-five year period (1994-2019). It also reflects examples of practice research.

The contributors to this casebook are members of the Bay Area Social Services Consortium (BASSC) founded in 1987 with the assistance of the San Francisco Zellerbach Family Fund. The Consortium represents a policy/research/training partnership between twelve northern California counties surrounding the San Francisco Bay, five university graduate social work education programs, and one foundation. Since 1992, the Consortium has functioned as a Think Tank for its members exploring issues of common concern. The evolution of BASSC is described in Chapter 1. BASSC's current Vision Statement appears as Chapter 3. In nearly all of its meetings and retreats, members have presented case descriptions of either innovative practice or administrative challenges and responses.

This 25th anniversary edition of the casebook features a wide array of BASSC research projects and teaching cases. It marks a milestone of the BASSC EDP and the beginning of a transition as the founders, Stan Weisner and Mike Austin, make way for the next generation of educational leaders. In the process of educating over 750 county staff over 2 ½ decades, the county directors are most grateful for Stan's and Mike's leadership in designing, implementing,

sustaining, and continuously updating the EDP with the assistance of the BASSC Training Coordinator, Andrea DuBrow. Additional gratitude for the program can be found in the keynote address (attached to this Preface) by Ellen Timberlake (Director, Santa Cruz County) at the 25th graduation ceremony in May 2019.

The set of cases reflecting the experiences of top management in the public human services and related research have been compiled for use in preparing senior managers for top management positions. The Consortium members identified as one of their top priorities the development of a cadre of their most promising managers, primarily women and people of color, for a regional talent pool that could be accessed when seeking to fill top management positions in the future. The contributors dedicate this casebook to their future successors; as one county director said, "These are the professionals who will be running our agencies when we all have retired to the golf course."

In addition to thanking the contributors, we want to acknowledge the valuable assistance of all the BASSC Research Assistants. They spent many hours researching topics of interest to the members, transcribing and editing the cases, and assisting each contributor in locating the missing pieces of their stories. We also wish to express our appreciation to our BASSC Staff at the University of California, School of Social Welfare, for serving as general editors of the casebook as well as ongoing facilitators of the rich and rewarding deliberations of the Consortium members.

**Jerry Huber, BASSC Co-Chair
Director, Solano County Department
of Health and Social Services**