

Proposal Narrative:  
New Initiative – Gap Funding Request  
Pacoima Community Youth Culture Center, Inc.

Project Title:  
African American Neighborhood Network/Culture Center (AANN/CC) Initiative

The Pacoima Community Youth Culture (herein after referred to as “PCYCC”) was organized in June 1977 through the establishment of the Pacoima Community Choir under the guidance of the late Sister Jane McGlory, who as assisted by Mrs. Vera Oden and Mr. Paul Myers. The formal proceedings to develop a youth culture center took firm root in October of the same year; the youth choir became the foundational entity that spearheaded PCYCC, offering programs in music, creative and performing arts, leisurely and recreational sports activities and the martial arts, personal development and family intervention counseling, and other social cultural and spiritual activities that served to divert the youth and young adults away from “street crimes” as a way of life. The initial center was housed in a house dedicated for a center by Mrs. McGlory in memory of her late son William Thompson. The center was organized to include a volunteer Board of Directors and was officially incorporated in February 1979 as a nonprofit educational and charitable youth and family services organization. The center was moved to its present location in early 1982 and received its first operational grant from the City of Los Angeles in March 1983. Thousands of youth, young adults, and their families have been served by PCYCC since its humble beginning in June 1977.

Currently, PCYCC is operating as a completely volunteer nonprofit community-based organization. The center offers activity programs in Karate, Dance and Drill and community empowerment initiative through its “grassroots” think tank – the LLAACETT Group. Additionally, the center continues to sponsor three Narcotics Anonymous support groups; the center also collaborates with several community-based organizations, which includes MASEED, the San Fernando Valley Branch, NAACP, Pledgerville Senior Citizens Villa, Inc., the Pacoima Neighborhood Council, Mount Zion Baptist Church and the Good Samaritan House. Many of these organizations utilize space in the center to hold meetings and seminars and workshops throughout the year. Under this request for funding support the PCYCC proposes to establish an African American Neighborhood Network/Culture Center (AANN/CC) initiative. This initiative will entail the development of a community and family support “wrap-around” center concept where members of the African-American community can gather and enjoy opportunities to educate themselves and their children/grandchildren, learn how to use the computer to acquire requisite computer and job skills, develop an awareness of and plan promote individual and collective strategies and implement micro enterprises and other entrepreneurial ideas, access information on employment, health, social, cultural (and multicultural) and other valuable community resources; and, participate in on-line civic and government forums. The direct result is to increase self-sufficiency, employability, and economic self-reliance. Indirectly, such a neighborhood community network serves to strengthen and empower community residents and maximize their capacity to participate more fully as productive and responsible citizens.

The initiative proposes to target the local residents of the Pacoima community and targeted youth and families in nearby Council District 7 communities. In addition, as the general population ages, so goes a substantial majority African Americans living in and around the Pacoima community and in the surrounding areas. This particular resource initiative will be designed to offer intergenerational programming, with a focus on senior adults (grand-parenting seniors) living with and/or assisting in the care of and raising minor children. Many of these individuals lack an awareness of viable and useful resources to assist them in the role/roles as custodial/guardian parents of minor children and pre-adult teens. Within this group of African Americans (senior adults living at home), a representative number are becoming increasingly frail and disabled, due to complications resulting from chronic illnesses and diseases, i.e., cardiovascular disease, diabetes, hypertension, stroke, and dementia, to name a few. Currently there is a critical gap in services to address the social services needs of many of these community residents, as well as residents throughout the local community. The AANN/CC's primary goals are to assist African-American residents in the community by 1) increasing independence and self-reliance; 2) Assisting disadvantaged youth, young adults, mature adults and senior adults and handicapped individuals in establishing and maintaining useful, healthy and productive lifestyles; 3) preventing premature institutionalization in the social and criminal justice systems; and, 4) increase awareness of resource accessibility and utilization.

Finally, the proposed services of the AANN/CC will be to provide avenues and opportunities that support the growth and development of the total African-American family and community members. PCYCC believes in community collaboration, creating trusting and responsive partnerships, such as with the NAACP, Pledgerville Senior Citizens Villa, Inc., and the PNC, and maintaining respectful relationships as was evidenced with the center's leadership team being intimately involved and engaged with the Pacoima Benefit Partners in its work on the Plaza Pacoima project.

In 2005, PCYCC begin to serve as a nexus for building collaboration among the African-American constituency in the community; and, over the past two years, the PCYCC has provided information and referral to community members—providing community residents with information, resources and connections to other agencies that can help to meet their needs. On average, PCYCC through its volunteer activities and sponsorship relationships serves approximately 900 persons per month. Evidence of this data can be gleaned from monthly narrative reports that are submitted to the City of Los Angeles Community Development Department's FamilySource Center, which is housed across the breezeway from PCYCC. The proposed AANN/CC initiative will be structured to focus on the following services modules within the African-American and general community as a whole:

- Community Education/Empowerment with an emphasis on linking residents to outside resources.
- Education/Quality of Life with an emphasis on residents receiving information through activities which will be offered both on site and through web-based and community-based enrichment and enhancement educational opportunities.

- Health Awareness and Education with an emphasis on helping residents to get information through culture-specific coordinated educational health resources.
- Culture-specific social and cultural programs and activities, as well as multi-cultural program, services, and activities through collaboration with other cultural and community-based agencies and organizations that focus on families and youth.

Planned/Expected Outcomes:

1. Residents will be able to access resources and services as needed.
2. Residents will participate more fully in community social and recreational activities.
3. Residents will be less isolated and get more involved in facility/community events.
4. Resident will enjoy each other's company; will take pride in their residential community or neighborhood; and will broaden their quality of life beyond day-to-day survival.
5. Residents/participants will be able to advocate for themselves.
6. Residents/participants will become more active and healthy and lead better lives through education and awareness by gaining knowledge in rewards of self-empowerment and personal growth and development.
7. Residents/participants will have increased understanding and awareness of empowerment-related topics; and, receive and use all available financial resources and entitlements.

Primary Target Populations:

The PCYCC African American Neighborhood Network/Culture Center initiative proposes to market and outreach to residents (African Americans as a focus group) residing within postal zip codes 91331 and 91342 as its primary catchment service areas. These areas are highly diverse in ethnic, cultural, social, and age demographics. The proposer expects to collaborate with the area's local community colleges and state university in designing and implementing its educational and health awareness programs and activities; and the initiative's strategies and implementation objectives will be to utilize undergraduate and graduate student interns in delivering programs and services to the residents, thereby increasing their opportunities for success in obtaining on-hands and practical experience in the social, economic, health and business sectors of society.

**Grant Request: \$119,962 (Projected for a pilot year and one year continuation @ \$59,981 per year.) Supplemental and complementary funding will be sought through additional proposal development projects and initiatives beyond the pilot and continuation year funding.**