

# Eden I&R, Inc.

"linking people and resources"



570 B Street ♦ Hayward, CA 94541 ♦ 510-537-2710 ♦ FAX 510-537-0986

## Agency Annual Report Fiscal Year 2008 (July 2007 – June 2008)

Eden I&R, Inc. has been fulfilling a vital role in Alameda County for over 32 years by fulfilling its mission of "linking people and resources." The agency's flexibility has allowed it to consistently and creatively change as the community's needs change.

This year, Eden I&R (Information & Referral) continued to provide a variety of programs linking at-risk populations with critical social services. The thousands of people who benefited from these referrals included: homeless families, vulnerable youth, people living with HIV/AIDS, domestic violence victims, non-English speakers, the elderly, and the disabled.

### Telephone Information and Referral Programs

#### 2-1-1 Alameda County Phone Line

Eden I&R began providing 2-1-1 services to Alameda County on July 1, 2007. 2-1-1 is a simple three-digit telephone dialing code that serves as a Single Point of Access for free health and human services information and referral in multiple languages. It provides service professionals and consumers access to the most comprehensive and up-to-date information on health, housing and human services in Alameda County 24-hours a day, 7-days a week, and 365-days a year. Eden I&R worked in partnership with local decision makers to solidify the public/private leveraged funding needed to raise the \$1.3 million annual dollars necessary to launch 2-1-1. During FY 2008, 2-1-1 Alameda County assisted 46,106 callers and provided over 77,000 referrals. A separate 2-1-1 Status Report is available upon request and the monthly narrative reports are available online at [www.211alamedacounty.org](http://www.211alamedacounty.org).



Eden I&R's 20' x 60' billboard as seen along South I-880 near the Oakland Coliseum.

2-1-1 callers generally sought housing related services (e.g. emergency shelter; subsidized housing; residential housing; tenant-landlord dispute assistance; transitional housing; domestic violence shelters; and deposit, rent, and utility payment assistance), but Resource Specialists also received a gamut of service requests such as where to go for food, where to go for free or low-cost dental and other medical services, where to seek aid for an elder parent, and even how to apply for a U.S. Passport. Depending on the request and the number of service providers available, callers were generally given more than one referral. Below is an example of a 2-1-1 phone call:

*A concerned daughter called on behalf of her disabled mother whose electricity was disconnected. The mother was receiving a housing subsidy through the Section 8 program and would lose her subsidy if the electricity in her home was turned off. The situation also threatened her status as a foster parent of a 5 year old child who was asthmatic and dependent on a nebulizer powered by electricity. She was over \$3000 behind on her electric bill. A 2-1-1 Resource Specialist was able to make an appointment for her to pay her bill down by \$1000 through the Heating and Energy Assistance Program (HEAP). The Resource Specialist then facilitated a call between the disabled mother, representatives from Pacific Gas & Electric Company, and the California Public Utilities Commission to arrange for the payment of the remaining balance in installments. Her service was restored that same day and she was allowed to keep her Section 8 subsidy and to continue raising her 5 year old foster child.*

**Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Phone Line**

From January 2008 through April 2008, Eden I&R Bilingual Resource Specialists assisted low-income individuals and families who called the Alameda County and Contra Costa County EITC program. Resource Specialists explained EITC eligibility guidelines and referred callers to their most convenient Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site. During FY 2008 Resource Specialists assisted 6,526 EITC callers (an increase of 153% from FY 2007) to 87 VITA sites. Bilingual Resource Specialists provided referrals in the following languages: 709 Spanish, 91 Cantonese, 67 Mandarin, 3 Vietnamese, and 1 Farsi.

**AIDS Housing Information Project (AHIP)**

This project includes a specialized phone line that provides assessment information on, and referral to, housing and human services designed for people living with HIV/AIDS in Alameda County. The project also includes an AHIP Rover who brings a laptop computer onsite to various AIDS service organizations and meets with clients living with HIV/AIDS who are in need of customized housing and social service referral information. In FY 2008 AHIP Rovers served 322 unduplicated clients.

**YouthLink**

YouthLink is a referral phone line available 24 hours a day and is dedicated to providing health and well-being referral services to at-risk youth and wards of the court, ages 12-17. Parents, youth advocates and law enforcement officials also use this phone service to assist their children and clients. During FY 2008 YouthLink received a total of 349 calls.

**Translation and Social Services After Hours Services****Multilingual Capabilities**

In response to the documented need, Eden I&R is highly committed to providing bilingual services to the community. Eden I&R literature and brochures are produced in both Spanish and English so additional at-risk Alameda County residents can access the vital information and resources provided by the agency's programs. Agency staff members speak various languages including Spanish, Cantonese, Vietnamese, and Mandarin. For all other languages the agency contracts with Tele-Interpreters to provide "real time" interpretation assistance.

**After Hours Emergency Phone Services**

Eden I&R handles the after-hours emergency calls for the Alameda County Children's Protective Services, the Foster Care Placement Line, Adult Protective Services and the Alameda County Public Guardian's Office. During FY 2008 Eden I&R handled 11,128 Child Protective Services calls; 457 Foster Care Placement calls; 1,983 Adult Protective Services calls; and 299 Public Guardian calls.

**AT&T's Emergency Cantonese Language Assistance Bureau (CLAB)**

Eden I&R provides 24-hour translation services in the Bay Area to assist AT&T operators when Cantonese-speaking individuals dial "0". In FY 2008 Eden I&R translators assisted 285 CLAB callers.

**Roving, Community Building, and Disaster Preparedness****Roving Housing Resource Project**

The Roving Housing Resource Project (RHRP) includes training and skill-building workshops, and one-on-one client assessment and intake at area shelters for homeless and low-income individuals. The Housing Academy, an intensive two-day training and skill-building workshop, takes place quarterly at different shelters and multi-service centers in the county. Topic specific workshops such as understanding the process and programs that support low-income housing, the importance of credit and tips on how to improve your credit score, and money management are conducted on an as-needed basis. With a laptop computer and the housing and social service database, the Rover travels to shelters and multi-service centers on a bi-monthly basis to assess and work with homeless and low-income individuals and families to acquire housing. In FY 2008, 43 individuals attended the Housing Academy workshops and 54 attended the topic specific workshops; 117 households were given 1,728 housing referrals; and 42 households acquired transitional or permanent housing.

Below is an example of how the Roving Housing Resource Project assisted a client:

*An Eden I&R Roving Housing Resource Specialist worked with a single woman named Jan (not her real name) with a long history of domestic violence. Jan has also been diagnosed with PTSD, major recurrent depression, and social anxiety disorder. Since losing her job, she has had three nervous breakdowns, lost her disability income of \$1,580, lost her apartment, and was sent to John George Psychiatric Pavilion. After her release to Woodward Outpatient Facility, the Rover worked with Jan's case manager to refer Jan to BOSS South County Shelter. From the shelter, Jan went to Meekland Transitional Housing where the Rover continued to correspond and send Jan affordable housing materials. At the end of her stay at Meekland, Jan received a letter of denial from a local nonprofit housing developer. Jan called the Rover and was advised to appeal the denial. The Rover also advised her to pay off the balance of her last eviction, which was accomplished by the landlord, Jan, and the Rover meeting at Eden I&R's office to settle the balance. At the end of the meeting, the landlord wrote a letter stating the balance had been paid. With the letter in hand, Jan, her caseworkers, and Eden I&R's Rover attended the housing appeal. Several days later, Jan received a call stating she was accepted into affordable housing. Today, she is doing well and is hoping to return to work as a caseworker.*

Eden I&R staff also "roves" to other areas on an as-needed basis. For example, after the April 2008 West Oakland Adeline Fire, Eden I&R worked with the Red Cross to assist the 50 displaced families by providing them with housing referrals.

### **CalWORKS and Social Services Agency Services**

Eden I&R partnered with the Alameda County Social Services Agency to provide a variety of targeted services for CalWORKS participants. One of the services provided to CalWORKS' participants was information and assistance for their successful involvement in employment activities. In FY 2008 Eden I&R contacted and assisted 74 CalWORKS participants in determining and resolving their barriers to participation in the CalWORKS employment program. The various services provided through this program were a result of a collaboration among Eden I&R, the East Bay Community Law Center and Bay Area Legal Aid.

### **Disaster Recovery Services**

Eden I&R is at the forefront of disaster planning at both the local and statewide level. As a result of the agency's disaster recovery roles in the aftermath of the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake, the 1991 Berkeley/Oakland Hills firestorm, the 2005 Gulf Region Hurricanes, and the 2007 Southern California Wildfires, the agency has become a link between disaster victims and recovery services, as well as a leader in disaster planning alliances. In each situation, Eden I&R responded quickly and provided immediate assistance. For example, Eden I&R sent two trained Resource Specialists to Southern California to help 2-1-1 San Bernardino County during the wildfires with data collection and answering phone calls. Callers were given information about emergency shelter locations, closed transportation routes, ability to enter fire zones, location and hours of disaster relief services, and assistance with alternative housing.



*Eden I&R staff, Silvana Hackett (third from left), went to 2-1-1 San Bernardino to help answer calls to assist victims of the Southern California wildfires in November 2007.*

Eden I&R is committed to disaster preparedness -- internally, locally, regionally and statewide -- and continues to play an active role as a member of the Alameda County Emergency Manager's Association and Collaborating Agencies Responding to Disaster (CARD). The agency partnered with Alameda County Office of Emergency Services (OES) to coordinate the roles of Spontaneous Volunteers during an emergency or disaster; entered into a

Cooperative Agreement with the Alameda County Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program; and collaborated with the Red Cross, Catholic Charities, and the Association of Black Social Workers in sharing information and in defining each agency's role in a disaster. Eden I&R staff attended Emergency Managers Association meetings; county, regional, and state disaster drills; the Operation Building Bridges – a Bay Area Cross Sector Pandemic Functional Exercise; the Alameda County Agency Disaster Collaboration Workshop; the Citizen Preparedness Committee meeting; the California Department of Social Services Planning for Emergency Care and Shelter of People with Disabilities and the Elderly forum; etc. Staff also hosted booths at the Emergency Survival Expo in Livermore and the FEMA Safety & Preparedness Expo, and are members of the Northern California Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) and Bay Area Emergency Public Information Network (BAEPIN).

### **Community Education and Leadership**

Eden I&R has been an active member of numerous community planning and collaboration activities. For example, Eden I&R is a member of both the Oakland Housing Collaborative and the Alameda Point Collaborative, and is part of a region wide initiative to assure mutual support and data sharing among the nine Bay Area county 2-1-1 providers. Eden I&R staff are members of the EveryOne Home Ending Homelessness in Alameda County Program, Data and Evaluations Committee, the Alameda County Housing Authority Program Coordinating Committee, The Emergency Food and Shelter Program Local Board, Tri-City Elder Coalition, Hayward Community Action Network, Tri-Valley Housing Scholarship, and the Alameda County Senior Services Coalition. All of these partnership efforts contribute knowledge and expertise toward planning and improving services in Alameda County. In addition, Eden I&R actively educated the community about the myriad of agency services during this past year by distributing information at 34 community fairs and other events, providing testimony at numerous public meetings, presenting at community workshops, and going to various agencies throughout the county to promote 2-1-1.

Eden I&R's Executive Director is an active Board Member of the California Alliance of Information and Referral Services (CAIRS), the statewide professional organization which represents locally-based information and referral agencies. As the CAIRS Board Public Relations Chair, Eden I&R's Executive Director is responsible for producing a quarterly statewide newsletter that keeps the public abreast of the I&R developments – especially in relation to 2-1-1 – throughout California. The agency has also been very active in getting 2-1-1 included in the Governor's Office of Emergency Services new California Emergency Plan as the primary communication vehicle through which the public can gain access to up-to-date disaster related information.

## **Information Management Products and Services**

### **Social Services Information**

The Information Management department manages over 1,350 records of human service agencies. By maintaining the only such database in the county, Eden I&R is Alameda County's comprehensive information resource hub and plays an important role in reducing unnecessary duplication of services. The entire database is updated annually by confirming information directly with the agencies (NOTE: individual records are updated as needed on a daily basis).

### ***The Big Blue Book: The Directory of Human Services for Alameda County***

Eden I&R publishes the countywide resource guide, *The Big Blue Book*, on an annual basis. As the only such guide in the county, the 508-page directory lists comprehensive information on over 800 human service agencies in Alameda County. The directory contains not only the general contact information, but also a detailed description of services, fees & eligibility requirements, days and hours of operation, person in charge, public transit routes to the location, language capabilities, application process, and more. Thousands of people utilize the directory every day at hundreds of locations including libraries, social service agencies, hospitals, and schools. In addition to the printed version, the directory is also available electronically in a user-friendly CD called the Directory on Diskette.

### **Online Social Services Directory**

In response to the community's need for online access to the social service database, Eden I&R provides a free online directory website at [www.alamedaco.info](http://www.alamedaco.info) and [www.211alamedacounty.org](http://www.211alamedacounty.org). The online directory includes customizable features that allow registered users to save favorite agencies and personal notes. During FY 2008 the website received over 1.7 million hits from 97,298 visitors, an increase of 172% and 64%, respectively, from FY 2007.

### Social Service Data on other Websites

During FY 2008 Eden I&R's social service database remained incorporated in the **East Bay Works** Web Page at [www.eastbayworks.org](http://www.eastbayworks.org) as well as the statewide **Network of Care** website at [www.networkofcare.org](http://www.networkofcare.org). East Bay Works is a project of the various Private Industry Councils in the East Bay and is geared toward serving low-income people seeking employment and training. The Network of Care website is focused on senior issues and resources.

### Housing Database

During FY 2008 Eden I&R provided free access to information on over 62,700 housing units through the agency's phone lines and roving programs. Additionally, the agency sold housing database subscriptions to community based organizations and government departments on a sliding fee scale. Organizations received updated housing information in printed or electronic formats twice monthly and an onsite workshop on how best to use the database. Eden I&R staff are members of the Program Coordinating Committee of the Alameda County Housing Authority, the Tri-Valley Housing Scholarship Program, and the East Bay Housing Organizations where they actively participated in community housing advocacy. Eden I&R continues to be the only agency that calls 18 Alameda County emergency shelters two times a day to check on bed availability for the homeless and battered women. Individuals and their advocates rely on this updated critical information on a daily basis. For example, a representative from the City of Oakland Mayor's Office calls for a daily report on the number of homeless and domestic violence beds available at shelters in Alameda County.

## Volunteers, Interns and Funders

### Volunteers and Interns

Volunteers and Interns are a critical resource for Eden I&R. After comprehensive training, volunteers and interns provide direct services by: answering administrative and housing department calls, updating housing and social services database records, and providing technical support. Agency Board Members are all volunteers who dedicate their time and expertise in making sure the agency fulfills its mission. During FY 2008 Eden I&R volunteers and interns from Spectrum, CalWORKS, Cal State East Bay, Alameda County Superior Court, and Hayward high schools contributed over 1,920 hours of dedicated service.

### Funders

Eden I&R has traditionally relied upon a private/public partnership in funding the breadth of services and products provided to the community. FY 2008 was no exception. On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff, and clients, the agency wishes to thank the following financial and in-kind supporters without whom Eden I&R could not have provided services to thousands of individuals and families:

#### *Public:*

Alameda County Area Agency on Aging  
 Alameda County Office of Housing and Community Development  
 Alameda County Probation Department  
 Alameda County Public Health  
 Alameda County Social Services Agency  
 Alameda Point Collaborative  
 Associated Community Action Program (ACAP)  
 Hayward Community and Economic Development  
 Oakland Community and Economic Development  
 The 14 Cities of Alameda County

#### *Private:*

AT&T Real Yellow Pages  
 Eden Area Foundation  
 Eden Township Healthcare District  
 Firedoll Foundation  
 First 5/Every Child Counts  
 Kaiser Permanente  
 Pacific Gas and Electric Company  
 The San Francisco Foundation  
 Starbucks  
 The United Way of the Bay Area  
 Western Digital Foundation  
 Y & H Soda Foundation

A special thank is extended to our individual donors whose contributions meant so very much to the organization.

For additional information please contact:

Barbara Bernstein, Executive Director  
 Eden I&R, Inc., 570 B Street, Hayward, CA 94541  
 510-537-2710 ext. 8; bbernstein@edenir.org

*Report Date: August 11, 2008*