

# Eden I&R, Inc.

"linking people and resources"



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## Agency Annual Report Fiscal Year 2009 (July 2008 – June 2009)

Eden I&R, Inc. has been fulfilling a vital role in Alameda County for over 33 years in "linking people and resources," with the current Executive Director, Barbara Bernstein, steering the way for the past 20 years. The agency's flexibility throughout its history has allowed it to consistently and creatively change as the community's needs changed.

Throughout Fiscal Year (FY) 2009, organizations throughout the county struggled to keep up with the increase in demand for their services while their funding streams dwindled (some even had to close their doors). Despite and because of the economic downturn, Eden I&R sought new projects that could be adapted into its current programs and services with little or no additional resources or staff time. The agency's proactive actions have allowed it to remain solvent while helping thousands of additional people during the past year.

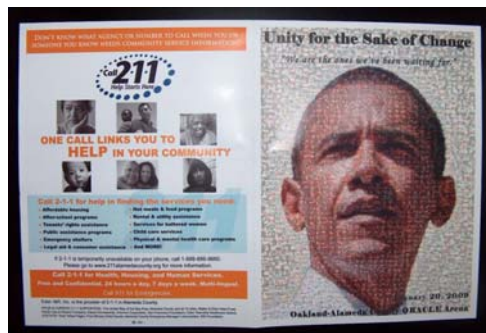
### Telephone Information and Referral Programs

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

Within the two years since its official launch countywide, the 2-1-1 Alameda County phone line saw a 52% increase in the number of calls from the first year. This increase in calls can be attributed to a variety of factors: more people sought aid in times of economic crisis; more people know of the service due to the substantial outreach activities conducted in the community; and previous callers in search of additional resources have been calling back.

Whether they were new or previous callers, the 2-1-1 phone line continued to be the major point of access for free health, housing, and human services information and referrals for Alameda County residents/employees. Because Eden I&R is dedicated to serving and informing all community members about this vital communication service, flyers in English, Spanish, Chinese, and Vietnamese were distributed; and phone lines were staffed with Spanish, Cantonese, Vietnamese, and Mandarin speakers. For all other languages the agency contracted with Tele-Interpreters to provide "real time" interpretation assistance so that anyone speaking any language could be assisted.

During FY 2009, 2-1-1 Alameda County handled 69,938 calls and provided 113,795 referrals. Staff distributed more than 410,000 pieces of outreach materials throughout the county, and this did not include publicity in other agency/department newsletters, programs, guidebooks, and websites. An example of one outreach effort involved partnering with Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson's office to plan a viewing and celebration of the inauguration of the new United States President. This planning effort resulted in the distribution of hundreds of outreach cards at the day of the event, as well as a full page 2-1-1 advertisement on the back of the program that was distributed to the thousands of people who attended the Inauguration Day Celebration at Oracle Arena in Oakland.



*The Obama Inauguration Day Celebration program with a full page 2-1-1 ad on the back.*

The majority of 2-1-1 callers continued to seek housing and housing-related services with the following top 10 service needs in FY 2009: Subsidized and Unsubsidized Housing, Housing Expense Assistance, Emergency Shelter,

Transitional Housing, Food, Utility Assistance, Landlord/Tenant Assistance, Mental Health, Homeless Issues, and Health Care.

Below is an example of a 2-1-1 phone call:

*An Alameda resident called seeking information on health insurance programs. She was pregnant but did not have health insurance. She was out of work and her husband was working reduced hours at his construction job. She had stopped receiving any prenatal care because they could not afford it. The Resource Specialist she spoke with was able to provide her with information on Medi-Cal and other low-cost insurance programs and also sites where she could obtain medical care at a low cost while her insurance applications were pending.*

For more information on call examples and outreach efforts, go to [www.211alamedacounty.org](http://www.211alamedacounty.org) to review and/or download a copy of the 2-1-1 Annual Report and the Monthly Narrative Reports.

#### Programs Partnering with 2-1-1:

2-1-1's ease of use has prompted partnerships with new and existing programs to serve individuals and families in an efficient and convenient manner.

- ***Bank On Oakland:*** An initiative of Bank On California, Bank On Oakland (BOO) helps individuals establish credit and save money through the opening of a free/low-cost checking/savings account. BOO partnered with area financial institutions to provide free or low-cost banking services to individuals who do not have bank accounts and who have traditionally relied on check cashing services. By simply dialing 2-1-1, Oaklanders were able to locate the nearest participating bank or the next financial education class to learn how to plan and save for the future.
- ***Food Stamp Outreach and Prescreening:*** In Alameda County, thousands of individuals and families qualify for food stamps, but do not currently receive them due to a lack of knowledge and/or fear of reporting requirements. In order to increase the number of food stamp recipients, Eden I&R partnered with the county to conduct outreach to inform the public about this program. Eden I&R distributed thousands of flyers throughout the county informing the public to dial 2-1-1 to learn more about food stamps and to get prescreened for eligibility in the program. For more information, please also see "Roving Housing Resource Programs" below.
- ***Digital Television (DTV) Conversion:*** As the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) deadline for all television stations to broadcast in digital format approached (the deadline was pushed from February to June 2009), 2-1-1 was advertised as the number to call for TV conversion information and converter box coupons. Eden I&R agreed to assist in educating the public about the DTV conversion because many elderly and/or low-income individuals and families (many of whom only have analog television sets) rely on television for disaster-related information. This DTV public-private partnership, which included local television networks, resulted in 995 calls.
- ***Turbo Tax:*** From February to April 15, 2009, the 2-1-1 Alameda County phone line was also used to provide statewide information about free workshops for people doing their own taxes using Turbo Tax software at community centers. As a result of this partnership with Intuit (the company that produces Turbo Tax), 671 callers throughout the State were assisted.
- ***Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC):*** From January 2009 through April 2009, 2-1-1 Phone Line Resource Specialists assisted low-income individuals and families who called the Alameda County EITC program. Resource Specialists explained EITC eligibility guidelines and referred callers to the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site most convenient to them. During FY 2009, Resource Specialists assisted 3,341 EITC callers (an increase of 42% from FY 2008) to 62 VITA sites, as well as to 3 neighboring counties' EITC lines. Bilingual Resource Specialists provided referrals in the following languages: Spanish-218, Cantonese-60, Mandarin-41, and Vietnamese-1.
- ***Oakland Housing Collaborative:*** This collaborative among East Bay Community Law Center, Center for Independent Living, Centro Legal de la Raza, and Eden I&R addressed the impediments to fair housing for low income Oakland renters. Residents who sought housing and/or housing services received comprehensive assistance as the collaborative shared non-confidential client information among the partners in order to most

efficiently and effectively serve the resident. 2-1-1 served as the Single Point of Entry for the collaborative by performing client intakes through the 2-1-1 phone line, saving time for the client as well as the agencies. For FY 2009, 10,024 Oakland renters received fair housing assistance through this collaborative.



*2-1-1 Phone Line Resource Specialists in the main 2-1-1 phone line room at Eden I&R.*

#### **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 2009, the AHIP Rover served 299 unduplicated clients.

Below is an example of how AHIP assisted a client:

*A 65-year old HIV-positive man who recently underwent surgery for recurring back problems was struggling to pay \$1,200 in rent after his roommate moved out with no notice. He was receiving \$1,705 from social security and could not afford to live alone in his current home, so he called the AHIP line to seek help. The AHIP Rover called various senior homes and luckily, Miley Garden had a vacancy within his income level. The Rover worked diligently with the client for three weeks by helping complete the rental application, secure a \$1,500 deposit assistance through Season of Sharing, and sign the lease. The low-income HIV-positive senior is now living stably in a home he can afford.*

#### **YouthLink**

YouthLink was a referral phone line that was available 24-hours a day and was 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 used this phone service to assist their children and clients. From July 2008 to April 2009, YouthLink received a total of 172 calls. Due to Probation Department funding cutbacks, this phone line service was eliminated on April 22, 2009.

## **Translation and After-Hours Social Services Programs**

#### **AT&T's 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 2009, Eden I&R translators assisted 189 CLAB callers.

#### **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 2009, Eden I&R handled 9,971 Child Protective Services calls; 409 Foster Care Placement calls; 2,122 Adult Protective Services calls; and 461 Public Guardian calls.

## Roving, Disaster Preparedness, and Community Building

### Roving Housing Resource Programs

The Roving Housing Resource Program (RHRP) includes workshops and one-on-one client assessment and intake at area shelters for homeless and low-income individuals. The Housing Academy is an intensive two-day training and skills-building workshop that takes place at different shelters and multi-service centers in the county. 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 conduct one-on-one assessments and to work with homeless and low-income individuals and families to acquire housing. This program is beneficial to both the site and its clients as it eliminates the need for the shelter/center to dedicate personnel to help clients seek housing, and it provides a unique opportunity for clients to work with the same person on his/her housing searches even when he/she moves to a different shelter. In FY 2009, 36 individuals attended the Housing Academy workshops; 159 clients were given over 1,665 housing referrals; and 54 clients and their families acquired transitional or permanent housing.

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

*Marcie and her two young children became residents at FESCO (a homeless shelter) after her husband went to jail and she was no longer able to live peacefully with her mother-in-law. Marcie suffers from depression and anxiety and has been seeing a therapist since the age of 12. Her unsettled life did not make things any better - her father was in and out of jail throughout most of her childhood, and her husband is bipolar and has a drug addiction. While at FESCO, she met with Eden I&R's Rover and willingly filled out all the housing applications presented. After two months with no imminent housing prospects, and her shelter stay coming to an end, her only other option was to look into transitional housing. Due to her mental health issues, she applied to Pacheco Court (transitional housing for people with mental disabilities) where she would only have to pay 1/3 of her income and could stay for up to two years. Although there were several applicants ahead of her, she was accepted. After living there for six months, she received a Section 8 voucher from Merced County and immediately moved into a new apartment. She intends to add her husband to the voucher, so the Rover coached her on the best way to present his case to the housing authority since he has a felony and drug history. Today, Marcie is living in a stable and affordable home with her two children; and if she chooses to, she can use the Section 8 voucher to return to the Hayward area after one year.*

The efficiency of having a Rover travel to various sites to assist clients in seeking housing and other services prompted the development of other Roving sites and services:

- **Oakland Tenants Assistance Program:** After a nonprofit housing developer (a provider of public housing for low-income individuals and families) announced its impending closure due to lack of funds, Eden I&R was approached by the City of Oakland to help the soon-to-be displaced tenants secure other housing. Rovers were sent to the various sites to aid those tenants seeking housing and other services. From June 2008 to March 2009, a total of 109 unduplicated clients were assisted through 1,524 contacts, where 548 housing referrals and 123 service referrals were provided.
- **Food Stamp Outreach:** Because thousands of individuals and families in Alameda County qualify for food stamps, but do not currently receive them, Eden I&R partnered with the county to conduct outreach to inform the public and to increase enrollment. For this partnership, the agency hired a Rover to conduct rigorous outreach, especially to residents in the Tri-Valley area where there is less participation, by providing information about the program and its eligibility criteria. The Food Stamp Rover also held information sessions, and assisted applicants in filling out and submitting applications. From March to June 2009, 18,282 flyers in English and Spanish were distributed; 457 individuals/families were prescreened; and 41 applications were submitted to the county.

### Disaster Recovery Services

Eden I&R is at the forefront of disaster planning at local, regional and statewide levels. 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 vital 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, shortly after the H1N1 (Swine) Flu Pandemic was made public, the Alameda County Public Health Department contacted Eden I&R so that

2-1-1 Phone Line Resource Specialists could relay the most current information to the public/callers. Due to the continuing threat of the H1N1 virus, Eden I&R and the Alameda County Public Health Department are in close contact in case new public information needs to be distributed via 2-1-1.

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, Collaborating Agencies Responding to Disaster (CARD), 2-1-1 Bay Area Partnership, and Northern California and Alameda County Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD). Eden I&R’s Housing Coordinator, Ollie Arnold, was voted President of the new VOAD chapter in Alameda County. In order to stay abreast of new developments, staff attended San Francisco Bay Area CA Disaster Volunteer planning meetings, the Disaster Preparedness Symposium, the Alameda County Point of Dispensing Disaster Drill, and Alameda County Emergency Volunteer meetings.



*Eden I&R staff listened attentively as Silvana Hackett, 2-1-1 Community & Programs Manager, reviewed the operation of a gas generator and other protocols during the agency’s internal disaster training.*

The agency participated in several disaster drills so when disaster does strike, staff will be well prepared to assist the public. Drills included: 2009 Severe Influenza Tabletop Exercise, the statewide Silver Sentinel/Golden Guardian Earthquake Disaster Drill, and the two-week Alameda County Office of Emergency Services’ Red Dragon Disaster Drill. Staff also hosted booths at the Emergency Survival Expo in Livermore and at the Tri-Cities Emergency Services Association (TESA) Emergency Preparedness Fair in Newark; and collaborated with Red Cross and other agencies to host the “Building Disaster Resilient Communities” countywide training.

In September 2008, the Emergency Alert System (EAS) gave written confirmation that 2-1-1 is now a part of the localized warning system, making it an integral part of the emergency public communication system. And after years of negotiations, Eden I&R was finally classified by AT&T as a Telecommunications Service Priority (TSP). As a TSP, should a disaster disrupt phone services, Eden I&R’s phone lines, along with that of hospitals, police, and other emergency service providers, will be one of the first to be serviced so it will be up and running as quickly as possible to assist the public.

### **Community Education and Leadership**

Eden I&R has been an active member of numerous community planning and collaboration activities. For example, Eden I&R has been a member of the Oakland Housing Collaborative, the Alameda Point Collaborative, and the Safety Net Providers Collaboration; 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. Agency staff are members of the EveryOne Home Ending Homelessness in Alameda County Program, Data and Evaluations Committee, Emergency Food and Shelter Program Local Board, Hayward Community Action Network, Alameda County Senior Services Coalition, and others. All of these partnership efforts contribute knowledge and expertise toward planning and improving services in Alameda County. The agency also partnered with East Bay Housing Organizations and Oakland Housing Authority in planning and hosting Affordable Housing Week events/workshops to inform and educate the public (renters, property owners, etc.) about housing resources. In addition, Eden I&R actively educated the community about the myriad of agency services during this past year by distributing information at 62 community fairs, providing testimony at numerous public meetings, presenting at community workshops, and going to various agencies and businesses throughout the county to promote 2-1-1 and other services.

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 a primary communication vehicle through which the public can gain access to up-to-date disaster-related information.

In recognition of Eden I&R's commitment to serving the county's most vulnerable populations, East Bay Community Law Center honored Eden I&R and the Executive Director with their Community Justice and Education Award.



*Alameda County Supervisor, Alice Lai-Bitker, presents Eden I&R's Executive Director and 2-1-1/Community Programs Manager with a Commendation for 2/11/09 Day.*

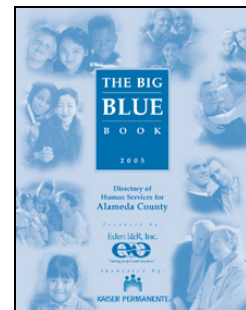
## Information Management Products and Services

### Social Services Information

The Information Management Department maintains detailed records on over 2,300 health and human service programs offered by nearly 1,000 agencies located in Alameda County. This comprehensive resource, the only one of its kind in Alameda County, makes Eden I&R the County's resource hub for social services and housing information. The entire database is updated annually by contacting each agency directly to confirm the information. Additionally, the information contained in the database is updated throughout the year if Eden I&R staff become aware of changes in the services offered or the contact information for a listed agency or program.

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

Eden I&R annually publishes the countywide resource guide, *The Big Blue Book*, using the information contained in the comprehensive health and human services database. It is the only directory of its kind providing comprehensive information on over 1,500 human service programs in Alameda County. The 2009 edition contains 690 pages of detailed contact information, narrative descriptions of services, fees and eligibility requirements, days and hours of operation, public transit routes to each location, language capabilities, application procedures, and more. People utilize the directory everyday at hundreds of locations throughout the county including libraries, social service agencies, hospitals, and schools.



### Online Social Services Directory

The information contained in Eden I&R's comprehensive health and human services database is available online at no cost at [www.211alamedacounty.org](http://www.211alamedacounty.org) and [www.alamedaco.info](http://www.alamedaco.info). This free searchable database also allows registered users to save a list of agencies that they often refer to and to record notes about their services so the information is quickly available for future use. During FY 2009, the website received over 2 million hits (an increase of 17% from FY 2008) from 73,473 visitors.

### **Other Uses of Eden I&R's Social Service Data**

Throughout the year Eden I&R is called upon by numerous local agencies, CBOs, and elected officials to provide information for targeted mailing, research, and the printing of specialized directories. During FY 2009 Eden I&R continued to provide data about services for the elderly and disabled to the statewide **Network of Care** website at [www.networkofcare.org](http://www.networkofcare.org). Eden I&R worked closely with Trilogy Integrated Resources during the development of the statewide system and continues to provide updated information for this very successful project.

### **Housing Database**

During FY 2009 Eden I&R provided free access to information on over 69,000 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. The subscription included an onsite workshop on how best to use the database and a twice monthly printed or electronic copy of updated housing units. In order to stay informed of the numerous activities taking place throughout the county, Eden I&R are members of the Program Coordinating Committee of the Alameda County Housing Authority, Tri-Valley Housing Scholarship Program, and East Bay Housing Organizations. 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.

## **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 2009, Eden I&R volunteers and interns from CalWORKS, Cal State East Bay, Los Positas College, Alameda County Superior Court, Abode Services, Lao Family Community Development, and Hayward high schools contributed over 3,197 hours of dedicated service.

### **Funders**

Eden I&R has traditionally relied upon a private/public partnership in funding its breadth of services and products provided to the community. FY 2009 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 Department  
Alameda County Social Services Agency  
Alameda Point Collaborative  
Associated Community Action Program  
EveryOne Home  
Hayward Community and Economic Development  
Oakland Community and Economic Development  
The Cities of Alameda, Albany, Berkeley, Dublin, Emeryville, Hayward, Livermore, Newark, Oakland, Piedmont, Pleasanton, San Leandro, and Union City

#### *Private:*

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

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

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