

NOTES FROM THE CEO



Dear Friends,

It's early in 2024 as I write this, and I find myself contemplating 2023 and my time here at EBALDC. Since I joined this organization as interim CEO last spring, I have listened and learned so much about the work that EBALDC does, the depth of our relationships in the community, and the impact that EBALDC has had on people here in Oakland and elsewhere in the East Bay. I am reflecting on the challenges that we have faced and the

accomplishments we have made together as a community. And I am thankful to our dedicated staff and longtime partners who believe deeply in our vision to provide quality housing and services to our residents and program clients despite ongoing challenges.

I am also looking ahead to what this new year will bring: a new CEO to guide this organization forward as we hold steady to a vision of affordable housing and wraparound programs serving residents in our buildings and surrounding neighborhoods.

At our upcoming Lunar New Year event on February 20th, we will be celebrating the Year of the Dragon. In the Chinese zodiac, the dragon symbolizes courage, creativity, and innovation. Like the Dragon, EBALDC has never been afraid of challenges or the need to take risks to support our vision of Healthy Neighborhoods. We are excited to see what 2024 will bring and look forward to a year inspired by care and purpose.

Cheers,
Lina

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Home for the Holidays EBALDC Seniors Enjoy Living at LCC



Resident leaders Marcie Castello, Monique Kennedy (staff), Terry Blackmon, Nakia Lipsey (staff), Secret Peoples Vallara, Naomi Tonsall, Marjorie Goolsby

"...the staff here....[are] always going above and beyond.... Living here, it feels like a community of family....[F]olks look out for each other here." So says Miss Deborah, who was unhoused until her move to become a resident at Lion Creek Crossings in June 2023. "I was homeless before, and I was so happy to find this place. I couldn't have asked for anything better....I am so thankful I got in here. It feels like a home here." Miss Deborah was one of approximately 50 residents who recently gathered in the brightly lit Community Room of Lion Creek Crossings' senior building to celebrate the holidays. A warm sense of community and care could be felt as residents enjoyed a delicious roast chicken dinner and holiday festivities including an ugly sweater contest and carol-singing.



Did you know that at EBALDC's first fundraising event, we sold cups of almond jello at SF's Portsmouth Square for 25 cents each? (We also sold \$25 shares of investment in EBALDC at the same table!)

LUNAR NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

TUESDAY, FEB 20
5:30pm

Block Community Hub
1955 Broadway, Oakland

Spotlight on EBALDC's SparkPoint Oakland: Senior Financial Coach, Vanessa Herrera



In 2017, Vanessa Herrera began coaching at EBALDC's SparkPoint Oakland (SPO), which builds financial health and increases access to good jobs for all Oakland residents. She is now a senior financial coach, having served hundreds of clients.

Q: What inspired you to become a financial coach?

A: *Growing up in Oakland, I saw financial disparities amongst people of color. As I...became more passionate about helping those in my community....I became interested in financial coaching when I started learning about the importance of credit and taxes.*

Q: Who are the people you work with as a coach?

A: *For the last few years, I have worked directly with students at Laney College—students in the Career & Technical Education (CTE) and Restoring Our Communities (ROC) programs. As a senior coach, I also advise and counsel the newer financial coaches at SPO.*

Q: Can you share an example of how you have helped a client?

A: *I provide coaching for students in ROC, an academic program by and for formerly incarcerated students to help equip these students with tools for success in school and beyond. Recently, a ROC client who had been incarcerated for many years came out of institutional custody [and discovered that] someone had stolen their identity and made a fraudulent entry now appearing on their credit report. I worked with this individual...to clean up the credit report and then [to] create credit.*

Q: What is the most rewarding part of your work as a coach for SPO and the students you work with at Laney?

A: *[R]eceiving phone calls from clients who have achieved their goals after taking the knowledge I taught them about building their financial health. Being able to show clients they can achieve their goals even if life may seem impossible is definitely a motivator not only for the client, but for myself as their coach.*

Support Healthy Neighborhoods!



EBALDC LOOKBACK: OAK PARK APARTMENTS



Dr. Russell Jeung, recently honored at EBALDC's 48th Annual Gala, once lived in a notorious Oakland apartment complex that was so run-down and neglected that tenants banded together to protest against the poor conditions at the location. Jeung, the co-founder of Stop AAPI Hate, a national coalition created in 2020 to fight against racism against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, was a resident at Oakland's Oak Park Apartments in the 1990s and helped organize his neighbors — largely Lao and Cambodian refugees — to win a lawsuit against a terrible landlord that neglected the property. Dr. Jeung helped shepherd the eventual sale and rehab of that property to EBALDC and Affordable Housing Associates.

Save the
Date:

- Lunar New Year Celebration: Feb. 20, 2024
- VITA - Tax Assistance Clinics
- 49th Annual Gala Celebration: September 5, 2024



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