



Office of Community Partnerships and Strategic Communications (OCPSC) Trusted Messenger Network: Final Grantee Report

Created for the Governor's Office of
Community Partnerships and Strategic Communications (OCPSC)
Report by the Inland Empire Community Collaborative
Contract Period: June 24, 2024 - June 30, 2025

Report Date: June 13, 2025

This report presents an analysis of project impact, incorporating insights from collaborative partner reflections. It details the strategies implemented to engage diverse communities through culturally responsive approaches and describes ongoing initiatives aimed at enhancing organizational capacity.



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OCPSC Partners

- A Coming of Age FFA
- The Mom and Dad Project
- Inland Empire Immigrant Youth Collective (IE-IYC)
- Autism Society Inland Empire
- Sahaba Initiative
- MALO: Motivating Action and Leadership Opportunity

Demographics

What is the total number of interactive engagements completed to date?

17,328

Please describe the most important demographic characteristics of the populations you serve to help us better understand who you serve. Why are these characteristics the most important descriptors of the populations you serve?

As the primary grantee, our role focused on providing backend and administrative support to enable all six of our subgrantees to lead on-the-ground outreach and engagement. Each of these organizations was intentionally selected because they primarily serve populations that are historically underserved across a range of demographic dimensions—including age, race/ethnicity, income level, language spoken, immigration status, and geographic isolation.

These characteristics are especially important because they reflect communities that are often overlooked by mainstream outreach efforts and who face systemic barriers to accessing accurate, timely, and culturally relevant information. Many of the communities reached through our subgrantees include low-income households, communities of color (especially Latino, Black, and immigrant populations), monolingual non-English speakers, and families living in rural or under-resourced areas.

By partnering with organizations embedded within these communities, we were able to ensure that our outreach efforts were both trusted and responsive to the actual needs of the people being served. These demographic descriptors are not just checkboxes—they represent real, intersecting forms of disadvantage that shape people's access to resources and power. Our approach was designed to reach the people most likely to be left out of critical conversations and services, and to do so in a way that honors their lived experiences and local expertise.

Impact

What impact did your project make in these communities? Please describe 2-3 of the most significant changes you observed as a result of this project. Include quantitative data where possible.

The OCPSC campaign made a significant impact across the diverse communities served by our six subgrantees by increasing awareness, access, and trust in local services. A Coming of Age mobilized outreach efforts and paired their existing youth work with campaign messaging, reaching 5,924 individuals and hiring new outreach staff.

Sahaba Initiative engaged 2,279 people and helped challenge the assumption that public services aren't relevant or accessible, fostering greater community trust. The Mom and Dad Project reached 625 youth and families, using the campaign to expand access to mental health services like Soluna through school partnerships. Autism Society IE engaged 2,144 residents, providing educational materials and tangible support around basic needs.

Collectively, the campaign deepened community connections, strengthened subgrantee visibility, and positioned each organization as a trusted messenger in their respective regions.

Outreach and Cultural Responsiveness

Please describe the 3 most successful outreach strategies your organization chose to implement during this project. What, in particular, made these strategies so effective for your work and ability to reach your goals?

Three of the most effective outreach strategies implemented during this project reflected the deep knowledge and trust our partners have within their communities. A Coming of Age found success by centering their outreach around youth—engaging children first through interactive activities, which naturally drew in parents and caregivers. This created a snowball effect that opened space for deeper family conversations about available resources.

The Mom and Dad Project focused on consistent presence at school-based tabling events, where they partnered with school districts and local agencies. They used bilingual materials, small giveaways for kids, and a warm, familiar presence to connect with families in a trusted environment.

IE-IYC, working primarily with immigrant and undocumented communities, emphasized that outreach in these spaces must be approached with intentionality, patience, and care. Given the current political climate and the fear many families face around immigration enforcement and public systems, building relationships took time. Rather than leading with materials, IE-IYC focused on listening to community concerns, being present, and earning trust before introducing resources. These three approaches were effective because they met people where they were—emotionally, culturally, and physically—and prioritized respectful, relationship driven engagement over transactional outreach.

Over the past year, how did you specifically address any language access barriers in your outreach efforts?

Language access was a central consideration in our outreach strategy, particularly for subgrantees like Sahaba Initiative, whose community members speak a wide range of languages. Their outreach team included staff fluent in ten different languages, allowing

them to tailor each interaction based on the linguistic needs of the neighborhood or group they were working with. In addition, Sahaba Initiative utilized several DAL (Digital Access Library) resources translated into languages such as Farsi, Dari, Pashto, Doteli, Arabic, and Urdu—ensuring culturally appropriate content reached the right audiences. MALO also expanded their reach by using Tongan source material, making their outreach more inclusive to Pacific Islander communities. This was crucial because many individuals in these communities are language-dependent and may not engage at all if they can't communicate in their mother tongue. Across other subgrantees as well, materials were translated into Spanish, and events were staffed with bilingual workers. These efforts made it possible for more people to not only understand the content but also feel respected and included. It allowed organizations to bridge the information gap that often exists in multilingual communities and ensured that the campaign's resources were genuinely accessible.

Over the past year, how did you specifically address any cultural barriers in your outreach efforts?

Throughout the year, our subgrantees placed strong emphasis on culturally responsive outreach practices to meet the unique needs of the communities they serve. A Coming of Age noted that during an event centered on the Filipino community, many individuals were hesitant to engage until one of their team members—who shared the same cultural background—joined the outreach effort. This immediately shifted the atmosphere, and community members felt more comfortable participating. Autism Society IE also learned that within the Spanish-speaking community, cultural norms and customs required more time and relationship-building to build trust. Quick exchanges were not as effective; instead, conversations needed to be rooted in warmth, shared values, and storytelling. These culturally tailored approaches helped bridge gaps that often prevent communities from engaging with public health information. Across all partners, showing cultural respect and familiarity was essential to creating safe, welcoming environments where people felt heard, seen, and valued.

Please describe the effects of these cultural adaptations on the communities you served.

The cultural adaptations implemented by our partners had a significant and lasting impact on the communities served. In the case of A Coming of Age, the presence of a culturally representative team member transformed a hesitant group into an engaged audience, leading to meaningful conversations and increased participation. This underscored how representation and familiarity break down barriers of mistrust. Autism Society IE found that giving more time and space for culturally relevant conversations, especially in Spanish-speaking communities, resulted in stronger relationships and a willingness to follow up on resources. Communities that may have otherwise dismissed materials or services were far more open when approached in ways that aligned with their communication styles and

values. These adaptations didn't just make the outreach more effective—they helped establish organizations as culturally sensitive and trustworthy allies in the eyes of the community.

Please describe the effects of these language adaptations on the communities you served.

The impact of language adaptations was transformative for many of the communities reached. Sahaba Initiative described how speaking to someone in their native language was often the deciding factor in whether a person chose to engage. Many community members had previously felt that available services “weren’t for them” due to language or cultural disconnects. Having staff who could speak their language directly—and do so with cultural humility—fostered immediate trust and deeper dialogue. For Spanish-speaking communities served by other partners, bilingual staff and translated materials allowed families to fully understand the resources being offered, ask questions, and feel empowered to act on the information. These adaptations not only improved outreach metrics, but they also built a foundation of respect and inclusion that strengthened the long-term relationship between organizations and the communities they serve.

Capacity Building

How did your partnership with OCPSC enhance your organization's infrastructure or capacity?

The OCPSC partnership significantly enhanced the infrastructure and capacity of all participating organizations, each in unique and meaningful ways. A Coming of Age was able to hire four additional community outreach workers, several of whom will continue with the organization beyond the grant period. This expansion also led to stronger collaboration with fellow subgrantees, increased networking, and even the growth of their board—laying a foundation for future grant partnerships and long-term sustainability.

Sahaba Initiative transitioned part-time staff to full-time roles, which improved consistency and reach in their outreach efforts. They now hope to secure continued funding to maintain these positions.

The Mom and Dad Project used the funding to increase hours for current staff, enabling them to deepen partnerships with agencies like the school district and local parks and recreation department. The added capacity allowed them to operate more effectively and build out infrastructure to support long-term engagement.

Autism Society IE faced a surge of outreach requests during 2023-24, and the OCPSC partnership gave them the flexibility and staffing support needed to meet this demand and access new communities they hadn't previously reached. While IE-IYC was only able to

bring on temporary staff due to funding limitations, the grant allowed them to operate at a higher level of engagement during the cycle.

Subgrantees also acknowledged the strong backbone support provided by IECC as the primary grantee, which played a critical role in streamlining operations and reducing administrative burden. IECC implemented an internal ArcGIS Survey123 tracking system that allowed partners to submit engagement data easily and consistently. This system fed directly into a visual performance dashboard shared across all subgrantees, enabling each organization to track their total engagements, monthly progress, and campaign referral numbers in real time. This transparency not only helped with timely reporting but also fostered a healthy sense of motivation and collaboration—encouraging partners to learn from and uplift one another's outreach efforts.

Additionally, IECC maintained a centralized SharePoint site that housed essential resources, meeting materials, deliverables, and grant-related information. This accessible hub helped ensure all subgrantees remained aligned and supported, minimizing confusion and redundant work. The overall low-bureaucracy structure made it possible for each organization to focus their time and energy where it mattered most: directly in community engagement, education, and support.

Collective Impact

What does the collective impact model mean to your organization in respect to the OCPSC grant?

The collective impact model, as implemented through OCPSC, was deeply meaningful to all participating organizations and transformative in the way they were able to do their work. For A Coming of Age, this was one of the best collaborative experiences they've had, praising how IECC made the process simple, transparent, and replicable for future projects. Sahaba Initiative emphasized how rare and valuable it was to be able to focus purely on doing the work they care about without being bogged down by administrative hurdles—stating that more funding models should follow this example. Mom and Dad Project, a small rural organization, shared that the collective impact approach gave them a much-needed seat at the table—something they often don't have access to. It also opened the door for other organizations to connect and collaborate with them, something they found empowering and validating. Autism Society IE described the entire process as seamless, supportive, and easy to navigate, especially compared to more burdensome funding structures. The model fostered mutual respect, integrity, and shared purpose. More than just a grant, it created a true partnership ecosystem that enabled every organization to show up fully for their communities.

Describe any new collaborations formed as a result of participation in the OCPSC collective impact model.

Participation in the OCPSC collective impact model directly led to new collaborations among subgrantees and with outside organizations, strengthening the regional network of trusted messengers. A Coming of Age shared that one of the most valuable outcomes was the opportunity to build meaningful relationships with fellow OCPSC partners. These relationships have opened doors to future joint grant applications, shared outreach events, and deeper strategic alignment on community-based work. The Mom and Dad Project, which typically operates in a small rural area, found that being part of the collective allowed larger or more urban organizations to discover and engage with them—forming partnerships that likely wouldn’t have occurred otherwise. They reported new collaborations with local agencies like school districts and parks departments, made possible by the visibility and credibility the OCPSC partnership provided. The collective model fostered an environment of trust, transparency, and shared goals, which not only enhanced collaboration during the project cycle but laid the groundwork for continued partnerships beyond the life of the grant.

What did your organization learn during this grant cycle that might inform future campaigns?

Throughout this grant cycle, our organizations gained valuable insights that will shape how we approach future campaigns. One of the most important lessons was the power of culturally responsive, language-accessible outreach. Partners like Sahaba Initiative showed how speaking to community members in their native languages—sometimes across 10 different dialects—built immediate trust and engagement. Autism Society IE and A Coming of Age reminded us that culturally informed outreach, including representation from within the community and honoring local customs, leads to more meaningful connections. We also learned the importance of building long-term trust, especially from IE-IYC, which serves undocumented and immigrant communities. Their experience underscored that patient, compassionate engagement is essential in communities navigating fear and systemic barriers.

In terms of infrastructure, many partners—including Sahaba Initiative, A Coming of Age, and Mom and Dad Project—saw how even temporary investments in staffing and coordination led to measurable gains in capacity, outreach reach, and inter-organizational partnerships. The collective impact model itself taught us how a streamlined, respectful funding process can unlock genuine collaboration and reduce barriers for smaller organizations to participate meaningfully. This grant cycle confirmed that when we center trust, cultural humility, and equity in our approach, the outcomes are not only stronger—they’re more sustainable. These lessons will guide how we design future campaigns, select community messengers, and build long-lasting coalitions.

Advance Pay

During the current grant cycle, advance pay was introduced. How, if at all, did this change the way you worked?

Advance pay had a significant and transformative impact on how our organizations were able to operate during the grant cycle. For many community-based and grassroots partners, particularly smaller organizations like Mom and Dad Project and IE-IYC, cash flow challenges have historically been a major barrier to fully participating in grant-funded initiatives. With advance pay, those barriers were lifted. Organizations were able to plan ahead, hire temporary or part-time staff, purchase materials, and commit to tabling events or collaborations without having to delay or pull from limited reserves. This flexibility created room for more thoughtful and proactive outreach instead of reactive, last-minute work based on when reimbursements were processed.

Beyond operational logistics, advance pay also sent a powerful message of trust and equity. It acknowledged the realities of nonprofit work in under-resourced communities and demonstrated that funders truly understood the challenges on the ground. Partners expressed feeling more respected and empowered in the funding relationship—no longer just grant recipients, but equal collaborators.

This model helped shift the dynamic from gatekeeping to partnership, allowing organizations to focus more deeply on building relationships, meeting their communities where they are, and delivering authentic, high-impact outreach. For future campaigns, this approach will continue to be critical to ensuring equity and access in public health and community engagement work.

Ongoing Needs

Looking toward your organization's future needs, what types of capacity building training would you like offered?

In future cycles, our organizations would benefit greatly from expanded capacity-building trainings that focus on long-term sustainability and staff development. IECC emphasized the need for capacity building trainings and content evolves with time, is tailored to organizational needs, and considers the financial realities smaller nonprofits face. In addition to formal trainings, partners strongly voiced a desire for ongoing access to toolkits, templates, and updated materials that community-based organizations and trusted messengers can continue to use and adapt. There was also a shared interest in maintaining a sense of partnership and peer learning, even outside of formal funding cycles. Many subgrantees found value not only in the trainings themselves, but in the spirit of collaboration and mutual support fostered by OCPSC. Continued investment in that

ecosystem—through virtual learning sessions, mentorship opportunities, or shared learning spaces—will ensure the work and relationships continue to grow well beyond the grant period. More training for nonprofits/trusted messengers on the way governments work and the way nonprofits can better understand, navigate and advocate for themselves within the system. An opportunity for nonprofits to educate sitting legislators about the work being done and issues/challenges they are facing.

Appendix

- **OCPSC Performance Tracker**
<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/f658ece0b55c4629baeab5fe9e53bd9d>
- **OCPSC Detailed Grantee Referral Dashboard**
<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/bf323b18b83844b2973df354873aeb96>