Letter from the CEO

Who could imagine that in an era of Twitter, the iPhone, and electric cars, we would still be facing chronic poverty in our own backyards?

It’s shocking – but true. Here in the Bay Area, home to 4 of the Nation’s 15 wealthiest urban areas, we still see persistent pockets of poverty, where residents struggle with health problems due to disenfranchised and unstable communities.

Some sobering facts:

❖ In Oakland, homicide is the leading cause of death for youth ages 1 – 24, accounting for over 36% of all deaths.
❖ In Antioch and Bay Point, teen birthrates are 40% and 61% higher than their peers in East Contra Costa County, respectively.
❖ In Richmond, over 37% of youth are obese – more than 10% above the West Contra Costa County average.

All these problems affect communities of color much more than their white counterparts.

Brighter Beginnings creates a powerful impact on the communities we serve from our five locations in Oakland, Richmond, and Antioch. We reached over 2800 individuals last year, empowering clients to foster healthy families, fulfill their potential, and provide their children with opportunities to thrive.

2013 also marked the expansion of our programs to serve males and provide medical services. A critical – and often under-appreciated – part of the family dynamic, we’ve launched an innovative suite of programs to help men and boys of color define and embrace masculinity, fatherhood, and responsibility. We also added a Family Medical Clinic to our integrated human services, enabling Brighter Beginnings to address both pressing medical problems and the social conditions contributing to good or bad health.

We’re deeply thankful to all who have supported our mission. We couldn’t be prouder of the impact we’ve had – and the trust we’ve earned. Please join us by investing in our ongoing work.

Barbara Bunn McCullough, Ph.D.
Why Our Programs Work

WE BUILD COMMUNITY TRUST
- By hiring local staff, collaborating with partners, and partnering with residents, we’ve earned the trust and respect of the communities where we work.
- Our unique capacity to convene clients, link agencies, and strategically integrate programs results in maximum impact for our clients.

WE SEE THE CONNECTION BETWEEN HEALTH AND WEALTH
- We know that health depends on the strengths, habits, and cohesion of an entire community. In other words, ZIP codes are the best predictors of a lifespan.
- That’s why, in addition to our individual medical and social services, we also offer family and community programs to create the right conditions for good health.

WE USE CUTTING EDGE THEORY IN PROGRAM DESIGN
- **Life Course**: Explains population health and disease disparities using broad social, economic, and environmental factors.
- **Family Strengthening**: Emphasizes five “protective factors” that stabilize and strengthen a family, decreasing child abuse and neglect.
- **Vocationalizing**: Integrates “pro-work” elements into social services to promote financial self-sufficiency.
- **Male Involvement**: Invites and supports males alongside women and children in accessing our family services.
Family Health

Providing quality medical, mental, and group healthcare for at-risk families and children.

OUR CLIENTS

❂ RotaCare Richmond Free Medical Clinic opened March 2013, serving 209 patients in just 3.5 months
❂ Black Infant Health groups helped 167 African-American mothers and children have a healthy start for a new life
❂ 165 adults and children received critical mental health counseling by licensed clinicians

THE RESULTS

❂ No-cost lab tests and 90 critical diagnoses of diabetes, hypertension, and acute respiratory illnesses
❂ Urgent medical and mental health care for over 540 people in poverty
❂ Multilingual, culturally competent services for families without other options

EVERY FAMILY MATTERS

Iesha, a young mother of 2, discovered our Black Infant Health program soon before she became homeless. Living from a shelter, she was able to rely on Brighter Beginnings for everyday necessities, like diapers and baby wipes.

But Black Infant Health didn’t provide just material items. The program also connected Iesha to community services, provided transportation to support groups, and taught her about her rich African-American heritage. Black Infant Health also provided crucial child development information, enabling Iesha to foster her children’s health through mental stimulation, healthy discipline, and breastfeeding.

And when a mother benefits, so do her children. Through Black Infant Health, Iesha’s son Deshaun and daughter Deanna participated in enrichment activities, like painting, arts, and crafts. Brighter Beginnings helped enroll them in Early Head Start, and provided weekly visits from a trained child development professional.

Today, Iesha has embraced meditation as a way to stabilize, relax, and prepare to learn, and Deshaun and Deanna have bright futures ahead.
Early Childhood Education

Helping vulnerable families provide healthy and supportive learning environments for their children.

OUR CLIENTS

❂ Over 700 children and parents from nearly 500 families – all living below the federal poverty line
❂ More than half of families headed by a single parent
❂ 1,000+ hours of parent education classes and workshops

THE RESULTS

❂ 225+ developmental screenings performed, flagging critical issues while they still can be addressed
❂ 27 children referred to specialists for crucial interventions
❂ 64 parent networking and education events hosted at our Centers

EVERY FAMILY MATTERS

Tomas, a single father caring for his newborn daughter, came into our First 5 Center in Antioch seeking parent education. His girlfriend, Selena, had just given birth, but was in rehab due to taking unprescribed medication while pregnant. Tomas found himself alone, frustrated, and without the support of his girlfriend – or any guidance for how to care for their daughter.

Our First 5 Center Director, Martha Rosales, was there for him. His biggest worry was how to soothe a crying baby, so she enrolled him in a Nurturing Parenting class. Quickly Tomas learned about baby massage and setting daily routines. Before long, he became able to reliably calm his daughter. Child development coaching, the opportunity to connect with other young parents, and our Fathers Support Group made the difference for this young father and his child.

Once Selena was released, she too attended classes with Tomas and joined in on the Center’s activities. Today, they’re grateful not only for the support and guidance they received, but also for the confidence they gained as young parents.
Community Strengthening

Building community resilience by supporting leadership development, economic empowerment, and male responsibility.

OUR CLIENTS
- 550+ benefited from Financial Coaching and tax preparation
- 117 ex-offenders coached in healthy relationships, parenting, and family stability
- Over 80 fathers and children engaged through 25 outdoor activities and camping trips
- 17 teen parents trained in community and legislative advocacy

THE RESULTS
- 6 state legislature presentations by teen parents advocating for their peers
- 75% of Male Involvement participants changed their thinking about sex, responsibility, and fatherhood
- 559 free tax returns completed, returning $938,403 to needy families

EVERY FAMILY MATTERS

Alex, an 18-year-old father, came to our Families in the Park program with a history of drug abuse and trips to juvenile hall. One of our “Fatherhood” rites-of-passage programs, Families in the Park put Alex outdoors, in a natural environment – a place he’d rarely been before.

He quickly immersed himself in activities designed to physically and mentally challenge participants, build community, and highlight the parallels between nature and one’s own life. Somewhere in the hills above Oakland, Alex discovered a commitment to personal reflection, began to understand his own path, and resolved to be a positive presence in his family.

As one of the older program participants, Alex learned to both lead and support his peers in the program. When he wasn't charging up the mountain, he hung back to encourage those who struggled. Something about the outdoors changed Alex, showed him new passions to embrace, and helped him commit to better decisions for himself and his community.
Teen Family Support

*Empowering teen parents and their children to succeed while preventing further teen pregnancies.*

**OUR CLIENTS**

- 33 teen parents trained as reproductive health educators
- 521 pregnant and parenting teen parents served along with 411 of their children
- Up to 30% of teen parent clients suffered from domestic abuse, and another 30% had dropped out of school

**THE RESULTS**

- 46 reproductive health presentations by teen parents reached over 1100 high school students
- 500+ high school students referred for health insurance information, prenatal care, and STI testing
- 83% of our teen parents stayed in school – compared to the national average of less than 40%

**EVERY FAMILY MATTERS**

Karina was a pregnant 18-year-old living at home when she found Brighter Beginnings. Pregnant teens often are ostracized at home, and Karina was no exception. Although she had planned to finish high school and go on to college, Karina’s mother believed that future was out of the question. Instead, she told Karina to quit school and find a job, or she would be kicked out.

Her mother wasn’t alone in making a challenging situation worse. With her brother in jail, the father of her baby refusing to get involved, and even her stepfather arguing that she had to start paying her own way, Karina had little support. Even though her mother admitted receiving more welfare with Karina in the home, she insisted that Karina move out.

But with the help of a Brighter Beginnings Family Advocate, Karina landed in a shelter for homeless pregnant women, obtained a high school diploma, and applied for college scholarships. Today, she has completed two semesters, securing a brighter future for herself and her child.
END OF YEAR NET ASSETS: $1,477,544

Financials fully audited by Lindquist, von Husen, & Joyce LLP. View our full list of 2012 – 2013 supporters at brighter-beginnings.org.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MARIANI SALMON, President
President/Owner, Coast Air (Ret.)

SEAN ABSHER, Vice President
Shareholder and Attorney at Law, Stradling Yocca Carlson & Rauth, P.C.

JILL GONZALEZ, Treasurer
Senior Vice President, Bank of the West

AMANDA FEINSTEIN, Secretary
Senior Program Officer, Walter and Elise Haas Fund

JIM HILL, Immediate Past President
President, Hill & Company Communications

BONNIE ZELL, M.D., M.P.H.
Executive Director of Clinical Improvement, Hospital Quality Institute

HOLLY BROCK-COHN
Human Resources Manager/Consultant, City of Alameda (Ret.)

FRANCINE JOLTON, M.D.
Chair of the Department of Pediatrics, Contra Costa Regional Health Center

BARBARA BUNN MCCULLOUGH, PH.D. (Ex-Officio)
Chief Executive Officer, Brighter Beginnings

Sources of Funds
Total: $4,683,099

Expenses
Total: $4,744,668

Donations: 16.7%
Government: 79.9%
Fundraising: 3.7%

Management & General: 16.2%
Other: 3.4%
Program Services: 80.1%

Program Services: 80.1%
Donations: 16.7%
Other: 3.4%