



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA
NEIGHBORHOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL AND
YOUTH COUNCIL REPORT

AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: February 13, 2019

TO: Neighborhood Advisory Council
Youth Council

FROM: Santa Barbara Youth Council

SUBJECT: Project ALMA (Adolescent Leaders Modeling Acceptance)

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Neighborhood Advisory Council and the Youth Council receive a report on the Santa Barbara Youth Council's Project ALMA (Adolescent Leaders Modeling Acceptance).

BACKGROUND:

In 2016, the Santa Barbara Youth Council (Youth Council) applied for and received a Youth Making Change (YMC) Grant. The YMC grant funded by Fund for Santa Barbara and is a teen-led program involving local youth who are engaged in projects that impact Santa Barbara County.

The Youth Council was approached by teens in the community and members of Changing Agents Network for Dismantling Oppression (CANDO), who expressed concerns related to students of undocumented parents, or who were themselves undocumented. During a regular Youth Council meeting in September 2016, the youth group Just Communities was invited to attend and present on the issue. Statistics showed that more than 5,100 youth in Santa Barbara are presently in foster care for a variety of reasons. Just Communities expressed a lack of understanding and compassion for undocumented youth which can lead to poor grades in school, feelings of anger and helplessness, and challenges for pursuing higher education goals.

As a result of the meeting, the Youth Council partnered with CANDO, and created Project ALMA, with a goal of becoming leaders for modeling the acceptance of others. To achieve this, Project Alma facilitated focus groups with diverse youth to discuss their perceptions regarding undocumented teens, current beliefs on the issue, and to listen to anecdotal stories about real life experiences in Santa Barbara. Additionally a survey was developed and distributed to youth between the 13 to 25 years of age and adults to gauge the

community's perception regarding undocumented teens. Over 130 completed surveys were returned, and the information showed the vast majority of respondents were aware of the issues and receptive to change. Lastly, Project ALMA hosted a Know Your Rights workshop providing guidance on how to navigate citizenship processes and financial aid for prospective college students. Approximately 50 youth attended.

Although the grant period for Project ALMA has passed, the Youth Council recognizes the importance of the issue and continues to include Project ALMA as an ad hoc subcommittee.

PREPARED BY: Roberta Payan, Recreation Leader and Santa Barbara Youth Council

SUBMITTED BY: Susan C. Young, Supervisor, Neighborhood and Outreach Services

APPROVED BY: Rich Hanna, Parks and Assistant Recreation Director