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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Federal Dollars to Boost Contra Costa County’s Response to Interpersonal Violence

DOJ Grant Provides Critical Anti-violence Funding for Project Led by Alliance to End Abuse

Martinez, Calif. (September 12, 2018) – The Justice Department’s Office on Violence Against Women has awarded \$32 million to improve the criminal justice response to sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Among the 54 nationally awarded grants, the **Contra Costa County Employment and Human Services Department (EHSD)** received nearly \$1 million. EHSD will use this funding over the next three years to strengthen critical victim services, judicial handling and law enforcement response, as well as to deepen its cross-sector community partnerships throughout the county.

“This funding will allow us to expand services into East County, improve risk assessment protocols and policy for law enforcement and engage more culturally relevant services,” explained Alex Madsen of the **Contra Costa Alliance to End Abuse**. “We look forward to further strengthening the work and innovations of our partners.”

The Alliance to End Abuse, an initiative of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors that EHSD oversees, will manage the funding and lead the project associated with the grant. For almost two decades, the Alliance has supported and advocated for improved system response to issues domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and human trafficking. The Alliance’s approach includes strengthening systems, building partnerships and educating professionals and the community.

Progress

Through the Alliance, Contra Costa County has achieved significant and coordinated progress in assisting victims of violence, raising awareness, and holding offenders accountable. The Alliance pilots, supports and coordinates a wide variety of activities and services focused on interpersonal violence including: Family Justice Centers in West and Central County that provide one-stop service for victims and their families through 38 on-site partners; a specialized domestic violence court; supervision of domestic violence offenders; facilitating high-risk case review teams; a train- the-trainer program; and public awareness campaigns and outreach events. The Alliance also played a key role in launching, and continues to help lead the Contra Costa Human Trafficking Coalition, made up of 30 organizations and

agencies providing direct services to human trafficking victims.

Overcoming Service Gaps

While Contra Costa County is a true model of a coordinated response to violence against women and other forms of interpersonal violence, the Alliance continues to address ongoing challenges. Due to the County's large size and the socioeconomic and racial/ethnic diversity, there remains a crucial need for sustaining and adding more high quality services in existing and new locations (East County and rural areas); increasing awareness and understanding, at the judicial level, of interpersonal violence, particularly risk assessment, and intersections between different forms of violence; improving practice and protocols for law enforcement's handling of interpersonal violence cases; as well as improving policy and practice, and enhancing coordination, among service partners who address various forms of interpersonal violence.

Tools

The grant will provide important updated law enforcement field guides; updated multi-disciplinary complex case review protocols, forms and evaluation tools; adapted risk assessment tool and protocols; and training material for judicial handling and assessing risk of Interpersonal Violence (IPV) cases.

County Partners

Grant implementation partners contribute services to and receive funding from the project. They are: **STAND! for Families Free of Violence**, a community-based, comprehensive, multi-service agency for domestic violence victims; **Bay Area Legal Aid**, a community-based legal services agency; **Community Violence Solutions**, a community-based agency that works to end sexual assault and human trafficking; **Contra Costa Family Justice Alliance**, which manages two one-stop victim services centers in the County; **CCC Probation Department**; and two culturally-specific victim services providers **Narika**, and the **Latina Center**. Resource partners, providing critical in-kind support and resources are **Superior Court of CCC**, the **Office of the District Attorney**, and **Concord, Pittsburg, and Richmond Police Departments** and **Rainbow Community Center**.

The Alliance to End Abuse

Learn More about The Alliance to End Abuse and its **Red Sands Project** at <https://vimeo.com/286217348>.

Contra Costa County Employment & Human Services

The Employment & Human Services Department (EHSD) partners with the community to deliver quality services to ensure access to resources that support, protect, and empower individuals and families to achieve self-sufficiency. Based on the core values of delivering an exceptional customer experience, encouraging open communication, embracing change, practicing ethical behavior, and embracing diversity, EHSD envisions Contra Costa County will continue to be a thriving community where all individuals and families can be healthy, safe, secure and self-sufficient. More information about EHSD is available at www.ehsd.org.