

CARE

Moving Our Community Forward

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF DELIVERING FAMILY ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY



**HOPE FOR FAMILIES
DURING COVID-19**
► **Visions for future growth**

**AID FOR VICTIMS OF
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**
► **How one survivor rebuilt her life**



CARE
COMMUNITY CENTER
OAKLAND
SACRAMENTO



Dear Friends of Lao Family Community Development Inc.,

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT AND COMMITMENT to hiring our hardworking job seekers, housing our new Americans, and developing our future college students and business owners.

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 changed the world we operate, learn and live in. Team members quickly pivoted and within a couple of weeks our facilities were reopened with CDC and public health protocols in place. We reflect that Lao Family's mission of advancing diverse communities to self-sufficiency through culturally informed employment, housing and supports is more essential than ever.

We have a lot to be grateful for in 2021, including the Contra Costa AB109 housing and employment program; Alameda County AB109 housing, career technical education and direct employment service; the Oakland Prison to Employment project; Sacramento employment and state domestic violence housing service and CSBG programs. Local companies hired, and landlords rented their properties to our participants so they could achieve outcomes like full-time work and permanent housing.

We look forward to working with the AC Probation Department and the City of Oakland and our network of community-based partners, local landlords and employers in Alameda County to support the residents of Lao Family's new CARE transitional supportive housing campus near East Oakland DMV, a 285-unit furnished studio complex. We are excited to move into our new CARE Community Center Sacramento campus in the Arden Park neighborhood. Community members will be able to access a SETA AJCC Career Center and Highlands Community Charter and Technical School, offering adult ESL, high school diploma programs, and multiple industry-recognized vocational training programs.

LFCD is happy to announce that our employment, career center, workforce services and organization received Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) status for three years to June 2024. CARF Accreditation achievement is the gold standard, indicating an organization's dedication and commitment to improve the quality of lives of the persons served, and that its personnel, documentation and procedures established conform to international standards.

There are many events and people who have helped Lao Family become what we are today. With the enduring support of local, state and national partners, Lao Family has been able to care for and support the comprehensive housing, employment, health and education needs of over 400,000 Northern Californians over the past 41 years. At our core, we are an agency of advocates, navigators, coaches, employment and housing counselors, job developers, mentors, case managers and innovators. We are a reflection of the diverse individuals and communities we serve. We deeply care for the communities we are entrusted to support. Families know they can count on unparalleled service delivered in 35 languages.

You will read about Basira Haidari's journey from survivor to mentor for other Afghan refugee women and children. We highlight Casa Liberty, which serves families facing situations that are a matter of life or death.

Thank you, California, for the Mental Health Services Act and the Office of Emergency Services. The Cal OES has been a leader partnering with LFCD to create victim-centered restorative justice programs. And we are grateful for a Community Capacity AB109 Grant from Alameda County that has led to monumental outcomes transforming the lives of those coming out of the justice system.

CONNECT and PARTNER with us. We invite our local community to reach out to us; attend our next CARE Gallery artist reception; or participate in our hiring fair, graduation or food distribution event. Visit www.lfcd.org or call us at 510-533-8850 or 916-393-7501.

Sincerely,

KATHY CHAO ROTHBERG

Chief Executive Officer

Office: 510-533-8850 | Cell: 510-334-4826

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● OUR MISSION

Lao Family Community Development (LFCD) is a trusted partner whose mission is dedicated to advancing the economic mobility and well-being of diverse communities through culturally informed specialized employment, housing, education and support services.

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT US AT WWW.LFCD.ORG.



40 YEARS OF GIVING BACK

As Lao Family Community Development celebrates a major milestone, we look back at some of the key accomplishments and supporters working with us to transform countless lives, decade by decade



Top to bottom: LFCD retreat; Angela Corona, site manager, Rumrill Place Apartments

The blessing of a community



A ceremony to bless the site prior to construction



1980-1990: THE EARLY YEARS

Between 1975 and 1988, more than 850,000 Lao refugees came to the United States after fleeing the Communist takeover of Southeast Asia. More than a third of them settled in California.

Kouichoy Saechao was among the first to arrive, and he became part of a small group of Laotian immigrants in the Bay Area who gathered in the living room of Chaosarn Chao, the late LFCD CEO, in 1980 to discuss how they could help those just arriving. Chao had heard about an organization started by revered Hmong General Vang Pao in Santa Ana, Calif., and he wanted to launch a Bay Area branch.

Thus began Lao Family Community Development, an organization that would expand over four decades to serve refugees and immigrants from all around the world, as well as other disadvantaged populations, as part of a special network of U.S. State Department-approved refugee resettlement and placement agencies in the United States.

Saechao, one of LFCD's first board members, remembers those first volunteers meeting refugees at the airport and getting them settled in their apartments—which often included teaching them to use Western amenities like stoves and bathrooms.

“This group was from agricultural settlements and they were coming to this industrial information society. We had a lot to adjust to and to learn,” says Saechao.

The members provided assistance with social adjustment and taught ESL classes and vocational training. They helped their new American members access social services and get a driver's license. Most importantly, they helped ease newcomers' loneliness as they dealt with separation from family members back in Laos and dealt with PTSD.

Khanmalee Rattanasith benefited from LFCD's English language classes as a teenager and then became one of the organization's first employees in 1985. She started as a receptionist and secretary and gradually grew with the organization into positions as a job developer, employment coordinator, bookkeeper and, finally, accounting manager. Thinking back to the early years, Rattanasith recalls Chao's passion and hard work as he tirelessly pursued opportunities for his clients and funding to enable those opportunities after creating the organization.

“Sometimes he would spend the whole night at the office to turn in a proposal for a grant,” she says. “He really wanted to make it happen.”

“This group was from agricultural settlements and they were coming to this industrial information society. We had a lot to adjust to and to learn.” —KOUICHOY SAECHAO



LFCD Rumrill Place
Apartments in San Pablo

1990-2000: GETTING SETTLED

Sandra Lewis moved from San Francisco, where she was living with family, to the Rumrill Place Apartments in the East Bay 19 years ago. Now 56, the empty-nester raised her son in the charming complex she came to call home. Rumrill allowed Lewis—a single mom—to provide her family with stability and a comfortable lifestyle. “All of us neighbors know each other,” says Lewis, who works as a Caltrans hiring coordinator. “We all take care of each other. It’s a little community.”

In 1993, LFCD bought 2.5 acres of land in San Pablo, ultimately developing 32 units of affordable housing on what was once a potato farm. The apartments include two-, three- and four-bedroom townhouses with garages. The complex is close to public transportation and jobs. The property rents to those with lower incomes and is financed with multiple funding sources.

Beyond entering the development field, Lao Family broadened its other housing initiatives. Services include group and one-on-one rental assistance and first-time homeownership counseling, assisting with applications to access affordable housing, and providing foreclosure intervention. Counselors meet clients wherever they are at, whether that’s shopping mortgages and other financial products or negotiating with banks to avoid foreclosure. The organization also offers pre-purchase workshops in multiple languages.



Kouichoy Saechao



Khanmalee Rattanasith

“When we first came here, we were living in crowded, older housing with lead paint and pests such as roaches,” says LFCD’s current CEO, Kathy Chao Rothberg. “Community members dealt with discrimination and unlawful evictions. We knew we had to provide an alternative and at the same time keep it affordable.”

Considering the Bay Area’s soaring cost of living and volatile rental market, Rumrill Place Apartments offers residents a safe and stable refuge, with the prospect of saving enough for homeownership. Over the decades, Lao Family’s housing efforts have shown in a multitude of ways how families thrive when given security and opportunity. “I really don’t know where I’d be if I hadn’t found this,” Lewis says.

2000-2010: FOCUS ON HOUSING

As Lao Family Community Development entered its third decade, agency leaders began to see a new need emerging in their diversifying client population. Home prices and rents were skyrocketing in the throes of Silicon Valley’s tech boom, and many of LFCD’s clients longed to gain more control over their housing situation.

“One of the dreams of living in the United States is the American dream of owning a home,” says Chao Rothberg. “That’s especially true when it comes to refugees who have lost their homeland. After living in a refugee camp for years, they dream of having a home where they can sleep safely, grow a garden, conduct their religious practices or have a birthday party.”

LFCD was also serving other clients who needed affordable housing, such as low-income seniors and those with justice records—most of them with no credit histories or

40 YEARS OF GIVING BACK

less-than-perfect ones. So the question arose: How could the organization best help these customers?

Their solution was to become a housing counseling agency approved by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The process was daunting, requiring extensive training and system building, yet the enormous effort paid off as soon as LFCD began seeing clients achieve their homeownership dream. Between 2004 and 2012, approximately 280 clients purchased a home through LFCD's first-time homeownership program, operated with multiple partners. The average house price was \$310,000, and LFCD and its partners helped secure an average of \$100,000 to \$110,000 in down payment assistance.

The Alameda County-Oakland Community Action Partnership was one of the agencies that partnered with LFCD to secure funding. One program it offered called Families Building Wealth matched a client's savings 2:1 up to \$6,000; that money could be applied toward homeownership, education or starting a business.

"The Lao clients were some of the largest savers. They were very aggressive in their savings and showed the success of behavior modification. Small, incremental changes can add up over three to five years," says Estelle Clemons, AC-OCAP director.

"The Lao clients ... were very aggressive in their savings and showed the success of behavior modification. Small, incremental changes can add up over three to five years." —ESTELLE CLEMONS

Claudia Lepe was a housing counselor who taught the Spanish-language first-time homeownership class at LFCD from 2004 to 2007. Some of her students had made mistakes with previous home purchases, such as buying from unscrupulous sellers or overstating their income on loan papers. She taught them how to build good credit, save for a down payment and determine what loan payment they could afford.

"We even went over every legal document with them in their language before they signed," she says.

Because of the good practices learned through the first-time homeownership program and the nonpredatory loans that the program helped its clients secure, LFCD's



Community members in front of home purchased through LFCD's first-time homeownership program



Claudia Lepe



Estelle Clemons



LFCD staff at the grand opening of Burma Burma Restaurant in Dublin, the third restaurant started by an early Refugee IDA savers co-op group.

homeowners weathered the financial crisis even as many of their neighbors were losing their homes.

“Not one family who went through our first-time homeownership program lost their home to foreclosure,” says Director of Programs Mai Quach. “We are proud of this accomplishment.”

2010-2020: GROWING THE LAO FAMILY TREE

Lao Family Community Development spent its first three decades serving a mostly foreign-born population, with more than 90% speaking a first language other than English. As the organization expanded its scope of services, it began partnering with fellow providers in a multitude of sectors, allowing it to deliver comprehensive, holistic care to as many people from as many backgrounds as possible.

“Our population has shifted,” says Chao Rothberg. While the refugee community has its own particular needs, it has increasingly faced many of the same hardships as other displaced and disenfranchised Americans. For instance, one of Sacramento’s largest homeless encampments is predominantly Southeast Asian. That is why LFCD has sought to provide aid to all individuals who face high barriers to self-sufficiency, including the unsheltered, the formerly incarcerated, senior citizens and victims of domestic violence.

“Through our partnerships,” Chao Rothberg says, “we can serve community members affected by things like the affordable housing and opioid crisis. We focus on creating thoughtful, strategic partnerships and standards of care.”

Those partnerships span the globe to hyperlocal levels.

“To provide strong outcomes we need to have a strong portfolio of partners.” —MAI QUACH

Chao Rothberg’s family and many of the founding members were once receiving services; they are now working beside international resettlement agencies like the USCRI to facilitate refugee resettlement in the East Bay and Sacramento. Lao Family has relationships with educational institutions, legal organizations, health care providers, probation departments and criminal justice advocates. It works with federal resettlement agencies, county and state social services, and individuals and community agencies.

Staff members speak 35 languages and work with 40 different ethnic populations each year. In total, the organization has more than 1,000 affiliates, 61 contracts and 13 government partners. Such broad alliances have allowed LFCD to not only expand—in 2020 workers contributed to the census count and registered voters—but also put down roots. In 2019, it opened a 30,000-square-foot multipurpose community center in East Oakland that focuses on promoting culinary skills, arts, recreation and education. In 2021, it opened a 25,000-square-foot multipurpose center in Sacramento and a 285-room transitional housing facility in East Oakland.

“We have a customized menu of services because each family we help has different needs,” Quach says. “To provide strong outcomes we need to have a strong portfolio of partners.”



Graduates of the Environmental Science Remediation Career Technical Education program, with LFCD CEO Kathy Chao Rothberg and Alameda County Probation Department Assistant Chief Esa Ehmen-Krause.



LOOKING AHEAD

LFCD CONTINUES TO BUILD ON ITS MANY STRENGTHS
WHILE PLANNING FOR A BRIGHT FUTURE

● LFCD STRATEGIC PLAN

While 2020 was a roller coaster year, LFCD has much to celebrate in 2021. Thanks to a Community Capacity AB109 grant from Alameda County, LFCD entered the domain of community reentry and criminal justice work and adopted a fair chance hiring policy. As part of the grant, Hatchuel Tabernik & Associates and Resource Development Associates guided LFCD's process in creating our Operational Strategic Plan for 2019-2023. **This plan has anchored LFCD with a strong foundation and a strategic focus on three priority areas:**

- 1. Organizational development**—to strengthen and increase staff and board capacity and formalize organizational infrastructure including the attainment of accreditation by the International Commission on the Accreditation of Rehabilitation (CARF).
- 2. Marketing and branding**—to develop a stronger brand presence, consistency of experience from location to location, and a marketing strategy that aligns with our growth and impact moving our community forward.
- 3. Financial sustainability**—to generate mission-based community development enterprise revenue and create organizational sustainability and growth.

As we near the completion of our third year of the plan, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and California wildfires, LFCD continues to operate with in-person service



Refugee mother with child

guided by strict safety protocols. With great team effort, we pivoted rapidly to use more technology tools including Zoom videoconferencing for individual case management and orientation; DocuSign for intakes and documentation; YouTube channels for module learning; and Xavus CRM active center for client engagement, communication and follow-up.

We look forward to serving more clients at our 285-unit CARE campus transitional housing site in Oakland, new CARE Community Center Sacramento and other mission-based economic development projects in the coming years.

● SAFE HOUSE CASA LIBERTY

In 2020, we opened a 12-unit facility to serve the physical, mental and emotional health of families and individuals in need of safety and recovery from domestic violence and homelessness. Families receive a full array of supportive services to heal and establish safe and stable lives.

Parents and children are able to undergo intensive parent-child bonding and positive parenting. There is support group access for the parents and recreational opportunities for the children. Additionally, there is an on-site computer lab, Wi-Fi, and one-on-one on-site case management services

for job readiness, pre-employment, prevention and early intervention mental health, legal assistance for family law and immigration issues, clinical counseling, court and justice system assistance, life skills training, and financial budgeting and savings.

Nearly 100 families have successfully transitioned out into permanent housing, full-time jobs, financial stability and pathways to a healthier, safer and happier life ahead.

● REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT

LFCD became a U.S. State Department and California Department of Social Services-approved refugee resettlement and placement agency in 2016 through our affiliation with the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants.

During the past four years, we have effectively resettled 2,000 refugees from Afghanistan and other parts of the world to Sacramento County and the Bay Area. Our location in north Sacramento County is ground zero for this positive and rewarding work. We see firsthand how many refugees become productive members of society, helping communities such as Arden-Arcade, South and West Sacramento, and others grow by creating new businesses and offering professional and cultural opportunities.

LFCD has co-hosted World Refugee Day for decades in the Bay Area and, in recent years, Sacramento. It offers an occasion to bring newcomers and existing community members to meet one another, reinforce identity, celebrate achievements and educate the public on issues such as the conflicts in various regions of the world.

In 2020, LFCD continued the important work of community outreach, education, promotion and operation of a question-and-answer Census center. Voter registration and facilitating citizenship assistance and civil engagement are other areas of our work.

● PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM

More than ever, our community members need California's Mental Health Services Act programs such as Prevention and Early Intervention.

LFCD began a pilot Health and Well-Being Program in Contra Costa County for Asian Families in 2010. This program has served over 120 adults a year with individualized service

and over 600 family members a year, including youth and seniors. In 2020, we expanded this service in Sacramento County—especially critical in light of the statewide shelter-in-place orders amid the pandemic.

Staff provide comprehensive, linguistically and culturally sensitive Prevention and Intervention services. The program combines an integrated service model with a client-centered approach for supporting underserved Contra Costa County South and Southeast Asian adults and families and domestic violence survivors. Our goal is to provide outreach, education and support to a diverse, underserved population to facilitate increased timely access to community and public mental health resources and the development of an individualized well-being plan. Support is given for problem-solving skills; decreased stigma attached to mental health; increased knowledge of the different forms of mental health; and increased protective factors to ensure families' emotional well-being, stability and resilience.

LFCD also focuses on building strengths and wellness among the client's family and community members and developing peer support groups.



Lizbeth's family, graduates of Casa Liberty

● GROWING OUR IMPACT

We look forward to completing and launching multiple affordable housing and commercial mixed-use economic development projects in the East Bay and Sacramento serving working families, those experiencing homelessness, nonprofits, and the minority- and women-owned small business communities.

LFCD's goals for 2021-2023 are to continue leveraging our resources with those of our CBO, government and private partners to offer the most comprehensive, timely and accessible resources for communities with high and multiple needs. **Community members can access employment career, education, housing and various family support services at:**

- ▶ Four locations in East, Deep East and Uptown neighborhoods in Oakland. These facilities provide a diverse mix of programs and services including three America's Job Career Centers (AJCC) and two Alameda County Social Service Agency Career and Employment Centers (CEC) for jobs and career services.
- ▶ One AJCC in San Pablo.
- ▶ Two AJCCs in Sacramento.
- ▶ Mental Health Services Act Prevention and Early Intervention Health Services in San Pablo and Sacramento.
- ▶ Public computer labs and job and community resource centers at all locations.
- ▶ Business and Employer Services at all locations.
- ▶ Summer jobs and year-round youth internships, education and career support in Oakland and Sacramento.
- ▶ Education opportunities for adults and youth at all locations.
- ▶ Volunteer income tax assistance and EITC in Oakland and San Pablo.
- ▶ Immigration and family law pro bono clinics in San Pablo, Oakland and Sacramento.
- ▶ Clinical, marriage, family and child development therapy referrals at all locations.
- ▶ Clothing closet at three locations.
- ▶ Food bank distribution in Oakland and San Pablo.
- ▶ Affordable housing access at all locations.

Visit us at www.lfcd.org or our Facebook page for the latest updates and our office locations. Let's make a difference together!

Serving Survivors of



Domestic Violence

AFGHAN REFUGEE **BASIRA HAIDARI** OVERCAME AN ABUSIVE MARRIAGE AND NOW HELPS OTHER ABUSED WOMEN GET THEIR LIVES BACK ON TRACK

Basira Haidari, a 26-year-old single mother of two and a refugee from Paktia Gardez, Afghanistan, is finally living in peace. “I am happy to be making a difference within my community and empowering women to take a stand to become better-educated Muslim women,” Haidari said. “With the help of LFCD, I have been able to overcome many obstacles and accomplish many of my goals.”

With the help of a resettlement agency, Haidari moved to the United States with her now ex-husband and young daughter and settled in Sacramento. She thought it was a dream come true; she and her family felt as if they had been given a new life with endless opportunities. Within a few months of living in Sacramento, her husband started to become absent from the household. He would constantly be out with friends, spending money that was meant to support the family in casinos, clubs and on other activities. She tried to resolve these issues with her husband, and he became verbally abusive with her. He constantly tried to control Haidari and forced her to stay home with the children. He wasn’t supportive of her getting a job or a driver’s license and told her that she wouldn’t survive without him. This started to take a toll on Haidari, but she didn’t know what to do or how to improve the quality of her life.

Haidari became aware of English courses that were offered to refugees, and she took advantage of the opportunity without her husband’s support. Dyer Kelly Elementary School in the San Juan Unified School District offered the courses, which have been extremely effective in helping the Sacramento community learn English. Within months of attending the courses, she picked up the language. She encouraged other women within her community to take the courses as well. In no time, the English class was full of women studying English. That was the moment Haidari realized that she needed to make a difference within the community.

After a year in the United States, Haidari became pregnant with her second child. She had hoped that with the arrival of her new child, her relationship with her husband would improve. But

once the child was born, Haidari’s husband became increasingly aggressive, and each argument turned into physical abuse. Haidari eventually called the police, who advised her to file a restraining order against him, but she was scared and unsure how to do so. Her in-laws and even her own family would disown her if she filed a restraining order, she said, because it would damage their reputations. They told her that she needed to accept her husband the way he was, and divorce would never be an option because it is not condoned within her culture.

Haidari came into contact with a therapist and wanted her husband to attend counseling as well, but it angered him and resulted in another abusive encounter. The physical abuse continued to worsen, to the point that Child Protective Services became involved and took her children. Her husband was arrested and put in jail, her children were in protective custody, and Haidari felt as if she had hit rock bottom. She finally summoned the courage to file a restraining order against him. With the restraining order in place, Haidari was able to have visitation time with her children. During this time, her therapist connected her with LFCD—and that is when her life turned in a new direction. LFCD helped her apply for her own apartment, get a job and start the process to get her children back. She felt like her life was finally going in the right direction.

Since then, Haidari has become an interpreter and has helped many women overcome similar situations. Her story has been such a motivation for other women that she was even voted Woman of the Year by the California State Assembly for Assembly District 7 in 2019. With the help of LFCD, Haidari is planning to create a safe women’s support group for the Sacramento community. Her goal is to have fun activities, therapy sessions, mental health counseling, marriage counseling, family counseling, resume assistance, job search assistance, drivers’ license assistance, guest speakers and more. She feels that this supportive environment will empower women in need to find a positive direction in life, just as she was able to do.

DONORS/FUNDERS

Moving our communities forward is made possible because of the extraordinary contributions of institutional partners, corporations and our many individual donors. We are profoundly grateful for our supporters current and past.

Alameda County Community Food Bank
 Alameda County Probation Department
 Alameda County Social Services Agency
 Annie E. Casey Foundation
 Asian Pacific Fund
 Bank of America – 2010 Neighborhood Builders Award
 Beneficial State Bank
 California Department of Education
 California Department of Parks and Recreation
 California Endowment
 California Reinvestment Coalition
 California Statewide Communities Development Authority
 Chevron – Economic Self-Sufficiency Program
 Citi Foundation
 City of San Pablo
 Clearinghouse CDFI
 Consumnes River College Architecture Program
 Contra Costa County Employment and Human Services
 Contra Costa Health Services
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 United Way California Capital Region
 US Bank
 U.S. Census 2010, 2020
 USCRI
 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
 The Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation
 Walter & Elise Haas Fund
 Wells Fargo Foundation
 Wells Fargo Housing Foundation
 White Pony Express

LFCD 2020 Annual Report

REVENUE, GAIN AND OTHER SUPPORT

Government grants and contracts	\$9,631,047
Private foundations/capital contributions	\$90,000
Donations	\$100,929
Other income	\$921,258
Total revenue, gain and other support	\$10,743,234

EXPENDITURES

Program expenses	\$8,909,449
Management and general expenses	\$1,069,531
Total expenditures	\$9,978,980

NET ASSETS

Change in net assets	\$764,254
Net assets at beginning of year	\$8,280,331
Net assets at end of year	\$9,044,585

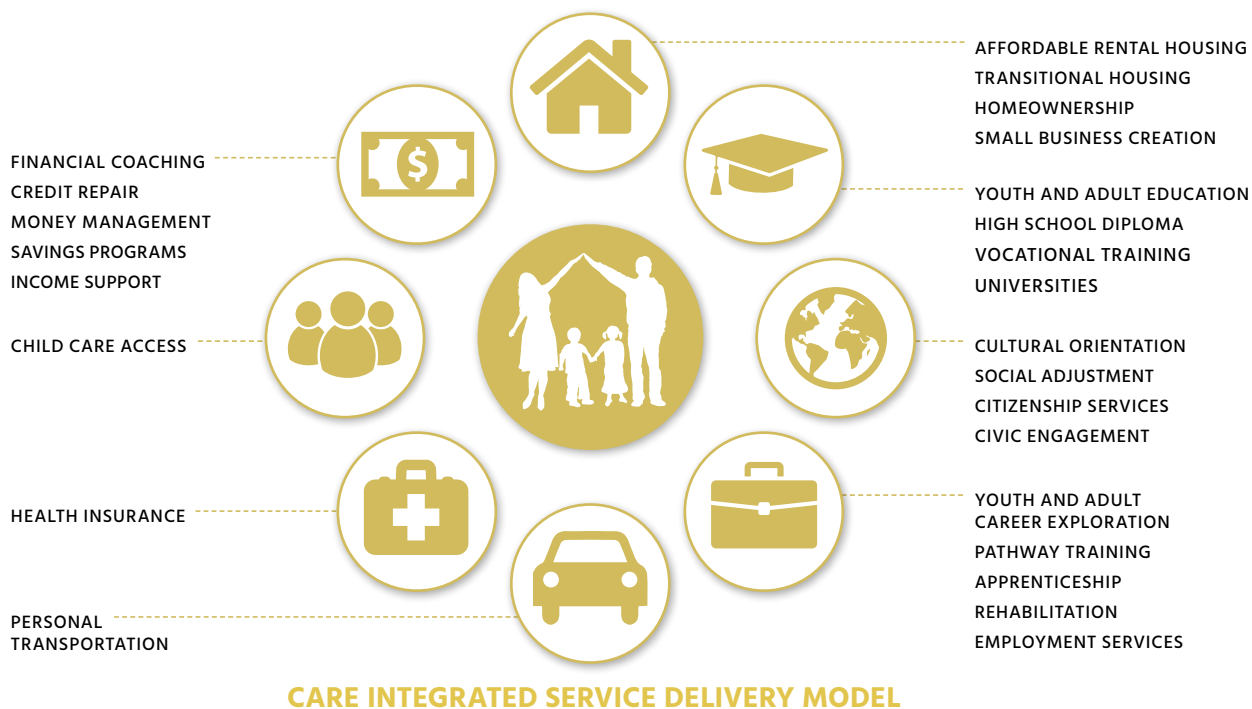
For more information on Lao Family Community Development programs and services, please visit www.lfcd.org.

Lao Family Community Development would like to thank the more than 500 individual donors and volunteers who play a vital role in our efforts to create opportunities for members of our community in need of extra support.

The CARE Integrated Service Delivery Model for Self-Sufficiency

LFCD is committed to supporting low-income households through the CARE integrated service delivery model that strives to meet their immediate, long-term and special needs. Our client-centered approach engages individuals and families to participate so that they achieve their self-sufficiency and stability goals.

LFCD's customized service plans foster positive outcomes by focusing on these priority areas: workforce; education; affordable housing; small business economic development; and support services in health, income and savings. The service model below represents LFCD's integrated approach to support diverse communities to achieve economic self-sufficiency.



EXPERIENCE CARE CAMPUS—LEARN. GROW. SUCCEED. A transitional home space where you receive all the tools for success—skills training and job placement, on-campus computer lab and financial coaching. Call 510-638-1180.





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