

AYC

Asian Youth Center

Strategic Plan January 1, 2021 – June 30, 2023

December 9, 2020

Dear Friends,

In 2014, the AYC Board of Directors completed and launched a strategic plan entitled, “Vision 2020”. This play on words was meant to communicate clarity and focus of the organization as well as the length of the five-year plan. The strategic priorities were:

- 1) Maintain mission-centered efficient & effective programs and services
- 2) Ensure sustainable, diverse, & adequate funding for programs
- 3) Build and sustain excellent organizational leadership at every level
- 4) Define and communicate AYC’s identity both internally & externally

Each year, AYC advanced these priorities incrementally with specific work plans until the goals in each priority area were achieved and sustained.

We maintained mission-centered programming, implemented program evaluations throughout the agency, and created a culture of learning so that programs are efficient and effective.

AYC’s annual budget has gone up and down over the years, but we have sustained funding to support the services delivered each year. We have diversified funding from 98% dependence on government funding to a mere 61%, while increasing foundation, corporate, and individual giving as well as generating more earned income.

We have cultivated and sustained excellent organizational leadership at the board level through best practices and the Board of Directors reflects the diversity of the communities we serve. AYC has invested in training and capacity building for staff to promote team excellence.

Finally, AYC implemented social media, community outreach, and a rebranding campaign that have increased internal and external recognition and understanding of AYC’s identity.

Our strategic plan did not anticipate the Coronavirus Pandemic, or the current social unrest and racial justice struggles the community is experiencing. However, AYC’s mission and values are still relevant and we have stepped up to the challenges of pivoting to digital services, addressing the digital divide, as well as scaling up the Emergency Food Program.

AYC is proud to release our next strategic plan detailing how we plan to continue serving and empowering low-income, immigrant, and at-risk youth and families.

We deeply appreciate the support of everyone who makes this work possible - the volunteer Board of Directors, the hard-working staff, other volunteers, the financial and in-kind contributions of more than 1,500 donors, as well as our community partners and other stakeholders. Thank you.

Working together we will continue to make a difference so that all youth can succeed in school, at work, and in life!

Sincerely,

Michelle Freridge
Executive Director

Table of Contents

Executive Director Letter p. 2

Table of Contents p. 3

Introduction p. 4

Mission, Vision, Values, Who we Serve, & Geographic Region p. 5

Timeline & SWOT Analysis p. 6

Strategic Priorities & Key Issues p.10

Work Plans p.12

Introduction

AYC's Board of Directors and Executive Director initiated a new strategic planning process in 2018-2019 and this document was completed in December 2020. Working with Kumamoto & Associates facilitating the process, the Board of Directors set the overall direction, identified key issues and priorities, and approved the final plan. The AYC staff gathered and presented the data, drafted the strategies and timelines, and presented the plan for approval.

Strategic Planning Components

AYC reviewed our mandates, updated our mission and values, and completed a very thorough analysis of the organizational Strengths & Weaknesses, as well as Community Needs Assessments and an Environmental Scan to assess Opportunities & Threats. This initial research included:

- 2018 AYC Brand Analysis by StepUpLA (Deloitte)
- 2018 A Community of Contrasts, AANHPI in the SGV, Asian Americans Advancing Justice
- 2018 Compensation & Benefits Report, South and Central California Nonprofit Organizations, Center for Nonprofit Management
- 2018, 2019, and 2020 AYC Staff Surveys and focus group work at annual retreats
- 2019, 2020 Client Satisfaction & Feedback Surveys
- 2019 HR Service Solutions Benchmark, ADP
- 2019 Los Angeles Community Impact (LACI) Study of Community Needs, Trends, and AYC Programming Feasibility
- 2019, 2020 The USC Price Center for Social Innovation – Neighborhood Data for Social Change – Geo-mapping
- 2020 Community Needs Assessments for San Gabriel Valley, East Los Angeles, and Antelope Valley areas of Los Angeles County, by Ricardo Lopez, MSW Dr. Argelis A. Ortiz, and Evelyn Casimiro, MSW.
- 2020 Stakeholder Surveys

In spite of the Coronavirus Pandemic and Safer at Home order shutting down in-person meetings in the spring of 2020, AYC's Board met virtually six times to review the mandates, values, and mission statements, Community Needs Assessment data, SWOT analysis data, and identify key issues, priorities & strategies. Staff developed the first work plans and will update the status of the identified goals and objectives annually through June 30, 2023.

Mission

AYC exists to empower low-income and immigrant youth, families, and adults of all ethnicities to succeed in school, at work, and in life.

Vision

All Youth Can Succeed in School, at Work, and in Life!

Values

- Passion AYC’s authentic passion for empowering people drives everything AYC does.
- Respect AYC treats all stakeholders with cultural competency and respect.
- Integrity AYC practices doing the right thing in all the ways AYC does business.
- Diversity AYC values diversity & inclusion because it empowers all stakeholders.
- Equity AYC promotes equity and social justice for all stakeholders.

Who We Serve

AYC’s services focus on low-income, immigrant, diversion, probation, re-entry, homeless, and foster youth and their families, young adults, and individuals with a special cultural and linguistic competency (Chinese, Vietnamese, Spanish, and English) with the Asian and Latinx immigrant communities.

Geographic Regions

AYC provides services in the San Gabriel Valley, East Los Angeles, South Los Angeles, and Antelope Valley areas of Los Angeles County.

Timeline

- Year 1: (FY 2020-2021): Transition Year will be spent Researching Best Practices, Building Organizational Capacity, and Securing Funding
- Year 2: (FY 2021-2022): Implementing, Evaluating, & Developing New and Expanded Programs
- Year 3: (FY 2022-2023): Achieving a New Level of Service Delivery, Core Competencies, and Organizational Sustainability

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

AYC's internal assessment identified significant strengths in areas of programming, leadership & management, operations & finances, and development.

Programming: CORE COMPETENCIES

- After-school & Educational Enrichment (PreK-12)
- Social Emotional Learning & Youth Development
- Case Management (Re-entry & Diversion)
- Linguistically Competent (Chinese, Spanish, English)
- Emergency Food Program

Leadership & Management

- Strong mission-centered organizational culture of learning
- Ability to adapt & pivot programming to virtual services due to COVID-19
- Diverse, High Functioning Governance Board
- Staff trends demonstrate strong professional development, promotion from within, low turn-over compared to similar organizations

Operations & Finances

- Ownership of three buildings
- Good Human Resources, Risk Management, Fiscal, Contract Compliance, Information Technology, and Back-Office policies, procedures, and actual operations
- Strong Financial Reserves & Cash Flow

Development

- Good Government Grant history (80% positive return ratio)
- Good Foundation Grant history (90% positive return ratio)
- Improvements in Events, Individual & Corporate Giving (From \$130,000 annually to \$750,000)
- Significantly Improved Diversity of Funding Streams over the years (From 98% dependence on government to 69%)

Weaknesses

AYC's internal assessment also identified organizational weaknesses in programming, leadership & management, operations, and development.

Programs (not within our current core competencies, but there is the potential for development)

- Community Outreach, Policy Advocacy & Community Mobilizing programs are small, underfunded and need more staff capacity
- Parent Education is an added program rather than a core program, and is also under-funded and underdeveloped
- Homelessness Prevention & Housing support services are limited, and staff capacity is minimal
- Basic Needs Programming for very low-income families was minimal prior to the coronavirus pandemic but has scaled up significantly in 2020

Leadership/ Management

- Board Fundraising Give & Get requirement is low (\$1,500) and board fundraising is uneven from year to year
- Pay & Benefits for all staff are at average/median or 10% below average/median
- Executive Director is not a person of color, nor representative of the communities AYC serves

Operations

- Aging buildings need repairs and offices in other locations may need to change in order to be truly useful
- Lack of dedicated Operations staff
- Lack of dedicated Evaluation staff
- CFO consultant to support fiscal department (really need an additional fiscal person and/or Fiscal Manager in order to grow)

Development

- Only 5.3% of Budget spent on Development last year
- Need more dedicated development staff
 - Currently there is only 1 FTE development staff
 - We should have at least 3 FTE development staff
 - Revenue raised has decreased in the prior two years due to reduced development staffing
- Need to invest for multiple years in planning and cultivation for individuals, major gifts, and planning giving in order to see effective fundraising revenues in these areas
- Need to upgrade donor software and add other platforms and supports
- Need to pursue more and diverse Government Grants

Opportunities

AYC's Board of Directors discussed the potential opportunities associated with the Political Environment in 2021 and beyond, including political impacts on government funding, tax deductible donations, immigration policy, and health and safety net programs for the low-income communities AYC serves. AYC's environmental scan also identified the following opportunities related to the Social & Racial Justice Movement that took off in 2020, the recession and the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

Social & Racial Justice Movement

- Promoting Anti-Racism education and culture change in multiple current youth and community target populations as well as in a multi-cultural context
- Policy Advocacy & Community Mobilization around social justice and racial justice issues (including housing, basic income, immigration, anti-discrimination, police brutality, and other areas)
- Funding opportunities as government and foundation funds are redirected

Responding to the Recession

- Increased need for back-office services among other non-profit organizations (We can provide this service as a social enterprise)
- Increased number of high skilled potential employee pool and employee retention
- Increased need for services in the following areas:
 - Emergency Food & Basic Needs could be expanded to meet the need
 - Homeless Prevention Services & Affordable Housing Programing (low-income housing development) could be initiated to meet increased need
 - Youth employment services could be expanded to meet the need
- AYC should respond to identified changes in Community Needs in the San Gabriel Valley, East Los Angeles, and Antelope Valley areas.

COVID 19 Crisis & Social Distancing has created or significantly increased the demand for:

- Digital & Virtual Programming (Phone based, Online Tutoring, Online Chinese Language Tutoring, Virtual Case Management, Social Emotional Learning, Etc.
- Bridging the Digital Divide
- In-Language Education & Outreach Materials about COVID 19

Threats

AYC's Board of Directors discussed the potential threats associated with the Political Environment in 2021 and beyond, including political impacts on government funding, tax deductible donations, immigration policy, and health and safety net programs for the low-income communities AYC serves. AYC's environmental scan identified the following threats related to the recession, COVID 19 Crisis, as well as the challenges of responding to changes in community needs.

Recession

- Decreased Government funding
- Decreased Foundation funding
- Decreased revenue from events, individual, & major gifts during recession

COVID-19 Crisis & Social Distancing

- Increased Hate Crimes against Asian-Americans
- Risk Management and operational challenges for Staff and Volunteers who are exposed to COVID-19 through AYC activities
 - Policies & procedures for PPE and legal compliance
 - Decision-making around re-opening, etc.
 - Succession Planning to replace key staff if they are sick and/or unable to work
- Funding decreases as government and foundation funds are redirected to COVID-19 Health Services

Responding to Changes in Community Needs

- San Gabriel Valley
 - Has the community near our building become high-income?
 - Do we need to move to provide better access for low-income communities?
 - If we do move – who are the competitors located in those communities already?
- East Los Angeles – how do we expand our presence, relationships and capacity here?
- Antelope Valley – how do we address transportation and other challenges here?
- Who are our competitors in each area and how can we distinguish ourselves or collaborate?

Strategic Priorities

The AYC Board of Directors identified the following strategic priorities in the strategic plan implemented from 2015-2020, and plans to continue with an updated version of these same priorities:

1. Maintain and expand mission-centered, efficient, and effective programs and services
2. Ensure sustainable, diverse, and adequate funding for current and future programs and services
3. Sustain excellent organizational leadership
4. Develop, define, and communicate AYC's organizational culture and identity both internally & externally

Key Issues

Additionally, the Board of Directors identified the following key issues within each strategic priority in order of importance based on current capacity, organizational strengths, community need, and opportunities:

1. Maintain and expand mission-centered, efficient, and effective programs and services
 - Culturally competent in-Language (Chinese, Vietnamese, Spanish, & English) services across all programs must be maintained and capacity increased
 - Maintain or continue to build the capacity of the organization to evaluate programming for effectiveness and efficiency
 - Program Areas
 - *Basic Needs programming should be expanded: Emergency Food Program, Rental Assistance, Temporary Shelter, etc. for low income individuals and families*
 - *After-school & Educational Enrichment Programs (ages 5-24) should be maintained and/or expanded*
 - *Employment & Vocational Training for Youth (ages 14-24) should be maintained and/or expanded*
 - Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Education (Anti-racism, racial/social justice) should be developed and implemented
 - Social Emotional Learning programming should be maintained and expanded
 - Re-entry & Diversion Case Management programming should be maintained and expanded (Juvenile Justice)

- Low Priority Program Areas Due to low organizational capacity and lack of opportunities:
 - Mental Health
 - Affordable Housing
 - Health Education, Health Services, Health Insurance Access
2. Ensure sustainable, diverse, and adequate funding for current and future programs and services
- Build the capacity of the organization to raise funds by investing in increased development staffing and infrastructure (online fundraising platforms, grant tracking software, donor tracking software, donor research software, etc.)
 - Develop and implement a comprehensive development plan annually that continues to diversify and increase revenues
 - Develop and implement earned revenue strategies such as back-office service collaborations and/or social enterprise programming
 - Develop and implement a long-term financial management plan that includes investment policies, building maintenance plans, and explores a federal indirect rate application
3. Sustain excellent organizational leadership
- Sustain effective and efficient board governance and leadership through best practices in board recruitment, orientation, meetings, and committees
 - Increase board fundraising outcomes and make those outcomes more reliable and consistent from year to year
 - Continue to invest in Executive Director professional development and sustainability with a focus on building capacity for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion as well as social justice, so that she can lead organizational change in culture to build capacity in these areas
 - Continue to invest in staff development and promotion from within at all levels of the organization, including staff training and professional development at all levels for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion as well as social justice, so as to create an organizational culture to be the foundation for social justice programming
 - Increase staff salaries to meet or exceed average/median pay as compared with LA County Salary Surveys
 - Develop succession plans for key positions through-out the organization (not only for the Executive Director) and update the Executive Director succession plan

4. Develop, define, and communicate AYC’s organizational culture and identity both internally & externally
 - Define and communicate consistent organizational identity, mission, vision, and values
 - Promote AYC visibility, positive image, and position as an industry leader in the community and field
 - Invest in staff training and professional development at all levels for diversity, equity, and inclusion as well as social justice to create an organizational culture to be the foundation for social justice programming

Work Plans

Year 1: (FY 2020-2021): Transition Year will be spent Researching Best Practices, Building Organizational Capacity, and Securing Funding

Work Plans for Year 1 will be developed and implemented by staff and board committees. Work plans will be shared with the Board at the February 2021 Board Meeting and outcomes evaluated by the board at the June 2021 Board Meeting.

Year 2: (FY 2021-2022): Implementing, Evaluating, & Developing New and Expanded Programs

Work Plans for Year 2 will be developed and implemented by staff and board committees. Work plans will be shared with the Board at the June 2021 Board Meeting and outcomes evaluated by the board at the June 2022 Board Meeting.

Year 3: (FY 2022-2023): Achieving a New Level of Service Delivery, Core Competencies, and Organizational Sustainability

Work Plans for Year 3 will be developed and implemented by staff and board committees. Work plans will be shared with the Board at the June 2022 Board Meeting and outcomes evaluated by the board at the June 2023 Board Meeting.