

Community Action Voice

- C* hallenging individuals
- A* chieving positive results
- P* romoting personal growth
- S* triving for excellence
- B* uilding assets
- C* reating opportunities

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The Weatherization Training Center Open House

By Rita Acueto-Colton, EEES Program Coordinator II

In late 2001 the CAPSBC CEO and staff began discussing and brainstorming the feasibility of creating a Weatherization training center. The idea supported CAPSBC's mission of self-sufficiency, in that it would provide valuable training that could lead to employment. In addition, it would be self-supporting by generating revenue. By 2003 CAPSBC had developed a basic curriculum that began with refresher training of the Weatherization and Appliance crews of the Energy, Education, and Environmental Services (EEES) Program. EEES staff had more than 100 combined years of experience in the Weatherization field, and CAPSBC knew it had the ability, experience and expertise to take this training dream further.

In 2006 The State of California Department of Community Services and Development (SDCSD) provided a discretionary grant for the construction of the training center and further development of the curriculum. Construction of the facility, which was handled by CAPSBC in-house staff, and development of the curriculum began in late 2007. CAPSBC's Weatherization Training Center is now fully operational and the first training session in Basic Weatherization was conducted the week of August 4 through 8, 2008, with ten students from three agencies. Several training sessions have been held since that time. CAPSBC utilizes its own employees as Instructors for the classes, allowing for employees to enhance their skills, and also for

more flexibility in scheduling classes. Up to date, 162 students have completed the weatherization training program.

On Thursday, January 22, 2009, area officials, community members and members from other Community Action Agencies attended the grand opening of the first Weatherization Training Center in Southern California. Guest speakers at the Open House included Mayor Patrick J. Morris of The City of San Bernardino and Lloyd Throne, Director, State of California Department of Community Services and Development.

The CAPSBC Weatherization Training Center is a 2,400 square-foot facility and the only one in Southern California. The only other weatherization training center in California is located in Stockton. CAPSBC's training center is designed to provide a first-class weatherization training program which includes: Basic Weatherization, Minor Home Repair, Appliance Diagnostics and Repair, Blower Door/Duct Blaster, Combustion Appliance Safety Testing.

To register for a class, go to www.capsbc.org/eeeswxtraining.html or contact Janette Hazelton at 909/723-1627 for more information.



Staff and guests gather for the ribbon cutting

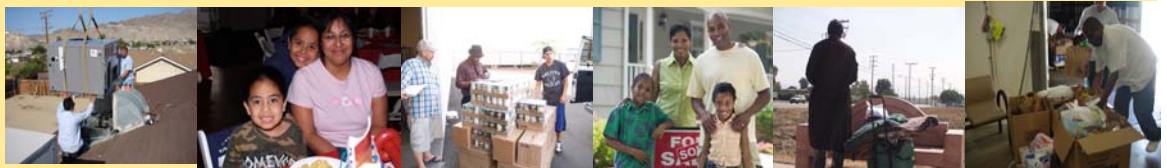


CEO Patricia L. Nickols and special guest Lloyd Throne



Open house attendees tour the Weatherization Training Center

"Working in partnership with the San Bernardino County communities to support low-income residents in achieving self-sufficiency"



Message from the Board Chairman



On February 19, 2009, barely a month into his term in office, President Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (“ARRA”) of 2009, a \$787 billion stimulus package designed to jumpstart a the nation’s weakening economy.

For Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County (“CAPSBC”) and the other 1,100 community action agencies across the country, this means a significant increase in funding for a defined period of time to achieve very specific goals. Areas of funding directly impacting CAPSBC pro-

grams include Weatherization, Emergency Food Assistance, Emergency Food and Shelter, Home Energy Assistance and the Child Tax Credit.

ARRA requires unprecedented levels of transparency, oversight and accountability, and also encourages collaborations and partnerships to the greatest extent possible. CAPSBC commits to work with public and private partners to improve the lives of the citizens of San Bernardino County.

Al Twine

Chairman of the Board of Directors

Message from the CEO



The nation is experiencing unprecedented economic upheaval, and San Bernardino County is no exception, having been seriously impacted by the downturn across virtually every industry segment.

Economic activity is down, and many companies with local operations have closed. Unemployment reached 11.9% by the end of February, and nearly 16,000 jobs have been lost countywide since the beginning of 2009. Home values declined 43% from March 2008 to March 2009, and over 13,000 homeowners received a Notice of Default, the first step leading to foreclosure.

However, it is during times like these that CAPSBC has the opportunity to shine. The Federal

Stimulus Package American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) provides a number of opportunities for CAPSBC and public and private partners to implement programs that provide real relief and have a positive impact for citizens who are suffering. The critical measurements will be how many jobs we help create or save, and how well we collaborate with our partners to maximize the value of the Stimulus funds.

As the leader in establishing innovative programs, challenging individuals to achieve positive results and promoting personal growth, CAPSBC is poised to successfully achieve the outcomes mandated by ARRA through solid partnerships, great ideas, skillful execution, transparency and accountability.

Patricia L. Nickols

Chief Executive Officer

CAPSBC Board Member Receives Jefferson Award

By Rowena E. Concepcion, Manager of Administrative Support



Long time Community Action Board member Dorothy Grant received the Jefferson Award for Public Service and was selected to come to Washington D.C. to represent the Inland Empire.



pire.

The Jefferson Awards for Public Service is a nationally recognized program founded in 1972 by

Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, U.S. Senator Robert Taft, Jr. and Sam Beard to establish a “Nobel Prize” for public and community service. Nationally, this award is sponsored by the American Institute of Public Service in Washington, D.C. and locally, Premier

Savings Bank teamed up with NewsTalk 590 KTIE Radio to promote this award in the Inland Empire.

In May 2008, CAPSBC nominated Dorothy Grant to the Jefferson Award. Every month, the radio station selects one winner and Ms. Grant was selected winner for the month of June. Among all the 12 winners, one was recommended to go to Washington D.C. and that was our very own Dorothy Grant!

Dorothy Grant is nominated for a Jefferson Award because the name Dorothy Grant is synonymous with helping – helping the elderly, helping young families, helping children, helping the needy and the disadvantaged. For over 25 years, Dorothy Grant has been a volunteer member of the Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County (CAPSBC) tripartite Board of Directors representing the poor. Dorothy Grant is a living legacy and an epitome of what volunteerism is.

Dorothy is a recipient of various awards and accolades for her commitment to community service: Black Rose Award presented by the San Bernardino Black Culture Foundation, Community Service Award from the North Fontana Community Committee, the San Bernardino County Education Medal of Honor, the 2005 Jayne Thomas Grassroots Volunteer Recognition Award for her extraordinary contributions to a Community Action Agency, 2007 Bank of America Neighborhood Local Heroes Award and the Woman of the Year Award. In May 2005, the City of Fontana recognized Dorothy Grant for her years of social-welfare advocacy and named a school after her, the Dorothy Grant Elementary School in North Fontana.

“God has been good to me; I keep on giving because God keeps giving. It is my passion,” said Dorothy Grant.

CAPSBC Board of Directors

OFFICERS	LOW-INCOME SECTOR
Al Twine Board Chairman, Representative of Poor, District 5	Vacant Representative of Poor, District 1
Nancy Ruth White Vice Chair, Representative of Poor, District 3	Dorothy Grant Representative of Poor, District 2
Jim Bookhout Secretary, Private Representative, Citizens Business Bank	Wytske Visser Representative of Poor, District 4
PUBLIC SECTOR	PRIVATE SECTOR
Juan Lopez Public Representative, Assembly member District 62	Michael Gallo Private Representative, Kelly Space & Technology
Eladio “Eddie” Garcia Public Representative, Democratic Central Committee	Edna Davis-Herring Private Representative, Rialto Unified School District
Josie Gonzales Public Representative, Board of Supervisors 5th District	Jim Bookhout Private Representative, Citizens Business Bank
William Ruh Public Representative, Councilmember City of Montclair	Pastor Joshua Beckley Private Representative, Ecclesia Christian Fellowship
Vacant Public Representative	Vacant Private Representative

Federal Stimulus Plan Provides Needed Funding to San Bernardino County

By Gerald Brown, Development Director



The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (“ARRA”) is an unprecedented effort to jump-start the national economy, create or save millions of jobs, and put a down payment on addressing long-neglected challenges so our country can thrive in the 21st century. Also known as the Federal Stimulus Plan, ARRA is an extraordinary response to a crisis unlike any since the Great Depression. It aims to achieve the following goals:

- Create or save more than 3.5 million jobs over the next two years;
- Take a big step toward computerizing Americans’ health records, reducing medical errors, and saving billions in health care costs;
- Revive the renewable energy industry and provide the capital over the next three years to eventually double domestic renewable energy capacity;
- Undertake the largest weatherization program in history by modernizing 75 percent of federal building space and more than one million homes;
- Increase college affordability for seven million students by funding the shortfall in Pell Grants, increasing the maximum award level by \$500, and providing a new higher education tax cut to nearly four million students;
- As part of the \$150 billion investment in new infrastructure, enact the largest increase in funding of our nation’s roads, bridges, and mass transit systems since the creation of the national highway system in the 1950s;
- Provide an \$800 Making Work Pay tax credit for 129 million working households, and cut taxes for the families of millions of children through an ex-

pansion of the Child Tax Credit;

- Require unprecedented levels of transparency, oversight, and accountability.

San Bernardino County has been seriously impacted by the downturn in the national economy across every industry segment. Economic activity is down. The Institute of Applied Research and Policy Analysis at Cal State San Bernardino reported in March 2009 that local purchasing managers are cautious about the current business climate, but still expect weakness in the coming months. One bright spot is the opportunity to do business with various branches of the government.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, unemployment in San Bernardino County reached 11.9% in of February 2009. Since the beginning of the year, nearly 16,000 jobs have been lost. The impact of lost jobs is an increase in home foreclosures, a decline in major purchases such as homes and autos, and a decline in retail purchases as consumers try to conserve the funds they have.

The real estate market continues to experience a dramatic drop in home values. According to Dataquik Information Services, home values in the region have declined 43% year-over-year from March 2008 to March 2009. The one bright spot in the data is that the number of homes sold in March 2009 jumped 88%, which is attributable to the precipitous median price decline, presently \$150,000. However, over 13,000 homes countywide received a Notice of Default, the first step in the foreclosure process, during the first quarter of 2009, a 19% increase over 2008.

Can the Federal Stimulus Plan make a difference? The statewide allocation of Stimulus Funding is shown on the next page. Final allocations for San Bernardino County are still being determined, however, help is on the way.

Federal Stimulus Plan Continued....

• Community Services Block Grant	\$89.2 million increase
• Weatherization Assistance Program	\$192.2 million increase
• Emergency Food and Shelter Program	\$13.2 million increase
• The Emergency Food Assistance Program	\$11.8 million increase
• Training and Employment Services	
Dislocated workers	\$225.0 million increase
Youth services	\$188.5 million increase
Adult activities	\$80.9 million increase
• Child Tax Credit	\$1.8 billion increase
• Earned Income Tax Credit	\$620 million increase
• Making Work Pay Credit	\$13.1 billion increase
• Lead Hazard Reduction/Healthy Homes	\$17.6 million increase
• State Energy Program	\$203.1 million increase

ASSEMBLY MEMBER WILMER AMINA CARTER OPEN HOUSE

By Renee Wilson, Family Development Program Coordinator II



On March 19, 2009, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County participated in an Open House for Assembly Member Wilmer Amina Carter of the 62nd District. The district office is located at 335 N. Riverside Ave. in Rialto, CA.

The event was open to citi-

zens of the community who were invited to discuss their legislative ideas, questions and concerns. Community Action Partnership was joined by Arrowhead United Way, ACORN, the US Census Bureau, and United Way 2-1-1. All of the organizations provided valuable information to the public.

Two particular stories were shared during the event that confirmed the economic situation in San Bernardino County. One was a teacher laid off from the Fontana school district and a second was a woman with a Masters degree who was finding it very difficult to find work. She stated that when she attends job fairs, thousands are showing up.

A second session of the open house was scheduled to take place later

in the day from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Juan Lopez, District Director expressed appreciation to CAPSBC's Chief Executive Officer, Patricia L. Nickols for the agency's participation.



CAPSBC staff member Renee Wilson and Assembly Member Wilmer Amina Carter

Green Your Home

By Rita Acueto-Colton, EEES Program Coordinator II



Weatherization services provide cost-effective, energy efficient measures for existing single and multi-family housing units where trained Outreach Specialists go throughout the county

to identify eligible households for services.

Crews are dispatched to these homes and conduct an energy audit of the dwelling. They insure that appropriate measures were recommended, which might include attic insulation, weather stripping and caulking, water heater blankets and carbon monoxide detectors. Some minor home repairs may be made such as replacing broken glass, doors or an entire window assembly, when feasible. Certain specific programs approve appliance repair/replacement such as water heaters, cooling and heating appliances, etc.

Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, CAPSBC will receive \$9 Million in Stimulus dollars for home weatherization:

- \$3 Million will be allocated for training, vehicle purchases, materials and administration costs.
- \$6 Million will be designated for home weatherization. It is estimated that we will be able to weatherize 1,195 homes, expending about \$5,000 per unit. This extended dollar amount spent on these homes will permit installation of mechanical devices to add combustion venting air to many homes that currently lack the proper amount required to install many energy saving appliances and measures. We have been limited in what we could do in these types of homes in previous years due to the dollar amount cap in the Contract. Com-

bustion venting is so important because every home must have enough air coming in to allow the home and appliances to breathe. Each home requires a certain amount of air, depending on the size of the home, size and amount of gas appliances in the home requiring air. When we install energy saving weatherization measures in a home, it reduces the amount of air coming in the home and if the home is not large enough to accommodate the new measures and appliances, we can now install these mechanical devices to induce the air rather than walking away and only doing a small portion of the work required to make the home energy efficient and safe

The program's main objectives are to help conserve energy by:

- Reducing the consumption of our natural resources
- Making homes more comfortable, healthful and lower the cost of utility bills.
- Provide energy education and utility assistance
- The health and safety of qualified clients

To find out if you are eligible for these FREE services, contact us at (909) 723-1688 or visit us at www.capsbc.org/eeswx.html.



THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!

By Herman Peña, Food Bank Program Manager II

San Bernardino County is a giant with 20,164 square miles. Providing any kind of service to this huge county is a real challenge and even if we had quadruple the number of staff, we would not be able to provide the countywide food assistance that we provide without our loyal volunteers.

We can do it because there are caring people that come from all economic, educational and cultural backgrounds who donate their time and energy to help others.

They are our loyal and dedicated Food Bank Volunteers and the heart of our food distribution network. They make it possible for us to distribute millions of pounds of food each year to needy families and individuals.

These 1,600 plus volunteers do a lot of work! They transport food to far away places, load and unload trucks, screen applicants for eligibility, pack food bags, deliver food to dis-

abled homebound seniors, and clean up the distribution sites before they leave, after the distributions are over.

From October, 2008 to March, 2009 our volunteers donated a total of 44,833 hours with an estimated value of \$912,805 dollars.

Thank you friends, for helping to bring health, hope and happiness to our county population!



Volunteers and staff receive a donation of 100 Turkeys from Stater Bros. Markets and Cargill Meat Solutions. Volunteers make it possible to serve an additional 12,000 families during holidays.

PASSPORT PROGRAM – EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS STORY

By Renee Wilson, Family Development Program Coordinator II



In July 2008, Ms. Johnson entered the Passport Program, a case management component of CAPSBC's Family Development Program. Ms. Johnson is a single parent with three young dependents ages one to four years old. When she entered the program she was unemployed and only receiving TANF. Her main goal was to find employment and eventually become registered as a Pharmacy Technician. Ms. Johnson stated that in 2005 she completed

courses at Four D College as a Pharmacy Technician, but then decided to put her career on hold and stay home to take care of her children. The eldest of Ms. Johnson's children started kindergarten and the other two children were placed in childcare in order for her to seek employment. Ms. Johnson said that she had to seek employment 20 hours per week as a requirement to participate in Cal-Works.

Through Passport, Ms. Johnson was provided with monthly bus passes in order for her to seek employment. In the month of December 2008 the entire Johnson family participated in the annual Children's Christmas event that provided them with lunch, entertainment, and gifts for everyone in the household. In order for Ms. Johnson to register as a Pharmacy Techni-

cian, her fingerprints/Livescan had to be processed. Community Action Partnership, through Passport, provided the fees for Ms. Johnson to complete her fingerprinting/Livescan. While at Livescan Super Print, the owner asked Ms. Johnson if she was working. She stated she was not currently employed, but that she was seeking employment. The owner stated that he needed someone to work in the afternoons and asked if she was interested. Ms. Johnson promptly said yes and, after an interview, was hired for the part-time position with Livescan Super Print. The Passport program assisted Ms. Johnson with a gift card to purchase clothing for her new job. Ms. Johnson said she is planning to save for a vehicle so that when her fingerprinting/Livescan clearance comes through, she will be able to seek employment at various medical offices or hospitals and provide a better life for herself and her children.

EMERGENCY FOOD AND SHELTER PROGRAM OVERVIEW

By Renee Wilson, Family Development Program Coordinator II

The Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP) has distributed \$2.95 billion to over 12,000 human service agencies in more than 2,500 communities across the country. The Local Board awarded the San Bernardino County jurisdiction \$1,605,419, which was a 60% increase over phase 26. EFSP funding is appropriated annually and the program can receive level funding, be increased or decreased each year. The jurisdiction's award is directly related to the average number of unemployed individuals for the time period October 2007 through September 2008. The funding is awarded to 35 agencies throughout San Bernardino County. The Local board reflects the national board and includes representatives from American Red Cross, Salvation Army, Council of Churches, FEMA, Catholic Charities, Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County (CAPSBC), United Jewish Communities, and United Way.

CAPSBC was awarded \$125,862 for the period of November 1, 2008 through October 31, 2009. The service categories for EFSP are food, motel/shelter assistance, rent/mortgage assistance, and utility assistance. Services will be available for residents in Central County consisting of (Big Bear, Bloomington, Blue Jay, Colton, Crestline, Devore, Grand Terrace, Highland, Lake Arrowhead, Mountain Communities, Rialto,

and San Bernardino). Due to the increase in the EFSP allocation this year, CAPSBC received additional funding specifically for the Northern and Southern desert in addition to serving the Central County area.

On March 17, 2009, a Phase 27 Documentation Orientation was held at Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County and presented by Wystke Visser, Executive Director of Inland Valley Hope Partners. The Local Board required that all newly funded agencies (those agencies that did not receive funding under Phase 26) attend a mandatory orientation to review the guidelines of the Emergency Food and Shelter Program Funds, including eligible/ineligible expenses and documentation requirements. Returning agencies were strongly encouraged to send staff new to EFSP administration to attend one of the workshops. A second orientation was held on Monday, March 23, 2009 at the Department of Behavioral Health in Rialto, CA. The Emergency Food and Shelter Program funds are for non-disaster related activities that are supplemental to programs already in existence.



Volunteer Income Tax Assistance

By Carolyn Debevec, Family Development Program Manager II

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program offers free tax help to low- to moderate-income (generally, \$45,000 and below) people who cannot prepare their own tax returns or pay for the service. Certified volunteers receive training to help prepare basic tax returns and help low-income people access tax credits to which they may be entitled, such as the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). VITA sites are generally located in neighborhood centers, libraries, schools, shopping malls, and other convenient locations. Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County (CAPSBC) has operated VITA projects as a service to low-income taxpayers since 2006.



CAPSBC's (VITA) program for 2009 showed exceptional success. CAPSBC partnered with AARP (American Association of Retired Persons) this year to refer clients and share resources. All of the final numbers are not in yet, but together CAPSBC and AARP completed well over 3,500 tax returns for a total of approximately \$4 million in federal refunds, of which more than \$1 million was EITC. This partnership is a very high-impact project for the low-income population of San Bernardino County.

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is an

important anti-poverty and work incentive program that is run by the federal government. The EITC is targeted to individuals and especially families who earn low to moderate wages. If a worker qualifies, the EITC will lower or eliminate any taxes owed. If a worker is not obligated to pay any taxes or if the credit is larger than any taxes owed, the worker will receive a cash payment ("refund") from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) after filing a tax return. In such instances, the government is providing low-income workers additional money beyond what they get paid at their jobs to encourage work and to reduce poverty. Millions of dollars are left on the table each year because low-income people are not aware of EITC.

It is important to note that through the VITA sites, not only is CAPSBC helping low-income clients access tax credits; it is also saving them an average of \$200 if they were to have their tax returns prepared by paid tax preparers. Given the state of the economy, it is important to save money wherever possible.

Another important fact to note this year is that several participants have taken a portion of their EITC refund and deposited it in their Individual Development Accounts (IDA). IDAs are matched savings accounts that enable low-income families to save, build assets, and enter the financial mainstream. IDAs reward the monthly savings of working-poor families who are building towards purchasing an asset - buying their first home, paying for post-secondary education, or starting a small business. IDAs make it possible for low-income families to build the financial assets they need to achieve the American Dream. Families that acquire appreciating assets are more economically secure, have more options in life, and can pass on status and opportunities to future generations.

CAPSBC ENGAGES COMMUNITY TO OBTAIN INPUT ON NEEDS OF LOW-INCOME

By Sandra Brown, Planning and Program Development Specialist

As CAPSBC's 2009 program year gets underway "Helping People and Changing Lives", staff geared up to take its programs on the road! A series of five Community Needs Forums (CNF's) were conducted throughout San Bernardino County. The five Supervisorial Districts were inclusive of the High Desert, the Central Valley, The West End, and the East Valley. The first forum occurred on April 29, 2009 (at the San Bernardino Employment Resource Center); the second on May 4, 2009 (at the Rancho Cucamonga Employment Resource Center); the third on May 6, 2009 (at Redlands' Building a Generation Program at Franklin Elementary School); the fourth on May 7, 2009 (at the Victorville Preschool Services Department); and the last one on May 13, 2009 (at the Ontario Salvation Army).

The purpose of the community hearings, which are required by the State Department of Community Services and Development (CSD) every two years, is to obtain input on the conditions and causes of poverty, document the needs of the low-income and identify programs to address needs. The economic crisis is seriously impacting the lives of the low-income, making it difficult for families to make ends meet. CAPSBC has seen an increase in the number of clients seeking emergency rental assistance come through its doors, in addition to an increase in other basic living needs.

This year CAPSBC took a new approach of con-

ducting public hearings by linking clients with CAPSBC's programs (the Energy, Education, and Environmental Services (EEES) Program, the Food Bank and the Family Development Program (FDP), on-site at the forum enabling them to pre-qualify for services and obtain information. This approach proved beneficial, giving clients contact with outreach staff who perform the day-to-day intake process. CAPSBC also incorporated the assistance of some of its community partners such as the Center for Employment and Training (CET), the Redlands Family Services, Angel Food Ministries, the Blessing Center, Molina Health Care of California and several others. The general feedback of participants was that the forums provided an excellent medium to hear from clients and link them to services. All agencies were appreciative of CAPSBC's staff and the Community Action Board (CAB) members who responded to their concerns.

In conclusion, CAPSBC has received over 3,100 completed Needs Assessment Surveys from the five Community Needs Forums and other low-income participants. The survey information will be analyzed and the results included in the Agency's Community Action Plan. CAPSBC has seen a dramatic shift in the movement of individuals who were once a part of the working class that have lost their jobs and homes and now in need of services from CAPSBC.



**CAPSBC PROGRAMS
AND SERVICES:**

- ◆ ADMINISTRATION
(909) 723-1510
- ◆ FAMILY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
(909) 723-1560
- ◆ CAPSBC FOOD BANK
(909) 723-1580
- ◆ EEES
(909) 723-1620
- ◆ INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNTS (IDA)
(909) 723-1570
- ◆ HMIS
(909) 723-1522

Upcoming Events

- ⇒ CAPSBC's Annual Gala will be held on September 10, 2009 at CAL STATE.
- ⇒ The Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties Joint Board Retreat will be held at the Holliday Inn Hotel in Beaumont on June 19-20, 2009.
- ⇒ CAPSBC will operate a Cooling Center from June 1, 2009 through October 15, 2009 at its offices at 696 S. Tippecanoe Avenue in San Bernardino. The Cooling Center will be open Monday-Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

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Improves communities, and makes America a better place to live.*