

CCYSB CONNECT BUILDING STRONGER FAMILIES TOGETHER



Leadership Notes: Guiding the Way Forward

As we reflect on the past year, we are inspired by the remarkable growth we've seen within our communities through the dedication of our staff, partners, and supporters. At CCYSB, we continue to strengthen our services and collaborate with local organizations to address the needs of underserved youth and families in West and East Contra Costa County.

Together, we are making strides to empower families, provide mental health support, and create sustainable change that improves lives. The challenges we face are significant, but through unity and continued commitment to our mission, we are guiding the way forward toward brighter futures for all those we serve.

Thank you for being part of this important journey.

-Marena Brown, Executive Director



Wellness Watch: 5 Tips for Healthy Mental Health Habits

Taking care of your mental health is key to overall well-being.

Here are five quick tips to help you stay balanced:

1. Practice Mindfulness – Take a few moments each day to breathe, meditate, or journal to reduce stress.
2. Stay Active – Exercise, even a 30-minute walk, can boost your mood and energy.
3. Get Quality Sleep – Aim for 7–9 hours nightly to recharge your mind and body.
4. Connect with Others – Build strong relationships by reaching out to friends, family, or support groups.
5. Set Small Goals – Break tasks into steps and celebrate even small achievements to stay motivated.

Small habits can make a big difference. Prioritize your mental health—you deserve it!

Need support? Contact CCYSB for resources and assistance.

CCYSB CORE PROGRAMS

WRAPAROUND

At Contra Costa Youth Service Bureau (CCYSB), our Wraparound program is a nationally recognized best practice model designed to support underserved youth ages 6-21 and their families. With offices in Richmond and Antioch, we proudly serve West and East Contra Costa County communities.

In 2024, CCYSB provided Wraparound services to over 242 clients and families, offering tailored, community-based mental health support to stabilize families.

The Wraparound model is family-driven, strength-based, and culturally responsive, working to connect families with critical resources that strengthen bonds, improve mental health, and reduce the need for out-of-home placements.

Our dedicated staff form collaborative family-based teams, empowering families to achieve their goals while building lasting support networks. At CCYSB, we remain committed to fostering resilience, healing, and hope for the communities we serve.



KINSHIP CARE

CCYSB's Kinship Program offers vital support to relative caregivers who are stepping up to care for children outside their parental homes.

Through support groups, educational classes, and access to essential resources, we help caregivers navigate the unique challenges they face.

In 2024, our Kinship Program served 85 families with 163 children, highlighting the ongoing need for programs like these to strengthen families and ensure children thrive in stable, loving environments.

KINSHIP SUPPORT GROUP INFORMATION

Groups offered in English: 2nd & 4th Monday of each month

Groups offered in Spanish: 3rd Wednesday of each month

For more information contact CCYSB!

DR PATH II & AFTERCARE

CCYSB's Differential Response (DR) Path II and Aftercare program is dedicated to helping families address challenges and build stability to keep their children safely in their homes while avoiding additional reports to Child and Family Services (CFS).

Our compassionate staff work closely with families to provide resources, guidance, and support tailored to their unique needs.

In 2024, CCYSB's DR Path II program proudly provided services to 75 families with 159 children, reinforcing our commitment to strengthening families and fostering brighter futures.



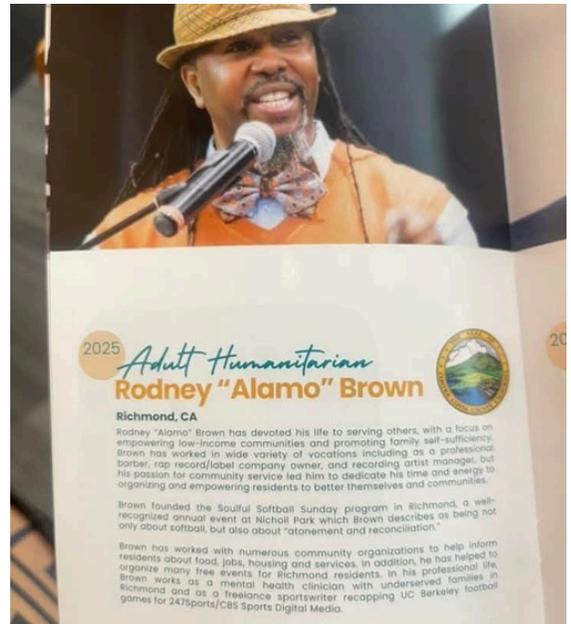
MEET THE CHANGE MAKERS: STAFF & COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

CCYSB proudly celebrates Rodney Brown, recipient of the **2025 Contra Costa County Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Humanitarian of the Year Award**, honored on January 21, 2025.

Rodney has dedicated his life to serving the community, tirelessly advocating for family self-sufficiency and unity. As the founder of Soulful Softball Sunday, a Richmond event focused on atonement and reconciliation, he has created 95 free community events over the last nine years.

Rodney's impact extends beyond events. He played a pivotal role in organizing nine churches to provide 2.5 million meals to WCCUSD children during the pandemic and works with numerous organizations to connect families with resources for food, housing, and jobs.

As a Care Coordinator, Rodney continues to support underserved youth and families, exemplifying CCYSB's mission to uplift the community.



Rodney Brown, CCYSB Care Coordinator

Congratulations, Rodney, on this well-deserved recognition!



Executive Director, Marena Brown, pictured with CCYSB Board Member, Jamie Gaines

JAMIE GAINES, CCYSB BOARD MEMBER, HONORED FOR OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY IMPACT

CCYSB Board Member Jamie Gaines was recently awarded the CCAR President's Community Service Award for his exceptional dedication to the community. Jamie presented a generous \$2,000 donation from CCAR - Helping Hands to support CCYSB programs and services.

In recognition of his efforts, Jamie received a plaque and multiple congressional awards for his impactful contributions to CCYSB and the families we serve.

Thank you, Jamie, for your leadership and commitment to making a difference in Contra Costa County!

A COMMUNITY UNITING TOGETHER FOR OUR CHILDREN



CCYSB Staff & Volunteers – Sharing Christmas with Stege Students Holiday Event

Supporting Stege Elementary School Students

In a true demonstration of community solidarity, CCYSB recently collaborated with local organizations to host a special holiday event for Stege Elementary School students in Richmond. We were grateful to have Supervisor John Gioia, CCYSB Board Member, Cheryl Cotton, Stege School Alumni, Lakeshia Keith, and newly elected WCCUSD School Board member, Guadalupa Enllana, join us for this meaningful event.

The holiday event “Sharing Christmas with Stege School Students,” was particularly significant as the students from Stege have been displaced due to the poor conditions of their school building, which had become unsafe for both students and staff. Stege Elementary, which serves a diverse and under-resourced neighborhood, has long faced challenges, and the closure left many families without a stable educational environment.

CCYSB’s dedicated staff, including Marena Brown, Ebony Blake, and Rodney Brown, along with Board and community members Tamara Shiloh and Michele Jackson, played an essential role in advocating for these students. Their efforts, along with countless voices from the community, culminated in a significant victory when the West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) board voted to rebuild Stege Elementary during their school board meeting later that evening on December 18th, 2024. This decision marks a new chapter for the school, and the commitment to invest in our children and the future of the community is a powerful reminder of the importance of coming together.

The holiday event itself, was not only an opportunity to provide some relief and joy for the displaced children but also a reaffirmation of the community’s resilience. It highlighted the importance of supporting the most vulnerable among us—our children—and ensuring that they have access to safe, nurturing, and effective educational spaces.

We are proud of our collaboration and look forward to continued efforts in supporting families in Richmond and beyond. Let us all continue to stand together to strengthen our communities.

GROWING TOGETHER: NEW FACES & FRESH BEGINNINGS AT CCYSB

Welcome & Congratulations!

CCYSB is excited to welcome Janet Cooks as a new Kinship Family Mentor! Janet retired from UC Berkeley in 2017, where she worked in the Space Science Lab's contract and grant office. A lifelong Richmond resident, Janet is no stranger to CCYSB, having volunteered with us in the past. She brings a wealth of experience, including elder care, and is a proud mother and grandmother. In her free time, Janet enjoys crocheting, walking, and line dancing. We are thrilled to have her on the team, supporting and empowering families in our community!

Congratulations to Sara Garcia on her well-earned promotion from Family Partner to Care Coordinator in our Wraparound Program! Since joining CCYSB in June 2022, Sara has brought a strong background in special education and behavioral support, quickly establishing herself as a dedicated advocate for the families we serve. Known for going above and beyond, she approaches her work with professionalism, compassion, and a commitment to excellence. Sara's willingness to take on additional tasks and her thoughtfulness make her a valued member of our team. We are excited to see her continue to grow in this new role!

Please join us in congratulating both Janet and Sara on these important milestones!

Join the CCYSB Team

CCYSB is excited to announce that we are currently hiring for three key positions:

- Licensed or Pre-Licensed Therapist: Provide therapeutic services to youth and families, supporting their mental health and wellness.
- Care Coordinator: Deliver individualized, strength-based, and trauma-informed care coordination under the Wraparound practice model.
- Family Advocate: Work directly with families to offer guidance, advocacy, and connection to resources, fostering self-sufficiency and empowerment.



If you or someone you know is passionate about making a difference in the lives of underserved youth and families, we'd love to hear from you!

For more information on these opportunities and how to apply, please visit our website or submit your resume to careers@wccysb.org.

Thank You to Our Youth Champions!

We want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to our incredible volunteers, lovingly known as our "Youth Champions," for their unwavering support and dedication. Your efforts make a lasting impact on the youth and families we serve.

Want to get involved, support, or donate? Visit www.wccysb.org to learn how you can join us in making a difference!

