LBCEI LONG BEACH CENTER FOR ECONOMIC INCLUSION

2022

In Review : A Summary

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City of Long Beach Economic Development

LISC Los Angeles

Long Beach Community Action Partnership

UNDERSTANDING ECONOMIC INCLUSION

Economic inclusion means ensuring that everyone in our community has access to economic opportunities, and for those who have been underrepresented and underserved we must do all possible and strive for racial and economic equity and to open doors of opportunity.

Economic Inclusion is:

- Having a good quality of life
- Good health and access to safe and supportive healthcare
- Access to proper education
- Good work and equitable compensation for that work
- Opportunities to create wealth and start and grow businesses
- The means to save for challenges and for our aspirations
- A way to invest in and sustain our family, friends and community

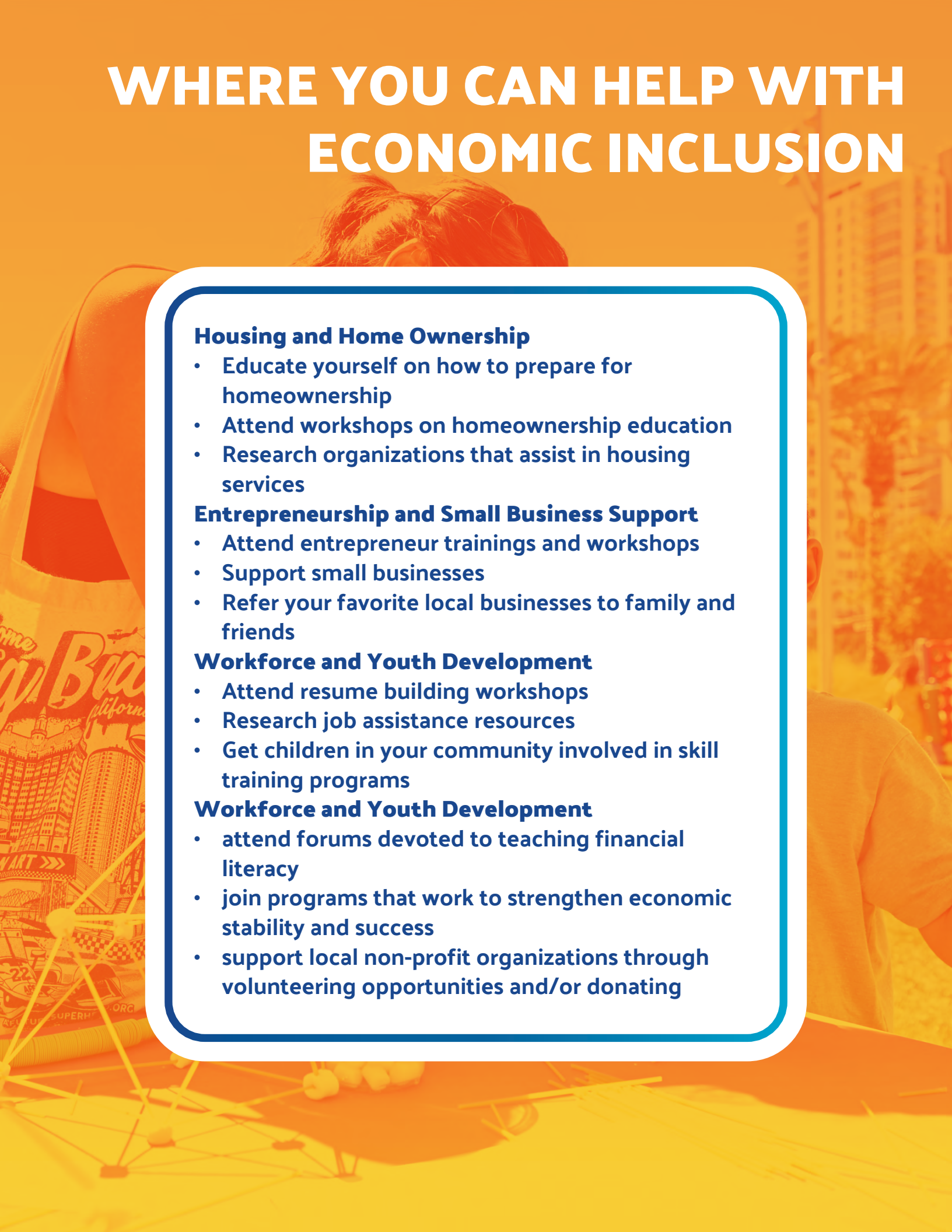
WHY IS ECONOMIC INCLUSION IMPORTANT?

For decades, low-income people of color have been excluded from employment, housing, banking and loan services, business and investment opportunities and education. These systems have generationally denied people of color a way to move out of poverty and climb the socio-economic ladder. Economic inclusion is key in ensuring that people are given a chance to succeed and thrive economically. Economic inclusion seeks to bring low income communities of color into economic systems as stakeholders whether as a new homeowner, an employee making a living wage, a youth getting a summer job and educational opportunities to thrive or a grant or low interest loan to help a young entrepreneur start a business.

WHERE LBCEI COMES IN WITH ECONOMIC INCLUSION?

We strive to create a seat at the table for individuals within communities that need uplifting and financial strength when economic decisions are being made. It's important that these communities know they have an advocate at the policy table on their behalf creating new opportunities and promoting their success. Our focus areas include Housing and Homeownership, Entrepreneurship and Small Business Support, Workforce and Youth Development, and Economic Resiliency (Connectedness). Through these focus areas, our mission is to expand inclusive economic opportunities for all communities in Long Beach.

WHERE YOU CAN HELP WITH ECONOMIC INCLUSION



Housing and Home Ownership

- Educate yourself on how to prepare for homeownership
- Attend workshops on homeownership education
- Research organizations that assist in housing services

Entrepreneurship and Small Business Support

- Attend entrepreneur trainings and workshops
- Support small businesses
- Refer your favorite local businesses to family and friends

Workforce and Youth Development

- Attend resume building workshops
- Research job assistance resources
- Get children in your community involved in skill training programs

Workforce and Youth Development

- attend forums devoted to teaching financial literacy
- join programs that work to strengthen economic stability and success
- support local non-profit organizations through volunteering opportunities and/or donating

THIRD YEAR : OVERVIEW

In our third year, LBCEI continued to address the ongoing economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic through food and basic needs resourcing, workforce and youth development, digital inclusion, financial literacy training, homebuying courses, and small business & entrepreneurship support.

SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT
Digital Support

Through a partnership with LBCEI, Project Business Lift worked with restaurant owners to create and implement a digital marketing campaign to help them maintain steady business through the COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of this endeavor was twofold: To drive up online visibility and sales during the lockdown days of the pandemic, and to close the digital divide experiences by many of these businesses.

Project Business Lift devised a simple and effective two-part plan to help businesses grow their online presence and impact. First, Project Business Lift showed how utilizing digital space helps businesses grow. Second, they demonstrated how simple it is for businesses to be online.

COVID-19 has proven the importance of being online by maintaining a website and social media presence. Project Business Lift taught small businesses how to use social media to market online, and they saw a huge impact. Restaurant owners experienced increased traffic on their websites and, most importantly, increased sales. Some attributed their ability to stay open during the pandemic to their expanded online marketing.

After the successes of the training and campaign, many of the businesses continued to pursue grants to support their online growth. Several began allocating a portion of their operating budget to advertising to new customers online.

SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT
Networking & Marketing

In 2022, LBCEI continued to support the North Long Beach Independent Restaurant Owners' Association, a coalition of 14 restaurants in North Long Beach. The association met on a monthly basis with our business navigators to discuss branding, marketing, and share best practices among each of their establishments. Our business navigators helped restaurants create holiday marketing campaigns, apply for grants, and become more visible online through social media, e-blasts, newsletters, and more.

DIGITAL INCLUSION & YOUTH/ WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Digital inclusion has been a priority and focus area for LBCEI. In 2022, we partnered with the City of Long Beach's Technology and Innovation Program and eight additional local nonprofits to support the distribution of digital resources and devices to Long Beach residents and small businesses. Through this digital inclusion program, LBCEI promoted the federal Affordable Connectivity Program, a program offering discounted internet and computing device services to eligible households and small businesses throughout Long Beach. Through our partnership with the City of Long Beach, LBCEI distributed over 180 Chromebooks and hotspots to Long Beach residents, and over 20 Chromebooks and hotspots to Long Beach small businesses and nonprofits.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Last September nearly 30 elementary and middle school students from all over Long Beach attended five classes through Demo Chick's Ace Career Camp. This camp included virtual and in-person components. During the first virtual class, students learned architecture basics and built their own structures using marshmallows, toothpicks, and dry spaghetti.

This is the first time LBCEI partnered in youth education - and we were honored to do so with Demo Chicks. Demo Chicks is a nonprofit organization that focuses on exposing young women and girls to nontraditional career fields in architecture, construction, and engineering (ACE). They do this by providing hands-on activities and training from women working in these professions.
For the ACE Careers Camp, Demo Chicks planned classes specifically so boys and girls in Long Beach could explore careers in architecture, construction, and engineering. The camp includes five sessions in ACE basics.

The ACE Career Camp was fully funded by the Long Beach Mid-Size Grant Program, which was purposed to provide educational summer programs for youth in Long Beach.

ECONOMIC RESILIENCY & CONNECTEDNESS

FINANCIAL LITERACY PROGRAMS

We partnered with F&M bank to provide financial literacy programs through our Food Support Network. We recently completed a 6-week Credit Building Course that was offered to patrons of one of our partner Food Banks in West Long Beach. We also completed a first-time home buyer workshop at a partner church in North Long Beach. Both courses were offered in English and Spanish and gave residents an opportunity to apply for $500 grant to either help them build their credit or take steps towards home ownership.

COVID-19 VACCINE INCENTIVE PROGRAM

We followed our 2021 COVID-19 Vaccine Incentive Program with a COVID-19 Booster Vaccine Education Campaign in 2022. We sent over 2,500 booster vaccine information packets - translated into English, Spanish, Tagalog, and Khmer - and hygiene kits to our 10 pantry partners around Long Beach. Our booster packets not only included culturally and language-appropriate content, but also featured locations in Long Beach where children, adults, and elders could easily access their desired booster vaccines. This campaign, in partnership with Vaccinate All 58, was purposed to build upon the momentum of our 2021 incentive program, encouraging Long Beach residents to seriously consider becoming vaccinated against COVID-19.

SPECIAL EVENTS

All throughout the year, LBCEI hosts and participates in special events for Long Beach families and residents. In August 2022, LBCEI co-hosted two back to school fairs – the first in Martin Luther King, Jr Park in Central Long Beach and the second in Ramona Park in North Long Beach. Each event featured backpack, uniform, school supply, and food giveaways, along with additional health-related resources and activities for families. We also hosted holiday food and gift distributions. We are grateful to our sponsors, donors, partners, and volunteers who continue to make holiday food and gift distributions joyful occasions for our community members.

EXPANSION OF THE FOOD SUPPORT NETWORK

In the pandemic we created a network of 9 food pantry partners that were providing free food to those in need. We have been able to secure contracts for food so these partners don't have to spend funds on obtaining food to distribute. We have been able to grow the number of nonprofits and churches we work with to more than 20 organizations who receive 50,000 lbs. of fresh produce and food. In 15 months, the Food Support Network has served more than 2,000 households a week throughout Long Beach. Meeting residents where they are at with food, we have built trusting relationships that have allowed us to bring other resources to families including digital technology, financial literacy, COVID education, Senior resources and more.

LIST OF FOOD PARTNERS:

- Food Bank of Southern California
- Food Forward
- Food Finders
- Vice Mayor Rex Richardson
- Long Beach Community Table
- Christian Outreach in Action
- AOC7
- LDS Long Beach
- Pools of Hope
- Church One Ministries
- Light and Life Christian Fellowship
- North Long Beach Prayer Center
- Grant A.M.E. Church
- Fountain of Life Covenant Church

ADDITIONAL ORGANIZATIONS WE PROVIDED WITH PRODUCE:

- Open Doors Worldwide Ministry
- Assembly of God Pantry
- Lutheran Social Services
- CSULB Basic Needs Department
- Beacon Pointe Senior Home
- Wrigley NA
- Central Long Beach Neighbors
- CityHeart/Cabrillo
- Creative Beginnings Preschool
- YMCA ECE on 70th St
- Masjeed Al Shareef
- Young Horizons
- New Hope Senior Home
- Casa Youth Shelter
- Temple Baptist
- Cambodia Town Neighbors
- Sunny Central NA

UNITED WAY PROTEIN GRANT

Sourcing protein often proves challenging for our pantry partners. In response, LBCEI received $65,000 in grant funding to purchase frozen protein for our Food Network. Between July and December 2022, LBCEI purchased frozen meat including chicken, beef, pork, and fish to distribute among our pantry network for both regular and holiday distributions. It is an honor and pleasure to support healthy and nutrient-dense offerings among our food pantry network.

HOUSING & HOME OWNERSHIP

In partnership with several community partners and housing organizations, LBCEI hosted three first-time homebuyers workshops throughout 2022. This year, we established our Black Wealth Initiative Program, a collaborative of several Black-led nonprofit leaders throughout Long Beach. The Black Wealth Initiative Cohort leveraged their connections and networks to promote our housing workshops and classes, bringing those interested in purchasing homes to the table. With support from Farmers and Merchants Bank, MUFG Bank, Wells Fargo, and West Angeles CDC, LBCEI hosted full-day classes, during which participants obtained HUD-certification. Over 70 households participated in these courses, creating a trajectory for Long Beach residents to purchase their first homes.

In addition, to culminate our Black Wealth Initiative and Housing & Homeownership project in 2022, LBCEI partnered with Farmers and Merchants Bank and Affordable Housing Clearinghouse to host a housing expo, serving over 70 residents from the greater Long Beach area.