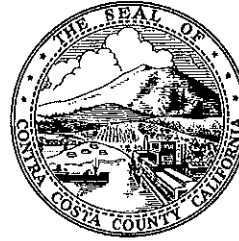


TO: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
FROM: Supervisor Susan A. Bonilla  
DATE: September 11, 2008  
SUBJECT: Educational Support and Job Training for Foster Youth



# Contra Costa County

SPECIFIC REQUEST(S) OR RECOMMENDATION(S) & BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize disbursement of \$150,000 from the Industrial Job Training and Educational Support Fee (Community Development Securities Deposit Trust Fund 894500, Sub-Account 0830) in the amounts of \$50,000 in January 2009, \$50,000 in January 2010, and \$50,000 in January 2011 to the Contra Costa County Independent Living Skills Program for the implementation of the Contra Costa County Foster Youth Employment Services program or Project YES which would provide services for emancipating foster youth in the areas of vocational training and college-oriented programs with the goal of placing emancipating foster youth in employed positions.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no impact to the County General Fund. These monies would be disbursed from a special trust fund established by the payment of fees by ConocoPhillips.

BACKGROUND

When the Board of Supervisors approved the ConocoPhillips Refinery Project in September 2007,

CONTINUED ON ATTACHMENT:  YES      SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

RECOMMENDATION OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR       RECOMMENDATION OF BOARD COMMITTEE   
 APPROVE       OTHER

SIGNATURE(S): \_\_\_\_\_

ACTION OF BOARD ON \_\_\_\_\_  
 APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED       OTHER

VOTE OF SUPERVISORS:  
\_\_\_ UNANIMOUS (ABSENT \_\_\_\_\_)  
AYES: \_\_\_\_\_ NOES: \_\_\_\_\_  
ABSENT: \_\_\_\_\_ ABSTAIN: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact:  
cc:

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS IS A TRUE AND CORRECT COPY OF AN ACTION TAKEN AND ENTERED ON THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ON THE DATE SHOWN.

ATTESTED: (MEETING DATE)

DAVID TWA, CLERK OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AND COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

By: \_\_\_\_\_ Deputy

ConocoPhillips voluntarily agreed to a condition of approval under which they would pay an Industrial Job Training and Educational Support Fee to Contra Costa County in the amount of \$500,000.

The specific terms of the condition of approval is as follows:

“ConocoPhillips agrees to pay an Industrial Job Training and Educational Support Fee to Contra Costa County in the amount of \$100,000 on January 1, 2008, \$200,000 on January 1, 2009, and \$200,000 on January 1, 2010. Payment shall be made at the beginning of each one year period. **The fee shall be deposited for programs and services which support education, career training, and life skills. The fee shall be deposited in a dedicated account to be used, upon approval by the Board of Supervisors, for programs and services which support the educational, career training, and life skills development of Contra Costa County youth and young adults in preparation for careers that support the economic vitality of Contra Costa County** including those in industry and manufacturing. The intent of this condition is to provide an appropriate level of **funding that can be used for programs and services which focus on developing the knowledge, skills, abilities and employment readiness that are necessary in order to enter various job training programs** including those in the industrial and manufacturing sectors.”

The Independent Living Skills Program (ILSP) is designed to prepare young people in foster care and group homes for transition to adulthood. ILSP offers a range of services to foster youth ages 15.5 through 21 years old. These services include daily living skills, money management, career and educational planning, employment preparation and housing assistance. ILSP also arranges and assists with college visits, selection and application of financial aid for those young adults who are moving on to higher education. The programmatic goal with this requested authorization of funds is to enable the young adults to achieve self-sufficiency before leaving the foster care system and to provide support services upon emancipation.

The intent of this board order is to create a program to be named the Contra Costa County Foster Youth Employment Services program or Project YES that would provide entry-level job opportunities and educational opportunities to untrained and economically disadvantaged emancipating foster youth who are transitioning out of the system. These youth often have no safety net, are unemployed or become unemployed, or fall into the hidden homeless population. Studies and regional evidence have also shown that a significant number of these young adults end up in expensive systems of care, such as jail and welfare. Prior to the development of the Emancipated Foster Youth Employment Program, the county had limited job opportunities for qualified emancipated foster youth, and the existing job opportunities were only available within the Social Services Agency. In early 2008, five county departments, Workforce Development Board, General Services, Employment and Human Services, Animal Services, ILSP as well as the office of Supervisor Susan A. Bonilla came together to begin discussions on how to develop a pilot employment program for youth to receive training for temporary, paid assignments. In the summer of 2008, General Services and ILSP identified five students to be interviewed, trained, and hired for either one or two paid positions within the General Services Department. General Services has hired two (2) emancipated foster youth and will begin their training in August 2008. The county wanted to use the momentum to pursue the creation of a broader, long-term employment program for emancipating foster youth.

The vision or future for Project YES would be to serve emancipating foster youth from Contra Costa County upon the completion of their junior year of high school until their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday. Once the County has the capacity to administer a long-term employment program, the program would allow eligible youth the opportunity to be considered for entry-level County jobs. Eligible youth would attend an EFYET

Application Workshop and submit an on-line County application. Applications would be reviewed by Contra Costa County Human Resources. Those meeting the minimum qualifications for entry level County jobs would receive a letter stating that they have been accepted into the applicant pool. Applications are kept on file for one year. During that time, when there is an opening for a position that the youth has indicated they would be interested in, they may receive a letter inviting them to an interview. The youth then has three days to respond to Human Resources to schedule an interview. Youth who are hired will be hired as unclassified employees with full health benefits. After a three month period of successful job performance, they are eligible for recommendation by their supervisor to become a permanent employee. At that time, they are required to take the employment test for their job classification. If they pass the test, they then become a probationary County employee. Once they successfully complete their probationary period, they become a permanent and coded County employee.

In addition, emancipating Foster Youth would have the opportunity to participate in intensive educational support programs including workshops on study skills, time management and career exploration. Identified youth would learn about the various educational opportunities available for them to pursue post secondary education and training. Youth would receive one-on-one support in completing admission and financial aid applications. In addition, emancipated youth will participate in college or vocational school tours to learn about the respective programs.

These funds that are being requested will be used for the expansion of this summer's pilot project to build a sustainable foster youth job training capacity in Contra Costa County which be implemented in the form of Project YES. The expectation would be to leverage these funds with other grants to expand the program to serve as many foster youth as possible.