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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**Contra Costa is One of Three California Counties to Win  
Gateways for Growth Challenge Award**

*Contra Costa County is among 19 Localities to Join a Network Deploying Economic Research and Multi-sector Welcoming Plans for Promoting Inclusion and Economic Opportunity for All*

**MARTINEZ, Calif.** (November 18, 2020) – **Contra Costa County Employment and Human Services Department (EHSD)** and **Contra Costa Health Services (CCHS)** are pleased to announce that New American Economy (NAE) and Welcoming America selected Contra Costa County to receive a [Gateways for Growth \(G4G\)](#) Technical Assistance award as part of the fourth cohort of a nationwide initiative. G4G is a competitive opportunity for localities to receive research support and/or technical assistance to improve immigrant inclusion in their communities. Contra Costa County and this year’s awardees join 71 other recipients since the 2016 launch of the initiative..

In light of the scale and severity of the COVID-19 pandemic, the [Gateways for Growth Challenge](#) this year prioritized localities that demonstrated a public-private commitment to better integrating immigrants into recovery efforts and emergency management systems.

“The Gateways for Growth Award is a timely boost to Contra Costa County’s efforts of welcoming and immigrant inclusion, and we greatly appreciate the opportunity to enhance our work,” said Candace Andersen, Chair of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors.

The immigrant community in Contra Costa is wide and diverse, representing 25 percent of the county’s population. The partners involved in the Gateways for Growth effort will include both new arrivals and longtime residents, and a number of previously unengaged groups. In addition to seeking out language minority and immigrant communities, the County will bring in more small community-based and faith-based organizations to support this work.

As the country looks to rebuild and set a more inclusive path forward nationally, Contra Costa County, as part of the G4G 2020 cohort, will lay the groundwork and build the infrastructure for economic, civic, and social inclusion at the local level.

“We recognize the inequities that persist and are exacerbated by the COVID pandemic in our systems, and we are committed to advancing further inclusion and fairness in everything we do,” explained Erika Jensen, Contra Costa Health Services Department. “As a result, plans to establish a County Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice are underway.” Technical assistance and research provided through the award will support the planning process for the new office.

“Respecting diversity by honoring individual differences is a core value for EHSD that echoes that of Contra Costa as a welcoming county,” said EHSD Director Kathy Gallagher. “Our County has strongly opposed federal rule changes that limited the scope of benefits under the public charge rule and affected immigrants on their path to citizenship. We remain committed to the continuation of the DACA program, and to supporting ongoing inclusion and long-term economic and social integration of newcomers to our community.”

“We are thrilled to see the Gateways for Growth Challenge expand to another set of localities that reflect the diversity of our nation,” said Christina Pope, Senior Network Director at Welcoming America. “With each cohort, there is an opportunity to support and connect local leaders making their communities more welcoming and resilient places where everyone, including immigrants, can prosper and belong.”

As in previous years, G4G awardees will receive a combination of:

- **Customized quantitative research reports** from NAE on the demographic and economic contributions immigrants make in their communities; and/or
- **Tailored technical assistance** from NAE and Welcoming America to help communities draft, execute, and communicate a multi-sector immigrant inclusion strategy.

In addition to Contra Costa County, this year’s awardees are:

- **Dayton, Ohio**
- **Cleveland, Ohio**
- **Columbus, Ohio**
- **Erie, Pennsylvania**
- **Gainesville, Florida**
- **Lancaster County, Nebraska**
- **Los Angeles, California**
- **Mercer County, New Jersey**
- **Miami-Dade County, Florida**
- **Minneapolis, Minnesota**
- **Ottawa County, Michigan**
- **Passaic County, New Jersey**
- **Reno/Washoe County, Nevada**
- **Saint Paul, Minnesota**
- **San Mateo County, California**
- **Southwest Kansas**
- **Spokane, Washington**
- **Washtenaw County, Michigan**

Year-round, NAE and Welcoming America maintain an interactive map at [gatewaysforgrowth.org](http://gatewaysforgrowth.org) that serves as a clearinghouse for the successes of all current and prior G4G awardees.

### **Contra Costa County Employment & Human Services (EHSD)**

Employment & Human Services partners with the community to deliver quality services to ensure access to resources that support, protect, and empower individuals and families to achieve self-sufficiency. Based on the core values of delivering an exceptional customer experience, encouraging open communication, embracing change, practicing ethical behavior, and embracing diversity, EHSD envisions Contra Costa

County will continue to be a thriving community where all individuals and families can be healthy, safe, secure and self-sufficient. More information about EHSD is available at [www.ehsd.org](http://www.ehsd.org).

### **Contra Costa Health Services (CCHS)**

Contra Costa Health Services (CCHS) is an integrated system of healthcare services, community health improvement and environmental protection. We are the largest department of county government, including a 166-bed full-service public hospital with eight satellite health centers, public health, behavioral health and homeless services, environmental health, a federally-qualified HMO serving more than 190,000 people and a hazardous materials response unit. We are also the county's emergency medical response agency.

CCHS provides high-quality services with respect and responsiveness for all. Our mission is to care for and improve the health of all people in Contra Costa County, with special attention to those who are most vulnerable to health problems. Learn more at [cchealth.org](http://cchealth.org).

### **New American Economy**

New American Economy (NAE) is a bipartisan research and advocacy organization founded to educate, empower and support policymakers, influencers, and citizens across the country that see the economic and social benefits of a smart approach to immigration reform. NAE has created a coalition of civic, business, and cultural leaders who span the political spectrum and represent all 50 states. NAE makes the case for smart immigration reform in four ways:

1. We generate and use [powerful research](#) to demonstrate how immigration impacts our economy;
2. We [organize champions](#) at the grassroots and influencer levels to build support for immigration;
3. We [partner with state and local leaders](#) to advocate for policies that recognize the value immigrants add locally; and
4. We show [immigrant contributions to American culture](#) through film, food, art, sports, comedy, and more.

Visit [NewAmericanEconomy.org](http://NewAmericanEconomy.org) to learn more.

### **Welcoming America**

Welcoming America leads a movement of inclusive communities from across the world in becoming more prosperous by making everyone feel like they belong. Through a membership network of 200+ local governments and nonprofits, Welcoming America connects and supports place-based initiatives that work to reduce divisions and support greater civic, social, and economic participation among new and longtime residents alike. Through the Welcoming Network, participating members access peer learning opportunities, technical assistance, tools, and training to help transform their communities into more welcoming places. Visit [WelcomingAmerica.org](http://WelcomingAmerica.org) to learn more.

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