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**From:**

LA County Department of Youth Development <DYD@subscriptions.lacounty.gov>

[Translate](#)



Happy 2023!

I hope you've all had a good start to the new year. Before looking ahead, I want to share some holiday cheer from 2022. Our team was honored to be able to brighten the holidays for two families who were part of the Department of Public Social Services' Adopt-A-Family program. You can see photos of our team delivering brightly wrapped toys, clothing and other surprises to the families below. We hope you all had a restful holiday season with your loved ones!

As we look ahead to all that we hope to accomplish in 2023, I want to first welcome our new director of DYD, David J. Carroll. David brings 15 years of experience working with community-based organizations focused on youth development both in Los Angeles and other communities across the country. He has most recently served as the vice president of public policy and government relations for Southern California Grantmakers. Prior to that work, he held executive roles at organizations including Brotherhood Crusade, Crystal Stairs, Inc., Unleashing Potential, North Grand Neighborhood Services and UrbanFUTURE with responsibility for programming, public policy, strategic planning, budgeting, fundraising, data collection and operations. We look forward to David's leadership and are excited for him to begin to reach out to our partners after he steps into the role in late January.

We are also very excited to announce the February launch of the Credible Messengers Program at Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall and Campus Kilpatrick. Please keep reading for an update about this launch from De'Andre (Dre) Nichols, who leads this work for our team.

As always, we are so grateful for your partnership and are looking forward to many more opportunities to connect and build together in 2023!

Thank you for your support,



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vincent".

Vincent Holmes, Interim Director

## Credible Messenger Program to Launch in February



Credible Messengers — set to launch in LA County next month — is an integrated service model staffed by community-based organizations within the County’s Secure Youth Track Facilities. It works by matching youth in County halls and camps with “credible messengers” who have navigated through their own prior involvement in the justice system. They share similar life experiences with the young people whom they will be serving inside our facilities but now have a broader perspective that allows them to offer a helping hand.

The belief is that these relationships can transform thinking and increase the potential for youth to succeed in building a new life once they return to their community. The key is consistency and trust, says Credible Messenger Program Manager De’Andre (Dre) Nichols.

“Due to staffing related issues, the youth don’t have the same probation staff every day. However, the youth will have the same Credible Messengers there working with them full-

time throughout the week,” Nichols says. “These Credible Messengers come from the same environment, the same communities, and tend to understand them better.”

Los Angeles County has committed to a one-year pilot of the program, which has been successful in New York as well as Washington, DC. It is planned to kick off in February at Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall in Sylmar and Campus Kilpatrick in Malibu with credible messengers staffed from two organizations: the Anti-Recidivism Coalition and Healing Dialogue and Action.

Working in two 8-hour shifts, the CMs will accompany youth as they move through their day, helping them navigate barriers that can be as momentous as missing the birth of their child or the death of a loved one while in a locked facility. Credible messengers will receive extensive training to help youth with crisis intervention and conflict resolution as well as with setting goals and accessing resources for a healthier, more productive life.

The program needs the support of partnering probation officers to succeed. Nichols grew up in South Los Angeles and has worked with at-risk youth in Los Angeles County for years, including as the head football coach at Manual Arts High School. But he also built a career as a probation officer and probation supervisor in Missouri, Nevada and Texas, and he is optimistic that probation staff will ultimately welcome the help.

“I wish I had a credible messenger, to be an extra eye, an extra ear, to be able to assist,” Nichols says.

The Credible Messengers will work together with probation staff to plan youth engagement and make the most of existing programs and services. They are in no way intended to take on the role of probation staff, but the hope is that they become integrated into and ultimately change the culture in these County facilities.

Catalyzing that transformation is the ultimate motivation of many of those who have joined the Credible Messengers program.

“They are coming back to serve and guide this next generation in hopes that this will be the last time these youth will be locked up,” Nichols said.

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## Design a Transformative Youth Center for the Antelope Valley!



**reIMAGINE CHALLENGER**

THE LA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY (DEO) IS SEEKING A VENDOR TO REIMAGINE AND TRANSFORM THE FORMER CHALLENGER MEMORIAL YOUTH CENTER IN LANCASTER INTO A HUB OF LEARNING, HOPE AND OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUNG ADULTS IN THE ANTELOPE VALLEY.

**Submit a Request for Proposal (RFP) today!**

Proposals are due on January 19.

department of economic opportunity  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES



The LA County Department of Economic Opportunity is seeking a vendor to reimagine and transform the former Challenger Memorial Youth Center in Lancaster into a hub of learning, hope and opportunity for young adults in Antelope Valley!

The redesigned center is intended to serve young adults between the ages of 18-25 who were involved with the criminal justice or foster care systems or who are homeless. The intent is that participants will have the opportunity to live onsite on the Reimagined Challenger campus while they receive education, career training, mental health services, arts and recreation, and other supports customized to meet their unique needs.

**Proposals are due January 19. Details can be found by [clicking here](#) or using the QR code in the image above.**

For questions, email [deo-pro@opportunity.lacounty.gov](mailto:deo-pro@opportunity.lacounty.gov).

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## Obama Foundation Opens US Leadership Program

The Obama Foundation Leaders United States program is a six-month, non-residential leadership development and community engagement program that seeks to inspire, empower, and connect emerging leaders across the country. Together, Leaders will accelerate positive and lasting change in their communities with a focus on strengthening our institutions toward a more inclusive, participatory democracy.

To learn more, [click here](#).

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## Adopt-A-Family Gift Giving Program



We want to hear from the community — especially youth voices — as we shape our plans for the months and years ahead.

Send us your perspective.

## Share your ideas

Click here or email us at [Info@dvd.lacounty.gov](mailto:Info@dvd.lacounty.gov)



Questions or comments? Email us at: [info@dvd.lacounty.gov](mailto:info@dvd.lacounty.gov)  
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