



L.A. Care
HEALTH PLAN®

Regional Community Advisory Committee (RCAC) Region 3

Pomona Community Resource Center

696 W Holt Ave, Pomona, CA 91768

Wednesday, January 15, 2025

10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Meeting Summary

Member Attendance			Staff/Management Present	
Alicia Mendoza	P	Sandra Aramburo	P	Frank Meza, <i>Community Outreach Field Specialist</i>
Gladis Alvarez	P	Daniel Kwong	E	Ramon Garcia, <i>Community Outreach Field Specialist</i>
Johnny Chua	E	Fung Ha Leung Kwong	E	Idalia De La Torre, <i>Supervisor, Community Outreach & Engagement</i>
Layla Gonzalez	P	Roberto Santos	P	
Linda Resendez	P	Ana Rubio	P	
Lluvia Salazar	P	Tanya Lopez	P	
Maria Angel Refugio	P	Elmano Osorio	P	
Marina Garcia	P	Jose Lopez	P	
Reyna Hernandez	P			

(P) Present **(E)** Excused Absence **(U)** Unexcused Absence

Public Attendance	Interpreter Attendance
	Izmir Coello Sanz, Spanish Interpreter
	Eduardo Kogan, Spanish Interpreter

MEETING SUMMARY, DISCUSSION AND FOLLOW UP

I. Welcome & Introduction	Agenda Lead
<p>A. Call Meeting to Order</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maria Angel Refugio, Interim RCAC Chair, wished everyone a Happy New Year and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Ms. Refugio then called the meeting to order. • All RCAC members, Interpreters, and the public introduced themselves. <p>B. Group Agreements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maria Angel Refugio invited RCAC members who would like to volunteer to read the group meeting agreements to the group. <p>C. Approval of Agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maria Angel Refugio asked members to review the January 15, 2025, agenda prior to the approval. • The agenda was approved as presented, with Reyna Hernandez, RCAC member, making the first motion and Sandra Aramburo, RCAC member, seconding it. <p>D. RCAC Meeting Minutes Approval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maria Angel Refugio asked members to take a few minutes to review the November 20, 2024, Meeting Summary prior to the approval. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ms. Layla Gonzalez, Board Member, stated that she did not make the comment under 'RCAC Chair and Vice-Chair Information and Nominations' regarding her name being missing from the nomination form for RCAC Chair and Vice Chair." ○ RCAC member Lluvia Salazar requested that the following statement be removed from the meeting summary: 'Lluvia Salazar, RCAC member, stated, if she runs for the consumer seat on the Board of Governors, will members vote for her? RCAC members laughed and stated that Ms. Salazar needs to campaign and win their vote.' ○ Maria Angel Refugio asked for approval of the November 20, 2024, meeting minutes, with Gladis Alvarez, Interim Vice-Chair, making the first motion and Layla Gonzalez seconding it. 	<p><i>Maria Angel Refugio, Interim RCAC Chair</i></p> <p><i>Frank Meza, CO&E Field Specialist</i></p>

II. L.A. Care Updates	Agenda Lead
<p>A. RCAC Chairperson Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maria Angel Refugio provided an update from the December 11, 2024, Temporary Transitional Executive Community Advisory Committee (TTECAC) and December 5, 2024, Board of Governors meetings as both committees didn't meet in January 2025. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Refugio stated Board Members, Mrs. Layla Gonzalez, and Fatima Vasquez reported Mr. John Baackes, Chief Executive Officer, stated the partnership with the Community Resource Centers and Blue Shield will continue. • Dr. Alexander Li, Chief Health Equity Officer, reassured members that they will continue to receive access to healthcare services regardless of their immigration status. • Mr. Baackes provided a final update regarding the growth of L.A. Care's programs regarding Covered California, Cal Medi Connect, Elevating the Safety Net and the expansion of the Community Resource Centers. • Board Member, Al Ballesteros thanked Mr. Baackes for his commitment to L.A. Care since he joined the organization in 2016. • Dr. Sameer Amin, Chief Medical Officer, will be proposing to the new CEO of L.A. Care his plan to expand medical services at the Community Resource Centers such as medical visits, exams, vaccinations, and other healthcare services. • Ms. Refugio provided an update regarding the Hoyer Lifts. The TTECAC approved a motion to include Hoyer Lifts in a recent proposal, recommending that L.A. Care collaborate with healthcare providers to install Hoyer Lifts in their offices. This initiative aims to improve accessibility and assist patients with mobility challenges by ensuring they have the necessary support for safe and comfortable transfers during medical visits. • Ms. Refugio reported that the TTECAC received a presentation on the Population Needs Assessment, which provided an overview of key health disparities and priority areas for improvement. The presentation highlighted the specific needs of diverse communities and outlined strategies to enhance access to care, address Social Determinants of Health, and improve overall health outcomes for members. <p>Ms. Refugio invited the RCAC members that attended the December 11, 2024, TTECAC and the Board of Governors meeting to share any updates or insights with the committee.</p>	<p><i>Maria Angel Refugio, Interim RCAC Chair</i></p> <p><i>RCAC Members</i></p> <p><i>Frank Meza, CO&E Field Specialist</i></p>

- Ms. Gonzalez stated that some additional information was presented at the December 11, 2024, TTECAC meeting regarding a motion that was introduced by the RCAC 4 Chair, Silvia Poz. Ms. Gonzalez mentioned that there were a few key points they were trying to address:
 - People are not receiving enough medical attention
 - They don't get their appointments on time
 - They aren't given enough time to thoroughly discuss their care with their doctor
 - The inability to access proper care is a serious issue
- Ms. Gonzalez stated that she hopes the motion goes to the Board of Governors for discussion and consideration.
- Maria Angle Refugio stated that she can bring more information to RCAC 3 once the outcome of the motion is returned to the RCACs. Ms. Refugio also mentioned that the motion was not only intended to address issues in RCAC 4 but appears to be a broader issue impacting all eight RCACs.
- Gladis Alvarez attended the December 11, 2024, TTECAC meeting and stated that she was impressed with the methodology regarding the well-being of African American communities, particularly mothers and adolescents. Ms. Alvarez stated the goal is set for either 5 or 10 years and aims to address and reduce the challenges these communities face. Additionally, Ms. Alvarez suggested to Maria Angel Refugio that this initiative should not be limited to African American communities but should extend to all young people and perhaps starting with education could be beneficial.
- Layla Gonzalez added to what Ms. Gladis Alvarez stated earlier and shared that over the past 10 years, statistics have shown that many women face serious complications during childbirth. These include hypertension, loss of life, and risks to newborns. Because of this, L.A. Care's goal is to reduce maternal deaths. L.A. Care shared data on the number of members who have lost their lives, which has only been two. L.A. Care is working to eliminate these tragedies and improve the quality of life for pregnant women and their families, ensuring safer births.
- Ms. Gonzalez stated this effort is important because, for many years, these women have been denied proper care, ignored, and overlooked. Since they experience complications at higher rates than other racial groups, the focus is on addressing their needs first. It's also important to remember that when improvements are made for one group, they often benefit others as well. While the initiative is centered on addressing disparities, its impact

will likely extend beyond just one community. Ms. Gonzalez stated L.A. Care is prioritizing this issue, as progress in one area often leads to broader improvements for all.

- Alicia Mendoza, RCAC member, stated the issue is that many women giving birth are not receiving proper prenatal care. While doctors are the same for everyone, some women do not follow a prenatal process. For example, in some cases, women have their blood pressure checked weekly and pay close attention to diabetes. This makes a big difference when monitoring health conditions separately.
- Ms. Mendoza stated the solution is not just about educating doctors but also about educating patients. Many women miss their medical appointments or do not follow proper nutrition guidelines. This contributes to the perception that they are being ignored, as attention seems to be given to everyone else except them, particularly African American women.
- Layla Gonzalez stated the issue is not just medical—it is cultural and rooted in racial and ethnic disparities. Many feel they are not receiving enough attention. When a doctor ignores a patient, what happens? The patient stops listening, avoids appointments, and no longer feels comfortable with their healthcare provider.
- Ms. Gonzalez stated the goal is to eliminate this disconnect so that patients feel heard, understood, and included. By improving communication and trust, healthcare outcomes can also improve.
- Jose Lopez, RCAC member, attended the December 5, 2024, meeting and shared that during the Board meeting, they discussed issues related to the concerns faced by undocumented communities. During the meeting, they also discussed restrictions on access to wheelchairs. Mr. Lopez mentioned he has heard of people who struggled with delays in obtaining wheelchairs, sometimes waiting years for assistance. He questioned whether anything could be done in this regard, as many people must travel to access wheelchairs. He stated this and other related matters that have long been a concern.
- Ms. Maria Angel Refugio stated that accessing Durable Medical Equipment has been a recurring issue raised with TTECAC. Members have shared that the process is not easy, and some have expressed concerns about the difficulty of repairing their medical equipment when it breaks.

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- Ms. Maria Angel Refugio stated that accessing Durable Medical Equipment has been a recurring issue raised with TTECAC. Members have shared that the process is not easy, and some have expressed concerns about the difficulty of repairing their medical equipment when it breaks.

- Tanya Lopez, RCAC member, shared that undocumented individuals are still very afraid to go to hospitals. She asked how the RCAC and L.A. Care can help ensure that members feel safe accessing healthcare. Although, she knows it's safe, there is no way to fully reassure them. She stated some members have legal status, and they may not experience the same fear they do. Ms. Lopez states the biggest concern is how can the RCAC support those members. Members should not have to avoid seeking care when they are sick.
- Ms. Lopez stated another issue is the rising cost of medications, especially for the elderly. Prescription prices continue to increase, and many seniors cannot afford them. With rent and other expenses, their limited income of \$900 to \$1,000 is not enough. As a result, many elderly folks delay in getting their medications, worsening their health.
- Lluvia Salazar expressed concerns about increased immigration enforcement in the community. Reports indicate recent check points and sightings of immigration officers in local stores such as Food 4Less and La Vallarta Markets. Fear is growing among undocumented individuals, including DACA recipients and others with uncertain immigration status. Members discussed the potential impact of immigration policies under the new presidential administration and how this could affect healthcare access and overall well-being in the community.
- Ms. Layla Gonzalez stated that during the pandemic, when people were hesitant to get vaccinated, L.A. Care launched a campaign featuring various actors and influential Latino figures to promote vaccination. Maybe L.A. Care can do something similar to reassure people. The fear they feel cannot be completely eliminated, and we can't guarantee their safety by simply telling them, however, perhaps we can assure them that seeking care will not put them at risk. L.A. Care could consider starting another campaign to help ease these fears and reassure the community.
- Alicia Mendoza stated the topic of immigration and access to care are very important points. Despite the expansion of Medi-Cal access to more people, including women aged 50 and older, many people still fear seeking medical care due to their immigration status and the threat of immigration enforcement operations.
- Frank Meza, Community Outreach Field Specialist, will work with Maria Angel Refugio to develop talking points addressing the issue of members being afraid to see their doctors due to immigration enforcement and checkpoints. Additionally, he mentioned bringing up Tonya Lopez's point about the rising cost of medications. These two issues appear to be concerns affecting multiple communities across Los Angeles County.

- Gladis Alvarez stated she agrees with the topics that were mentioned and it will significantly impact people's health. For example, if they are afraid to go to stores, if their health conditions prevent them from going to appointments, if they don't have proper medical equipment, or if they must choose between buying medication and food—this is a global issue that will have serious consequences.
- Additionally, Ms. Alvarez stated that she had been attending district meetings, and everyone was worried because the administration had promised to implement many harmful policies, including cuts to education. Schools, especially those that received Title 1 funding—a type of grant—depended on these funds. However, the administration had also promised to eliminate them.
- Thanks to this funding, children had access to free lunches. Without it, concerns arose about what would happen next. The cost of living had already risen significantly, rent prices had skyrocketed, and people had begun losing their homes. As mentioned earlier, many individuals were barely getting by on \$900 a month. Additionally, the administration had announced plans to cut social service programs, further worsening the situation. From her perspective, this was a major crisis—like a snowball that would continue to grow. It felt like a return to past hardships.

B. RCAC Members Attending TTECAC and the Board of Governors Meeting

- Ana Rubio volunteered to attend the February 6, 2025, Board of Governors meeting.
- Reyna Hernandez volunteered to attend the March 6, 2025, Board of Governors meeting.
- Linda Resendez volunteered to attend the February 12, 2025, TTECAC meeting.
- Marina Garcia volunteered to attend the March 12, 2025, TTECAC meeting.
- Tanya Lopez and Elmano Osorio volunteered to serve as the alternate if the members assigned are not able to attend the TTECAC and Board of Governors meeting.

C. Community Outreach & Engagement Updates

• Decision Making and Building Consensus

- Ramon Garcia, Community Outreach Field Specialist, reviewed two documents with the members: one outlining the traffic light system and the other titled Voting Methods. These documents were briefly discussed, and members were encouraged to take them home for further review.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the next meeting, members will have an opportunity to practice using these methods. Previously, Robert's Rules of Order had been used for decision-making, but to simplify the voting process within RCAC, CO&E will use a new simplified process for parliamentary procedure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Consent - Used for approving meeting minutes and the agenda. Ballot Voting - Used for elections. Color Cards - This method will use green and red cards to indicate agreement or disagreement. Members were reminded to review the documents, bring any questions to the next meeting, and prepare for a practice session. There were no questions or comments from the members. 2025 Work Plan Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frank Meza stated that Community Outreach & Engagement is in the process of refining the focus of the work plan project for the RCACs to ensure it aligns with L.A. Care goals and objectives. Mr. Meza stated he will keep the RCAC informed of any updates or developments as they become available. There were no questions or comments from the members. 	
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III. Member Experience Feedback & Updates	Agenda Lead
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<p>A. L.A. Care New Global/Regional Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maria Angel Refugio invited members to share access to care issue related to their primary care doctors, pharmacy, medication, referrals to a specialist and L.A. Care. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alicia Mendoza mentioned that she was able to receive "emergency medication". She stated that she needed a refill but did not have her prescription. However, the pharmacy noted that the medication she needed was one that she takes daily. Ms. Mendoza stated that because of this she was able to receive emergency medication (CVS Pharmacy). Jose Lopez stated that the pharmacies are not providing him with what the doctor is prescribing. Mr. Lopez made what appeared to be two separate claims. The first, it sounded like the pharmacies are providing him 	<p><i>Frank Meza, CO&E Field Specialist</i></p>
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<p>with the generic version of the medication that his physician prescribed him. The second, he received smaller quantities of specific medication. He gave an example where he was prescribed a topical cream. He noticed that on one occasion he received a tube that was much smaller than what he had previously been given.</p>	
<p>IV. Break</p>	<p>Agenda Lead</p>
<p>A. RCAC members took a ten-minute break.</p>	<p><i>Frank Meza, CO&E Field Specialist</i></p>
<p>V. Old Business</p>	<p>Agenda Lead</p>
<p>A. RCAC Chair and Vice-Chair Information and Nominations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maria Angel Refugio informed the RCAC members that during this section members would have an opportunity to elect their Chair and Vice Chair. • Frank Meza thanked all members for their support in the election. It was noted that information regarding the election had been shared during the November 2024 meeting. An appreciation was also extended to those who had submitted their candidacy for the two available positions, RCAC Chair and Vice Chair. • Before closing the nominations, the current list of candidates for the RCAC Chair position was shared. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gladis Alvarez • Tanya López • Elmano Osorio • José López. • Members were then given the opportunity to make any last-minute changes, including nominating of additional candidates, withdrawing their candidacy, or modifying their nominations. • During this process, Layla Gonzalez nominated María Ángel Refugio for RCAC Chair. <i>María Ángel Refugio expressed her gratitude for the nomination and the trust that had been placed in her by the committee, however, she stated</i> 	<p><i>Maria Angel Refugio, Interim RCAC Chair</i></p>

that she had previously informed Frank of her decision to step back, as she believed it was time for other members to take on leadership roles.

- Frank Meza officially closed nominations for the RCAC Chair position. Mr. Meza stated before the elections he would provide instructions for the elections:
 - Member needs to receive 50% plus one based on the committee's attendance the day of to win the election.
 - There are currently 13 members in attendance and 50% plus one is seven.
 - Members who are running for the RCAC Chair or Vice Chair need to be present to participate in the elections.
- Mr. Meza invited all RCAC candidates to share with the committee their experience, background and goals if they are elected for the position.
 - Tanya Lopez emphasized the importance of unity, support, and standing together as a team, regardless of differences. She highlighted the need to assist those without a voice, especially undocumented individuals, and expressed a strong commitment to helping the community. Recognizing the challenges ahead, she encouraged members to remain united, support each other, and rely on faith to stay strong in difficult times.
 - *Lluvia Salazar asked Ms. Lopez what her employment is. Ms. Lopez stated she is a volunteer, and a Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) and she loves to help people.*
 - Gladis Alvarez expressed her gratitude for the nomination and shared that it is an honor to be part of the team. She emphasized the importance of advocacy, particularly for the community and those who cannot speak for themselves. As a mother of four children, three of whom have special needs, her personal experiences have driven her passion for advocacy, both in schools and within the community, ensuring that everyone receives the support they need.
 - *Lluvia Salazar made a comment stating that Gladis Alvarez and her are members of Parents Place, which is an organization in West Covina that supports kids with disabilities.*
 - Jose Lopez expressed his gratitude for being chosen and shared his deep connection with those experiencing illness, as he has faced his own health challenges for a long time. He sees this as an opportunity to support

and motivate others, helping them navigate the life changes that come with illness while fostering a sense of unity and family within the group.

- Lluvia Salazar asked Mr. Lopez if he volunteers with other organizations and if he has been in a similar role. *Mr. Lopez stated he hasn't had an opportunity to volunteer due to previous illnesses.*
- Elmano Osorio was born in Africa, raised in the United Kingdom and Portugal, and is fluent in five languages. With experience in global missions for the United Nations, he is committed to addressing health disparities through collaborative problem-solving and advocating for an effective and accountable health plan.
- Sandra Aramburo asked Mr. Osorio if he volunteers with other organizations and if he has been in a similar role. *Mr. Elmano stated he was part of the United Nations for more than 10 years and has visited other countries to help bring resources to underserved communities.*
- Lluvia asked Mr. Osorio where he was born and how many languages he speaks? *Mr. Elmano stated he was born in Angola in the continent of Africa, and he speaks English, Spanish, Portuguese, French and Italian.*
- Frank Meza proceeded with the election and instructed all voting members to select only one person on the ballot and ensure they sign the ballot for it to be valid. Frank asked one of the interpreters, member that was not running for any position and staff to count the ballots.
- The RCAC Chair election results are the following:
 - Gladis Alvarez - 10
 - Tanya López - 0
 - Elmano Osorio - 3
 - José López - 0
- Gladis Alvarez was elected as the new Chair for RCAC 3. Ms. Alvarez thanked everyone and asked for their patience, as she wants to do well in the role and represent the RCAC effectively.
- Before closing the nominations, the current list of candidates for the RCAC Vice Chair position was shared:
 - Tanya López

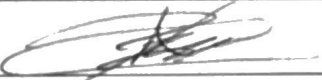
- Elmano Osorio
- José López
- Linda Resendez

- Members were then given the opportunity to make any last-minute changes, including nominating of additional candidates, withdrawing their candidacy, or modifying their nominations.
- There were no additional candidates included on the voting ballots, and nominations closed before the elections began.
- Due to time constraints, the other members on the list had already presented, so Linda Resendez, RCAC member, because she was added was asked to share her experience, goals, and reasons for running for the RCAC Vice Chair position.
- Linda Resendez stated that she has been with the RCACs for 22 years and emphasized that they are all in this together. She clarified that she is not approaching this position with a power-driven mindset but rather with a commitment to public service in the community. She volunteers with the House of Ruth and various events, advocates against human trafficking, and has a strong passion for helping others.
- Maria Angel Refugio asked if members that were running for the RCAC Chair, are they also interested in running for the Vice Chair? Frank Meza stated members on the list communicated that they were initially running for both positions.
- The ballots were distributed to everyone and an interpreter, member not running for both positions and a staff member counted the ballots. Members were reminded that the number a candidate must have is 7 to win the election.
- The results for the RCAC Vice Chair were presented.
 - Tanya López - 3
 - Elmano Osorio - 6
 - José López - 0
 - Linda Resendez - 4

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because the candidates didn't receive 7 votes, the RCAC had to do a revote. • The results for the revote were presented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tanya López - 2 • Elmano Osorio - 7 • José López - 0 • Linda Resendez – 4 • Elmano Osorio thanked everyone for their vote. <p>RCAC Chair & Vice Chair Mandatory Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RCAC Chair and Vice Chair will receive mandatory trainings focused on meeting facilitation, meeting decisions, note taking, and reporting during their term. • All trainings will be at L.A. Care Health Plan office in downtown Los Angeles and transportation services will be offered to eligible individuals. <p>RCAC Chair & Vice Chair Approval and Timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When all RCAC members have voted for their Chair and Vice Chair, their names will be forwarded to the February 2025 TTECAC meeting for review and approval. • Once approved by TTECAC, the list will be sent to the Board of Governors for final approval at their March 2025 meeting. 	
<p>VI. Future Agenda Items</p>	<p>Agenda Lead</p>
<p>A. Maria Angel Refugio invited members to bring up anything for future agenda items.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members suggested inviting someone to speak on immigration services. Some members are concerned about an increase in immigration officials in the community (i.e. grocery stores). The members would like to have someone who has resources on immigration. Lluvia Salazar added that some schools, particularly CSULA, has a DREAM Resource Center. Ms. Salazar to connect with Frank to provide that information. 	<p><i>Maria Angel Refugio, Interim, RCAC Chair</i></p> <p><i>Frank Meza, CO&E Field Specialist</i></p> <p><i>RCAC Members</i></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jose Lopez shared regarding the Real ID is an enhanced identification with higher security standards required by the U.S. federal government. Lluvia Salazar added and stated the Real ID is for access to federal facilities, domestic flights, and government offices. Elmano Osorio stated Real ID does not affect immigration status, is not required for driving, and does not replace passports, visas, or other residency documents for international travel. • Issues with East Valley Health Centers seem to be persistent in the area. Idalia De La Torre, Supervisor, suggested that members consider putting together a motion to present to ECAC or explore alternative solutions. Frank Meza recommended adding the topic of East Valley Health Centers to a future agenda in March, allowing members to potentially make a motion and forward it to ECAC for further discussion. Additionally, members suggested inviting an East Valley representative to a meeting so they could voice their concerns directly. 	
VII. Public Comments	Agenda Lead
<p>A. Public member will speak for up to 2 minutes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maria Angel welcomed the public to share question or comments. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no public comments. 	<p><i>Frank Meza, CO&E Field Specialist</i></p> <p><i>RCAC Members</i></p>
VIII. Resource Sharing and Meeting Evaluations	Agenda Lead
<p>A. There weren't any resources shared at this time.</p> <p>B. Maria Angel Refugio reminded all RCAC members to complete their meeting evaluations.</p>	<p><i>Maria Angel Refugio, Interim RCAC Chair</i></p> <p><i>RCAC Members</i></p>
IX. Adjournment	Agenda Lead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting adjourned at 12:30pm. • Next Meeting Date: Wednesday, March 19, 2025, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the El Monte Community Resource Center at 3570 Santa Anita Ave, El Monte, CA 91731. 	<p><i>Maria Angel Refugio, Interim RCAC Chair</i></p>

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Respectfully Submitted by:	Approved by: 
Frank Meza, <i>Community Outreach Field Specialist</i>	Gladis Alvarez, <i>RCAC 3 Chair</i>