



CAN Board of Directors Meeting

4/11/25 Minutes

Location: Virtual Zoom Meeting

Present: **Natasha Harper-Madison**, Council Member, City of Austin; **Sylvia Calderon**; HACA; **Loretta Edelen**, ACC; **Jacqueline Evans**, CapMetro; **Simone Talma Flowers**, Interfaith Action of Central Texas (iACT); **Suchitra Gururaj**, UT Austin; **Natasha Harper-Madison**, Council Member, City of Austin; **Liz Johnson**, St. Edwards University; **Hal Katz**, Integral Care; **Laura La Fuente**, Austin Public Health; **Craig McNary**, CAN Community Council; **Regan G. Moffitt**, St. David's Foundation; **Amy Price**, United Way for Greater Austin; **Pilar Sanchez**, Travis County; **Fernando de Urioste**, Board of Trustees, Austin ISD

Other guests: Becca Bice, United Way for Greater Austin; Eric Byrd; City of Austin, Stephen Dellert, CapMetro; Sharon Mays, City of Austin; Ara Merjanian, CAN Community Council

CAN Staff in attendance: Raul Alvarez, Jelina Tunstill, Carlos Soto

Call To Order, Welcome, and Introductions: Executive Director Raul Alvarez called the meeting to order at 1:04 pm and welcomed folks in attendance. Members introduced themselves.

Minutes: The February 14, 2025, Board meeting minutes were approved after a motion submitted by Liz was seconded by Craig. The motion was approved unanimously.

Community Council Report: Craig McNary mentioned the council began working on the "Building Community" in Austin Forum. The Council seeks to shift its focus into engaging community members in important conversations. The forum, scheduled for June 16, will be focused on Social Capital and will be an in-person event. The council welcomes suggestions from the Board or input from local organizations or individuals who are also working to build social capital. The focus at the next meeting will be on planning for the fall season, with another "Building Community" in Austin Forum in the works (focusing on Economic Mobility). The Council decided to focus on issues related to economic mobility after working on identifying opportunities for economic mobility that the board had not already selected as priorities on this topic.

Executive Director's Report: Raul thanked the Butler Award recipients present at the meeting. A presentation from AARO in the fall discussed their regional engagement efforts via the Catalyst Summit. This month the focus is the work of the 2-Gen Coalition for Economic Advancement, and next month we plan to feature the Asset Funders Network, who have been hosting roundtable discussions on the topic of economic mobility.

Regarding CAN's 30th anniversary, CAN staff recorded a conversation between the three individuals who have served as Executive Director at CAN. They discussed their respective tenures at the organization. The video will be shared on social media once it's ready.

Next, Alvarez discussed the 2024 Annual Report and 2025-2027 Strategic Plan. This included an updated overview of CAN's work on Language Access, the work of the Community Council over the past 10 years, Butler Awards recognizing local initiatives & individuals, Mental Health First Aid, Language Access Project for Mental Health and Wellness, and related activities such as the Family Support Network.

Looking ahead, in response to the interest shown by Board members, we will be convening small work groups to help to outline parameters to guide CAN's regional-level work and to discuss strategies for

navigating the new DEI landscape. Alvarez also highlighted an ongoing effort to compile information and resources that relate to recent immigration policies and their impact on our local community.

Regarding Economic Mobility, Council member Harper-Madison mentioned an interest in finding ways to help support folks with succession-planning, food related policy, and economic opportunity.

Economic Mobility Briefing: The 2-Gen Coalition for Economic Advancement is the culmination of ongoing work that can be traced back to the years leading up to the development of the initial 2-Gen Coalition Strategic Plan. Becca Bice, Director of Economic Advancement at United Way for Greater Austin mentioned that a 2-generation approach serves parents and children from the same family deliberately and simultaneously and can lead to better outcomes for both generations of a family. Bice discussed top strategies, how the 2-gen coalition works, key policy priorities, a pilot project with ACC (with plans to institutionalize aspects of the program), and how folks can get involved. See attached slide deck.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 2:00 pm.

Problem: 30% of Travis County families with children live in households with low-income

Vision: All families in Greater Austin are financially stable and have opportunity for economic advancement across generations.

Intervention Areas:



Employment



Adult Education



Postsecondary
Education



Wealth Building

Collective Impact: 2-Gen Coalition for Economic Advancement

The 2-Gen Coalition for Economic Advancement enables collaboration between over 60 community partners to ensure whole families can meet their economic potential and pursue well-being.

Top Strategies

- Broaden use of 2-Gen Approach
- Remove barriers for parents to continue education
- Grow opportunities for parents to advance in employment
- Establish a support network of resources for the whole family
- Strengthen social networks of families

A 2-Gen approach serves parents and children from the same family deliberately and simultaneously and can lead to better outcomes for both generations of a family.

How the 2-Gen Coalition Works

A coalition brings together entities across sectors to solve systemic problems no one organization could solve on its own.

- Problem-solve and develop projects in work groups
- Leverage community voice
- Share knowledge and network
- Build capacity of partners
- Advocate for policy change
- Align actions for systems change



“Becoming involved with United Way’s 2-Gen initiative ...helped us to understand the importance of high-quality early childhood education and how that integrated with our education and training programs to create the greatest impact for the families we work with.” - American YouthWorks

2-Gen and the 89th Texas Legislative Session

Key Policy Priorities

- Invest in more workforce readiness training
- Continue to support students who are pregnant or parenting at institutions of higher education
- Increase access, affordability and quality of the child care sector



EMPLOYMENT & WORKFORCE

PRIORITY BILLS:

- **HB 2545 by Gerdes** would support scaling of rural workforce centers that provide training, including supportive services.
- **HB 2294 by Thompson** relating to reimbursement rates for child-care providers participating in the Texas Rising Star Program.
- **SB 1031 by Blanco** would streamline the SNAP 6 Month eligibility check.
- **HB 555 by Rep. Bucy** would modernize our statewide information and referral network—211 Texas.***

POST SECONDARY & ADULT ED

HB 120 by Bell would establish a high school advising program and allotment to support high quality advising and direct partnerships with institutions of higher education that offer both degree and professional certification pathways.

Budget Priorities:

SB 1/HB 1 –Secure appropriations for HB 8 (community college finance, 88R), invest in programs such as FAST, R-PEP, P-TECH, etc., Financial aid; data modernization for THECB; and increase incentives for completion of postsecondary credentials tied to meaningful wage outcomes.

FINANCIAL ASSET BUILDING

PRIORITY BILLS:

SB 208 by West would establish a workforce housing capital investment fund program to fund the development of workforce housing in this state.

- would provide funding to support homeownership for families earning as little as 30% of the area median income.
- Selected nonprofit must provide financial literacy training.

Piloting Programs: Parenting Student Project

Provides parenting students at Austin Community College with \$500/month, wraparound supports including child care scholarships, and peer networking:

- **PERSISTENCE:** 88% of students who had ever participated in the PSP had either graduated or were still enrolled at ACC in Spring 2024, compared to 54% of parenting students who had never participated.
- **CREDIT HOURS:** On average, a student who participated in the PSP during a given semester had a 64% chance of successfully completing nine credit hours, compared to just 36% for a student not participating in the PSP in a given term.
- **FINANCES:** Students in the PSP borrowed an average of \$1,052 less per semester, and required less emergency funding during the terms they participated in the PSP as compared to students who did not participate in the PSP.

Currently working to institutionalize aspects of this program permanently within ACC... and then onto a new pilot!



What's Next: Supporting the Transition into Employment for a Resilient Workforce

Partner with employers to provide added support to employees who transitioning from low-income household with public benefits to higher-wage employment.

Potential Services:

- Emergency funds – transportation needs, first rent payments, etc.
- Child care support
- Financial coaching
- Mentorship
- Health care navigation
- ConnectATX visit

Measures:

- Impact to employer: absenteeism, retention, employee satisfaction, manager satisfaction
- Impact on family: financial stability, stress reduction



How You Can Be Involved

1. Join a 2-Gen Coalition Work Group
2. Sign up to be a United Way Advocate
3. Bring Us to the Decision-Making Table

