

SPECIAL NEEDS NETWORK EXTENDS C.O.R.E. PROGRAM THROUGH OCTOBER 2024

Launches New Training Cohorts in LA and Kern County

Los Angeles, CA – In a groundbreaking initiative to combat the shortage of diverse professionals in the field of developmental disabilities, the Special Needs Network (SNN) is thrilled to announce the approval of a \$420,000 budget reallocation to extend its C.O.R.E. program through October 2024.

This initiative, dubbed Creating Opportunities and Resources for Equity in Early Intervention (C.O.R.E.), targets professionals, college graduates and current students in relevant human services fields. It promises a holistic training experience encompassing Diversity, Equity, Inclusion certifications, professional development, and a paid training stipend, ensuring that participants are thoroughly prepared to meet the unique needs of their communities.

This extension, authorized by the Department of Developmental Services (DDS), will include the initiation of new training cohorts in Los Angeles and Kern County, focusing on culturally competent training and job placement to expand the provider pool. Additionally, existing providers will be offered a one-day intensive training on cultural competence care at the Special Needs Network's April Conference.

Areva Martin, founder and president of SNN, emphasized the transformative potential of this initiative: "With this generous funding and extended timeline, we are not just expanding our program; we are setting a new standard for inclusive and equitable early intervention services. Our mission has always been to bridge gaps and build futures, and with this initiative, we are poised to turn these aspirations into tangible realities for children and families in dire need of support."

Expanding the Scope of C.O.R.E. Program:

The Creating Opportunities and Resources for Equity in Early Intervention (C.O.R.E.) program, initially funded through a \$6.5 million grant from the American Rescue Plan Act, has been pivotal in addressing the shortage of diverse professionals in the field of developmental disabilities. The program's extension and expansion will further Special Needs Network's mission to provide culturally sensitive and effective services to children with autism and other developmental disabilities, particularly in communities of color.

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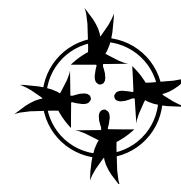
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Expansion:

The project, set to unfold in distinct phases starting January, will initially focus on the recruitment of 40 diverse candidates from Los Angeles and Kern Counties, transitioning into comprehensive training in April, and culminating in a six-month fieldwork phase from May to October. This structured approach ensures that candidates are not only well-prepared but also effectively deployed to make a real difference in communities that need it the most.

“We have a long history of partnering with regional centers and community-based organizations to address service disparities,” said Nancy Bargmann, director of DDS. “This unique initiative expands the department-wide focus on increasing the diversity and accessibility of our service providers.”

SNN is actively recruiting BIPOC fellows in Los Angeles and Kern counties for the C.O.R.E. program effective immediately. Interested individuals can visit www.snnla.org or call (323) 949-6738 to learn more about the program.

About Special Needs Network (SNN)

Special Needs Network, Inc. (SNN) is a nonprofit grassroots organization responding to the crisis of autism and other developmental disabilities in underserved communities. The organization recognizes the intersectionality of individuals with disabilities and that their fight for disability rights is inextricably tied to the fight for racial justice and the civil rights of all people. SNN focuses on raising public awareness, impacting public policy, and increasing education and access to resources for families, children, and adults.

About Early Start Services

The Early Start program is California's early intervention program for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. Early Start services are available statewide and are provided in a coordinated, family-centered system.

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