



South Sacramento Neighborhood News and Youth Media Council

Improving Communications and Healthy Lifestyles
In Sacramento County's Most Diverse Community



Neighborhood News

The California Endowment May 31, 2011 Report

Access Sacramento, nonprofit community media for Sacramento County, in partnership with The Center for Community School Partnerships at the University of California, Davis (CCSP/UCD), Video Streaming Services Company (VSSC) and The Sacramento Metropolitan Cable Television Commission (SMCTC) have initiated the Neighborhood News Bureau project (NNB) serving the culturally diverse communities in South Sacramento City and County.

The \$50,000 per year, two-year TCE grant has been used for personnel expenses and materials used in the implementation of "Neighborhood News Bureaus" in South Sacramento County. Together with help from VSSC and funding for equipment from SMCTC, we have launched a new web site, www.AccessLocal.tv, filled with digital data created by teens, schools, and families with the help of Asian Resources, Inc, La Familia Family Counseling, and the additional help of Southgate Parks and Recreation (Florin Creek), City of Sacramento Parks and Recreation (Pannell Center), the Valley Hi – North Laguna Library and the Sacramento City Unified School District.

On March 12, 2011 we celebrated the public launch of www.AccessLocal.tv, a Word Press, multiuser, aggregated blog site filled with digital content, created by teams of South Sacramento residents. The teams have been formed by meeting with and training NPO staff members and mentor volunteers to help technically skilled youth create stories about their neighborhoods and important issues they face. Together they create and post new digital content to the web site. Each NNB site is provided with assigned pass codes permitting editorial control of data posted on their blog site.

However, new content creation and web site delivery is only half the story. Access Sacramento has actively cultivated relationships with local major media outlets including the Sacramento Bee, the online Sacramento Press, and television stations KCRA (3), KXTV (10), and Fox 40. Each has contributed to the training, mentoring, and celebration of hyper-local community reporting – especially by teens.

For example, a teenage community reporter creates a story using his/her smart camera-phone. The teen authors the story with photos or even a short video and uploads it to the designated NNB blog site. NNB partner organization staff or mentors serve as managing editors of the NNB blog site. They review the story and work with the teen in editing before adding the blog post to AccessLocal.tv. One “published” to AccessLocal.tv, the story and photos are automatically distributed via an RSS feed (Real Simple Syndication) to the professional media outlets for further review and possible publication on their blog site.

The process is being perfected to become ever more efficient but advantages are becoming evident.

- The NNB partner organization gains equipment and training and a direct connection to local media outlets eager for new human interest content, photos, and videos.
- The news organizations benefit from fresh stories complete with photos/videos at little expense.
- The professional reporters have contacts and story ideas served to them via the RSS feed.
- Teens benefit from seeing the direct product of their creativity and literacy skills being posted to local major media outlets. Their voices “make a difference” and their friends will notice.

A Short History -- Beginning in October of 2010, the California Endowment and the “NNB Partnership” has successfully: (a) surveyed and invited partner organizations in South Sacramento; (b) included the “voices” of youth in the planning and implementation process of a Youth Media Council and successfully produced the Youth Media Forum; (c) identified five neighborhood centers and nonprofit organizations with great experience working with youth, adults, and families including La Familia Counseling and Asian Resources, Inc.; (d) launched the web site AccessLocal.tv capable of receiving and displaying all forms of digital media from any broadband connected computer, smart phone or digital device and (e) shared NNB original digital content via RSS feed with our local print and electronic media outlets. Through this program, young people in the South Sacramento area are working with adult allies to connect existing and/or newly produce social media projects that amplify and support youth and community voices directly to various distribution platforms including online, print, television, and community news journalism.

Since its launch in March, AccessLocal.TV has generated and distributed over 160 stories, all written by a small group of Neighborhood News Reporters (See Addendum B for details explaining AccessLocal.tv features). Averaging 20 stories per week, we are off to a good start. Access Sacramento staff have conducted more than 22 meetings and training sessions at the NNB sites. Here’s a synopsis of those sessions.

Neighborhood News Overall: 166 stories

- Neighborhood News Regional 7 stories - all training sessions.
- Access Sacramento Neighborhood News 66 stories - all training sessions
- Sam Pannell Community Center 12 stories - 3 meetings and 1 training session
- Valley Hi-North Laguna Library 14 stories - 3 training sessions
- Youth Media Forum for Social Change 12 stories - 3 meetings and 1 training session
- Asian Resources Inc 8 stories - 2 meetings and 2 training session
- Florin Creek Rec. Center 3 stories - 3 meetings and 2 training sessions
- La Familia 3 stories - 2 meetings and 2 training sessions

The South Sacramento Youth Media Council – See Addendum C for Full Report

The South Sacramento Youth Media Council (SSYMC) established and successfully addressed the following challenges in the first few months of the grant:

- (1) Identified local print and electronic media partners committed to supporting the YMF work and honoring youth media in the 2nd Youth Media Forum hosted by the Sacramento Bee May 7, 2011;
- (2) Developed a working relationship with these local media partners included Access Sacramento, the Sacramento Bee (Sacramento Connects), KXTV News10 (My Neighborhood), KCRA Channel 3 (U-Local), FOX 40 News, and the Sacramento Press (SacPress.com).
- (3) Created digital content for the Neighborhood News web site (AccessLocal.tv) and video programming for distribution on Sacramento Connects (Bee) and My Neighborhood (News10) regional blog sites.
- (4) Fostered meaningful communication skills development and “connectedness” for South Sacramento youth, by establishing outreach and training strategies to be replicated throughout the Sacramento Region, and
- (5) Advocated for policies to improve community conditions and healthy life-style choices in South Sacramento through targeted social media campaigns and engagement with other like-minded organizations.

Successful and meaningful steps have been taken to addressing these five challenges. Here is a summary of those steps in chronological order.

- www.AccessLocal.tv launched as public site on March 12, 2011
- Five NNB sites have been oriented and have developed initial NNB plans and identified trainers
- Dell desk top computers and Vegas software have been delivered to 3 NNB sites
- FLIP video cameras have been delivered to 4 NNB sites
- Further production camera training dates are being established
- Training completed for NNB “AccessLocal.tv” at Asian Resources & Florin Creek
- Follow-up video training for teens accomplished at La Familia and Asian Resources
- California Endowment has funded additional training personnel to help NNB sites
- UC Davis School of Education met with media reps at Sac Bee (12/8)
- CA Endowment and Sac City Schools have met to assist in “YMF” development
- Outreach successful to Channels 3, 10, 40, Bee and Sacramento Press
- Servers installed to host NNB sites
- RSS feed directly adds NNB content to KXTV News10 “My Neighborhood” and SacBee.com “Sacramento Connection” blog sites – other local media RSS feeds connections being explored
- Identify Youth Leaders form “Youth Media Council” planning YMF
- “YMC” and “Youth Media Forum” teach teen leadership skills
- KCRA hosts judging of YMF submissions April 9, 2011
- Hosted Second Annual Youth Media Conference for Social Change at Bee May 7, 2011
- Met with Pannell Center adult mentors to create NNB content
- Met with Valley Hi Library staff to create NNB content
- Professional HD camera and audio equipment provided to Valley Hi Library staff

- Isaac Gonzalez engaged to provide direct mentorship to each NNB organization
- Mentorship meetings shall be held every other week at each of the 5 NNB sites

Next Steps

- Report to Cable Television Commission and California Endowment in May
- Engage additional “mentors” to help NNB create regular content
- Add new content to “AccessLocal.tv” – three items per week from each of five NNB partners
- Expand NNB to other interested organizations and individuals
- Create NNB Advisory Task Force to advise Access Sacramento Board of Directors
- Continue work with local major media perfecting use of the RSS feed from NNB sites
- Collaborate further with The California Endowment by contributing media work to the statewide TCE “Building Healthy Communities” web site

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Addendum A

I’m Ready to Help and Eager to Learn

by Isaac Gonzalez, Jr.

The following NNB article was written by Isaac Gonzalez, an independent contractor for the “Neighborhood News Bureau” Project. His primary responsibility is to mentor teens and NNB adult trainers on how to create “digital stories” for www.AccessLocal.tv and how to post them digitally to the web site for further distribution. The following introduction is Isaacs first posting to the NNB site and shared with blog sites at the Sacramento Bee and KXTV News10.

I believe nearly everyone has had this feeling at one time or another: “I’ve got something to say, but I don’t know how to say it, or know if anybody is even listening.” When I was growing up as a young boy in South Sacramento, this was something I felt quite often. Attending John F. Kennedy High School in the late 1990’s, I experienced what one could only call an identity crisis. I’m Mexican-American, but I was never taught how to speak Spanish. I grew up in a suburban tract home, but I spent most of my free time downtown with punk rockers. Long before it was socially acceptable, as it seems to be today, I was dyeing my hair every hue in the rainbow, and dressing in strange clothes I acquired from thrift stores and swap meets. Looking back now, I can only explain it as some sort of strange attempt to force strangers to stop in their step and acknowledge my existence. I didn’t know what I wanted to be, I just knew that I wanted with every fiber of my being to make my mark on the surrounding landscape, *desperately*.

It may not have been that long ago, but you must remember, this was in an era before the Internet as we know it today. Broadband video streaming sites like YouTube and the social networking powerhouse Facebook didn't exist yet. It wasn't easy to publish and share one's thoughts or interests with their peers. So instead of updating my status, or recording a video blog, the only way I felt I could express myself was musically. I knew plenty of kids who felt the same way, and we'd get together and collect musical instruments of various qualities and try to write melancholic songs about teenage angst and heartbreak. Were we any good? Not by a long shot. But were we successful? I'd say we were, if success can be measured not by the level of fame your art achieves, but by the sense of fulfillment creating something original gives your soul. In that sense, we were rock stars.

Now, I understand not everybody wants to be in a rock band. I'd actually be the last person to even recommend doing so to most. The point of my story is that even though I didn't know it at the time, all I really wanted to do was express myself, and for others to witness and respond to that expression. As I've aged in life, I've continued to find new methods of expression to fulfill my needs. I've worked the restorations of semi-historical downtown buildings, some over 100 years old. I've joined neighborhood organizations and attended forums where my input has helped shape the future of our community. I've even found solace in the simple pleasures of gardening in my yard. To my surprise, however, nothing has satisfied me greater than a creative outlet I discovered about a year ago: online journalism.

The first piece I ever wrote was for the website sacramento.press.com. One morning, while driving to get coffee in my neighborhood, I noticed an abundance of illegal advertisements that were propagating on a temporary fence surrounding a construction site. I had noticed them before, but the sheer number I observed that morning inspired me to do something. I know I should have called code enforcement, or have contacted the property owner, but I decided that instead I would handle this myself. Pliers in hand, I removed dozens of signs and banners from that fence, and several telephone polls, vacant buildings, and empty lots in my neighborhood. Now, I could have stopped there, but I'm glad I didn't. Once I got home, I laid all the materials on my driveway and took a digital photo. After uploading that picture to my computer, I took to my web browser and pointed it to sacpress.com. I wrote the tale of my actions, attached the photo, and clicked on a button that said, "publish story". I had no idea what I was in for next.

Over the next few days the comments beneath my article astounded me. Some thanked me for my actions. Others cheered me for my "vigilantism". It was one posted comment, however, that really struck a chord with me. A user, quoting Gandhi, wrote: "be the change you want to see in the world." It was as if somebody flipped a switch in my brain. I had no idea that a) something I wrote could affect so many strangers and b) that a strangers response to something I wrote could have such an affect on me. Over the next few months, I continued to write and hone my craft. I found my writing "voice" through trial and error. Most importantly, I felt as if finally I had found a way to connect with people in way I never knew possible before, by crafting original and relevant stories about the city I love and have called home all my life.

I don't possess a college degree or any specialized training. I don't have a gift or exclusive ability that no one else can tap. All I have is my desire to express myself and a passion to see that this city remains a great place to live for me and my family and my neighbors. Luckily, I now live in an era where anybody can do so in the digital domain. This website, accesslocal.tv, and other social media sites like these allow those who once may have been voiceless speak as loud as their soul can shout. With the now common everyday tools such as a computer and a digital camera, we all are now free to share the stories that otherwise may have been lost to the ages. The stories of regular folks making their way through the world in a fast-changing environment. To that end, I am willing to help anyone use these tools in the hopes that they too can achieve the same sense of reward that I've been fortunate enough to enjoy. All you need to do is shed the fear of failure, look into your heart and the eyes of your neighbors, and write what you observe so that others can share in your experiences. This is an amazing time to be alive, why not help write the pages of history with your tales?

ADDENDUM B

Neighborhood News Features and Services Report by Kristian Manoff

The “architect” for AccessLocal.tv is Kristian Manoff of Foxyea Web Media working with Video Streaming Services Company. Listed below are features of the web site operational today and planned improvements to be added in the coming year.

AccessLocal.TV provides the following services to Neighborhood News Bureaus:

- **RSS Aggregation offered to** all major Sacramento Media Outlets including the Sacramento Bee and KXTV News10.
- **AccessLocal.TV content is search engine optimized** to provide organic search engine ranking improvement.
- **Online publishing platform for the posting of stories** organized by Neighborhood News Bureau, and featured on the home page of AccessLocal.TV.
- **On Demand publishing platform** for select Access Sacramento content including “Place Called Sacramento” Film Festival and community event information.
- **Neighborhood News Security Profiles** that allow the individual Neighborhood News bureaus to control their own content, and mentor their Neighborhood News Reporters.
- **Video Posting, Sharing, and RSS syndication** through the Access Media Neighborhood News Server.
- **Social Network sharing integration** and Analytics gathering.
- **Online access to AccessLocal.TV training materials** at <http://accessmedia.accesslocal.tv>
- **Web Managed content** and member control.
- **Comment moderation and filtering** on individual story and video posts.
- **Layout sidebar widget control** for running ads and underwriting information.
- **Access Sacramento can currently upload and download member videos** for featuring on Local Access Cable channels. For further information about Access Sacramento playback integration, please see the next section.
- **Category and Tag based content** permitting creation of new Neighborhood News bureaus and story threads. AccessLocal.TV was originally planned to reach 3 Neighborhood News Bureaus. Currently, AccessLocal.TV has grown to 7 Neighborhood News bureaus with more being planned through the addition of Access Sacramento Journalism staff.
- **Onsite Trainings hosted by the Neighborhood News** bureaus continue, presented by Access Sacramento, Video Streaming Services Company, and Foxyea Web Media. Recent additions in journalistic staff by Access Sacramento are creating infrastructure and support for Neighborhood News Content Creation.

AccessLocal.TV features and services currently under integration or awaiting further information from Access Sacramento, to be completed August of 2011:

- **<http://yourblogname.accesslocal.tv>** availability for Neighborhood News Bureaus and Access Sacramento Members. This is currently available on a pilot basis awaiting further use and load testing.
- **Open registration for visitors** interested in becoming members of AccessLocal.TV or Access Sacramento is awaiting establishment of terms and conditions by Access Sacramento. The use terms and content considerations to implement this are currently being developed by Access Sacramento through fact gathering and observation of

the Neighborhood News and Access Media pilot programs.

- **Access Sacramento Playback scheduling of Neighborhood News Video** content and Access Sacramento Member Content: Currently, Access Sacramento Playback can both upload and download video from the Neighborhood News Media server. Further automated integration through RSS is being investigated in regards to compatibility with Access Sacramento's current playback technology, along with some upgrades in technology that Access Sacramento is considering.
- **Blog Upgrade Options along with Advertising and Underwriting** support to create revenue options for bloggers and organizations that take part in the AccessLocal.TV Vlogging network are currently being investigated and considered by Access Sacramento.
- **Miro Community integration to provide Video Channel editing** and remixing to AccessLocal.TV Members and Neighborhood News Bureaus is currently being considered as a way to rate and remix member content.
- **AccessLocal.TV provides a knowledge base** for its members located at <http://accessmedia.accesslocal.tv>. Training materials and videos in both English and Spanish are currently under development.
- **AccessLocal.TV is built on the Open Source WordPress** publishing platform. New features, layout options, and member services are being investigated, tested, and integrated based on feedback from Access Sacramento and the Neighborhood News Bureau Reporters.
- **AccessLocal.TV search engine optimization** can be integrated with Google Adsense and Adwords to provide even more search engine visibility of Neighborhood News content and member services. Google Adwords is a paid service, though grant programs are available for some organizations. Access Sacramento is currently investigating this as a low cost way of making the site more visible once AccessLocal.TV Version 1.0 is complete.
- **AccessLocal.TV will be featured** at the Alliance for Community Media Conference in July of 2011. Workshops will include Community Media approaches presented by Access Sacramento, Video Streaming Services Company, and Foxyea Web Media.

ADDENDUM C

The 2nd Annual Youth Media Forum for Social Change by Kindra F. Montgomery-Block and bel Reyes

The 2nd Annual Youth Media Forum For Social Change was held on May 7th, 2011 at the Sacramento Bee. The forum provided over 100 youth and adult allies the “real-talk” connection to youth produced social media with the primary purpose of creating community change. The young social media producers ranged in age from 11-21 and live in the Sacramento region. Celebrated for their unique contributions to the digital media world, the forum highlighted three core areas that connected the social media projects to youth identified social topics of concern: 1) Race, Culture, Gender, and Class; 2) Health and Fitness; and 3) Summer and Out Of School Time.

For many youth and adults in attendance the social media projects highlighted issues that create social barriers for many youth to succeed. The forum provided a safe venue to raise concerns and discuss current events that led to their development. Furthermore, the forum provided an opportunity for the youth social media producers to directly engage in a dialogue with forum participants to collectively identify “3 Big Ideas” to move the efforts of the forum from discussion to action. For example Kengi Brown from the Met High School, showcased a documentary about the Mr. Success program at Sam Brannan Middle School (his almamater). The documentary featured current students in the program and the success the program has had by focusing on African American males, at a time when schools and districts are struggling to meet the academic, social, or emotional needs of this “high or at risk” population. His documentary focused on the highlights and learning’s that participants receive through the after-school Mr. Success program and the mentoring that has prepared Kengi to be a successful high

school student. Over and over the audience heard from forum participants that their ability to amplify issues that concerned them had a huge impact on what projects they choose to develop. [Click Here To View "Mr. Success"](#)

As adult allies we continue to be amazed at the power youth have to envision and actualize social equity. Social media has provided an opportunity, “digital window – front row seat” into how this current youth generation is going to use technology to change the world. We as adults can sit by and watch this phenomenon unfold or we can shape the connection our youth have to revitalizing our democracy and civic engagement through the use of social media.

The 2nd Annual Youth Media Forum for Social Change represents an active community media partnership through the UC Davis School of Education and Access Sacramento Cable TV foundation and a host of other community partners. This partnership is unique in its ability to bridge relationships and community collaborations with local mainstream media partners to provide leadership and recognition of youth voice through social media.

These partnerships are extremely valuable in that they are at the root of a growing issue for most media outlets. How do you get younger generations to pay attention to us and find “news” credible? Loyalty comes with time and age. The solution is to pay close attention to youth culture and social media connections. Tom Negrete, Managing Editor at the Sacramento Bee, demonstrated this essential connection at the forum by delivering the keynote. During his talk he was able to connect with student participants in a real way, explaining his up bringing in the South Sacramento area, his issues with dropping out of school, dead-end jobs, and ultimately his career rise through self-determination and community connection. This type of relationship building is core to how the media industry moves forward with building core constituency and how community media is really of the community and for the community. Social media is a viable solution to the failing mainstream media woes. Build genuine social capital through social media, with youth as active media partners – the opportunity to create community media solidarity is limitless. So consider this a call to ACTION, get involved! Support, connect and link to youth media for social change!



Figure 1: South Sacramento Youth Media Council May 7th, 2011

The South Sacramento Youth Media Council:

December 2010 marked the launch of the South Sacramento Youth Media Council. A partnership between the Sacramento City Unified School District led to the development of council headquarters housed at American Legion High School located in the South Sacramento Oak Park Neighborhood. Council members consist of both middle and high school students from the area. Through January and May 2011 the council met bi-weekly on Thursdays at the American Legion after-school program. With over 15 youth members mainly from the Sacramento County School LINKS Community School at Marian Anderson (Close location to American Legion).

This unique level of student engagement provided opportunities for the production of youth-led community media to “high risk” youth in the South Sacramento Building Health Communities. Youth Media Council members were charged with three major activities this year (1) Produce and solicit youth media for social change by local youth (2) Review and select youth media projects to be featured at the forum and (3) Represent youth voice and media at the forum and community planning meetings.

Youth Media Forum Timeline of Community Planning:

December 8th, 2010 marked the first community-planning meeting of the 2011 Youth Forum. Over the past six months the community planning efforts of the youth media forum proved continued success. To-date we have over 20 youth and adult community members that have participated in the development and implementation of the 2nd Annual Youth Media Forum. Additionally, we have maintained a close connection with KCRA Channel 3 the host of the first forum. Anzio Williams (News Director) and Aaron Slavick welcomed this year’s submission review team to the KCRA studios on April 9th to review and select youth media submissions. As digital editor for KCRA, Aaron also played a lead role editing media submissions from featured projects (Youth media submission total = 21) 10 Projects were selected to be viewed at the forum. Pam Dinsmore, Public relations and Tom Negrete, Managing Editor at the Bee were very gracious hosts and welcomed us numerous times to hold planning meetings, discussions and event run-throughs. Students on the youth media council also connected their voice to the planning efforts supporting major roles in facilitating and brainstorming forum planning ideas. The forum was filmed live by Access Sacramento and will be available to view in the coming week at Accesslocal.tv.



