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MEDIA ALERT

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**OC Human Relations Receives
JAMS Foundation/NAFCM Grant**

Agency to work with Santa Ana's Cedar-Evergreen Neighborhood residents to empower them to bring lasting, positive change to their community.

What: OC Human Relations has recently received a grant to develop a protocol aimed at giving disenfranchised groups a voice in resolving conflicts that arise due to cultural differences. The nonprofit will facilitate dialogues between residents, community service organizations, and governmental agencies to address the needs of residents of the Cedar-Evergreen Neighborhood, a low income, primarily immigrant area in Santa Ana.

Who: The grant is the result of a collaboration between the JAMS Foundation, the National Association for Community Mediation (NAFCM) and OC Human Relations.

When: The grant was approved in October, 2016 and initial work has been done to identify community members, both residents and service agencies, who are invested in exploring and addressing issues that prevent residents from engaging more fully in the larger Orange County community. The grant is for two years, with the second year subject to approval.

Why: The Cedar-Evergreen neighborhood has a population of 1300 residents with 41% of the population under the age of 20 (U.S. Census Bureau). It is a high density area with more than 760 apartment complexes packed into a four-block area.

Conversations with community residents and agencies paint a picture of a neighborhood that experiences a high level of violence and crime and significant challenges related to housing and parking. Residents generally do not have strong ties with local organizations or with each other such that in the past when organizations have tried to bring the neighborhood together to build community capacity or develop community leadership, the efforts have largely been unsuccessful.

How: OC Human Relations' approach has been to employ mediation and conflict resolution strategies to bring people together to learn about each other and build understanding and respect for different perspectives. This awareness and respect then creates an opportunity for dialogue and peaceful conflict resolution.



OC Human Relations intends to develop a dialogue-based protocol for successfully empowering disenfranchised neighborhood communities to find their voice, become visible, and effect positive change in their communities. Doing so requires the agency to develop a “do with” approach as opposed to the “do to” or “do for” approaches often applied in community building efforts. It is our expectation that lasting positive change can be achieved by giving the traditionally disenfranchised residents a direct voice in defining and solving the problems in their neighborhood.

About OC Human Relations:

OC Human Relations is a local nonprofit with the mission to foster mutual understanding among residents and eliminate prejudice, intolerance and discrimination in order to make Orange County a better place for ALL people to live, work and do business. For 45 years, OC Human Relations has been honoring individuals, law enforcement and school and community organizations for their contributions to human relations. For more information, visit www.ochumanrelations.org.

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