

**Breaking Down Barriers:
A Three Prong Approach to Fulfilling a Multicultural and Inclusive Mission
At the Alameda County Family Justice Center**

By
Kadie Kelly
Mills College
Oakland, California
Public Policy Program
Masters in Policy Report
Spring 2008

The author conducted this analysis as part of the Public Policy Program at Mills College. This report is submitted as a course requirement for the Masters of Public Policy degree. The judgments and conclusions are solely those of the author, and are not necessarily endorsed by the Public Policy Program at Mills College or any other agency. The author wishes to acknowledge the helpful insights of Professors Carol Chetkovich, Mark Henderson and her fellow MPP colleagues.

Executive Summary

Eliminating barriers for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking has been the driving force behind the ACFJC since its opening in 2004. Up until now it has successfully addressed obstacles which commonly face women who are familiar with and accustomed to mainstream cultural norms and values. For example, it has provided more than 20,000 services to victims and their families since 2005.

However, it has yet to fully realize its potential as an agent for change in Alameda County in eliminating domestic violence and barriers to services for all County residents. At present the ACFJC desires to see the full blossoming of this vision and has commissioned this report to help in strategizing ways to remove barriers for women with diverse cultural backgrounds and needs.

This report consists of six sections. Section I, the introduction, briefly explains the importance of working on cultural competency issues at the ACFJC and describes the methods used and limitations of this analysis.

Section II provides information on obstacles facing Asian American women in combating domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking. These include language barriers and cultural misalignments with mainstream definitions of domestic violence as well as the kinds of interventions employed by main stream service providers.

Section III discusses the demographics of Alameda County and ACFJC's clients, paying particular attention to the number of API here, their utilization rates at the ACFJC and the

rate of domestic violence homicides in this community. Findings here include that while 7% of ACFJC clients identify as API, 27% of domestic violence homicide victims in this county are Asian American. Data also supports that there is an estimated 715 API women who are victimized by domestic violence, sexual assault and/or human trafficking each year.

Section IV discusses the Alameda County Family Justice Center's organizational parameters, i.e. its mission, capacity and sources of legitimacy and support, looking at enabling and constraining factors to determine an appropriate strategy to providing better support to APIs.

Section V puts forth strategic recommendations to achieve the above mentioned goals. It also includes tools and highlights potential funding sources.

Section VI offers concluding remarks and is followed by the appendices.

Recommendations of this report include 1) building operating capacity for language and cultural understanding, 2) addressing immigrants' needs with U visas, which grants legal status to immigrants who report domestic violence related crimes and are helpful to police, and 3) organizing events to build community and awareness of domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking issues in the Asian and Pacific Islander communities in Alameda County.