



## **DRAFT PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 8, 2023**

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### **Oakland Housing Authority (OHA)**

#### **Secures \$2.3 million HUD grant to boost jobs in East Oakland**

**OAKLAND, CA** – City leaders including Mayor Sheng Thao, District 6 Councilmember Kevin Jenkins, Oakland Unified School District Superintendent Kyla Johnson-Trammell joined the Oakland Housing Authority Thursday evening at the Lockwood Gardens public housing community in celebrating the launch of new jobs program, East Oakland Works (EOW). EOW is a four-year program funded by a \$2.3 million dollar Jobs Plus grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). OHA was one of only four housing authorities nationwide to be selected for the competitive grant in this cycle.

Designed to give adult residents of public housing access to proven tools to increase their earnings through employment in a job with a career path, the program combines three evidence-based components: 1) on-site individualized employment and training services 2) work incentives that enable public housing residents to save more of their earned income instead of simply reducing their rent subsidy; and 3) community supports for work that include peer and professional networking opportunities.

During the celebration, which included over 40 residents, OHA Executive Director Patricia Wells encouraged attendees by stating: “In a word, this is about opportunity – opportunity for you, your families, our neighbors and ultimately our community. In four years’ time we’re going to celebrate each and every family at Lockwood Gardens that has realized a dream, whether it’s a small business enterprise, getting a degree, or landing that dream job.”

“I believe in this community because I was a part of it – and I am a testament to what can be when people are given a simple opportunity. When you gain hope back, that’s when beautiful things can happen. I am so happy that this grant was awarded here and that these resources will come directly to Deep East Oakland,” said Mayor Sheng Thao.

“With the launch of the East Oakland Works Jobs Plus Initiative at Lockwood Gardens today,” said HUD Field Office Director Ed Cabrera, “we are proud to partner with the Oakland Housing Authority to deepen our commitment to supporting residents striving to increase their income and earning potential to better themselves, their family, and their community.”

Wells credited the new Jobs Plus grant award to the dedication and hard work of OHA staff, and the support of the OHA Board of Commissioners, local elected leaders and core partners including Oakland Private Industry Council (OPIC), Lao Family and Community Development,

Oakland Adult and Career Education, and Cypress Mandela Training Center. This is the second Jobs Plus grant to be awarded to OHA; the first was implemented at five West Oakland public housing sites from 2016-2020 resulting in over 400 participants achieving a variety of employment, education, and micro-enterprise goals.

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