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## **2014 ORANGE COUNTY COMMUNITY INDICATORS REPORT SHOWS IMPROVING ECONOMY, STRUGGLING FAMILIES**

*The Annual Report Notes that Household Income Remains Low while Cost of Living Continues to Rise*

SANTA ANA, CA – The 15th Annual Community Indicators Report released today shows an Orange County community that continues its slow rebound from the Great Recession while families continue their struggle to make ends meet.

The report, jointly produced by CalOptima and the Children and Families Commission of Orange County with underwriting and a special report from Orange County United Way, offers a comprehensive picture depicting the health and prosperity of Orange County residents relative to peer regions throughout California and U.S.

The three partnering organizations collaborated on this important project due to the impact the report has on their respective decision-making, and in identifying additional opportunities for collaboration amongst Orange County leaders and community stakeholders to address key trends identified in the report.

“We’re pleased to play a leadership role in the development of the annual Community Indicators Report,” said Michael Ruane, Executive Director of the CalOptima Foundation.

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“The data clearly shows that despite recent national and state efforts to **expand** coverage, at the local level we need to continue our efforts to ensure **access** to quality healthcare along with boosting immunization rates and combating asthma.”

“While the Community Indicators Report shows growth in many areas, particularly business and employment, the academic proficiency rates for Orange County are important indicators for the future workforce something that we closely monitor,” said Children and Families Commission Chair Sandra Barry. “This report can serve as a guide for the Commission and other local stakeholders on how and where to target funding for programs that will improve students’ academic performance.”

The Community Indicators Report covers all areas of County health, economic conditions and quality of life, including business, technology and employment, income and housing, education, public safety, environment, infrastructure and healthcare.

Overall, the Report lists some areas of education, the environment and infrastructure as having the strongest gains while identifying access to housing and family financial stability as particularly weak areas.

Specific indicators of note include:

- The county’s population is projected to reach 3.4 million by 2035. That translates to 13% growth between 2010 and 2035, supported by 12% growth in housing and 19% growth in employment over the same period.
- More Orange County residents were in poverty in 2012 (12.7%) than in 2005 (8.8%).
- 75% of Orange County public schools met their individualized, state-identified API improvement target in 2013, down from 85% in 2012
- In 2013, an average of 38.6% of Orange County students in the grades tested had an unhealthy body composition, compared to 43.9% statewide.
- Over one-third of Orange County neighborhoods show a high concentration of families that are financially unstable.
- Less than 43% of households in Orange County can afford an entry-level priced home priced at \$570,090, a steep drop since 2012, when 57% of residents could afford an entry-level home.

Childhood obesity, financial stability and housing security are three of the four key components (along with reduction of the high school dropout rate) identified by United Way’s 10-year community wide action plan, “FACE 2024.”

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“United Way utilized recent Community Indicator Reports in developing our plan,” said President Max Gardner. “Comprehensive reports like this, will become even more valuable to us as we seek to move the needle in addressing key critical human service challenges over the next decade. This year, we are pleased to have commissioned research to develop the Family Financial Stability Index which is highlighted in the 2014 report.”

For more information about the 2014 Community Indicators Report or to request a copy, please contact Lisa Burke at 949-200-6221 or [lisa@lisajburke.com](mailto:lisa@lisajburke.com).

## **ABOUT THE COMMUNITY INDICATORS REPORT**

Released annually since the year 2000, the Community Indicators Report tracks a range of topics important to the county’s health and prosperity. It highlights areas in which the county is performing well and making progress, as well as those where improvement is needed and where community efforts may positively influence Orange County’s future. The data compiled allows stakeholders to ask whether a certain practice or trend is sustainable and helps guide policy makers in fostering and maintaining Orange County’s vitality.

## **ABOUT CALOPTIMA:**

A county organized health system, CalOptima provides publicly funded health plan coverage for low-income families, seniors and people with disabilities in Orange County, Calif. CalOptima’s mission is to provide members with access to quality health care services delivered in a cost-effective and compassionate manner. One in seven Orange County Residents is a CalOptima member through Medi-Cal, OneCare, (a Medicare Advantage Special Needs Plan) or PACE (Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly.) The dedication of more than 600 staff to ensure members have quality care earned CalOptima’s Medi-Cal plan National Committee for Quality Assurance “commendable” accreditation. In total, CalOptima serves nearly 500,000 members with a network of more than 6,500 primary care doctors and specialists, as well as 30 hospitals. For more information, please visit <https://www.caloptima.org>.



**ABOUT THE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMISSION OF ORANGE COUNTY:**

The Children and Families Commission of Orange County oversees the allocation of funds from Proposition 10, which added a 50-cent tax on tobacco products sold in California. Almost \$29 million was allocated last year to fund 161 programs that served more than 136,000 young children. Funds help pay for early education, pediatric primary and specialty health care, children’s dental, homeless prevention, and child development programs for children from the prenatal stage to age 5 and their families. The Commission’s goal is to ensure all children are healthy and ready to learn when they enter school. For more information, please visit [www.occhildrenandfamilies.com](http://www.occhildrenandfamilies.com).

**ABOUT ORANGE COUNTY UNITED WAY:**

Since 1924, Orange County United Way has been a nonprofit organization that works to improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of Orange County to strengthen OUR community. To do this, we focus on the Building Blocks for a self-sufficient life: Education, Income, Health and Housing by investing in Orange County children, families, and individuals, by creating pathways to self-sufficiency. In short, we help people help themselves. Through a 10-year community-wide action plan to move the needle and make a real difference in the lives of Orange County youth and families, United Way is inviting business and individuals to FACE 2024 (Fund, Advocate, Collaborate, Educate) To learn more, or to join our movement, visit [www.unitedwayoc.org](http://www.unitedwayoc.org).

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