



# COMPASSION AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

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## Case Study: Compassionate Sacramento

**Presented: February 28, 2025**

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Compassionate  
Capital Region  
Presents...

# COMPASSION AMBASSADOR

MELINDA PENNY WASHINGTON

This is a 3-minute video not  
able to be played  
within the PDF format.

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# The Gift: Compassion Ambassador Guidebook

- Roles and Responsibilities of a Compassion Ambassador
- Development Strategy for your Community
- Building Your Team
- Stakeholder Relationship Development and Communication Plan
- Community Meeting Toolkit (Structure, Logistics, Roles & Responsibilities, templates and more)
- Project Management
- Sample Budget
- Organizational support



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# Plus...

# Sponsorship Guidebook

- Development Strategy for your Funding Partnership Plan
- Leveraging Your Board or Advisory Committee
- Sponsorship Benefits
- Sponsor On-boarding Plan
- On-going Sponsor Engagement
- Helping Cultivate Compassion Ambassadors within the Sponsor organization
- Sample Budget







# **The Spark for the Compassion Ambassador Role**





**We believe compassion is a collaborative effort because our neighbors' problems are our problems.**

The Kwanzaa principle of Ujima states this belief clearly as: "collective works and responsibility; to build and maintain our community together and make our brothers' and sisters' problems our problems and to solve them together."



**Top row left to right:** Russell Johnigan, Deatrice Lockhart, Rev. Tynya Beverly, Rev. Laura Hansen, Melinda Penny-Washington, Sonny Walebowa.  
**Front row left to right:** Amanda Baker, Melissa Hensel, Joan Marie



**Compassion Ambassadors are assets for the community to support positive action on the issues and ideas of their neighborhoods in partnership with their local government.**



**Compassion Ambassadors, left to right:** Melinda Penny-Washington, Amada Baker, Pauline Haynes, Eliza Deed, Joan Marie, Tynya Beverly, Barbara Range, Laura Hansen, Russell Johnigan, Sonny Walebowa

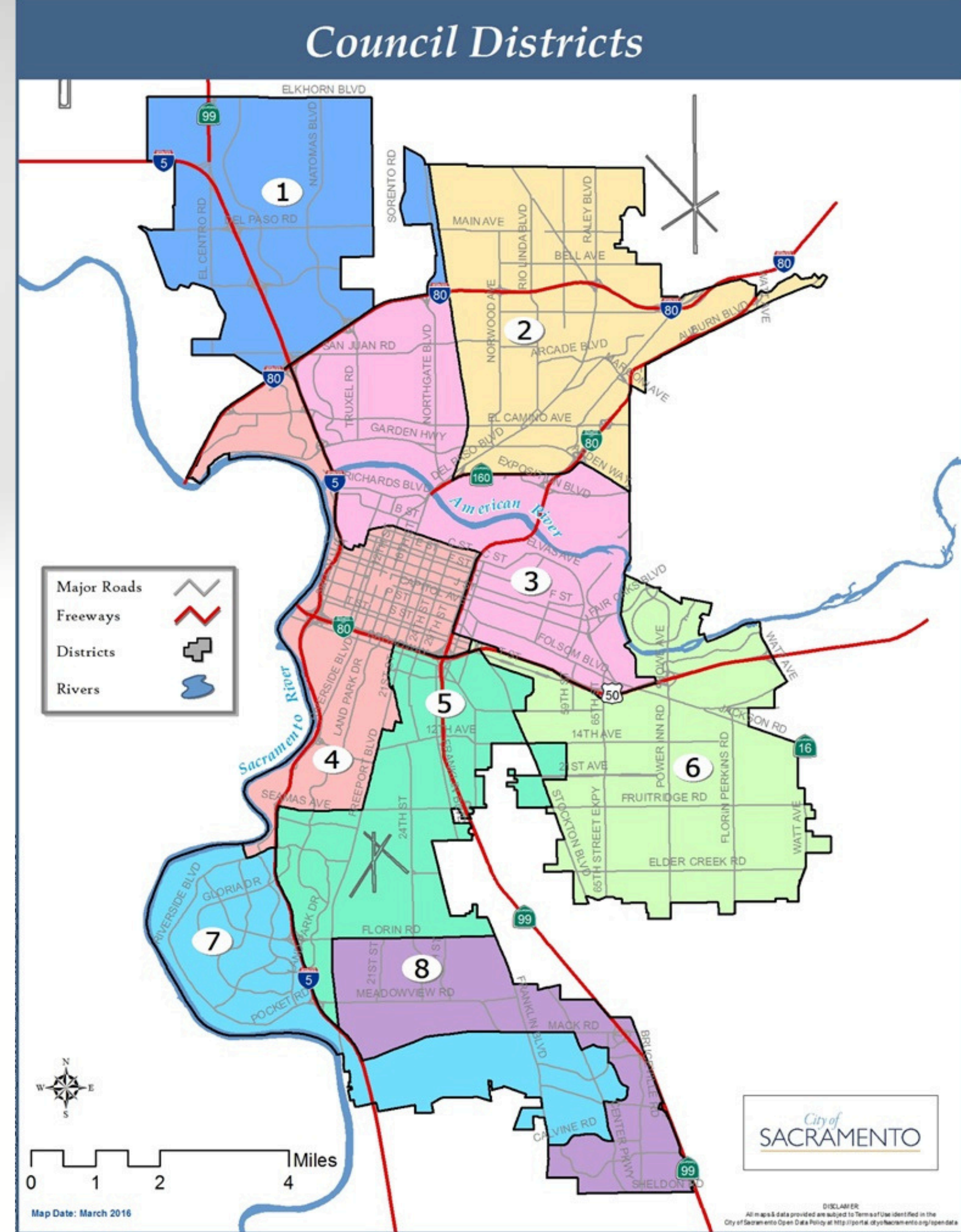
***They act at the will of the residents and can support the community as a connector, weaver, guide, mentor, facilitator, counselor, elder, or steward.***



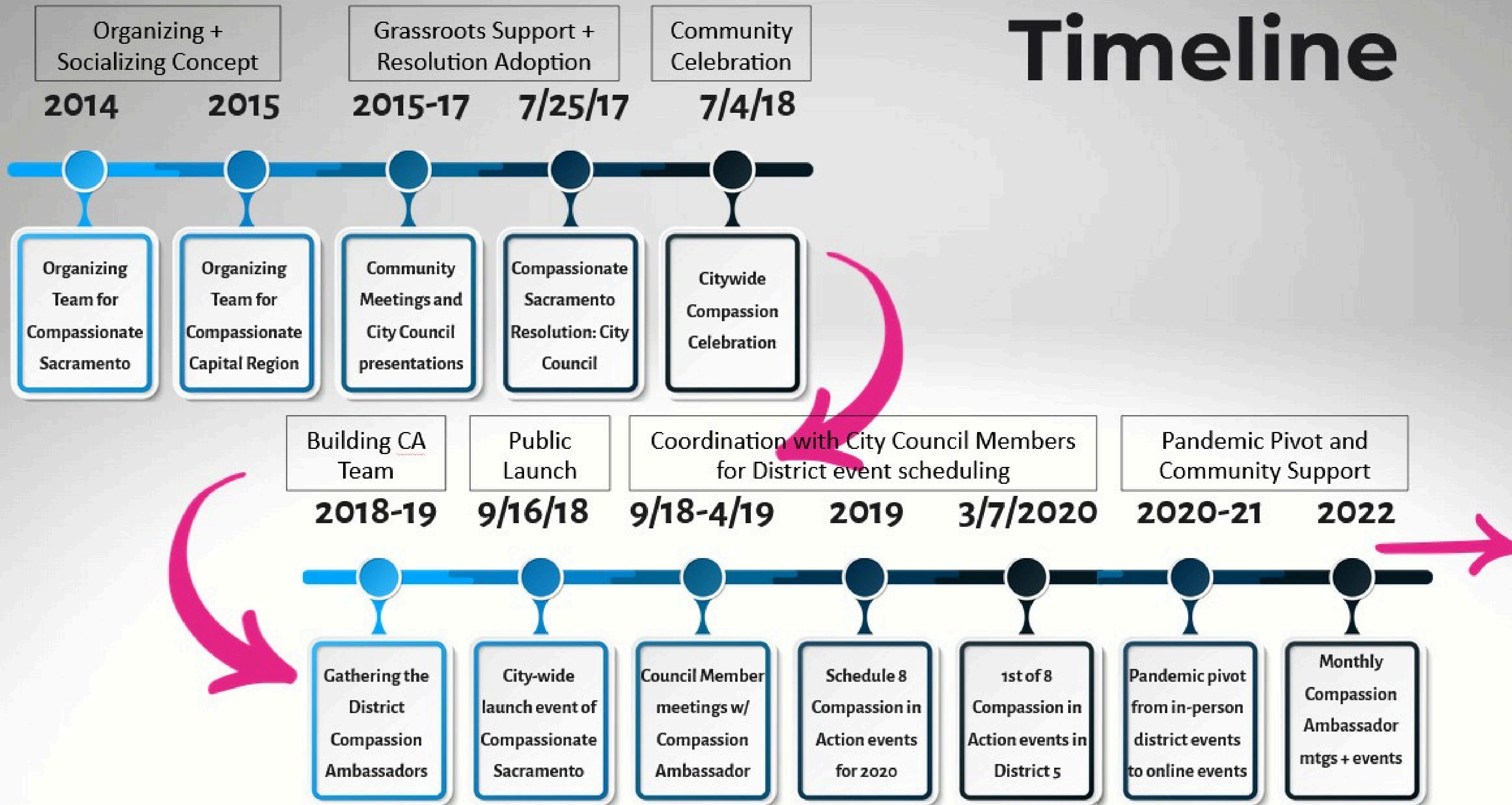
# Sacramento's 8 Districts

Each District is represented by a Councilmember.

A Compassion Ambassador is assigned a district, typically the district in which they live.



# Timeline







# Why it worked

*Caption:  
Compassion in Action  
Art Day for Youth  
in Partnership with  
Brown Issues*



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# **Unwavering Altruism**

Speak to the hearts of others and offer the invitation to rise.



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## **Build a Core Team of Community Leaders People Trust**

Find the altruistic community leaders and connectors who are already doing the work of a Compassion Ambassador to join a team to lighten the work and improve impact.



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# **Stakeholder Mapping and Engagement**

Bring in the organizations and individuals who wield influence, power and are willing to be champions and door-openers.



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# **Local Government Communication Protocols and Best Practices**

“Learn the ropes.” There are unwritten rules when working with and communicating with elected officials and their staff.



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# **Project Management and Preparation**

If you're not organized, few will take you seriously.



A group of approximately 15 youth, mostly teenagers, are sitting in a circle on folding chairs in a grassy park area. They are wearing light blue t-shirts. A man with a red bandana and a dark shirt is sitting in the center of the circle, facing them. In the background, there are trees, a green trash can, and a generator. A sign in the foreground reads "About Personal Agency".

# What We Didn't Have: Capacities for Long-Term Engagement

*Caption: Youth Circle  
for Personal Agency at  
Public Community  
Event*

**About  
Personal  
Agency**

*Lonnie Winston*



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# **Compassion Ambassador Stipends**

Based on the level of activity, your team may decide to volunteer their time.

We recommend a honorarium or stipend funded by a local community foundation or granting organization with aligned interests.

The Pandemic threw into flux the role of the Compassion Ambassador and how the work could be funded.



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## **Partnership with a Medium to Large Nonprofit or Community Organization.**

The nonprofit, Chill Center, Inc. that housed the Compassion Ambassador program, was a small nonprofit without a strong reserve or funding base.

Aligning with a larger community organization would give the program more financial stability to weather social, economic or political headwinds.



# Continuing the Work



Caption:

Compassionate Sacramento Launch Event -- We invited Black Lives Matter to protest during Mayor's speech, then a productive conversation followed. The first the Mayor and BLM were able to engage peacefully.





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# Sharing Our Story and Resources

**#1 Compassion Ambassador Guidebook** for the Compassion Ambassador program -- a comprehensive guide with agendas, templates, and step-by-step project management and event management. 63 pages.

## **#2 Funding through Business Sponsorship Guidebook**

Step-by-step guidance for developing the strategy and executing the plan complete with templates and on-boarding process. 43 pages



# DISCUSSION

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# NEXT STEPS

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**This presentation and discussion was a case study of a Compassion Ambassador program we developed in the Sacramento, CA region.**

**We are sharing the program and its documents to support you in creating or adding to your own initiatives.**



**THANK YOU**

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