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REACH ASHLAND YOUTH CENTER [www.REACHASHLAND.org](http://www.REACHASHLAND.org)  
A project operated by Alameda County Health Care Services Agency

## For Immediate Release

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May 18, 2018

## REACH Ashland Youth Center Celebrates Five Year Anniversary

**San Leandro** - on Friday, May 18, 2018 the REACH Ashland Youth Center will celebrate the 5 Year Anniversary of the youth center opening. The event is being hosted by the REACH Youth Leadership Council (YLC) to celebrate our youth and the impact the youth center has had on their lives. The community is invited to attend the family and community friendly event that will include carnival activities, food, and youth performances from 3:30-6:30 PM, 16335 E. 14<sup>th</sup> St., San Leandro.

Ashley Cobbs REACH staff points out, "The REACH Youth Leadership Council members are hosting this celebration to honor the founding youth, REACH staff, the five-year milestone and the community partners who have come together to create safety, possibility and belonging. The youth are excited to show their youth power and voice. Years ago, youth came together to create REACH and the Youth Leadership Council wanted to come together to celebrate the five-year anniversary."

"It is a big deal for REACH to be here for 5 years. Helping kids and running REACH is a lot of work. So much love and heart to help kids is shown by the staff. The YLC wants to show our appreciation and love for the REACH staff and privilege of this beautiful building." Terris Ricks, 21, Youth Leadership Council Member.

"The REACH Youth want to show how we can come together and work together to put on the celebration. We want to show everyone what REACH is all about and that we're fun." Belem Ojeda, 17, REACH Youth Leadership Council Member.

This past year, 91% of youth surveyed reported that they know where to go for health and wellness services: medical, dental, counseling, and nutrition. On average, REACH has served 3,000 youth annually over the last 3 years. The percentage of youth who report talking with a staff member at REACH about personal challenges has increased from 31% in 2014 to 67% in 2017. Ninety-three percent of REACH members surveyed agreed with the statement, "as a result of participating in REACH activities, I have become actively involved in improving my community."

Jose J., 22 a REACH member for the past five years, says, "Most importantly, for me, REACH helped me to develop my artistic identity and has given me the palate to paint my way into that career."

Alameda County Health Care Service Agency (the operator of the youth center) in partnership with the many dedicated youth providers that includes Alameda County Deputy Sheriff's Activities League, Alameda County Office of Education, San Lorenzo Unified School District, Alameda County Library, Soulciety, La Clinica de la Raza, and Kidango have worked collaboratively to uplift our communities' youth and provide them with recreation, education, arts, youth employment, and health and wellness services. The REACH Executive Director, Pedro Naranjo said, "It is an honor and a privilege to serve the young people of the Ashland Community (unincorporated area of San Leandro) because the young people are our biggest asset. "

REACH Ashland Youth Center – [reachashland.org](http://reachashland.org)

Opened in May of 2013, REACH is a 31,500-square foot facility, located in the unincorporated Alameda County community of Ashland. Inside REACH there is a health clinic, media studio, dance studio, fitness room, library, outdoor amphitheater, computer lab, employment center, educational, vocational and artistic activities, an infant and toddler development center, and an onsite café. REACH's target population are youth ages 11-24, living in Ashland/Cherryland.

REACH is in one of the most racially and ethnically diverse communities of Alameda County, where 20% of youth are living in poverty. Unemployment and juvenile arrests are major issues that challenge the community. The social, economic, and environmental realities that Ashland youth face each day place them at increased risk for poor health and educational outcomes.

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