



Mike Huntley Jewish Family and Children's Service Long Beach, CA



"The Encore Fellowship has given me the opportunity to see the impact I can have on an organization that is stretched for resources. I didn't realize how much amazing work is being done by people that just felt the need to do something." Mike Huntley Encore Fellow

"In addition to helping us lay the foundation for future program growth and revenue generation in two key program areas, Mike helped us form key connections in the Long Beach area that we will build on in the future." Kathryn Miles, Executive Director, JFCS Long Beach

I spent over 30 years in general management, sales, marketing, strategic planning, and manufacturing, and growing businesses in diverse industries such as aerospace, automotive, medical, electronic and electro-mechanical device manufacturing. The last five years, I've built my own company, MexAmerica Sales, to address a growing need for U.S. based companies to grow their business in Mexico. My business is at the level where my staff is very autonomous and handles the vast majority of the daily tasks which frees up time for me. With my youngest daughter going to college, I was looking for an opportunity to offer my skills and talents to an organization working to better our world on a local level. I felt I needed to learn about non-profit organizations and how they work. I'm an alumni of UCLA Executive Management program and learned about Encore Fellowships from the network I have there.

I had started working on a local issue because I noticed the differences between the wealthier and poorer middle schools in Long Beach, in terms of students involved in PACE, a college preparation program. I worked on getting mentors for students to encourage them to apply to the program, and began going to schools pitching the program. I wanted to get kids in college and stop the cycle of poverty. I also served as a board member for 6th Floor Families, a non-profit my 13 year old daughter founded in support of the patients and their families, in the Leukemia Stem Cell Transplant unit on

the 6th floor of the UCLA Medical Center. I wanted to learn and apply new knowledge. My work with the Jewish Family and Children's Service of Long Beach and West Orange County ideally fit my skills. As the Strategic Planning Consultant, my job consisted of identifying and growing new services. JFCS provides counseling to children, adults, couples, and families. They wanted to build affordable counseling services and generate more revenues. The goal leveraged my sales and marketing skills since it was focused on finding more customers and building programs.

One project I led involved a senior housing facility run by HUD in Long Beach. As seniors grew older, there were questions as to whether the facility was safe for them. We conducted a safety assessment and lifestyle assessment for free. The board of the housing facility then hired JCFS to provide 3-4 sessions of case management services. Individuals could pay to continue the services. We generated new clients for JFCS that way.

Another project involved working with St. Mary's Hospital in Long Beach. They had funds to support older adults from selling some senior living housing on their property. They have several facilities for servicing older adults such as a separate emergency room, counseling and social services and they plan to use the funds from the sale of their housing facility to build a Center for Integrated Care which will house all of their older adult services facilities in one location.

JCFS is involved in partnering with them to plan this facility which will position them to be able to provide counseling and social services for seniors referred by the Center. Another partnership with St. Mary's which I led is with their mobile medical unit, a mobile exam facility that goes to senior centers and checks blood pressure, diabetes and other vital signs. Our hope is that JCFS social service interns will provide further services such as depression and Alzheimer's screenings.

The Executive Director and I shared a lot of learning with each other. I have a lot of experience in many different industries, teams, people, and countries. The Executive Director's background is in social services and she has an MBA with a focus on non-profit management. She included me as a member of her management team, and we met as a team weekly. She mentored me on the non-profit world. I learned about it, firsthand, which helped me solidify my understanding of the different aspects of this world, and had a deep effect on me.

At the same time, I was able to evolve into acting as a business consultant for her. With my years leading teams and organizations, I started sharing with her my observations about the strengths and weaknesses of members of her team, ways I might handle various issues and challenges, financial strategies, suggestions on the strategic direction they are heading. It turns out about 80% of the time, the private sector experience applies to social impact organizations. She graciously accepted my mentoring, as I accepted hers. I didn't come in to the assignment thinking it was part of the job; it just evolved. We became mentors to each other. I have been asked to be on the board of my agency but I am going to continue in my current role to be more effective as a silver bullet for JFCS.

Kathryn Miles, Executive Director comments, "Having Mike join us as an Encore Fellow has been beneficial for JFCS. He integrated well in to our management team, taking the time to learn the organizational culture. Mike was flexible as our projects morphed along the way. He offered guidance without overstepping boundaries."

The Encore Fellowship has given me the opportunity to see the impact I can have on an organization that is stretched for resources. I would like to seek out other work with other agencies, now that I have had my eyes opened up to this type of life. I didn't realize how much amazing work is being done by people that just felt the need to do something. They don't seek the limelight for themselves, but for funding purposes, because they feel their work needs to be done.