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I am a retired CEO of the Family Service Agency of San Francisco (FSA/SF) and had a 36-year professional relationship and personal friendship with Robert Tobin. It is a privilege to recommend him.

Our work together began in 1976 when he worked with the Welfare Rights Organization and represented several FSA/SF clients. We also were members of several committees working to improve services to those with mental illness and substance abuse issues.

His first major management assignment came in 1985 when he was the CEO of Tenderloin-based Hospitality House, where he started to develop his innovative approach to enabling consumer self-sufficiency. I consulted with Robert as he developed a strategic plan for the future of Hospitality House.

After my retirement as CEO, I continued our friendship and consulting relationship and facilitated a strategic plan for the Boys and Girls Club in Auburn. I was most impressed with his application of client resiliency theories to a practical youth development program. Indeed his capacity to move from theory to practice and as well as good management and advocacy skills make Robert an excellent candidate for an executive leadership role in a start-up, turn-around or expanding human service organization.

His client - centered approach was fully developed during his decade-long tenure as CEO of Sacramento-based Cottage Housing. The resident retention and self-sufficiency data of Cottage Housing is impressive.

Robert brings extensive experience, expertise, education and enthusiasm to any effort in which he is engaged. He knows how to work with government and philanthropic organizations. He understands the target population more than most. His proven approach to client self-sustainability will have positive effect program outcomes.

He has well-developed leadership attributes. He is a high-energy role model for his staff. His interpersonal skills put all at ease and he motivates others. He is committed to developing his staff and is a born collaborator. Most important he is a future oriented leader and will bring stability and sustainability practices to any organization.

Please free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Ira Okun