



Contra Costa Continuum of Care

Homelessness Awareness Month Toolkit

2021

Letter from the Chair

The Contra Costa Council on Homelessness is happy to recognize November as Homelessness Awareness Month! This special month provides inspiration and opportunities to reflect on important community work being done to address homelessness, learn how to engage and hear stories of hope, resilience and compassion from community members impacted by this issue. Throughout the month of November, we hope you will take time to learn, engage and celebrate and utilize this toolkit to spread awareness.

This toolkit is divided into three sections:

In our **LEARN** section, you will find data about homelessness in Contra Costa, an overview of our homeless Continuum of Care (CoC) and available services as well as insights into the innovative approaches and pivots made during the COVID19 pandemic.

In our **ENGAGE** section, you will find events, volunteer and donation opportunities and advocacy tools. Opportunities to create change abound!

The toolkit concludes (truly saving the best for last) with the **CELEBRATE** section. We highlight our new short video “H.O.P.E.- Hearing Other People's Experiences”, “The Journal”, a series of zines created by residents of our Project Room Key program, and end with an Awards section filled with rich details of the spirit and incredible work of individuals and organizations impacted by and addressing homelessness in Contra Costa.

Homeless Awareness Month is an effort of collaboration and requires engagement. This toolkit can act as a resource for those who want to learn more, do more, and share more. We hope you will help us to spread the word!

Lindy Johnson
Chair, Council on Homelessness

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Data on Homelessness

The data below comes from the "Contra Costa Continuum of Care Calendar Year 2020 Annual Report" which summarizes the demographics, program utilization, and outcomes for people who accessed homeless services in Contra Costa County's CoC during calendar year 2020.

For the full report, go to: <https://cchealth.org/h3/coc/reports.php#Annual>

9,767

people accessed
homeless services in
2020



Black/African American (4x) and American Indian/Alaska Native (7x) were over-represented in the CoC data relative to the county's general population.



9% increase in households served between 2018-2020



14% of households in the CoC in 2020 were families with children



25% of households accessing crisis response services had a history of domestic violence



50% increase in individuals age 62+ served between 2018-2020



2,538 households maintained or moved into permanent housing in 2020



49% increase (since 2018) in the number of deaths of people experiencing homelessness who die in a setting without a medical provider present

Connecting to Services

For an Access Point flyer , go to: <https://cchealth.org/h3/coc/pdf/CES-flyer.pdf>

CALL



**CALL 211 or
Text "HOPE" to 20121**

FREE CONFIDENTIAL SERVICE
AVAILABLE 24/7

Through 211, individuals and families experiencing homelessness are referred to:

- shelter
- CARE centers
- CORE homeless outreach teams
- emergency food
- job training
- healthcare
- mental health counseling
- transportation
- substance abuse treatment
- other services

Callers will be matched and referred to appropriate programs

CARE



**WALK INTO A CARE
CENTER**

Coordinated Assessment Referral and Engagement (CARE) Centers

RICHMOND (GRIP)

165 22nd Street
M-F: 9 am - 3 pm
Sat-Sun: 8 am – 2 pm

Current Services:

- Basic needs services (meals, bathrooms, showers, mail, laundry)
- Case management : M-F, 9am - 3pm
- Lunch served (inside or to-go) 7 days/week
- Housing navigation

WALNUT CREEK

(Trinity Center)
1888 Trinity Ave
M-F, 8 am-4 pm

Current Services:

- Basic needs services (meals, bathrooms, showers, mail, laundry)
- Breakfast and lunch served inside with social distancing enforcement
- Case management
- Housing navigation

CORE



CALL 211 FOR CORE

The Coordinated Outreach Referral, Engagement (C.O.R.E.) teams serve as an entry point into Contra Costa's coordinated entry system for unsheltered persons and work to locate, engage, stabilize and house unsheltered individuals and families. The outreach teams identify individuals living on the streets, assess their housing and service needs, and facilitate connection to shelter and services.

To notify a C.O.R.E. team about an unsheltered homeless individual or family, please call 211. Please note that C.O.R.E. teams are not designed for crisis response. For medical or other emergencies involving homeless individuals, please call 911.

Connecting to Services: Families with Children (0-5)

In addition to accessing services through CALL-CARE-CORE, families with minor children may also connect to homeless-related services through these resources listed below.

Bay Area Crisis Nursery

For parents with children aged 0-5 experiencing homelessness who need additional childcare and housing support for their children.

- **Nursery:** Children ages 0-5 may stay at the Nursery for up to 30 days.
- **Emergency Childcare Services-** Emergency Childcare Services are now offered between 7 am – 7 pm daily!
- **Crisis Day Services-** Support parents in finding and maintaining employment, attending court dates, classes, medical appointments, etc.
- **Crisis Residential Overnight Program-** Parents voluntarily admit their child(ren) when experiencing a crisis.
- **Respite Overnight Program-** For parents who just need a break can visit the Nursery for monthly visits. These visits range from 1-3 days.

For more information go to <https://bayareacrisisnursery.org/> or call 925-685-8052.

Head Start

For parents with children aged 0-5 who need free or low cost Child Care and Pre-School.

- Part-day or full-day care is available.
- Center hours are 7:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
- Home-based services, health and nutrition services, and mental health services offered

For more information, call (925) 272-4727.

Connecting to Services: Families with School Aged Children

In addition to accessing services through CALL-CARE-CORE, families with minor children may also connect to homeless-related services through these resource listed below.



District Homeless Liaisons

School aged children experiencing homelessness may qualify for specific help and resources. Each school district has a Homeless Liaison to ensure that homeless children and youths are enrolled in, and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in, school.

District Homeless Liaisons can help homeless children and youth that fall into the following categories:

- An individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence;
- "Doubled-up" families, children in families that live with friends or relatives due to a loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;
- Children and youth living in a shelter, transitional housing, motel, vehicle, or campground; and
- "Unaccompanied youth," children and youth who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

To find the Homeless Liaison for your school district and to learn more about what resources might be available, call 925-942-3300 or click [here](#).

Connecting to Services: Transition Aged Youth

In addition to accessing services through CALL-CARE-CORE, Transition Aged youth (TAY) ages 18-25, may also connect to TAY specific homeless-related services by calling 510-236-9612.



Homeless? Runaway? Kicked out?

510-236-9612

If you are between the ages of 18-24 and have run away, been thrown out, or are feeling unsafe in your home, we have free and voluntary services:

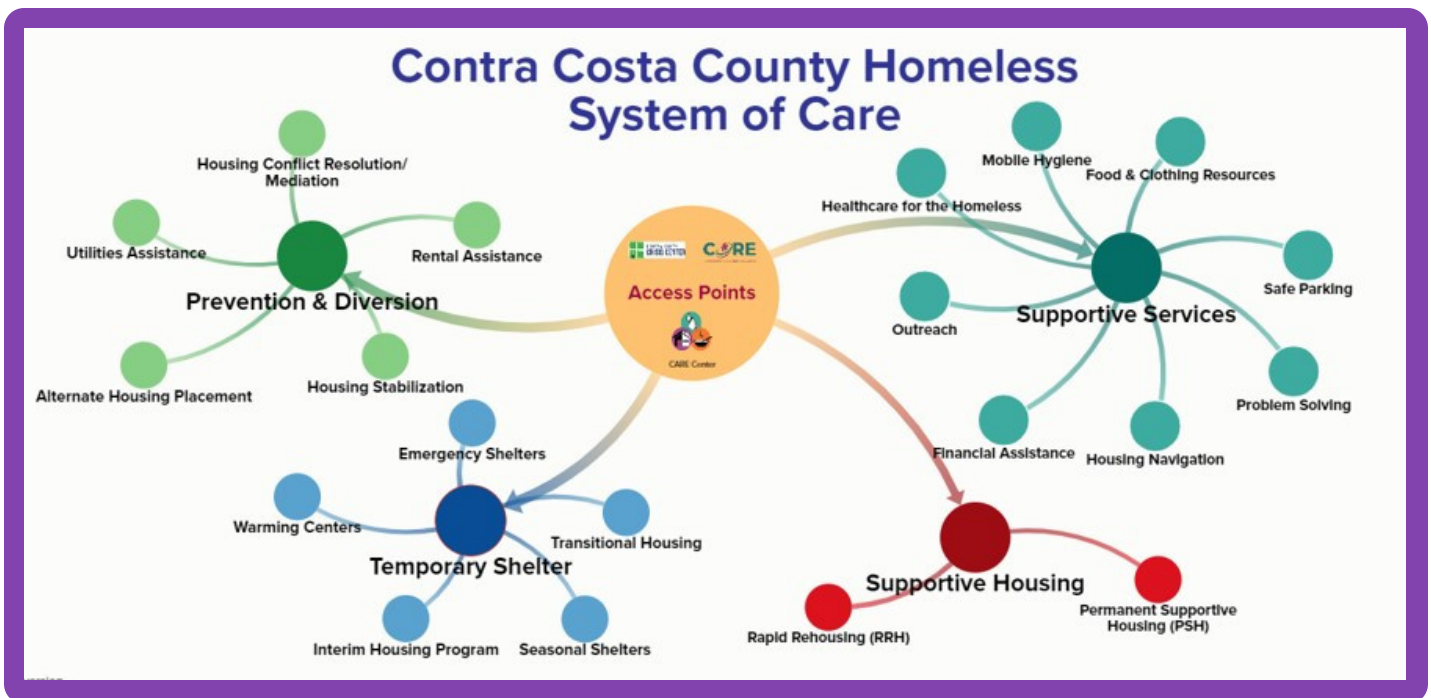
Counseling Housing Search Assistance
Substance Abuse Prevention Groups
Linkages to Substance Abuse and Mental Health Treatment
Employment Assistance **Drop-in Center**
Life Skills **Case Management** Health Care
Meals, showers, laundry facilities, mail service
Transitional Housing Family Reunification
Peer Support Groups **Emergency Housing**
Transportation
School Enrollment/GED Prep

Services Available

From CALL-CARE-CORE, people seeking homeless services may be connected to a variety of available resources that best meet their needs.

The general categories of resources people may be connected to are:

- Prevention & Diversion**
- Temporary Shelter**
- Supportive Services**
- Supportive Housing**



Because our homeless system of care does not have enough capacity to meet the needs of every person seeking services, instead of "first come, first serve", some resources are distributed through a process called Coordinated Entry that you will learn about on the next page.

Coordinated Entry



Contra Costa uses Coordinated Entry to quickly connect individuals and families to available and appropriate housing and services.

The purpose of a Coordinated Entry System is to ensure that all people experiencing a housing crisis:

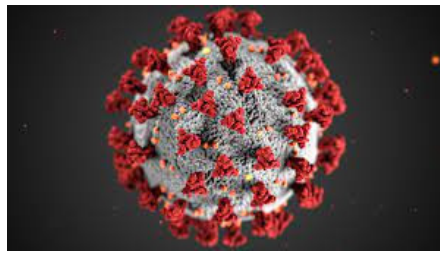
- have fair and equal access to resources; and
- are quickly identified, assessed for, and connected to housing and homeless services based on their strengths and needs.

Coordinated Entry:

- uses standardized tools and practices;
- incorporates a system-wide Housing First (no barriers to entry) approach; and
- in an environment of scarce resources, coordinates housing support so that those with the most severe service needs are prioritized.

For more information about Coordinated Entry in Contra Costa County, go to:
<https://cchealth.org/h3/coc/#CES>

COVID-19: Impact



The CoC continues to support providers, staff, and consumers through the COVID-19 pandemic. CoC partners are providing guidance, COVID-19 testing, vaccines, and implementing strategies to transition individuals in Project Room Key hotel rooms into permanent housing.

For more information about COVID-19 go to <https://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org>.

COVID Testing

Between January and September 2021, our community conducted

18,456

tests for COVID-19 for people experiencing homelessness in Contra Costa.

COVID Cases

Between January and September 2021,

698

people experiencing homelessness in Contra Costa tested positive for COVID-19.

COVID Vaccination

Between January and September 2021, our community provided

8,050

vaccine doses to people experiencing homelessness in Contra Costa.

COVID-19: New Resources

PROJECT ROOM KEY (PRK)



In April 2020, the state launched Project Room Key (PRK) to help communities move people experiencing homelessness from shelters to hotels, to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Contra Costa quickly leased up 5 hotels and began moving people from shelters. Once the sheltered population was moved, additional rooms were prioritized for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness deemed most at risk of contracting or vulnerable to complications from COVID-19.

During the course of 2021, two of the hotels were closed as our Concord and Respite Shelters reopened and other shelters began to accept more residents. Before the hotel closures, the homeless system of care began to speed up housing placements for people in Project Room Key to make sure no one would be unsheltered or unhoused by the time the two hotel programs closed.

As part of that process, the community prioritized COVID-19 Project Room Key residents for 100 Mainstream Vouchers from the Housing Authority of the County of Contra Costa. Roughly \$3 million in Rapid Rehousing resources were also dedicated to this population.

As 2021 comes to a close, we still have two hotels in operation, with plans to continue one of those programs through December 2021 and the other through June 2022.

COVID-19: New Resources

EAST COUNTY INTERIM HOUSING PROJECT (ECHIP)



The Motel 6 in Pittsburg, purchased with state of California Homekey funds awarded to the county, is being remodelled and will open this winter as the East County Interim Housing Program (ECHIP), with Bay Area Community Services (BACS) contracted as the service provider.

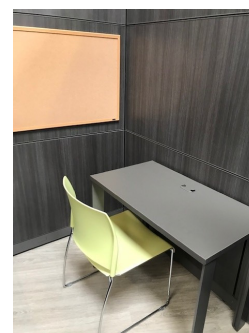
The site has:

- 172 rooms (non-congregate);
- 24/7 Residential Counselor team;
- Care Coordinators;
- Employment Coordinators;
- Benefits linkages and advocacy;
- On-site mental health services; and
- Community based Housing Locators

Referrals to ECHIP are made by CORE Outreach teams. Connect to CORE by calling 211.

COVID-19: New Resources

CONCORD SHELTER AND SERVICE CENTER



While the Concord Shelter and Service Center was closed during the pandemic it underwent a major transformation!

Shelter

- Individual sleep stations;
- Capacity to accept couples and adult-only multi-generational households;
- Increased privacy and physical distancing;
- Greater equity in household types that can be served; and
- Respect for the companionship pets provide to many persons experiencing homelessness.

Service/Warming Center

- Restrooms, laundry, showers and mail services for adults experiencing homelessness;
- Outdoor pocket park to promote a sense of community;
- Limited kennel space for companion animals; and
- Warming Center with 6 beds for night-by-night shelter placement

Concord Service Center

Hours: Monday - Friday 8 am - 5 pm
Location: 2047 Arnold Industrial Way,
Concord

Concord Warming Center:

Hours: 7 days/week; 8 pm - 8 am
Location: 2047 Arnold Industrial Way,
Concord

Please note, that unlike CARE Centers, the Service Center will not offer in-depth case management or housing assessments.

The Warming Center can be accessed through CORE outreach by calling 211. Available beds will be prioritized based on assessed vulnerability.

COVID-19: New Resources

Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP)

Contra Costa County tenants and landlords impacted by COVID-19 can apply for assistance from the state COVID-19 Rent Relief program called Emergency Rental Assistance Aid Program (ERAP).

If you have had trouble paying your rent due to COVID-19, you can qualify for rental assistance for up to 100% of the rent you owe!

TO APPLY:

- Visit: <https://housing.ca.gov>;
- Call: 833-430-2122; or
- Reach out to one of the agencies listed below

Able Community Foundation
(510) 768-3100
West Contra Costa
Languages: English, Thai,
Laotian,
Russian, Vietnamese,
Mongolian

The Latina Center
(510) 260-1264 or (510)
233-8595
West Contra Costa
Languages: English, Spanish

Monument Impact
(925) 954-9488
In-person appointments
available
Central/East County
Languages: English, Spanish

AAPI Coalition
(510) 630-6852 or (510)
260-0602
Countywide
Languages: English, Nepali,
Hindi

LISC Partner Network
Hotline
(833) 687-0967
Countywide
Connects to many
organizations

Engage



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Calendar of Events for November

8th

Monday
1 pm - 3 pm



CoC Learning Hub: "Hearing Other People's Experiences (H.O.P.E.) Beyond Homelessness"

Location: <https://homebaseccc.zoom.us/j/84943539480>

Join us for a panel discussion of people with lived experience of homelessness! After the Question & Answer session, we will break out into smaller groups to reflect on the learnings from the panel and finally, come back together to report out 1) on actions participants will take and 2) actions participants want to see decision makers take to address homelessness in our community.

9th

Tuesday
9:30 am



Homelessness Awareness Month Presentation to the Contra Costa Board of Supervisors

Location: Agenda with link will be posted here 96 hours before meeting: http://64.166.146.245/agenda_publish.cfm?id=&mt=ALL

Join community members and advocates as we honor Homelessness Awareness Month award nominees, receive a proclamation from the Board of Supervisors declaring November Homelessness Awareness Month and celebrate together!

Calendar of Events for November

17th

Wednesday
6 pm- 8 pm



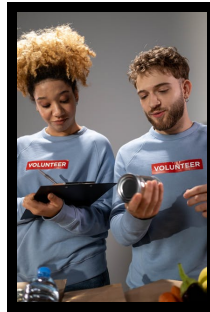
Community Forum on Homelessness in Walnut Creek

Location: https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://www.eventbrite.com/e/community-forum-on-homelessness-in-walnut-creek-tickets-176412212677?utm-campaign=social&utm-content=attendeeshare&utm-medium=discovery&utm-term=listing&utm-

The Walnut Creek Homeless Task Force, established in 2013, is hosting a free public Community Forum on Homelessness via Zoom. This is the fourth in a series of forums designed to give community members and business owners a platform to discuss homelessness in Walnut Creek and to learn about the actions being taken in the city and region to address homelessness. The Fall forum will focus on mental health issues and services available to homeless and at-risk individuals and will kickoff with a video providing background on the Continuum of Care available to displaced people in Walnut Creek.

Volunteer

To see a full list of homeless service agencies with volunteer opportunities, go to: <https://cchealth.org/h3/coc/pdf/Volunteer-Opportunities-at-CoC-agencies.pdf>.



Hope Solutions

Volunteer Opportunity:

- Homework Club Support: We need a few more compassionate and patient individuals to provide academic support and mentoring for the children in our program. Volunteers are asked to commit to one afternoon per week, Monday through Thursday, for the rest of the school year. Adults and high school sophomores through seniors are encouraged to volunteer their time.
- Friday Fun Days: Hope Solutions Enrichment Programs at Lakeside Apartments and Los Medanos Village bring fun enrichment activities to the children every Friday from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm, on site. We are looking for volunteers who are interested in sharing a skill, talent, or activity with the children in our programs.
- Volunteers to Pick Up and Deliver Furniture: Transporting beds and other furniture throughout Contra Costa County has been a challenge the last couple of months. We need strong friends with a large car or truck to pick up and deliver furniture to residents. We would love to add you to our call list and utilize your time once or twice a month.

When: Ongoing

Contact:

- If you are interested in becoming a Homework Club tutor, please complete our interest form [here](#).
- If you are interested in hosting an activity on a Friday afternoon for Friday Fun Days or able to help pick up and deliver furniture, please contact us at development@hopesolutions.org

Volunteer

To see a full list of homeless service agencies with volunteer opportunities, go to: <https://cchealth.org/h3/coc/pdf/Volunteer-Opportunities-at-CoC-agencies.pdf>.



Humanity Way

Volunteer Opportunity: "Holidays For Humanity": taking care of our community during the holidays. Making brochures, collecting donations, making cards for families in need, mailing and emails, logging and recording data and contacting the public and families

When: November and December

Contact: DeVonn Powers at: dpowers@humanityway.org.

STAND! For Families Free of Violence

Volunteer Opportunity: On-going. Please see website for continually updated opportunities and training.

When: Ongoing

Contact: <https://www.standffov.org/volunteer/>

Donate

To see a full list of homeless service agencies with donation needs, go to:

<https://cchealth.org/h3/coc/pdf/Donations.pdf>

Contra Costa Adult Continuum of Services

Items Needed: Doggy poop bags for new doggy park on site!

Drop off Location: 2047 Arnold Industrial Way, Concord

Contact: Call Enedina Mendoza, 510-334-7068

Contra Costa Community College Sock Drive

Items Needed: Socks! All socks will be donated to homeless service provider organizations in Contra Costa.

Drop off Location: Contact Jo Bruno

Contact: Contact Jo Bruno, Health and Human Services (HHS) Club, Contra Costa Community College at hhsclubheart@gmail.com for details.

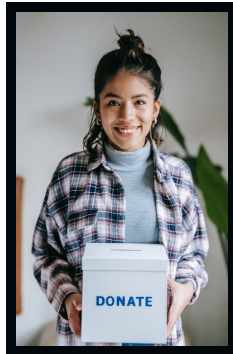
CORE Outreach

Items Needed: Clean blankets or moving blankets

Drop off Location: 2400 Bisso Lane, Suite D2, Concord

Contact: Mike Callanan at michael.callanan@cchealth.org or at 925-316-9619

Donate



Facing Homelessness

Items Needed: We are in need of hygiene products, including baby wipes, blankets, sleeping bags, women and men clothing, and hand warmers.

Drop off Location: Other than our weekly location where we serve downtown, we do not have a place to drop off supplies but can pick up any items that are donated.

Contact: Nichole Gardner at facinghomelessnessinantioch@gmail.com or call 925-755-6975

Glo's Independent Living

Items Needed: Masks, blankets, hand sanitizer

Drop off Location: 145 6th Street, Richmond

Contact: Call or text Tiffany Powell 510-932-0882

Donate



Hope Solutions

Items Needed:

Furnishings and Household Items: Every month, we have families and individuals moving into homes and we provide furnishings and household items for incoming residents. We can always use good furnishings, cleaning supplies, kitchen kits, bath towels, dishes, pots and pans, and silverware. We also need NEW beds and bedding including several full- and twin- size beds. For a complete list of furnishings and items needed this month, please look at the attached Furnishing Request sheet [here](#).

Seeking In-Kind Donations:

- \$25 gift cards to Grocery Outlet, FoodMaxx, or Walmart
- Menstrual products of all kinds
- Diapers size 1 through 6 and baby wipes for families in our program
- \$5 Starbucks and Jamba Juice gift cards for report card check-ins
- Welcome Kits for new families moving into permanent housing
- Cleaning supplies for our multi-site clients (Comet, Windex, Simple Green, buckets, mops, etc.)

Contact: If you have any of these items to donate or want more information, please email development@hopesolutions.org.

Donate

STAND! For Families Free of Violence

Items Needed: Regular size personal hygiene products including for various ethnicity-specific hair and skin types.

Drop off Location: In Concord. ONLY BY APPOINTMENT

Contact: Rhonda James at rhondaj@standffov.org or 510-815-4538

Trinity Center

Items Needed: The most urgently needed items are listed here: <https://trinitycenterwc.org/shop-with-a-purpose/>.

Drop off Location: Please contact to coordinated drop off

Contact: Email info@trinitycenterwc.org or call (925) 949-8712

Winter Nights Family Shelter, Inc.

Items Needed: New standard size pillows, twin fitted sheets, family size hygiene items, men's and women's deodorant, boys socks, gas cards, Target cards, Clorox wipes, Clorox spray, extra large nitrile gloves.

Drop off Location: 404 Gregory Lane #7, Pleasant Hill

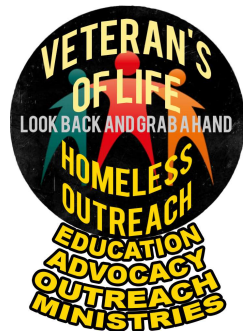
Contact: Email info@cccwinternights.org or call 925-435-2074

Guidance on Clothing Donations

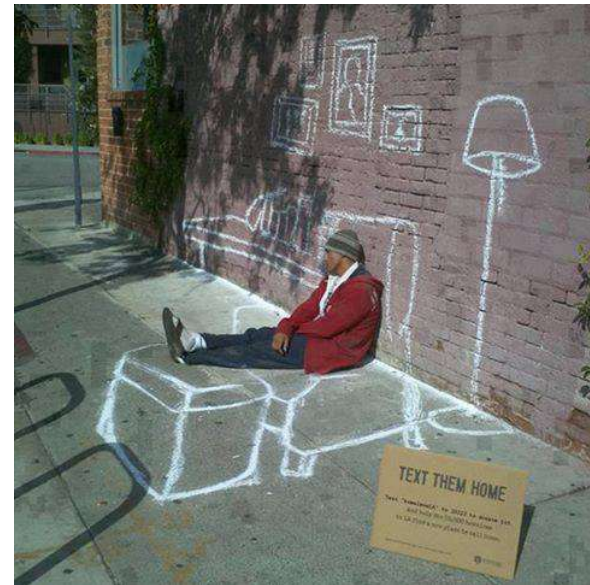


The printable booklet
**"CLOTHING DONATIONS CONSIDERATIONS &
BEST CHOICES FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING STREET HOMELESSNESS"**
on the following pages was developed by John Warden, a community member
with a lived experience of homelessness.

**CLOTHING DONATIONS CONSIDERATIONS &
BEST CHOICES
FOR
PEOPLE EXPERIENCING STREET
HOMELESSNESS**



VETERAN'S OF LIFE MINISTRIES
EDUCATION ADVOCACY OUTREACH



WHAT IS PROPER CLOTHING FOR PEH ON THE STREET

These days most people experience homelessness without shelter. They are forced to improvise or construct shelter from wind and rain, snow and moisture. If they can't make a cover of some sort then they may just be standing in the rain or sitting in the rain trying to not move so the wetness doesn't rub against them and chill them to the bone.

When the weather turns wet and windy the homeless try to find places they can "hangout" and stay dry. Throughout their day this involves migrating from a coffee shop to a library to a stoop of a dumpster area back to a coffee shop until they wear out their welcome and get told to leave. Then they head out into the cold, wet world. They get wet and then cold and then have nothing to warm them up. They stay like that until the rain clears. As this happens the skies clear and the cold returns. None of this helps this person dry out or get warm. Their skin is pruned and their feet are absolutely frozen. How would you feel to start your day off like this? How would your demeanor and attitude be? How would you cope day in and day out with this?

What if there were clothes that would help you manage better? What if the homeless on the street had more than cotton hoodies and down jackets to wear?

GOOD NEWS!!!

The clothing that we use for hiking, winter sports, backpacking, snowboarding and anything we do outdoors is the perfect match for a homeless person.

WHY?

Because it is made from synthetic materials that absorb little to no moisture, stay warm when they are wet, and they work to keep you dry and keep the wind off of your skin.

Anything made of synthetic materials like fleece, polypropylene, nylon, is the type of fabric we are looking for. These qualities are:

Easy wash and rinse

Quick drying

Wind resistant

Water resistant (still keeps wind from blowing through fabric to cool you down)

Easy to pack and manage wrinkles

Generally considered travel clothing so the look is casual/professional

Very durable and tear resistant

WHAT'S WRONG WITH A THICK COTTON HOODIE?

Natural materials like COTTON and WOOL or SILK are not good to use in such extreme exposed situations because they are made up of fibers that are able to absorb water into them which takes away their ability to warm. They also can not dry without significant heat from a machine or many hours or several days in the sun. This means that the clothing will actually make you lose precious heat from your own body instead of insulate you from the cold.

NOTE: WOOL and SILK for 24/7 outdoor use makes these just as bad as COTTON

A QUICK STORY

One winter year ago I went to Squaw Valley to snow camp along Squaw Creek. I was snowshoeing and came to a place where I crossed over a snow bridge. The snow bridge gave way to my weight and I broke through the bridge and fell into 2 feet of ice cold rushing water. With my back pack on I rolled into the water and completely soaked myself.

The time was noon. It was 29 degrees outside with a slight breeze. Windchill was about 24 degrees. I was two hours from my car. What did I do?

Took off all my wet clothes (everything) while standing on a closed cell foam sleeping pad. I rung out my fleece jacket and fleece pants and hat, gloves.

Put on a change of dry base layers and mid layers and socks

Put on my damp jacket and pants

Put on my outer most shell for wind protection

Put on my pack and continued

Within 5 minutes I was too warm. Right where I wanted to be. I adjusted my clothing so I didn't get too hot and 30 minutes later my fleece jacket and pants were bone dry.

If I had been homeless and this happened I would be in a life threatening situation in less than 15 minutes. And over the course of many years, this scenario has happened to me countless times and I'm here to share the story.

**SYNTHETIC CLOTHING CAN
LITERALLY SAVE A PERSONS
LIFE IF THE CLOTHING GETS
SOAKED.**

**JUST WRING IT OUT AND PUT
IT BACK ON.**

FINE TUNE YOUR GIVING

The San Francisco bay area is home to many outdoor enthusiasts. Joggers, cyclists, hikers, trail riders, equestrians and sports players all use synthetic clothes for their exploits. Folks who do winter sports like snowboarding and skiing, ice fishing, snow shoeing. All of you are using these materials and you have stuff in the closet that you no longer use. These are all life savers to a homeless person. Look at some of the clothes you have had for years and it still looks good. These are all waiting to be repurposed as "SAFETY CLOTHES" for the homeless.

So, when you think about donating clothes to a shelter please think about your old outdoor clothes and donate those over the cotton clothing.

When you donate your clothes ask if the shelter is separating clothes for people living outside. If they don't please suggest that they do this service for their clients.

If you belong to a club or organization that is involved in outdoor activities, please consider having a clothing drive for old synthetic clothing to be given the homeless.

If your organization helps homeless with resources and support. Consider reorganizing your clothing bank so that those who live on the street can obtain the special clothing they need to support themselves. Have your staff educated on "outfitting" so they can work with and educate their clients.

These small steps will help make life better for a person experiencing homelessness and maybe even save their life.

Any person experiencing poverty who has no access to laundry facilities should consider these clothes as well.

CLOTHING MANUFACTURERS TO CONSIDER

These companies make cotton casual clothes also so be aware to check labels for fabric contents:

COLUMBIA

The NORTH FACE

PATAGONIA

R.E.I.

TITLE 9

SMART WOOL

BIG 5 / DICK'S / J.C. PENNY / SEARS / OLD NAVY – Active Wear

Departments

FROGG TOGGS

CAMPMORE

Exofficio

OTHER IDEAS TO STAY WARMER

Any “CLOSED CELL FOAM” material insulates against cold surfaces.

Backpacking and yoga sleeping pads work well. NO AIR MATTS

Cut a foam matt into 14x14 inch pieces to form an insulating butt pad.

–

Speak Up

If you care about homelessness, your voice should be heard. Here are a few ideas about how you can become an advocate on issues relating to homelessness.



1. VOTE

You don't have to be housed to vote! Your vote can make the difference when it comes to representatives and policies that impact people experiencing homelessness. For more information on voting in Contra Costa, including polling places and how to track your ballot, go to: www.cocovote.us

2. JOIN A MAILING LIST

Sign up for updates from the trusted agencies and organizations below. They'll alert you to opportunities and often provide speaking points!

- [Contra Costa Continuum of Care \(CoC\)](#). (Be sure to select Policy Committee updates!)
- [Nonprofit Housing Northern California \(NPH\)](#)
- [East Bay Housing Organizations \(EBHO\)](#).
- [National Alliance to End Homelessness \(NAEH\)](#).
- [Housing California](#)
- [Ensuring Opportunity: The Campaign to End Poverty in Contra Costa](#)

Speak Up



3. SPEAK AT A MEETING

Council on Homelessness, City/Town Council and Board of Supervisors meetings all discuss issues related to homelessness and provide opportunity for public input. Sign up to automatically receive agendas and share your thoughts when an issue related to homelessness is being discussed. Ask your local electeds to adopt a proclamation like the one on the next page. Come to the Board of Supervisors meeting on November 9th!

4. WRITE A LETTER

Federal, State and Local representatives want to hear from you! Don't be shy about writing a letter or email. For more information about how to identify your representatives go to www.usa.gov/elected-officials.

Sample Proclamation

2021 Proclamation of November as Homelessness Awareness Month

WHEREAS, the month of November is recognized as Homelessness Awareness Month in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the proclamation is to educate the public and advocate with and on behalf of people experiencing homelessness about the many reasons people are homeless, including the shortage of affordable housing in Contra Costa County; and to encourage support for homeless assistance service providers as well as community service opportunities for students and school service organizations; and

WHEREAS, there are over twenty organizations in Contra Costa committed to sheltering, providing supportive services, and/or basic resources to people experiencing homelessness; and

WHEREAS, Contra Costa County recognizes that homelessness continues to be a serious problem for many individuals and families in Contra Costa; and

WHEREAS, 9,767 individuals accessed homeless services in Contra Costa in 2020¹; and

WHEREAS there was a 9% increase in households served between 2018 and 2020²; and

WHEREAS, there was 42% increase in the number of days homeless from 546 days to 776 days between 2018 and 2020³; and

WHEREAS, 14% of the households in the CoC were families with children⁴; and

WHEREAS, 37% of the individuals were Black/African American; 4x the percent in the county population⁵; and

WHEREAS, 7% of the individuals were American Indian/Alaskan Native; 7x the percent in the county population⁶; and

WHEREAS there was a 50% increase in people aged 62+ between 2018 and 2020⁷; and

WHEREAS, over half (53%) of households across all CoC programs reported having a disabling condition⁸; and

WHEREAS, one quarter of people in crisis response programs have experienced domestic violence⁹; and

¹ Contra Costa County Homeless Continuum of Care 2018 Annual Report, p.5, <https://cchealth.org/h3/coc/pdf/Annual-Report-2020.pdf>

² Ibid, p. 5

³ Ibid, p. 7

⁴ Ibid, p. 6

⁵ Ibid, p. 6

⁶ Ibid, p. 6

⁷ Ibid, p. 6

⁸ Ibid, p. 7

⁹ Ibid, p. 60

Sample Proclamation

2021 Proclamation of November as Homelessness Awareness Month

WHEREAS, 2,538 households exited to or maintained permanent housing during 2020¹⁰; and

WHEREAS, the coroner reported 100 people from the homeless community who passed away during calendar year 2020, a 49% increase from 2019 and an 82% since 2018¹¹; and

WHEREAS, In Contra Costa, Renters in Contra Costa County need to earn \$37.54 per hour - 2.5 times the City of Richmond minimum wage - to afford the average monthly asking rent of \$1,952.¹²; and

WHEREAS, 27,709 low-income renter households in Contra Costa County do not have access to an affordable home¹³; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Contra Costa County hereby proclaims November as Homelessness Awareness Month.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Contra Costa County encourages all residents to recognize that thousands of people in Contra Costa do not have housing and need support from government, citizens and private/public nonprofit service entities to address the myriad challenges of homelessness.

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 63

¹¹ Ibid, p. 7

¹² Contra Costa 2021 Affordable Housing Needs Report, https://1p08d91kd0c03rlxhmhtydpr-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Contra-Costa_Housing_Report.pdf

¹³ Ibid

Celebrate



H.O.P.E. (Hearing Other People's Experiences) Video

Page 36

"The Journal"

Page 37

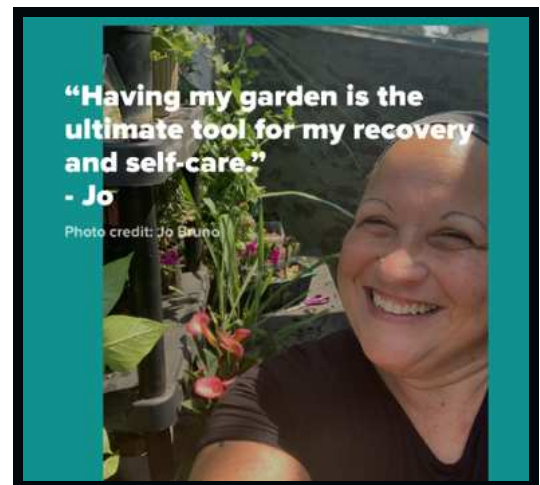
Homelessness Awareness Month Awards

- Thriving in the Face of Homelessness Page 38
- Innovation Page 63
- Outstanding Volunteer Page 79
- Outstanding Landlord Page 94

"H.O.P.E.- Hearing Other People's Experiences" Video

"H.O.P.E.- Hearing Other People's Experiences" is a short video amplifying the voices of people in Contra Costa with lived experience of homelessness.

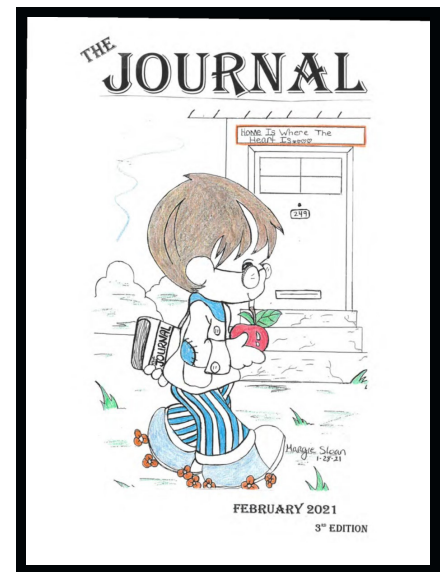
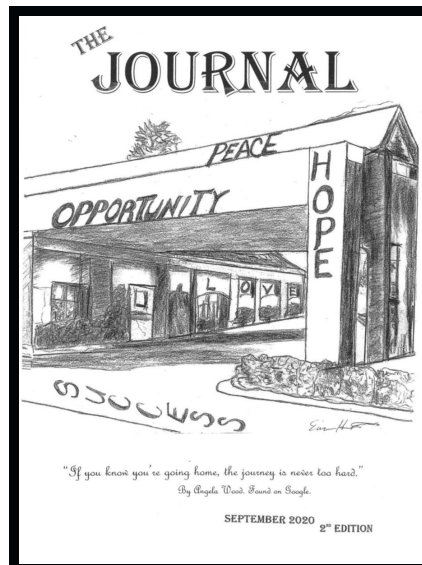
To view the video, go to:
<https://spark.adobe.com/video/g8uFATP1cNCaI>



The Journal

"The Journal" is a zine produced by people experiencing homelessness sheltered in the Project Room Key program and staff. It was created during the COVID-19 pandemic in an effort to strengthen the sense of community during a very difficult time.

To read "The Journal" go to:
<https://cchealth.org/h3/coc/#Voices>





Contra Costa Council on Homelessness

Homelessness Awareness Month 2021

Awards for “Thriving in the Face of Homelessness”

The “Thriving in the Face of Homelessness” award is to recognize individuals who have experienced the crisis of homelessness and a) supported other people experiencing homelessness and/or b) moved out of homelessness themselves.

Awardees

1. A. D. (initials used to protect privacy) (District 1)
2. Carmella Kowall (District 2)
3. Charlie, Leslie, Tommy, Scott, Jon, Pam, and Kevin from Trinity Center (District 4)
4. Colin Jack Fliehmman (District 4)
5. D. G. (initials used to protect privacy) (District 1)
6. David Cohen (District 1)
7. Denise Mills (District 1)
8. Ileia Thomas (District 4)
9. J. G. (initials used to protect privacy) (District 1)
10. James Martin (District unknown)
11. Jo Bruno (District 5)
12. Kai Powell (District 1)
13. Loren Dalbert (District unknown)
14. M. C. (initials used to protect privacy) (District 1)
15. Patrick Davis (District unknown)
16. Quinton Walker ((District 4)
17. Raymond and Dolores Custodio (District 2)
18. Yesenia Pleitz (District 1)

The following pages contain descriptions of each awardee as provided by the person (s) who nominated them.

A. D.

Nominated by: Larry Wilson

Supervisory District: District 1 (Richmond, San Pablo, El Cerrito, part of Pinole, and the unincorporated communities of Bayview, East Richmond Heights, El Sobrante, Kensington, Montalvin Manor, Tara Hills, North Richmond, and Rollingwood)

Description of nominee's personal accomplishments that reflect resilience and courage: This is one of those stories that has to be told. My client, a mother of two, is employed as an IHSS making minimum wage. She has a history of homelessness going back several years. She was able to secure an apartment for her family in 2019. Hope Solutions assisted with her move-in costs. A. was thankful for her new residence but she hoped for a safer area to raise her two little ones. In 2020, she was able to move to a really nice apartment complex.

Her children are doing really well in school since they have become more stable. She's taking on more clients with her IHSS work and reunited with her husband, which is a plus. Speaking with her recently, she expressed such thankfulness for all the support and resources she received to better the life her family now has.

Carmella Kowall

Nominated by: Ann Lawrence

Supervisory District: District 2 (San Ramon, Danville, Alamo, Lafayette, Moraga, Orinda, Canyon, Rossmoor, Parkmead, Saranap and a portion of Walnut Creek))

Description of nominee's personal accomplishments that reflect resilience and courage: Carmella Kowall and her children, G. and J. Kowall were clients at Winter Nights in 2014/2015, from October through May. Carmella describes a divorce and absent father leading to serious financial stress. She worked full time but the bills still piled up and rent became impossible. They were ultimately evicted. With an eviction and unpaid rent on her record, no one would rent to her. For 2 ½ years she continued to work full time, parent her kids, while living in various motels that could cost her over \$3,000 per month. In 2014, at a motel, Carmella met a father and his 2 young sons who were also homeless. He was interviewing with Winter Nights and left to join the program. After arriving, he called Carmella, leaving messages saying *"You have to come here. This is just what you need"*. She says it took her a few more days to finally agree to talk to Bill. It changed her life and the lives of her children.

At the time J. was in 7th grade, G. was a sophomore in high school and Carmella was employed full time at Kinder's.

"I never saw it as a free ride. I thought of it as holding me up so that I could take care of my business. A stepping stone. It gave me time to do the things I needed to do to make our lives better. I still worked full time, and the money I saved on motel bills and food let me pay-off my bills, including all the back-rent. The kids focused on school. I focused on working and finding us a home. We were ready to start again." - Carmella

Since leaving Winter Nights in the spring of 2015 a lot has happened. A rental wasn't immediately available because of the eviction on her record, so it was back to a motel for a bit.

The owner of the motel got to know Carmella and the kids, and was really impressed with them and their story. When an apartment became available in a building he owned, he offered to rent to them regardless of the past eviction. They have been there ever since.

Carmella moved on from her long-time job at Kinder's in 2017 and joined Toyota Walnut Creek, where she was promoted to Concierge Manager in 2019 (the free pickup and delivery service for customers). She is working to grow the service in a time of COVID contact-free protocols. She now manages 400 customer trips a month. J.J. graduated from high school in 2020 and is employed full time at a local electrical supply company. Gloria graduated from high school in June 2017, and went on to California State University, Monterey Bay. She received multiple scholarships her senior year and also received one through CSUMB. In May 2021 she graduated Cum Laude with her B.S. in Biology, with a concentration in Evolution, Ecology and Organismal Biology in Science. For something entirely different, and 2700 miles away, Gloria enlisted in the US Army. She has completed Basic Training and it now at Fort Eustis, Virginia training to repair the CH-47 Chinook helicopter.

In July 2020, when Winter Nights Family Shelter, Inc became an independent nonprofit, we began forming a Board of Directors. High on our list of candidates were Winter Nights alumni; individuals who knew the program from the inside and could speak for the clients. Carmella was among almost 20 men and women with various skills who were nominated. In December 2020 she was officially elected to the board of Winter Nights, along with five other community members. Her voice is sought and heard in all aspects of board responsibilities.

Thank you, Carmella, for giving your time and talent in support of the future of Winter Nights.

When I asked Carmella if I could nominate her she said (emailed)

"Can I just say wow!! I am so honored that you would like to nominate me!! I am so floored and humbled. Thank you! Love my Winter Night's family!! Homelessness is not the end of the world, it's the beginning of a new one. It's your choice what you do with it."

Charlie, Leslie, Tommy, Scott, Jon, Pam, and Kevin From Trinity Center

Nominated by: Leslie Gleason

Supervisory District: District 4 (Clayton, Concord, Pleasant Hill, part of Walnut Creek, and the unincorporated Contra Costa Centre)

Description of nominee’s personal accomplishments that reflect resilience and courage:

When a dedicated leader joins forces with people experiencing homelessness and community supporters, what do you get? Trinity Center, a place of safety where “everybody knows your name” and works together to make sure people living unhoused can access basic resources, build community, and move forward. We proudly nominate our seven (7) staff who have lived experience of homelessness and/or substance use disorders and who bring their talents and teamwork daily in service of others. Because of them, and others who have been part of our history, Trinity Center can keep the doors to opportunity open for others facing or at risk of homelessness. Not only do they keep the Center operating, and support members who are facing the daily challenges they have shared, they serve as role models for persons seeking housing, financial stability, and recovery.

Individually and collectively, their accomplishments have been remarkable—overcoming substance use disorders, pursuing education, raising families, regaining housing, maintaining employment—demonstrating strength, courage, resilience and hopefulness that quietly says “you can do it too!” For believing in themselves, each other, and coming together to create a community that truly cares about persons living unhoused, we recognize and commend Charlie, Leslie, Tommy, Scott, Jon, Pam, and Kevin for “Thriving in the Face of Homelessness!”

Colin Jack Fliehmann

Nominated by: Wayne Calhoon

Supervisory District: District 4 (Clayton, Concord, Pleasant Hill, part of Walnut Creek, and the unincorporated Contra Costa Centre)

Description of nominee's personal accomplishments that reflect resilience and courage: Jack has provided 30,000-50,000 room service style hot meals and supplies, plus his love, delivered every single day on his route in Concord. His work is mostly self funded.

Colin Jack Fliehmann

Nominated by: Michele Perry

Supervisory District: District 4 (Clayton, Concord, Pleasant Hill, part of Walnut Creek, and the unincorporated Contra Costa Centre)

Description of nominee's personal accomplishments that reflect resilience and

courage: Jack gets up before 4 am, 7 days a week to carry food, supplies, and hope to unhoused people in Concord. He is out there in the dark, whether anyone comes with him or not. Also, he has chartered a bus to take unhoused people to the beach for a day so they can feel some kind of normalcy in their lives. Jack is dedicated to caring and has rallied the community to support him. He does need more support, but what he does truly makes a difference. #LoveRevolution #LovedKnownAndNotAlone.

D. G.

Nominated by: Count Butler

Supervisory District: District 1 (Richmond, San Pablo, El Cerrito, part of Pinole, and the unincorporated communities of Bayview, East Richmond Heights, El Sobrante, Kensington, Montalvin Manor, Tara Hills, North Richmond, and Rollingwood)

Description of nominee's personal accomplishments that reflect resilience and courage: The consumer was homeless for 2 years. He has a significant other that is expecting her first child and he was able to establish stable housing for his family.

David Cohen

Nominated by: Paula Bonnell

Supervisory District: District 1 (Richmond, San Pablo, El Cerrito, part of Pinole, and the unincorporated communities of Bayview, East Richmond Heights, El Sobrante, Kensington, Montalvin Manor, Tara Hills, North Richmond, and Rollingwood)

Description of nominee's personal accomplishments that reflect resilience and courage: Completed his teaching credentials!

Denise Mills

Nominated by: Denise Mills

Supervisory District: District 1 (Richmond, San Pablo, El Cerrito, part of Pinole, and the unincorporated communities of Bayview, East Richmond Heights, El Sobrante, Kensington, Montalvin Manor, Tara Hills, North Richmond, and Rollingwood)

Description of nominee's personal accomplishments that reflect resilience and courage: Denise made the Dean's list for 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, is on the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council for Contra Costa County, TRADEMARK WOMEN OF DISTINCTION HONORS EDITION 2020, completed AA Degrees in Dual Diagnosis Specialization & Screening, HHS, Sociology, Substance Abuse Case Management AB109 Mentor, Life Impact (self leadership & personal growth). Through this journey, this lady found much support with counselors, co-workers, professors, and family members.

Ileia Thomas

Nominated by: Ileia Thomas

Supervisory District: District 4 (Clayton, Concord, Pleasant Hill, part of Walnut Creek, and the unincorporated Contra Costa Centre)

Description of nominee's personal accomplishments that reflect resilience and courage: Experienced homelessness as single mom and now living in 1-bdrm apartment with daughter.

I am nominating myself. I started experiencing homelessness when I was pregnant for the first time with my daughter, about 5 years ago. I was pregnant and sleeping in my car, friend's couches, and eventually over 3 shelters. Fast-forward to now: the past 2 years I've gotten off welfare and food stamps. And, for 4 months now, my daughter and I live in a 1-bedroom apartment and I am working full-time at the same job for 3 years now.

J. G.

Nominated by: Michelle Milam

Supervisorial District: District 1 (Richmond, San Pablo, El Cerrito, part of Pinole, and the unincorporated communities of Bayview, East Richmond Heights, El Sobrante, Kensington, Montalvin Manor, Tara Hills, North Richmond, and Rollingwood)

Description of nominee's personal accomplishments that reflect resilience and courage: J.G., is nothing if not a true representative of the American Dream. The American Dream which for many is very difficult to achieve. I met J. when he was a young person on a "Shop With A Cop" excursion. J. was always friendly, hard working and willing to learn and help others. That impressed me, to have that level of maturity at such a young age. J., at the young age of 17, found himself without housing options. He was working as a volunteer at Richmond PAL, and later was employed there.

Eventually with the help and support of the community he was able to find a safe place to stay at a transitional facility for teens, and later at a young adult facility which helped get J. into his own apartment. J., through all of this, vowed to finish school and make everyone proud of him. He graduated from high school in Richmond, and later enrolled in some of the programs offered to him at the transitional program. J. took an interest in culinary training, and decided last year to venture out on his own and start his own small business selling some of his culinary cultural dishes. He'd often take public transportation to deliver them. This was only ONE business. In addition he began painting houses, and doing home repairs and designing T-shirts for sale. It is very rare to see adults with that kind of drive. Though J. still has many challenges that he faces, I cannot think of someone who deserves this more, or has more heart to overcome them.

My life challenges, by J.

"I was in a homeless shelter in Oakland CA. For a long time I lived with my parents which were not easy. There was a lot was going on which I did not understand at all until I got older. In 2003 my mother

and father divorced each other which impacted my brother and I and our childhood. It hard for me express the pain.

But as I am getting older I am starting to understand a lot of things about life. I have learned to take challenges and do something better in life. I learned that I have to keep my head up no matter what the situation is so it can make me stronger in an lot of areas. Negative energy can turn into something positive. I'm very good at seeing the positive in every bad thing. I won't let anything stop me from reaching my goals in life including my past.

Going to college is a major step for me. Some people will not take that step in life to move on to something different in life. I am a very outgoing young man and have a heart for people and I am also an entrepreneur and I'm very good at making businesses. That is my specialty and hobby. At the age of 16, I ran my own car wash in the summer and people had people working for me. I did it again at age 17.

I am very good with managing people and running a business. I am also starting up a clothing line of my own. I plan on launching the clothing line, and adding a painting business to my list of projects. I want the best for my future I feel like college will do that for me. My goals are to own a lot of businesses and have my own company and build it under my family name. People deal with a lot in their life and cannot follow through with their goals because they deal with a lot of madness, destruction, and trauma.

From 1st grade to 5th grade I was in a behavioral private school. I did not have the best education at a young age but that does not stop me from trying to learn and understand but my childhood was rough. But I learn no matter what you are going through do not let nothing stop you from reaching your goal at all.

I achieve my goals by doing the unexpected. I will use my education to give the community hope and understanding so they know they can do anything they put their mind to. All a person needs to do is be themselves and do not let people talk them down from doing anything they want to do with their life.

At the end of the day I hold my head high no matter my situation. I've been in the street, sleeping in cars, park benches, and football fields but through all of that I don't let anything stop me. I keep going and I take the pain and make myself stronger. What is making me pursue my education is I want to show people that dreams can come true.

I want to go to an HBCU and learn more about my culture and where my people come from, and/or attend barbering college. People look up to me and I have a lot of people want to see me succeed. I feel like it will be a good experience for me and see something different. I am about to rise to the top and make my plans happen and set things in motion. I plan to teach other people how to do the same as me, including young people.

Right now I am helping this young man that is thirteen start up his own clothing line. I love helping people and bringing them together. So that way these students of mine that I help can help others from what they learned being around me. The main point of going to college is to learn and to come back and teach my community and be a good role model to everybody. I really care about giving back to my community so they can be educated and have a mindset like I have to do better and like and make something of themselves.

People often doubt themselves about how they are not going to make it because the environment in Richmond. I would like to show them that anything is possible and I want to show people that they do not have to make their self a statistic in Richmond I want them to be better than that.”

James Martin

Nominated by: Mary Fitzgerald

Supervisorial District: Unknown

Description of nominee's personal accomplishments that reflect resilience and courage: Participant was chronically homeless; in his car for a long time and hesitant to reach out for help bc he didnt feel worthy. Found him at Trinity; enrolled in SSVF. Placed him in an Emergency hotel to help protect him from COVID (he is a senior). From hotel, got VASH voucher and is stably housed. New lease on life.

Jo Bruno

Nominated by: Hans Nijessen

Supervisory District: District 5 (Hercules, Martinez, Pittsburg, portions of Pinole and Antioch, and unincorporated communities of Alhambra Valley, Bay Point, Briones, Rodeo, Pacheco, Crockett, Tormey, Port Costa, Mt. View, Vine Hill, Reliez Valley, and Clyde)

Description of nominee's personal accomplishments that reflect resilience and courage: Jo Bruno, (Delta Peers) has handled herself exemplary during her own homeless ordeal and mental struggle. She is a remarkable helpful peer and a resourceful person. By her structural and determined approach and implementation of the Delta Peers organization in Antioch and Contra Costa County, she is being the role model and helpful peer, by maintaining strength and agility, as she is slugging away on the path to recognition for this group of human beings. She is, in my humble opinion the personification of the "Thriving In The Face Of Homelessness" Award and therefore, I do nominate her.

Jo Bruno

Nominated by: Samantha Handley

Supervisory District: District 5 (Hercules, Martinez, Pittsburg, portions of Pinole and Antioch, and unincorporated communities of Alhambra Valley, Bay Point, Briones, Rodeo, Pacheco, Crockett, Tormey, Port Costa, Mt. View, Vine Hill, Reliez Valley, and Clyde)

Description of nominee's personal accomplishments that reflect resilience and courage: Even while unhoused, Jo continued to show up for the community. She has the Consumer seat on the Council for Homelessness. She has attended the SPIRIT program through Contra Costa Behavioral Health, and during her internship created a new community engagement model between two county offices, and is currently applying to UC Berkeley for her Master's in Public Policy, all while barely staying housed herself. Jo is a good friend. She is always there to listen without judgement and offer encouragement. She wants to see her people succeed in life. She puts her all into everything she does without a thought for what the cost might be to herself.

Jo Bruno

Nominated by: Jessica Rojas

Supervisory District: District 5 (Hercules, Martinez, Pittsburg, portions of Pinole and Antioch, and unincorporated communities of Alhambra Valley, Bay Point, Briones, Rodeo, Pacheco, Crockett, Tormey, Port Costa, Mt. View, Vine Hill, Reliez Valley, and Clyde)

Description of nominee's personal accomplishments that reflect resilience and courage: Jo Bruno was recently the the valedictorian at her graduation from Spirit, she is the founder of Delta Peers, she is helping to establish the Peer Network of Contra Costa County (PNCC), she is a peer advisor, she is a writer, massage therapist, an advocate, a beautiful soul and so much more. I am grateful to have met Jo in elementary and years later we meet through her work in Contra Costa and I am so grateful and impressed by who she is and strives to be and all that she holds and continues to push through and be a voice for others in need. She has always had a fighting spirit and a love for others - her voice is so needed for change! Her resilience shouldn't have been needed - she should have been protected from all that she has endured and yet she is thriving and not only that but living with purpose!

One of my favorite posts from her social media was one that stated, "Reminder: If serving is beneath you, leading is beyond you." And that is a beautiful example of who she is.

Kai Powell

Nominated by: Darlene Scruggs

Supervisory District: District 1 (Richmond, San Pablo, El Cerrito, part of Pinole, and the unincorporated communities of Bayview, East Richmond Heights, El Sobrante, Kensington, Montalvin Manor, Tara Hills, North Richmond, and Rollingwood)

Description of nominee's personal accomplishments that reflect resilience and courage: Kai Powell goes above and beyond the call of duty for the clients of Project Room Key. She has helped a family get to into permanent housing with their two set of twins, she works tirelessly to get the kids at the Marriott into school and bridge the gap between families in transition and the schools in West County. Kai imbues the clients with hope, and self belief. The clients say she sees them and for once they feel someone really cares.

The one thing that makes her so courageous is that she came through her lived experience to be a beacon of light to many that are lost and with out hope. Kai shares her experience, strength, and hope to encourage everyone that she come in contact with.

Loren Dalbert

Nominated by: Loren Dalbert

Supervisory District: They serve the entire county

Description of nominee's personal accomplishments that reflect resilience and courage: Loren shines in so many ways:

1. His ability to apply himself and learn about something new (such as the technology tools we use – Trello and Miro).
2. His ability to adapt to an entirely new environment (public service, virtual work).
3. Working with a new (cross-functional) team and learning about the members of the team (workforce services and homeless services, plus the two coaches and white paper writer who served as meeting support early on).
4. His enthusiastic dedication to the WAF/HCD project (Workforce Accelerator Fund/Human-Centered Design) and all the research it entails.

But mostly, his courage is the most prominent way he shines because it allows him to do all the rest. Loren has been through a lot in his life, but he dares to keep swimming forward into the unknown, even when things are scary, and he is facing something he has never done before, and he is not sure he can do it. His open-mindedness is the thing that makes him change his own “Why?” into a “Why not?” Whether he realizes it or not, he has inspired us all with his leadership on the project and his mastery over himself. Those comments were from my annual performance review.

M. C.

Nominated by: Count Butler

Supervisory District: District 1 (Richmond, San Pablo, El Cerrito, part of Pinole, and the unincorporated communities of Bayview, East Richmond Heights, El Sobrante, Kensington, Montalvin Manor, Tara Hills, North Richmond, and Rollingwood)

Description of nominee's personal accomplishments that reflect resilience and courage: The consumer is legally blind and was homeless for a couple of years. He is highly motivated to become an entrepreneur.

Patrick Davis

Nominated by: Rylie Silva

Supervisorial District: They serve the entire county

Description of nominee's personal accomplishments that reflect resilience and courage: Patrick is courageously helping men overcome the challenge of homelessness by leading people through the very process of restoration that he himself walked through. Patrick's life is one of many ups and downs but he made courageous decisions to not only overcome for himself, but now for others.

Quinton Walker

Nominated by: Mary Fitzgerald

Supervisory District: District 4 (Clayton, Concord, Pleasant Hill, part of Walnut Creek, and the unincorporated Contra Costa Centre)

Description of nominee's personal accomplishments that reflect resilience and courage: After spending 38 years incarcerated, this participant completely changed his life around. While inside; he recieved 3 AA's degrees (BA's not offered). When he came out, he found our SSVF program. We were able to help him get on his feet and find housing. He now is a counselor for others and stable.

Raymond and Dolores Custodio

Nominated by: Mary Fitzgerald

Supervisorial District: District 2 (San Ramon, Danville, Alamo, Lafayette, Moraga, Orinda, Canyon, Rossmoor, Parkmead, Saranap and a portion of Walnut Creek))

Description of nominee's personal accomplishments that reflect resilience and courage: A chronically homeless senior couple that lived in their car for many years. They got very bogged down by debt but couldn't get on their feet. Found our program, got housing, and are working to get out of debt. They got a HUD VASH housing voucher, are stable now and much healthier and happier after getting off of the streets.

Yesenia Pleitez

Nominated by: Hillary Bowers

Supervisory District: District 1 (Richmond, San Pablo, El Cerrito, part of Pinole, and the unincorporated communities of Bayview, East Richmond Heights, El Sobrante, Kensington, Montalvin Manor, Tara Hills, North Richmond, and Rollingwood)

Description of nominee's personal accomplishments that reflect resilience and courage: I would like to Nominate Yesenia Pleitez. She is a former CORE client and now work for CORE full time as a Lead Outreach Worker. Yesenia is Spanish speaking and uses here experiences with homelessness to help others. She is an asset to CORE and the homeless Community. Yesenia is a trauma and suicide survivor.

She has shared her story publicly before including how she overcame mental health and substance abuse issues. Worked to get custody of her children, find independent housing, and full-time employment. She has an amazing story and is a true testament that people experiencing homelessness can recover and give back to others what was given to them.



Contra Costa Council on Homelessness

Homelessness Awareness Month 2021 Awards for Innovation

The Innovation Award is to recognize individuals and/or organizations that have enriched the lives of people facing homelessness in Contra Costa County using an innovative initiative/project/program. The innovative initiative/ project/program must be new to Contra Costa County within the past two years. The initiative/project/program may have been successful elsewhere and has been modified to work in Contra Costa County, or an original program that is successful in assisting those facing homelessness. The Nominee must be an individual or organization helping Contra Costa County residents and the initiative/project/program must be new to Contra Costa County within the past two years.

Awardees

1. Continued Success Program, Winter Nights Family Shelter, Inc.
(District: Entire County)
2. Holistic Intervention Partnership (HIP) Program (District: Entire County)
3. Homeless Action Coalition (District 5)
4. S.H.A.R.E. Community (District 5)
5. SoS Richmond! Streets Team (District 1)

The following pages contain descriptions of awardees provided by the person (s) who nominated them.

Continued Success Program, Winter Nights Family Shelter, Inc.

Contact: Bill Shaw

Nominated by: Jo Kerner

Supervisory District: They serve the entire county.

Description of the innovative initiative/project/program: Winter Nights has operated a family shelter in Contra Costa County since 2004. Now in our 18th season, over 380 families with minor children have been served and the program has expanded to include a Safe Parking program for families and individuals living in their cars. In early 2020 we planned a pilot program to stay in touch with families from prior years, after they were housed. We called it Continued Success and originally budgeted \$450 for simple outreach.

The Covid-19 pandemic changed all of this. Keeping former clients housed became a major priority. At Winter Nights, our clients and alumni live near or below the poverty line and these folks have been hit hard. They are often one paycheck away from returning to homelessness, pandemic or not. We expanded our effort from simple follow-up to a formal program to contact alumni, assess their vulnerabilities, provide referrals, and if needed provide financial support for rent, car repair, or other expenses that threatened their ability to stay in their home. This program seeks to prevent that from happening. Since July 1, 2020, we have contacted 40 alumni families and have helped 9 of them with specific needs (23%).

Description of how the innovative initiative/project/program impacts the lives of people experiencing homelessness: We have spent \$5450 in direct payments for rent, keeping two families from losing their apartments, and \$400 in Target and Gasoline gift cards to others. \$5850 in total. We have also helped families receive needed furnishings for their apartments, clothing for newborns and

growing children, and access to food and baby supplies through agencies we work with.

Here is the story of one family, as told in our Good News letter:

September 2020 While reaching out to stay in touch, a wife and mother of two told program manager, Teri Lundvall, that when she didn't feel well, she went to get tested for Covid-19. (False alarm- it was negative. Yay!) While she waited for results, her employer took her off the work schedule completely, and did not reinstate her. At the same time, her husband's work hours, at the same firm, were reduced to one day a week. What a terrible situation for a family of four.

We are glad to report that both parents have since found new jobs and are fully employed. But, while she was sheltered, waiting for her test results, and he was working one day a week and then both were looking for new jobs, the rent was due, and then overdue. Their landlord served them the California "3-day Notice to Pay Rent or Quit", the first step in the eviction process.

Well, that is what Continued Success is for: to help keep alumni families housed, rather than repeat the cycle of homelessness. After verifying the eviction notice, our Continued Success team went to work, and so did they. Mom and Dad contacted all the resources we suggested but were repeatedly told that the agency was out of funding. So, Winter Nights' Continued Success offered to pay their back rent, and the current month's rent too, giving them breathing room they needed. They are so very, very grateful. When Mom came to pick up the rent check, with one of her sons, there were tears all around.

Description of what makes initiative/project/program innovative: Prior to the American Rescue Plan in 2020 and the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP), a small non-profit like Winter Nights was able to assess the vulnerability of it's former clients and offer assistance just by starting with a small fund for follow-up support. The regular email outreach is designed to acknowledge the difficulties of staying housed these days and provide a source for guidance that is known and trusted by those who receive the monthly outreach emails. The name of the program, Continued Success, honors the achievements of formerly homeless families.

A note from a Continued Success father of four, after a visit from Winter Nights staff.

“Hi Bill, Teri and Kathleen,

Thank you so, so, so much for loving on us. I got so emotional, at work, when my wife sent me the pic of y’all at our place Hugs and kisses to you guys. You took us in when family kicked us out. Till this day they haven’t visited us, yet y’all have come to see us. My heart overflows with thanksgiving to God for you all. God bless each of you!!!”

Holistic Intervention Partnership program (HIP)

Contact: Bertha Lopez, Hume Center

Nominated by: Chris Celio, PsyD

Supervisory District: They serve the entire county.

Description of the innovative initiative/project/program: The Holistic Intervention Partnership program (HIP) is a collaboration between Contra Costa County Health, Housing, and Homeless Services (H3) and the Contra Costa County Public Defender's Office. H3 and the Public Defender's Office have brought together an impactful team of agencies in this project, including The Hume Center, Bay Area Legal Aid, Contra Costa County Office of Re-entry and Justice, Cal State University Long Beach, Rubicon, and Uptrust.

The HIP program serves Contra Costa County, justice-impacted residents and their families with housing support services and resources in Contra Costa County. The aim of the project is to help these residents successfully resolve their justice-related issues while attaining or maintaining housing for them and their household. The project includes legal advocacy, housing support, rapid resolution, community linkage, mediation, employment support and training, and appointment and court date reminders and linkage. Amazingly, the partners were able to put the distractions of the early pandemic aside and start up the project collaboratively. The project started July 1, 2020 for its first year and has been renewed for a second year!

This project is a vast one, with different goals and activities for each of the partners. I am nominating the entire HIP project and all of the partners. In this application though, I can only speak to Hume's impact and I hope that other partners, if this project is considered, can add in their impact statements. For Hume Center, we were contracted to work with 65 clients a year. So far, we have worked with 80 clients to assist with their housing. Our work with each client has

varied, but we are most excited about having helped one-third of those households achieve permanent housing!

Description of how the innovative initiative/project/program impacts the lives of people experiencing homelessness: This project has had a vast impact and has had four main stakeholder groups: justice involved individuals, their families, the justice system, and the Continuum of Care.

Justice-Involved Individuals: When you're facing the weight of the justice system, it can be an overwhelming and heavy lift to get through it. Small issues can easily snowball into large and dreadful issues for many reasons, including: not knowing how to navigate the justice system; missing court dates due to lack of housing, transportation, reminders, etc; not having the resources to assemble an advocacy and support team; not having stable housing from which to be able to prepare, attend, and resolve legal issues; not being able to afford missing work to attend to the preparation or court dates successfully; not knowing what resources are available to help you or how to access them; and having co-occurring stressors, employment, mental health, substance use, housing, or other difficulties that make it impossible to complete your court or other legal requirements successfully so that you can move beyond this justice issue. It can feel like the legal system is not just a snowball that builds slowly over time, but that it is already a boulder perched on a cliff that is ready to fall down toward you at the slightest touch. This population is the main stakeholder of this project.

The second stakeholder group of this project is the family and other household members of the justice-involved person. They are often negatively impacted greatly by their loved one's participation in the justice system. With HIP's support to resolve the justice system issue and to equip the household with appropriate and sustainable housing and employment, the whole household benefits! Not only is the household's entry into homeless prevented, but the stigma of being justice-involved is resolved and the dignity of appropriate housing and employment can lead to great improvements in their mental health and functioning.

The third stakeholder group of this project is the justice system itself. Persons who do not resolve legal matters are kept within the legal system, with additional

court appointments, public defender assignments, and other resources while they remain in the justice system. Efficiently resolving their legal issue through a concerted effort to help through the arduous process results in benefits for the entire legal system. As this project helps its clients resolve their issues, the limited resources of the justice system are freed up to assist others to achieve swift and supported resolutions of their case.

And lastly, the limited resources of the entire Continuum of Care benefit from a successful project such as this one. With these individuals connected to a full suite of resources and supported to resolve their legal, housing, and employment issues, that leaves other resources available to support the others who are experiencing housing disruption, eviction, or homelessness.

Description of what makes initiative/project/program innovative: What makes this project unique and impactful is the collaboration between all of the partners and the easy and seamless manner in which clients gain access to the full suite of services and agencies. People and their families who are justice-involved are, in general, multi-stressed. The justice system can be arduous to navigate, especially when many other life stressors are being experienced concurrently and the person and their family are trying to maintain their income and household at the same time.

This project takes existing services and brings them together for easy access and a more impactful and lasting outcome. The partnership is summarized below: H3 and Hume Center work together to evaluate the housing needs and which strategies to use to help the person leave homelessness, maintain housing, or attain more healthy or sustainable housing. H3's interventions include linking them to HDAP and General Assistance, CORE Homeless Outreach, a homeless shelter, or entry into the Coordinated Entry System. When appropriate, they refer the person to Hume Center's Rapid Resolution Program to prevent homelessness. Hume provides short-term case management, advocacy, housing support services, mediation, rapid resolution, and linkages throughout the Continuum of Care. They assist individuals with Whole Person Care and wrap-around-services, including behavioral health. Bay Area Legal Aid provides legal services and advocacy outside of what is needed in their criminal case, including advocacy related to areas like child support, divorces/separations, financial issues, landlord/tenant

issues, evictions, and restraining orders. Rubicon provides employment coaching, training, and linkage to support the person sustain their gains made in the program and open more housing opportunities to them. CCC Office of Re-Entry and Justice provides the legal services that have to do with their legal case that need additional services outside of what the Public Defenders' Office provides, e.g. helping them get their driver's license back CSU Long Beach is the research partner and the glue that pieces together and facilitate interagency and stakeholder communication. Uptrust is creating an app that will link the clients of the program with their provider team and be a centralized place for court date, appointment, and documentation information and reminders. It's obvious why this program has been so impactful. With so many talented agencies all working together for these individuals and their families, successful navigation of the legal system and positive and sustainable housing outcomes are easily enabled. Compare that to the ineffective status quo, where justice-involved individuals have to find and navigate complex and unknown community resources all while going through a very stressful experience, and the positive impacts of the HIP program are no surprise at all.

Hume Center would like to appreciate H3 and the Public Defender's Office for convening this group of agencies and doing the hard work to stand up a collaborative project with so many pieces. it was a big lift but the reward for the residents of Contra Costa have been numerous! Thank you H3 for always being a great partner and driver of innovation.

Homeless Action Coalition

Contact: Noralea Gipner

Nominated by: Deborah White

Supervisory District: District 5 (Hercules, Martinez, Pittsburg, portions of Pinole and Antioch, and unincorporated communities of Alhambra Valley, Bay Point, Briones, Rodeo, Pacheco, Crockett, Tormey, Port Costa, Mt. View, Vine Hill, Reliez Valley, and Clyde)

Description of the innovative initiative/project/program: The Homeless Action Coalition (HAC) is a new nonprofit organization led by former Martinez City Councilmember Noralea Gipner. It is a coalition of community and faith leaders who have joined together to address the needs of the unhoused residents of Martinez residents.

With more than 150 unhoused residents living in encampments, embankments and parking lots, Martinez has one of the highest per capita homelessness rates in Contra Costa County. With such great need, Martinez leaders were compelled to act.

Over the past year, community groups and the Martinez Homelessness Task Force have partnered to address urgent needs, most recently operating a weekly homeless service center at the Martinez Waterfront Park. There, the Bay Church and other faith partners offered showers, laundry service and toiletries. The Martinez Police Department and Contra Costa C.O.R.E. connected people to shelters and other public resources, while Contra Costa Health Services provided a free mobile clinic. Community volunteers offered haircuts and organized a clothing exchange program. Prior to COVID-19, 30-40 individuals participated in these services every week. Moving forward, the Homeless Action Coalition will serve as a hub for these resources, coordinating strategy and funding within Martinez and its adjacent communities.

Description of how the innovative initiative/project/program impacts the lives of people experiencing homelessness: The Homeless Action Coalition provides multiple needed services for unhoused individuals in Martinez, including

temporary housing, clothing, showers, restroom facilities and medical care. Their actions have assisted fully 75% of Martinez's unhoused individuals. Of particular importance, The HAC was able to move quickly to find, renovate, and move people into a safe shelter for individuals during the COVID pandemic. Individuals there were regularly tested and could quarantine safely, preventing the spread of COVID in Martinez and beyond.

Description of what makes initiative/project/program innovative: The Homeless Action Coalition is a grassroots organization that was born out of one city official's frustration with a system that made it difficult for people to work together to confront an obvious concern. Starting with faith organizations who were motivated to assist but had no venue to pool resources and then using her knowledge of the system to enlist the assistance of police and medical services to expand the work. It has grown quickly and was in a position to begin collecting donations and further expanding services immediately upon becoming a 501c (3) organization. One of the other important facets of HAC is its dedication to self-governance by the individuals served, encouraging "self confidence, sense of community, and security. "

I couldn't decide whether to nominate Noralea Gipner as an individual or Homeless Action Coalition as an organization. Both are very deserving of the award. They have done more to assist the unhoused population of Martinez in two years than has been done in a decade.

S.H.A.R.E. Community

Contact: Ricka Davis-Sheard

Nominated by: Patrice Guillory

Supervisory District: District 5 (Hercules, Martinez, Pittsburg, portions of Pinole and Antioch, and unincorporated communities of Alhambra Valley, Bay Point, Briones, Rodeo, Pacheco, Crockett, Tormey, Port Costa, Mt. View, Vine Hill, Reliez Valley, and Clyde)

Description of the innovative initiative/project/program: As of September 29, 2021, it has been a year since S.H.A.R.E. started providing consistent mobile showers in a state of the art, constantly fully-sanitized trailer. The trailer is ADA compliant and can provide up to 25 hot showers per session. S.H.A.R.E. provides clean clothing and hygiene packages including: soap, razors, toothbrush, toothpaste, lotion, shampoo, conditioner, feminine products, hair brushes and other toiletries.

S.H.A.R.E. also connects guests to other on-site personal grooming services, gives new/gently used clothing according to the weather, provides device charging stations, and free meals. S.H.A.R.E. has provided just under 1,000 showers so far! Guests have many positive things to say about having consistent place to shower.

"You know, ever since I've been coming to shower here, I feel like a person again. I didn't feel like that before. Thank you."

"When I shower here, I feel loved AND clean. I feel a part of society again -- I'm ready to take on the day!"

Description of how the innovative initiative/project/program impacts the lives of people experiencing homelessness: S.H.A.R.E. understands showers and access to hygiene will not alone solve the homeless crisis. However, given a chance to restore dignity, many of the guests have managed to acquire jobs, build self-confidence, combat depression, and actively participate in quelling the spread of COVID-19. Nearly 40% of the guests report they believe access to this facility helps them stay healthy.

By leveraging support from organizations and small businesses such as White Pony Express, local Barbers and Hair Salons, HealthRIGHT 360, Golden Hill's Community Outreach Center, Shelter, Inc., Lava Maex, Contra Costa Health Services' CORE Team, and Supportive Services for Veterans, S.H.A.R.E. helps facilitate access to opportunities that come with being clean and helps guests reach optimal levels of success, individually and communally.

Description of what makes initiative/project/program innovative: S.H.A.R.E. is the ONLY consistent, full-service, fully ADA compliant mobile shower program in East Contra Costa County. S.H.A.R.E. envisions our work as the springboard for unhoused people to build confidence, reinforce their human worth, and secure stable housing. S.H.A.R.E. understands this cannot be achieved overnight, however, through consistency and unfettered support. We know our work changes lives and communities!

SOS! Richmond Streets Team

Contact: Daniel Barth

Nominated by: Gayle McLaughlin

Supervisory District: District 1 (Richmond, San Pablo, El Cerrito, part of Pinole, and the unincorporated communities of Bayview, East Richmond Heights, El Sobrante, Kensington, Montalvin Manor, Tara Hills, North Richmond, and Rollingwood)

Description of the innovative initiative/project/program: Richmond has an innovative organization called SOS! Richmond. SOS stands for Safe Organized Spaces. Safe Organized Spaces Richmond has been operational as an essential resource for the city since 2019. It receives universal praise for its as it addresses essential needs among the unhoused that are otherwise unmet. SOS! Richmond is the only organization in Richmond whose mission is centered on workforce development for unhoused individuals who otherwise have the least access to mainstream opportunities. It is the SOS! Streets Team program that I am nominating for this "Innovation" award.

The Streets Team is a unique model that builds and maintains relationships with encampment residents through rooting their work in cultural competencies that can only be provided by peers who have trusted relationships with unsheltered populations. In other words, unhoused people trust other unhoused people, SOS trains and hires Streets Team members from among the unhoused and provides them with responsibilities to do outreach, engagement and stewardship to address street and encampment hotspots and needed services, as well as to help resolve neighborhood complaints. Among their many activities, they remove tons of trash and illegal dumping throughout Richmond on a weekly basis. What started as a staff of 4 diverse Streets Team members in December of 2019 has grown to a staff of 23 as of July of 2021. With new funding provided by the City of Richmond through one of our Reimagining Public Safety initiatives, the SOS! Streets Team will be able to expand to at least 60 and potentially to 100 members very soon (all to be hired from among the unhoused community in Richmond).

SOS! Richmond's Street Team provides hands-on help day in and day out to members of our unhoused community. They improve encampment and

neighborhood living conditions through direct service, engagement, advocacy, and collaborations. The impact of their efforts are enormous and they are setting Richmond on course to be an example of a city that cares about its unhoused, steering them into opportunities to lead better and more productive lives and eventually into stable housing.

Description of how the innovative initiative/project/program impacts the lives of people experiencing homelessness: Our challenges in the midst of this extreme housing crisis era are enormous. It is essential that we address the very real problems that people are facing at the root causes. That means we need to address the needs of unhoused residents and not just push them around from one site to another with no real support as to helping people get a leg up in their lives. Helping people lead dignified lives, as they cope in such difficult situations, takes a certain type of attitude and support. It takes compassion, understanding, patience and a willingness to provide whatever support is needed. Only with such attitudes and real support can a course be carved out toward better quality of life that leads to stable, sustainable and permanent housing. The Streets Team program provides such support.

The difference in people's lives that the SOS! Streets Team had made is enormous - helping support both unhoused residents and neighbors throughout the city that are impacted. Unsheltered people are employed on the Streets Teams to respond to neighborhood problems such as illegal dumping. Streets Team staff serve as land stewards and role models, and engage in continuous community engagement with encampment residents. This work benefits both the community and the workers.

Here is a quote from one of the Streets Team members;

"I help run the showers, and work on the streets team on Friday. This is my first actual job with a regular paycheck. I like the people I work with, and it's great having a job. I make \$15.50 an hour. " - Sasha Allen, encampment resident and SOS employee

SOS operates a mobile shower trailer, staffed by unsheltered people, which brings hygiene and other necessities to people at various locations across West County on a rotating basis.

Below is a quote from another SOS Streets Team member:

"I love helping people get showers. Some people told me they haven't had a shower in 8 months. One man told me he wasn't sure he could walk as far as the shower trailer, so I pushed him there in his wheelchair." - Buddy Bennett, encampment resident and SOS employee

SOS! Richmond also provides and maintains low-cost portable hand-washing stations at encampment locations, filling an immediate and high priority request from residents. SOS partners with public and private entities to provide portable toilets, trash removal, and other essential sanitation services.

Below is a quote from an encampment resident who receives benefit from having such water, sanitation and hygiene available for her and her husband, both seniors struggling with homelessness.

"We sleep in our truck in the front seat. We're both on social security. We don't make enough money to consider buying or renting anything. We just want someplace where we can cook, have running water and use the restroom." - Amilee Smith, encampment resident

Description of what makes initiative/project/program innovative:

Daniel Barth is the Director of SOS! Richmond. He has 35 years of experience working with homeless populations. He directs the development and operation of the Streets Team for daytime encampment and neighborhood engagement and provision of basic amenities, and for nighttime neighborhood responses related to public safety and quality of life issues. Thanks to Daniel's leadership and that of others associated with SOS! Richmond, unhoused people are employed in the Streets Team with zero incomes, with the majority of the staff reporting that this is the first job they have held in decades, sometimes the first in their lives. We

are so lucky to have this exciting model of transforming people's lives alive and well in Richmond!

To learn more, see this link:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1D6sIlrYkMt9EJ_qiiV3OlrIJugP4NhxBHEWtrmQP88U/edit?usp=sharing



Contra Costa Council on Homelessness

Homelessness Awareness Month 2021 Awards for Outstanding Volunteer

The Outstanding Volunteer Award is to recognize individuals or groups who have enriched the lives of people facing homelessness in Contra Costa County through volunteer efforts. Outstanding efforts can be demonstrated by length of involvement, by a strong concentration of service or impact of efforts. Nominees must volunteer in Contra Costa County and the volunteer activity must be without pay.

Awardees

1. Ady Olvera (District 4)
2. Antwon Clorid (District 1)
3. Boys Team Charity (District 5)
4. Colin Jack Fliehmann (District 4)
5. Denise Mills (District 1)
6. Linda Mino and Tom Hall (District unknown)
7. Meredith Fleming of St. John Missionary Baptist Church (District 1)
8. Robert Gregory (District 3)
9. RR Ministries (District 3)
10. St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Walnut Creek (District 4)
11. Stan Fleury (District 1)
12. Vanessa Calloway (District 1)

The following pages contain descriptions of awardees provided by the person (s) who nominated them.

Ady Olvera

Nominated by: Laura Nakamura

Supervisory District: District 4 (Clayton, Concord, Pleasant Hill, part of Walnut Creek, and the unincorporated Contra Costa Centre)

Nominee's outstanding volunteer service: Concord Communities Alliance would like to nominate one of our own for the "Outstanding Volunteer" award. Our nominee is a resident of Concord who has been actively raising awareness of the issue of homelessness in Contra Costa County, and very specifically in Concord. Her focus on this issue intensified immediately at the onset of the Covid 19 pandemic when shelters were shut down and fears that unsheltered communities would become super spreader death camps. She has been an outstanding volunteer leader in efforts to ease living conditions for homeless residents of Concord and Central Contra Costa. She has worked with tenacity, humility, and thoroughness to organize residents for specific policy proposals and direct their collective energy efficiently towards local government officials. She has very appropriately made a point of seeking the involvement of homeless residents themselves and ensuring that their knowledge and priorities are reflected in advocacy.

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness: She has worked tirelessly to bring the community groups, faith-based organizations, and residents together to push for concrete, long term solutions for the benefit for the whole community. She has also been instrumental in raising the voices of those experiencing homelessness to ensure they are heard and validated during the process.

Concord Communities Alliance values her tenacity. Through her leadership she has organized meetings, pod casts, live-streaming interviews with law enforcement and city leaders. She co- led efforts to organized community meetings and help CCA facilitate a stakeholder forum with over 50 attendees from city, county and community groups. She has acted as an encampment sweep observer to witness and document the treatment of the unhoused as they are uprooted. She has collaboratively led the CCA Housing and Homelessness Action Team and has involved several unhoused individuals in the conversations and recognizes that the voices of those most impacted must be elevated.

Our nominee has been a constant presence in the effort to uplift the voices of low-income communities, unhoused communities, communities of color, and other underrepresented

folks in Concord and beyond. She works to make spaces accessible for everyone and makes sure that people feel welcome and seen so they are comfortable sharing their stories and working towards community solutions. She is willing to meet the unhoused where they are today. When she hears that someone is sick or hungry, she reaches out to all those she knows and responds generously. So while she is organizing to meet the long term needs of the unhoused, she is present to do what she can for their immediate needs.

She has always ensured that we meet our unhoused neighbors where they are and as they are, find ways to hear from them directly in meetings, to truly help them meet their needs. With the full support and involvement of many members of Concord Communities Alliance, she has been doing some amazing and challenging work with raising awareness and bringing people together to elevate this issue. She is brave and persistent. We are proud to nominate Ady Olvera for the Outstanding Volunteer award.

Antwon Clorid

Nominated by: Mike Kinney

Supervisory District: District 1 (Richmond, San Pablo, El Cerrito, part of Pinole, and the unincorporated communities of Bayview, East Richmond Heights, El Sobrante, Kensington, Montalvin Manor, Tara Hills, North Richmond, and Rollingwood)

Nominee's outstanding volunteer service: Antwon Clorid is an advocate for the homeless, placement of individuals with drug or alcohol problem into successful recovery programs and the recruiting the unemployed in good paying union jobs in construction and warehousing in Richmond & Contra Costa County.

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness: I have followed Antwon Clorid's volunteerism for a decade. I have personally witnessed him feeding the homeless, getting homeless people into shelters and being enrolled into successful drug and alcohol recovery programs here in Richmond, CA. I have witnessed because of both his passion & activism have truly changed homeless peoples lives and landscape. Antwon Clorid truly believes in empowering the less fortunate individuals in society. He believes that a person's conditions does not dictate their position in life. Antwon always says, "*Everyone needs a second chance at first life.*"

Boys Team Charity

Contact: Raina Foster

Nominated by: Julie Clemens

Supervisory District: District 5 (Hercules, Martinez, Pittsburg, portions of Pinole and Antioch, and unincorporated communities of Alhambra Valley, Bay Point, Briones, Rodeo, Pacheco, Crockett, Tormey, Port Costa, Mt. View, Vine Hill, Reliez Valley, and Clyde)

Nominee's outstanding volunteer service: Boys Team Charity has been volunteering for SHELTER, Inc. for just a few years. They always come with a desire to help, and have a supportive attitude about our participants. The pandemic didn't stop these generous teens and moms! Even with restricted access to our programs due to health precautions, the group continued to provide celebrations for the families at our Mt. View Family Shelter, and organized in-kind drives.

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness: The children, and adults, at Mountain View Family Shelter were challenged during the pandemic to keep themselves entertained and engaged. Without the extra financial resources to invest in at-home entertainment, the special occasions set up for them by Boys Team Charity made a huge impact on helping these families feel connected to the world and gave them hope for a brighter future.

Colin Jack Fliehmman

Nominated by: Louise McGuire

Supervisorial District: District 4 (Clayton, Concord, Pleasant Hill, part of Walnut Creek, and the unincorporated Contra Costa Centre)

Nominee's outstanding volunteer service: Colin Jack Fliehman visits unhoused people daily, brings them home-cooked meals, makes the community aware via Facebook of individuals and their needs.

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness: I am sure that Jack's caring attention makes recipients feel loved. His byline is "LOVE, KNOWN AND NOT ALONE". I am sure that everyone who knows about Jack, cares about the unhoused and follows his posts values his work, because they value people. Jack invests a huge amount of time and money in getting up in the middle of the night, preparing meals and driving around delivering them and connecting with those he helps.

Denise Mills

Nominated by: Denise Mills

Supervisory District: District 1 (Richmond, San Pablo, El Cerrito, part of Pinole, and the unincorporated communities of Bayview, East Richmond Heights, El Sobrante, Kensington, Montalvin Manor, Tara Hills, North Richmond, and Rollingwood)

Nominee's outstanding volunteer service: This nominee volunteers with Contra Costa Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council, in order to assist youth coming from the Justice system. The council(JJCC) will advise the Board of Supervisors on the development and implementation of a multi-agency juvenile justice plan is composed of several critical parts, including, but not limited to an assessment of exiting law enforcement, probation, education, mental health, and health services, drug and alcohol and youth services resources which specifically target at risk juveniles, juvenile offenders, and their families, an identification and prioritization of the neighborhoods, schools, and other areas in the community that face a significant public safety risk from juvenile crime. The Council will also coordinate on a countywide basis the work of those governmental and non-governmental organizations engaged in activities designed to reduce the incidence of juvenile crime and delinquency in the greater community, develop information and intelligence-sharing systems to ensure that county actions are fully coordinated, and provide data and appropriate outcome measures.

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness:

Working with JJCC there are some youths that become homeless when they are released so we try to get them as much referrals as possible, they are led to reentry programs that assist with housing, employment, and education. Being someone who was homeless at one time in my life, the tarmac issues that come with homelessness can be quite overwhelming. I can relate. So I commit to helping the homeless, knowing how lost and afraid the journey can be. I had to figure out where the help was going to come from, now that I have those tools, I can be a great help to those that are homeless. by giving incite oh how to obtain housing and to stay permanently housed. This Nominee is a Team Player has encouraged both co-workers as well as the youth she works with. She has a GREAT compassion the work she does.

Linda Mino and Tom Hall

Nominated by: Suzanne Martin

Supervisory District: Unknown

Nominee's outstanding volunteer service: Linda and Tom have supported Hope Solutions for over 10 years. Together they have volunteered 158 hours with Hope Solutions

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness: Linda and Tom are active as Volunteer Outreach and Services committee members. They also have provided different furnishings and housewares and supported Ruby Slippers and will continue to do so. Tom purchased and delivered food for Homework Club for many years. Linda helped set up Garden Park Apartment units for incoming residents, she provided many kitchen kits for incoming families. She volunteered during Summer Camps, which has been her favorite memory with Hope Solutions and has also helped with translation for families trying to find housing.

Meredith Fleming at St. John Missionary Baptist Church

Nominated by: Nicole Jones

Supervisory District: District 1 (Richmond, San Pablo, El Cerrito, part of Pinole, and the unincorporated communities of Bayview, East Richmond Heights, El Sobrante, Kensington, Montalvin Manor, Tara Hills, North Richmond, and Rollingwood)

Nominee's outstanding volunteer service: This lady is the true epitome of volunteerism. Meredith Fleming comes to our organization-Greater Richmond Interfaith Program (GRIP) every weekday to help in the kitchen or wherever she is needed. Her church group used to cook lunch every 3rd Thursday for our homeless consumers and the residents, but once the pandemic started, the group couldn't come due to the closure of our kitchen for outsiders. The group consisted of elderly women, so of course seniors were being told to stay home.

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness: She comes and helps make sandwiches, put together lunches, chop vegetables, put together hygiene kits, helps sort and pass out the mail, mops floors, wipes tables and gives us a little kick in butt when we need it. She serves in the kindest way with a smile that makes anyone going through the food line return a smile even if they are having a bad day. She comes in every day with a smile and a story about her grand kids or her children. She is motivated and motivates others. She will have her say if something is out of order and will work to make it right. She is a problem solver and is full of life.

Robert Gregory

Nominated by: Irma Gregory

Supervisory District: District 3 (Bethel Island, Blackhawk, Byron, Diablo, Discovery Bay and Knightsen, as well as the cities of Antioch, Brentwood, and Oakley)

Nominee's outstanding volunteer service: The nominee is Robert Gregory. He has been volunteering since the first wave of COVID. He goes above and beyond to enrich the lives of people who are less fortunate than him. He dedicated his efforts to serve a community of homeless people in downtown Antioch (the area around the Amtrak station). Every Thursday and sometimes on the weekends (or when it is needed or asked for by the homeless people) he brings food, toiletries, clothes, and other necessities to take care of the people in this area. Being a part of a church, he not only tries to take care of the physical needs of the homeless people in Antioch, but also provide them with spiritual healing and hope.

He demonstrates an exemplary commitment to serve the interests of homeless people by preparing nutritious food with the produce that he buys himself: meaty soups (the favorite among the "regulars"), pasta salads, baked potatoes with toppings, etc. He treats these people as his family. He worries that the food stays hot when needed or that these people have a variety in what they eat as they already struggle so much. When it gets hot, he brings light clothes bought at the Goodwill store in Brentwood, when it gets cold – he looks for jackets and sweaters for these people. To help them to cope with rain, he buys tarp covers for them.

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness: Robert and people with whom he serves usually feed about 20 homeless people in downtown Antioch (and people in need who just come to the tables where he serves) on every Thursday. He makes sure that the people there have decent food. Sometimes when he runs out of food that he prepared and someone approaches him and says that s/he is hungry he goes to the store or the nearest fast food place to buy meals. Every time he is there he asks what is needed (Band-Aids, ointments, baby wipes, shampoos, etc.) and delivers it next Thursday.

You might want to ask the "regulars" – John, Greg, Kim, Wendy, and many other homeless people about his outstanding efforts to keep these people fed and ready for the weather conditions, not to mention showing them that they are not alone in this struggle, that there are people who care about them. Many of the homeless people have dogs and cats as their companions – they treasure them more than a chance to have a free temporary housing – Robert takes care of them too by providing food and other things. These homeless people in the downtown Antioch value his work because he contributes to their physical and mental survival. He knows that nearly all of them are struggling with some kind of addiction: he

accepts it and tries to find resources to help them. Drugs give these homeless people a way to escape the hush reality, Robert tries to make this reality better for them. He comes not to “solve all their problems”, but he comes to hear them and to help them.

RR Ministries

Contact: Sandro Trujillo

Nominated by: Marjori Lizarraga

Supervisory District: District 3 (Bethel Island, Blackhawk, Byron, Diablo, Discovery Bay and Knightsen, as well as the cities of Antioch, Brentwood, and Oakley)

Nominee's outstanding volunteer service: RR Ministries have been distributing food , clothes and programs for free to the unhoused community and families in Antioch. Literally rain or shine ! Their work has made an impact in so many ppl .

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness: Many of our unhoused community in the city of Antioch have been blessed and felt the love through organizations like RR Ministries.

St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Walnut Creek

Contact: Rustin Comer

Nominated by: Leslie Gleason

Supervisory District: District 4 (Clayton, Concord, Pleasant Hill, part of Walnut Creek, and the unincorporated Contra Costa Centre)

Nominee's outstanding volunteer service: The Trinity Center Crew of St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Walnut Creek has devoted over six years to ensuring that persons experiencing homelessness or living in poverty enjoy a delicious, healthy lunchtime meal. Each week, the St. Matt's volunteers have planned the lunch, bought groceries, prepared and served the meal, creating supportive relationships with our unhoused neighbors. Even when COVID curtailed their ability to be onsite, the Lunch Crew made arrangements to prepare the meal in their commercial kitchen and deliver it hot and ready-to-serve. Knowing that hunger doesn't take a holiday, they have provided Safeway gift cards for members on the Friday before each legal holiday, and during the winter holidays, provide generous gift cards accompanied by notes and cards of warm wishes to brighten the lives of those served at Trinity Center. Over the six year history of Trinity Center's winter Evening Program overnight shelter, St. Matthew volunteers have hosted shelter participants at their complex when the usual Armory location has been unavailable, welcoming them with meals, entertainment, and companionship. For their long-standing and meaningful support for individuals facing homelessness, we are proud to nominate The Trinity Center Crew of St. Matthew Church.

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness: By providing for people's basic needs in the form of hot, delicious, healthy meals, prepared and served with compassion, this group of nominees demonstrate that the community cares about unhoused and vulnerable people. Every member who has enjoyed their meals, chatted over lunch with a St. Matt's volunteer, or enjoyed their holiday "shopping spree" compliments of the entire congregation knows what a difference their service makes. Knowing that we can count on St. Matthews volunteers in so many concrete ways is deeply valuable to the staff of Trinity Center, and they are always open to exploring new ways to help Trinity Center and our members enjoy a vibrant life and build a path forward.

Stan Fleury

Nominated by: Nicole Jones

Supervisory District: District 1 (Richmond, San Pablo, El Cerrito, part of Pinole, and the unincorporated communities of Bayview, East Richmond Heights, El Sobrante, Kensington, Montalvin Manor, Tara Hills, North Richmond, and Rollingwood)

Nominee's outstanding volunteer service: Stan Fleury is our "Volunteer Extraordinaire." He came to our organization-Greater Richmond Interfaith Program (GRIP) as an IT consultant helping us get our computer and phone systems updated--a much needed revamping. However, since then, he has been with us performing maintenance tasks, completing work orders so we didn't have to hire other contractors, painted shelter rooms, replaced doors, locks, shelving, set up camera's for our facility, helped find resources for free laptops, being a liaison and assistance with contracts and grants. This "Volunteer Extraordinaire" has jumped in performing all these services donating both his time and his personal money.

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness:

Because we are a non-profit homeless shelter for families with children, all the services he provides us for free enables us to use our current funding on our program services we provide to the community. We value his work, and his assistance with anything we ask of him. He has helped make changes to some of our program processes and procedures to enable us to better serve our homeless consumers.

Stan Fleury is an all around good guy and he loves to give back to the community. We appreciate and thank him for all his hard work.

Vanessa Calloway

Nominated by: Michelle Milam

Supervisory District: District 1 (Richmond, San Pablo, El Cerrito, part of Pinole, and the unincorporated communities of Bayview, East Richmond Heights, El Sobrante, Kensington, Montalvin Manor, Tara Hills, North Richmond, and Rollingwood)

Nominee's outstanding volunteer service: Vanessa Calloway and her project "Way to Love" has been volunteering in the Richmond community assisting the unhoused population with hot meals, clothing, and basic needs.

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness:

Vanessa is a deeply caring and committed person to the needs of the unhoused community in Richmond, CA. She has utilized her own personal resources, resources from the faith community and other volunteers to serve people in Richmond with hot meals, resources, basic needs, clothing and other items.

Richmond was hit hard by the pandemic, and aftermath like many cities. The city has a large population of unhoused folks that need support. Vanessa can be counted on each weekend with her team to go out and see the need and fill it. What is also inspiring is that in a time when many have concerns she turns that concern into action, or as Vanessa calls it "Way to Love".

Vanessa's inspiration and positivity is infectious. Our police officers have come off duty to help, as well as many community members. She has a special place in her heart for young people and has been able through her efforts to impact youth who fall through the cracks of the system.

There are many people who volunteer, but not many people who treat everyone as if they are the family. That is what people will tell you about Vanessa - she makes us feel like family. You would be hard pressed to find a more resourceful example of love in action.



Contra Costa Council on Homelessness

Homelessness Awareness Month 2021 Awards for Outstanding Landlord/Property Manager

The Outstanding Landlord/Property Manager Award is to recognize landlords or property management companies that have enriched the lives of people facing homelessness in Contra Costa County by providing permanent housing opportunities. Outstanding efforts can be demonstrated in a number of ways including length of time involved in housing people affected by homelessness, number of units rented to individuals and/or families facing homelessness, quality of units rented, etc. Landlord or property management company must rent units in Contra Costa County to individuals and/or families facing homelessness.

Awardees

1. Agueda Gomez, St. Paul's Commons (District 2)
2. Deanna Vallejo (District 4)
3. Delta Pines (District 3)
4. Eric Sadati (District 3)
5. Glo's Independent Living and Transitional Housing (District 1)
6. Margarita Duarte, The Oaks (District 3)
7. Rick Johnson, Cemel Industries, LLC (District 4)
8. Roberto, LLC (District: Entire County)
9. Satellite Affordable Housing Associates (SAHA) (District: Entire County)

The following pages contain descriptions of awardees provided by the person (s) who nominated them.

Agueda Gomez, St. Paul's Commons Apartments

Contact: St. Paul's Commons Apartments

Nominated by: Amanda Hopkins

Supervisorial District: District 2 (San Ramon, Danville, Alamo, Lafayette, Moraga, Orinda, Canyon, Rossmoor, Parkmead, Saranap and a portion of Walnut Creek))

Description of nominee's outstanding contribution to ending homelessness: See below

Difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness: I'd like to nominate Agueda Gomez, Property Manager of St. Paul's Commons for being a stabilizing force in her formerly homeless resident's lives. Her management style is consistent, firm, compassionate and understanding and she goes above and beyond to lend a hand & ensure resident's needs are met. She's been known to call out misconduct and address issues head-on, she's connected single parents on site with neighbors for after school support when she noticed they were struggling, she always makes herself available to her resident, and has even personally provided housekeeping help a time or two when residents were unable to keep up on their own. She has such a positive impact on the people's lives she touches. I can't think of anyone more deserving!

Deanna Vallejo

Contact: Deanna Vallejo

Nominated by: Toni Jackson

Supervisory District: District 4 (Clayton, Concord, Pleasant Hill, part of Walnut Creek, and the unincorporated Contra Costa Centre)

Description of nominee's outstanding contribution to ending homelessness:

Deanna Vallejo is the landlord/ she is awesome! She has made a difference in two of my clients lives who are now housed in Concord.

Difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing

homelessness: Deanna Vallejo who met with the Case Manager on the 7th of September, she gave my client Tina E. a chance to go from being homeless to having a one bedroom apartment in two days after meeting her! I truly believe we have angels on earth and Mrs. Vallejo is one of them. I just would like to say as a Case Manager she made me feel very comfortable and confident that people can have second chance.

Delta Pines

Contact: Delta Pines

Nominated by: Julie Clemens

Supervisory District: District 3 (Bethel Island, Blackhawk, Byron, Diablo, Discovery Bay and Knightsen, as well as the cities of Antioch, Brentwood, and Oakley)

Description of nominee's outstanding contribution to ending homelessness: The management of Delta Pines Apartments in Antioch welcomes the participants of SHELTER, Inc. with open arms on their road to self-sufficiency. The manager, Taniesha Bowman, was once herself a participant in SHELTER, Inc. programs, and she 'pays forward' the benefits she received by encouraging others and welcoming them to Delta Pines.

Difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness: Low income housing units are difficult to find, and often do not encourage pride by the residents. Ms. Bowman helps to build up the household's confidence in their ability to move forward positively.

Eric Sadati

Contact: Eric Sadati

Nominated by: Chelsey Villaro

Supervisory District: District 3 (Bethel Island, Blackhawk, Byron, Diablo, Discovery Bay and Knightsen, as well as the cities of Antioch, Brentwood, and Oakley)

Description of nominee's outstanding contribution to ending homelessness: Eric has helped many of my clients be housed. He is not biased towards them or their situation and is very understanding. He has stepped up to offer units to clients who have a voucher that will be expired, even as soon as the next day of me reaching out to him. I have almost 10 clients housed because of him and his referrals to his friends with units available for our clients.

Difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness: Eric is very responsive to our clients that are now his tenants. He is quick to house clients. All clients have been positively affected by Eric's kindness, especially clients who have difficult finding housing due to credit, income, etc. Case managers and clients value the work Eric has done for our clients.

Glo's Independent Living and Transitional Living

Contact: Tiffany Powell

Nominated by: Rachelle Wormely

Supervisory District: District 1 (Richmond, San Pablo, El Cerrito, part of Pinole, and the unincorporated communities of Bayview, East Richmond Heights, El Sobrante, Kensington, Montalvin Manor, Tara Hills, North Richmond, and Rollingwood)

Description of nominee's outstanding contribution to ending homelessness:

Tiffany Powell has let me move into one of her properties. I am now the House Manager for all her properties. Tiffany has taken the time to teach and show me how to be an excellent house manager to all her residents. Showing them love and helping them in areas. I would never know.

Difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing

homelessness: First her love for God. The love and time she devotes to them is unbelievable.

Tiffany is love. I believe the love she has received from her Mother Gloria (God Bless her soul) has shown her how to love in a Godly way. To be able to not judge any of residents and look beyond their past is amazing. Always there for support in what ever their endeavors are. She is a godsend.

Glo's Independent Living and Transitional Living

Contact: Tiffany Powell

Nominated by: Larry Wilson

Supervisory District: District 1 (Richmond, San Pablo, El Cerrito, part of Pinole, and the unincorporated communities of Bayview, East Richmond Heights, El Sobrante, Kensington, Montalvin Manor, Tara Hills, North Richmond, and Rollingwood)

Description of nominee's outstanding contribution to ending homelessness:

Tiffany Powell with Glo's Independent Living LLC stands high above all of the affordable landlords in the county. I've been working with her for quite a while and she's the real thing. She has a heart for the those living in her properties and is always striving to improve the quality of their lives. Her properties are well maintained and the residents help to keep them clean and free of clutter. How many landlords take their residents out to dinner and offer other social activities??? This lady does!

Difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing

homelessness: Tiffany offers room shares and room rentals that those on low incomes can afford. A formerly homeless client of that I referred is now the manager overseeing the different sites for Tiffany.

Her properties provide 2 meals each day. They offer credit counseling, personal life coaching and community building skills and connecting to support groups.

Glo's Independent Living and Transitional Living

Contact: Tiffany Powell

Nominated by: Fayron Thomas

Supervisory District: District 1 (Richmond, San Pablo, El Cerrito, part of Pinole, and the unincorporated communities of Bayview, East Richmond Heights, El Sobrante, Kensington, Montalvin Manor, Tara Hills, North Richmond, and Rollingwood)

Description of nominee's outstanding contribution to ending homelessness: She checks in with me and ask me to help her with cleaning other properties.

Difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness: She's caring person loves to see people move forward and helps them out from walking down the wrong path.

Margarita Duarte, The Oaks

Contact: Margarita Duarte

Nominated by: Alex Alexander

Supervisory District: District 3 (Bethel Island, Blackhawk, Byron, Diablo, Discovery Bay and Knightsen, as well as the cities of Antioch, Brentwood, and Oakley)

Description of nominee's outstanding contribution to ending homelessness: The Oaks, from Oakley, has worked with Shelter Inc's SSVF Program for a number of years helping housed veterans and their families who were in need of housing. This complex has gone through a number of management changes but it still did not matter who the new management team were, they still worked with case management from Shelter Inc's SSVF program to help house veterans and their families. I would like to recognize this complex for their support to help end homelessness to veterans and their families.

Difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness: That they had available units, the rent is affordable and they have worked with SSVF to provide a comfortable home for the veterans.

The tenant values the work of the nominee. because they came through when it was needed. I appreciate the partnership that have been established and I look forward to a continued working relationship with the Oaks.

Rick Johnson, Cemel Industries, LLC

Contact: Rick Johnson

Nominated by: Kristine Nishi

Supervisory District: District 4 (Clayton, Concord, Pleasant Hill, part of Walnut Creek, and the unincorporated Contra Costa Centre)

Description of nominee's outstanding contribution to ending homelessness:

Property manager/owner, Mr. Rick Johnson, has been working with the HUD-VASH team at Martinez VA for about 10 years (as far as I remember). He/Cemel Industries LLC has multiple properties in Martinez and Concord areas, mainly located in Martinez. Mr. Johnson has rented to many of our homeless Veterans/families that we were trying to help house with a HUD-VASH voucher. Mr. Johnson at least has put over 20 Vets in his properties without checking their credits as he understands that most homeless Vets probably do not have good credits. He has many units located in the convenient areas in Martinez. Mr. Johnson ensures that all the units are up to health and safety codes.

Difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing

homelessness: As I mentioned above, Mr. Johnson is willing to work with the HUD-VASH team taking our homeless Vets without checking their credits. Our homeless Vets who are housed by Mr. Johnson have many health, substance use and mental health issues. Mr. Johnson is working with our team/case managers closely to stabilize and maintain their housing. He understands that if our Vets lose their housing, it would be very likely that they will become homeless again. Mr. Johnson has expressed in multiple occasions to me and other teammates that he does not want to see our housed Vets losing their housing and becoming homeless again. He has gone extra miles to work with VA/HUD-VASH and housing authority to keep our Vets in his rentals, including putting extra money and efforts for repairs, accepting and being patient with Vets' special needs (one of my Vets who has severe paranoid is verbally abusive to Mr. Johnson).

Mr. Johnson has evolved over the years, and has become more and more empathetic to our homeless Vets. He even commented that it is probably because he is getting older. When our Vets did not pay their rent, his comment was, "Oh, well it's just money, right?" I took it as a kind act even though he was

probably feeling the pain of not receiving the rent. Our Vets have many high needs who are housed with him, including active using, CPS involvement, serious health issues/dementia, and so on. He is working with our team closely to keep a roof over our Vets' heads. He continues to give our homeless Vets priority to be housed in his properties even though he has had many challenging Vets from our team.

Rick Johnson, Cemel Industries, LLC

Contact: Rick Johnson

Nominated by: Hannah Frank

Supervisory District: District 5 (Hercules, Martinez, Pittsburg, portions of Pinole and Antioch, and unincorporated communities of Alhambra Valley, Bay Point, Briones, Rodeo, Pacheco, Crockett, Tormey, Port Costa, Mt. View, Vine Hill, Reliez Valley, and Clyde)

Description of nominee's outstanding contribution to ending homelessness: Rick Johnson is a landlord who has worked with our VA HUD-VASH program here in Contra Costa County for about a decade. Over the years, Rick has worked tirelessly with the VASH program to not only rent to homeless Veterans, but to keep his Veteran tenants housed. Rick is currently renting to approximately 20, formerly homeless Veterans now. Over the years, Rick has worked with dozens more.

Difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness: Rick Johnson understands the complex barriers facing our Veterans and homeless populations in general. He is patient, flexible, and understands there may be more to a person seeking housing than what shows in their background. Rick is proactive and genuinely concerned for our Veterans, often reaching out to VA VASH staff if he worries for a Veteran's wellbeing. Some of our Veterans who have struggled the most with independent living due to complex, psychosocial stressors have maintained their rentals with Rick because of his extra care, support, and patience. Our VA HUD-VASH program and Veterans who have completed their journey out of homelessness with Rick's support are forever grateful. This nomination for Rick Johnson is from Hannah Frank, Kristine Nishi, James Cherry, Ryan Normandy, and Laura Rasmussen of the VA's HUD-VASH program.

Roberto LLC

Contact: Roberto LLC

Nominated by: Anthony Arasa

Supervisory District: They serve the entire county

Description of nominee's outstanding contribution to ending homelessness:

Roberto LLC understands the Housing First model. "Lets get them in and provide support to assist in their stability and transition to affordable housing if they desire or they can stay here as long as they like", is what was shared in our first meet and greet with Roberto LLC's Site Manager George Roberto. Roberto LLC has been in Contra Costa for several years now providing clean, affordable and a beautiful shared living environment for those that desire a community of care.

Difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing

homelessness: Roberto LLC creates a space of housing in their own rooms; rent that's negotiable to help the individuals get stable and thrive in their environment. They understand the limited incomes and generously work with each individual to create a plan that sustainable for both themselves and their partners residing in their homes...What's great about Roberto LLC's properties are some of their homes have wheelchair ramps, grab bars in the bathrooms, enough space for the partners to move around in their walkers ,that's huge for the elderly or mobility impaired that need that additional support in their living environment. Just thankful for the staff and home managers that provide compassion and empathy for those residing in the Roberto LLC homes.

Satellite Affordable Housing Associates (SAHA)

Contact: Satellite Affordable Housing Associates (SAHA)

Nominated by: Debbie Toth

Supervisory District: They serve the entire county

Description of nominee's outstanding contribution to ending homelessness:

Satellite Affordable Housing Associates (SAHA) has 4 projects in Contra Costa County with units set aside for chronically homeless seniors (12), families that meet Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) criteria (10), and voluntarily added a leasing preference to prioritize seniors experiencing homelessness at a HUD subsidized for 14 units. SAHA partners closely with Coordinated Entry System and Health Housing and Homeless to provide services and create new units. Veterans Square is under construction now and will be a 100% Permanent Supportive Housing for Veterans Assisted Supportive Housing and No Place Like Home populations.

SAHA and Choice in Aging have worked together since 2017 at the senior affordable housing, Tabora Gardens, in Antioch. The quality of the units, community spaces, and property grounds are outstanding. There are community gardens where residents grow fresh produce, walking paths, computer labs, a lounge, and transportation services. In this project, SAHA built a community of residents from very diverse backgrounds and experiences in a way that honored all of them. When challenges arise, SAHA is right there to partner and solve complicated problems through understanding their residents and their unique needs.

Difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing

homelessness: SAHA is providing the highest quality of units, community amenities, and services because they believe that each resident deserves dignity, autonomy, and access to opportunities. They partner well and advocate with a clear voice. SAHA is positively impacting the lives of the residents who live at their buildings, and setting a standard for quality housing that everyone deserves.

Over the last eight years, I have had the incredible fortune of getting to know some of our amazing Bay Area nonprofit housing developers through our

endeavor to create an Aging in Place Campus and through our work most recently doing mobile vaccine clinics for at risk populations. While all seem to be mission driven outstanding agencies, SAHA stood out to me for a variety of reasons. First and foremost, they had a staff person dedicated to understanding and creating opportunities to meet the needs of residents that go beyond housing. There was a fundamental knowledge that housing alone won't keep someone housed - particularly populations that are elder or have previously been without housing. So they set out to create support systems that ensured gaps were filled proactively such as transportation, care management, access to food and so much more. For this and a variety of other reasons, Choice in Aging chose to partner with them to change to future of aging in our state.



To access homeless services:

- Call 211
- Go to:
<https://cchealth.org/h3/coc/help.php>

To learn more about homeless services and the CoC:

- Visit: <https://cchealth.org/h3/>
- Email: contracostacoc@cchealth.org
- Call: 925-608-6700