



free from homelessness and family violence

Special 30th Anniversary Edition

# NEWSLETTER

## STEPHANIE AND DIAMOND: A PLACE TO CALL HOME

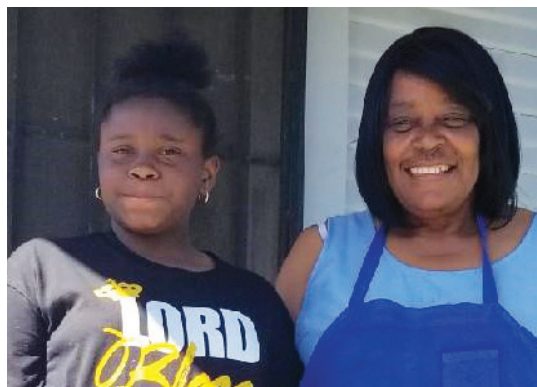
"Building Futures does what the name implies: it provides the foundation for a better life." Stephanie Pendarvis speaks with a leader's assurance. When her husband passed away, it was a different story. His mother ordered Stephanie and her granddaughter, Diamond, to pack their belongings and get out. The two were alone with no place to call home. That's when Stephanie called Building Futures' hotline.

The two found a temporary home at the San Leandro Shelter—Building Futures' very first site. Grateful for a place to "breathe and pray," Stephanie assured Diamond they were on an adventure.

At the San Leandro Shelter, Stephanie had the time and support to address a long-neglected medical issue. "When someone is homeless, their daily priority is getting food and finding a place to rest. There is no time to make a better life," she says. "The San Leandro Shelter is uplifting. The residents have food and a bed. They also get the

tools they need for housing, identification and social services—all of that."

Working with a volunteer tutor at the shelter, Diamond raised her math grade from a C to a B. Stephanie got a job as a parent educator and noon supervisor at Diamond's school. Today with the help of Building Futures' Housing Program, Stephanie and Diamond have an apartment to call home. "That's what Building Futures helped us achieve," Stephanie says. "We are truly grateful."



## KAISER PERMANENTE GIVES THE GIFT OF SERVICE

*"Everybody can be great, because everybody can serve." —Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

On January 15th, Kaiser Permanente led a mighty contingent of volunteers—including U.S. Congresswoman Barbara Lee, San Leandro Mayor Pauline Cutter, and Council Members Pete Ballew and Lee Thomas—in service at the San Leandro Shelter. Kaiser leadership also represented their sites in making a difference: Michelle Gaskill-Hames, Senior Vice President/Area Manager; Kapil R. Dhingra, Physician-in-Chief of San Leandro Medical Center; and Eric Cain, Physician-in-Chief of Fremont Medical Center.

Taking place each year on the third Monday in January, the MLK Day of Service is the only federal holiday observed as a national day of volunteerism—a "day on, not a day off." The Kaiser volunteers arrived early, and got to work making over the children's area, and installing a sitting bench, new closet shelves, and new light fixtures. Fresh paint was also on their "to do" list: the team painted murals on dorm dividers, gave a fresh coat to the ramp and stairs, and refreshed the kids' playhouse. "The volunteers had a great time helping out. And they loved sharing the enchilada dinner the volunteers provided for dinner!" says Kaiser Public Affairs Manager Kimberley Cunha.





# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**H**appy spring! If you're like me, you find yourself asking "where has the time gone?" No sooner have I celebrated one birthday, the next is rolling around. One moment, my children were babies. Now they stand on the brink of adulthood. One day, I was a freshly-minted college grad and the next, I was reporting to volunteer at a shelter for women and children in my home town of San Leandro. I vividly recall the kids I met, and how they inspired me to create the shelter's first Children's Program. As you can see in the photo, their smiles were contagious!

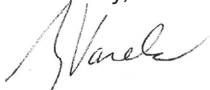
This year, Building Futures marks an important milestone: **30 years of service** to thousands of individuals and families building new lives after homelessness and domestic violence. I can tell you a lot about where those years have gone. When I started as a volunteer 25 years ago, Building Futures' sole service site was the San Leandro Shelter. In the mid-nineties, we added domestic violence services—including Sister Me Home. In the early 2000s, we expanded into Alameda, with Bessie Coleman Court and Midway Shelter.

In 2009, during the deepest recession since the 1930s, we grew our services to meet the need. The expertise we built made Building Futures an area housing leader. In 2015, we were asked to help pilot The Family Front Door, a one stop service hub for families. Now the "hub" model is being rolled out across Alameda County—with Building Futures playing a significant role.

**That brings me to YOU.** From the start, individuals, businesses, and faith groups have served as our partners, donating "time and treasure" to help their neighbors in need. You'll read about some of these partnerships in these pages.

Thank you for giving your neighbors in need a helping hand and a new way to see themselves: as special beings with much to offer. Best of all is handing a client a set of keys to a place they can call home. Ending a client's homelessness is possible because of the partnerships we have built. Thank you, and I hope to see you at **Jazz it Up!** on May 18th! (See page four for details.)

Sincerely,



Liz Varela



## LONGSTANDING STAFF SHARE THEIR PERSPECTIVES

We sat down with Building Futures' longest-tenured staff, to ask them about their experiences. Areda Boyd directs services at Bessie Coleman Court. She began working at "BCC" in 2003. Sabrina Thomas began as an on-call substitute at the San Leandro Shelter in 2007. Today, Ms. Thomas serves as the agency's Emergency Services Director. Camille Moreno, PhD, is the agency's Clinical Director. She began working at the San Leandro Shelter in 1995 and was instrumental in starting our domestic violence services.

### *What Would You Like to Share About Building Futures?*

**CM:** Building Futures offers opportunities for growth and re-growth! Staff and clients alike are supported in reaching their potential.

**AB:** It's the way we empower our communities, providing the most effective approach to enhance their lives. It's an

approach of love, empathy, and forgiveness.

**ST:** As a director, I love the freedom to work with staff and clients with the hope of changing our lives for the better, one day at a time.

### *You have all said that Building Futures makes you proud. Why?*

**CM:** The staff is deeply committed to our clients and the work. We've sat in the attic at the San Leandro Shelter folding clothes. We've done laundry, cooked and served meals, and raced to the post office to meet the grant proposal deadline. We have supported clients in distress and played with children to help them be children. We show UP, each and every day!

**AB:** I feel proud of our residents' commitment to doing their best and shifting to success.

**ST:** I see the fruits of our labor, and the true



*Veteran staff members Areda Boyd, Liz Varela, Sabrina Thomas and Camille Moreno (left to right)*

love we give when working with our clients. We are truly changing one life at a time.

**AB:** My son was a little boy when I started. I thought I'd stay until he graduated from high school. Now he's in his 30s, with a son of his own.

**CM:** It will soon be 23 years that I have been at Building Futures. I want to be here for 23 more!

# HONORING THOSE THAT MADE OUR SUCCESSES POSSIBLE

## OUR MISSION

*To build communities with underserved individuals and families where they are safely and supportively housed, free from homelessness and family violence.*

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1395 Bancroft Avenue  
San Leandro, CA 94577

510-357-0205

CRISIS LINE: 1-866-292-9688

f [buildingfutures.san.leandro](https://www.buildingfutures.san.leandro.org)

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*I'd like to thank everyone  
for the support given me*

*It means more than  
what the eye can see*

*I greatly appreciate  
without a doubt*

*I just want to go out  
and scream and shout:*

*Building Futures is  
simply the best!*

—GHOST

San Leandro Warming Shelter guest

Jazz It Up! 2018 brings together Building Futures' supporters and partners to celebrate the many successes of the past 30 years and raise funds to fuel life-changing programs and services.

On May 18th, we'll also honor three longstanding partners:



New retiree **Jim Franz** has been called the “heart and soul of Alameda City Hall.” Jim’s career in public services includes a stint with the Red Cross, and as a city staffer coordinating nonprofits serving youth and families. When Building Futures began Midway Shelter and then Bessie Coleman Court, Jim’s advocacy and warmth gave our efforts rocket fuel. He also founded the city’s Domestic Violence Task Force. We are proud to honor Jim, and to call him a friend. For more on Jim, see <https://www.eastbaytimes.com/2018/01/17/jim-franz-heart-and-soul-of-alameda-city-hall-gets-a-sweet-send-off/>

In the early 2000s, Alameda County **District Attorney Nancy O'Malley** envisioned a hub where victims of interpersonal violence could access an array of coordinated services. When the Alameda County Family Justice Center opened in 2005, Building Futures was one of the 30 original service providers. We are grateful to District Attorney O'Malley for serving as a dedicated ally bringing federal and state resources into Alameda County, and for sponsoring laws to protect survivors. Visit the Family Justice Center at <http://www.acfjc.org/>



Under Mayor Pauline Cutter, **The San Leandro Homeless Compact** is a historic and successful collaboration linking Building Futures, San Leandro’s Recreation and Human Services Department, the San Leandro Police Department, the Rental Housing Association of Southern Alameda County, local landlords and Interfaith Homeless Network. As a result, 26 chronically homeless individuals from our community have received housing and supportive services, and the way the city addresses and ends homelessness has evolved. Our partnership with the City of San Leandro is thirty years strong and has never flagged. The Compact was awarded the 2017 Helen Putnam Award for Excellence in Community Services and Economic Development by the League of California Cities. Read about the San Leandro Housing Compact in *Western Cities Magazine*: <http://www.westerncity.com/Western-City/March-2018/San-Leandro-Homeless-Compact-Takes-a-New-Approach/>





# Jazz it Up!

MAY 18, 2018 • 5:30–9:00PM  
CASA PERALTA  
384 W. ESTUDILLO AVE., SAN LEANDRO

## BUILDING FUTURES' 30TH ANNIVERSARY EVENT

Want to have a magical night and help neighbors in need build safe and stable lives after homelessness and domestic violence? Join us May 18th! The fun happens at historic Casa Peralta in San Leandro—just two blocks from Building Futures' first overnight shelter for women and children. Ticket prices are just \$30. Purchase at [jazzitup2018.eventbrite.com](http://jazzitup2018.eventbrite.com), or by phone at 510-924-3092 or [lcurtis@bfwc.org](mailto:lcurtis@bfwc.org).

### THANK YOU, 2018 SPONSORS!

*Jazz it Up! sponsors support life-changing programs and services in our community*



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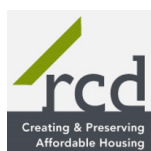
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