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.
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—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.)
Honoring Those That Made Our Successes Possible

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/

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
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, or by phone at 510-924-3092 or lcurtis@bfwc.org.

**THANK YOU, 2018 SPONSORS!**

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

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**THERE’S STILL TIME TO SPONSOR!** Contact Lorie at 510-924-3092 or lcurtis@bfwc.org.