



FAMILY SUPPORTIVE  
HOUSING



# FAMILIES MATTER

Winter 2015

## Foreclosure Forces Family to Refocus Goals



**S**arah and Mike worked hard all their life. Sarah held two jobs; one full time, and the other part time to pay for the children's daycare. Mike worked long hours in

construction. Combined, they earned just enough to make ends meet. They worked off of a very strict budget that left no room for emergencies or unplanned expense, consequently their world fell apart when they lost their housing.

The home they had been renting, the home they had been living in since their first child was born 12 years ago, was being foreclosed. They were devastated and shocked to find the rental market so out of reach. They were unable to find any affordable options. Sarah and Mike and their three children spent some time bunking with friends, and relatives, then in a hotel.

Being homeless was so expensive, and they quickly ran out of what little savings they had. They knocked on our

door when all their options were exhausted. Moving into shelter is not easy - losing privacy and personal space. Sarah remained positive and upbeat throughout. She never let herself or her family become discouraged. She took advantage of every workshop offered, enrolled her children in every enriching activity San Jose Family Shelter provided, and made absolutely certain that her family ate dinner together EVERY night.

With Sarah and Mike's combined income, they qualified for our Transitional Housing Program and were placed on our wait list. Soon, a spot became available and they were accepted into the program. They found an apartment that was close to their schools and day care, and moved in in time to celebrate Christmas in their new home.

**“You’ve got to stay focused...”-Sarah**

Sarah offers this advice for all those struggling to make ends meet, “You’ve got to stay focused and do what you need to do. You can’t wait for someone to do it for you. And, accept the help and “hand up” from wonderful organizations like Family Supportive Housing.”

## A Soup-er Great Evening Raised Almost \$100,000

**I**n November we celebrated *Soup's On!*, Family Supportive Housing's 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Soup Kitchen Dinner. More than 250 guests joined us for this gala event at Bellarmine College Preparatory. *Soup's On!* raised almost \$100,000 to help fund our supportive services and case management for homeless families in our San Jose Family Shelter and Bridges AfterCare programs.

At the event, Marcus, a former San Jose Family Shelter resident, shared the inspiring story of how his family overcame homelessness, with the help of Family Supportive Housing's programs and services.

Thank you to all of the sponsors, patrons, donors and volunteers who made *Soup's On!* a success. Hundreds of families will benefit from your generous support!

A big **Thank you** to Dick Pfaff, who has auctioneered this



Pictured: Marcus, Janae and their son

event for the past 10 years. This was Dick's last time serving as auctioneer, and we will miss him!

We hope to see all of you at Soup Kitchen Dinner 2015!

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Dear Friends,

*From the Executive Director*

One of the ways that I continue to learn and grow in my role as Executive Director of Family Supportive Housing is through meeting with leaders of other Bay Area social service agencies to share stories about what we are learning and accomplishing, and how we are meeting both new and chronic challenges.

I come away from those meetings energized by the shared commitment that I find to breaking down barriers on behalf of children, youth and adults in need. I come away inspired by the relentless creativity – or creative relentlessness – with which our agencies keep working to achieve real, lasting change for the clients we serve.

Often, I come away with exciting new ideas about peer-to-peer learning, or using video, or incentivizing savings.

Always, I come away asking myself one fundamental question: Is Family Supportive Housing fulfilling our mission *to empower families to move from homelessness to self-sufficiency in our community* in the most effective possible way?

This year, FSH will examine that core question in a systematic way. Our 2015 Strategic Planning process will engage members of FSH's Board and staff, our program partners, funders and, of course, client families, to evaluate our program quality, organizational effectiveness, and outcomes. We will look at critical success factors for the future, and how FSH can remain effective in a changing political, economic and policy environment.

If that sounds like a lot of work, it will be! But as the San Francisco-based Mulago Foundation rightly notes, "Everyone benefits from a rigorous look at impact: the doers, the funders, the social sector itself, and most importantly, those who are hoping for a brighter day ahead."

I'll share more about our Strategic Planning process and findings in the months ahead. I invite and welcome your feedback.

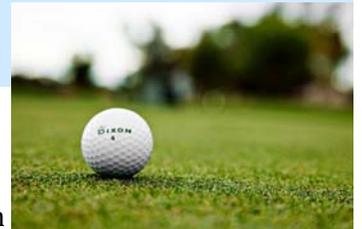
Thank you to all of you, who share your time and resources to help us bring that brighter day to families who are experiencing homelessness. Together, we can achieve a real and lasting impact, day by day, and family by family.

Sincerely,

Beth Leary  
Executive Director

## Sanmina Tees Up Support for FSH

For the last five years, **Sanmina**, a Fortune 500 Company headquartered in San Jose, has hosted a golf tournament to raise money for Family Supportive Housing. A leader in the Electronic Manufacturing Services industry, Sanmina is strongly committed to supporting local families in need. The October 2014 Sanmina Golf Classic raised over \$80,000 for Family Supportive Housing's programs! Thank you to all of the Sanmina participants who continue to make this event such a success!



Pictured: HEP Classroom

## New Look for Homework Enrichment Program

Thanks to **First Tech Federal Credit Union's** generous donation through its December Season of Giving Campaign, our Homework Enrichment Program (HEP) now has new classroom tables and desks that give our HEP teachers and volunteers flexibility to reconfigure the classroom as needed to create an engaging and collaborative learning environment. HEP provides academic support, targeted skill development and enrichment activities to over 150 children and youth each year. Thanks First Tech Federal Credit Union for supporting our efforts to keep young students engaged and on track for success!

## Growing Skills in the Garden

Last Fall, we inaugurated our hands-on Garden Education Program, as part of the *Healthy Eating, Healthy Living* initiative at our San Jose Family Shelter. This program makes gardening, nutrition, and cooking fun and educational for families staying at our shelter. Participants learn how to create a container garden and build new skills in producing and preparing fresh, nutritious and affordable food. Nutrition is key to school and work performance. *Healthy Eating, Healthy Living* provides information and support to help families become and remain healthy and active.



Pictured: Vegetable Christmas tree

With support from **The Health Trust, Sharks Foundation and Adobe Foundation**, we were able to hire our full-time Garden Educator, Erin, through the AmeriCorps program. Erin uses our third floor outdoor micro-garden to deliver entertaining and educational activities for kids and parents on how to incorporate healthy foods into their daily routine. Erin believes that “teaching families to eat

healthy is empowering them to take charge of their lives and build a stronger future.”

One of Erin’s favorite recent activities for the children was the “Vegetable Christmas Tree.” The children made a Christmas tree out of broccoli and decorated it with carrots and pomegranate seeds. Once the tree was assembled, the kids had a ton of fun disassembling the tree by eating every piece!



Pictured: Child partaking in garden education

While the program is still in its initial phase, it is already a success. We have seen children start the program *hating* vegetables, and after three months, they think that vegetables are yummy! Our garden educator also works with parents, to ensure that their children continue to increase their vegetable consumption after leaving our shelter.

## Generous Community Gives the Gift of Hope

Each year in mid-December, our San Jose Family Shelter’s parking garage transforms into a magical “Christmas Shoppe,” where families staying at our shelter can choose holiday gifts for one another and even have them wrapped! Every item in the Shoppe is contributed by businesses, churches, school groups, and other supporters of Family Supportive Housing. Throughout the holiday season, donations of clothing, toys, books, sports equipment and electronics pour through our doors.

Setting up the Christmas Shoppe is a job in itself. Volunteer groups from **eBay** and **Dell** came to our shelter days before the shop opened to get it ready, organizing clothing by size and toys by age group, to make it easy for parents to find that perfect present. On the Saturday morning when the Shoppe opened, volunteer “elves” assisted parents with their selections.

“Every day we empower homeless families, and the Christmas Shoppe is no different,” said Community Resource Manager Christi-Moyer Kelly. “Even though these parents are experiencing homelessness, they can still give their children a magical holiday season.”



Pictured: Some of the Christmas Shoppe volunteers

On the following Monday, it was kids’ turn to “shop”! **The Assistance League of San Jose** helped children to pick out and wrap presents for their parents. **Yahoo!** employees volunteered to set up arts and crafts.

Family Supportive Housing is thankful for the volunteers and community partners who helped to make Christmas Shoppe a special event once again for our families.



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## TWO Exciting Events This May- Spread the Word!

Visit our website for more details: [www.familysupportivehousing.org](http://www.familysupportivehousing.org).

### SV Gives, May 5, 2015

Get That GIVING Feeling! Silicon Valley Community Foundation will be hosting their second annual 24-hour online fundraising event, SV Gives, on May 5, 2015 from 12:00am-11:59pm! Stay tuned to our Facebook page and website for exciting offers and matching opportunities.



### Toast 2 Success, May 30, 2015

Long time friend and former resident, James Jones, and his wife Tamika Jones, will be hosting their fifth annual Toast 2 Success, benefiting Family Supportive Housing and the Love Jones 4 Kids Foundation. Come show your support, and toast to the success of all the families that achieved self-sufficiency!

**When:** May 30, 2015

**Time:** 6:00-9:00 pm

**Where:** The Fairmont San Jose  
170 S. Market St.  
San Jose, CA 95113

**Benefiting:** Family Supportive  
Housing & Love Jones 4 Kids

Tickets go on sale April 1st



### Our Mission

To provide shelter and supportive services to homeless families in Santa Clara County, to empower them to move from homelessness to self-sufficiency in our community.

[www.familysupportivehousing.org](http://www.familysupportivehousing.org)