Imagine LA’s 10th anniversary year was one of explosive growth, increased public investment, and capacity building. We served a record 105 families with our Family Empowerment & Mentorship (FEM) model (up from 42 in 2017), increased our staff by 25%, doubled our work in South LA and mid-City, and set the stage to grow in the San Fernando Valley and West LA. We spent the last quarter of 2018 developing a robust three-year strategic plan, which puts our focus squarely on continued growth, program enhancement, community engagement and operational excellence for years 2019-21. This report provides our key funders with a summary of our work in 2018 and details of our 2019-21 strategic plan.

GROWTH
Since 2008, Imagine LA has been teaming vulnerable families with volunteer mentors and our professional social workers to break the families’ cycles of homelessness, poverty and trauma. In our first 10 years, we partnered with 125+ families, 500+ volunteer mentors and hundreds of community partners. Our pace of growth has accelerated since being awarded expandable funding from the LA County Department of Health Services (DHS) (via Measure H) in 2017. That year, we worked with 42 families. In 2018, including the 15 families served by our new licensed affiliate, Imagine Whittier, we worked with 105. We aim to be empowering 250 families and 750-1,000 mentors annually by 2022.

MODEL
Our unique FEM model provides families who have experienced homelessness (and are now in housing) with intensive case management, volunteer mentorship, workforce development, and resource linkages over a minimum 12- to 18-month period. Imagine LA’s program staff helps families set goals and access private and public resources; our community engagement team joins in to recruit and train volunteers to offer 1:1 mentorship to each member of the family (over age 5) and provide a financial wellness mentor to the head of household. While most other homeless housing case management services focus their support on the adult head of household, Imagine LA effectively works with whole families both in permanent supportive housing and scattered site apartments. Our model empowers the whole family to stabilize, build relationships, habits and skills, increase their income, and integrate into their communities so they are set up to thrive long term and break their cycle of poverty and homelessness.

IMPACT
ILA outcomes data continues to demonstrate the impact of our FEM model. In 2018, 97 percent of the families enrolled in our program have maintained their housing and a good relationship with their landlord. (Notably, two of our longer-term program graduates are now homeowners.) Our families have demonstrated heightened financial literacy (including budgeting and saving, completing taxes, utilizing the banking system, increasing earned income and decreasing debt). All families are working and/or in school or on workforce development pathways. The vast majority of Imagine LA family members are receiving regular healthcare. Our youth participants are progressing in reaching their developmental milestones and, if applicable, pursuing post-secondary education.

Imagine LA is truly a community effort – all shapes, sizes, and colors of volunteers and skill sets come together with public and private resources in a unique blend of support and structure to empower vulnerable families to flourish.

THANK YOU FOR HELPING MAKE THIS JOURNEY POSSIBLE FOR US; WE ARE TREMENDOUSLY GRATEFUL FOR YOUR ONGOING SUPPORT.
ANNIVERSARY YEAR GROWTH

Geographically, we **doubled our work in South LA** and Mid-City. More than 60% of our families lived in South LA/Inglewood in 2018 and that number is growing quickly because housing is generally more affordable there than elsewhere in the county. The expansion of our program in South LA, where we’ve been operating since 2014, has been fueled by the family referrals from the homeless Coordinated Entry System (CES) and our new partnership with the Housing Authority of the County of LA (HACoLA) South LA Scattered Sites initiative. The partnership referred us 31 formerly homeless families recently housed in HACoLA buildings. HACoLA provided Imagine LA with free office space in one of these South LA apartment complexes. In addition, Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas (2nd District) awarded us a community expansion grant to help us increase local recruiting initiatives to provide volunteer mentors for the South LA families.

Mid-City, thanks to partnerships with St. Anne’s Beverly Terrace Permanent Supportive Housing and Alliance for Children’s Rights/Alliance of Moms, **we continued our work with vulnerable parenting foster youth as they age out of the system.** We also serve scattered site families in Mid-City, working with family referral partners including Alexandria House and St. Joseph Center, and continue to recruit a large share of our mentors from this region.

In East LA, **our first training and licensing partnership with The Whole Child, Imagine Whittier, is thriving.** Fifteen families and their mentor teams are growing together, with more to come.

SETTING THE STAGE FOR FUTURE GROWTH

With a strong foundation of family referral partners, a growing pipeline of committed volunteer mentors, increased public and private investment, and **OUR 2019-21 STRATEGIC PLAN** in place, Imagine LA is ideally positioned to continue to scale our FEM model in multiple regions:

- **South LA** – continued growth through CES and HACoLA.
- **San Fernando Valley** – via a new partnership with LA Family Housing (LAFH), fueled by funding from Supervisor Sheila Kuehl (3rd District).
- **East LA** – serving more families via our licensee The Whole Child, Imagine Whittier.
- **West LA** – expanding to the west side. In 2018 we set the stage to be the primary service provider for a new Permanent Support Housing/low-income development for 73 families being developed by Thomas Safran & Associates with Proposition HHH funding. It will include free office space for Imagine LA staff and is scheduled to open in mid-2020. In addition, we signed an MOU with Community Corporation of Santa Monica to provide our FEM model to homeless families who will reside in their future buildings.
THOSE WE SERVE
Imagine LA serves a diverse group of families exiting homelessness and an increasingly diverse mix of volunteer mentoars. Family participants range in age from 14 months to 51 years. Of the 105 families enrolled in our program in calendar year 2018 (90 Imagine LA + 15 Imagine Whittier), 98% were headed by single females, 49% disclosed they are survivors of interpersonal violence, 12% have had substance abuse issues, 38% have been in foster, care and 67% have had mental health challenges. African American families account for 54%, 24% are Latino, 11% are Caucasian, and the remainder identified as multi-racial or “other.” We served one Filipino family.

I want to thank you for providing me with the best mentors ever! They are intelligent, kind and caring. They help me to believe in myself and I look forward to every meeting with them. I don’t know what in life I did to have such wonderful people in my life.

- MARILYNN, IMAGINE LA FAMILY PARTICIPANT

We serve families from across LA County: Metro LA, South LA, the South Bay (Inglewood), the San Fernando and San Gabriel Valleys, and East LA (through Imagine Whittier). Our mentors come from all the same areas plus West LA.

Fourteen proud families commenced from Imagine LA’s program in 2018, more than triple the number in 2017.

PROGRAM IMPACT
OF OUR GRADUATING FAMILIES:
● 100% remained housed
● 86% were enrolled in school and/or employed
● 100% increased financial literacy and improved their financial status (decreased debt & increased credit score)
● 40% of adults increased their earned income; the other 60% maintained their income
● 100% received regular medical and dental care
● 100% of school-aged children were enrolled in school

Please see our full 2018 FAMILY IMPACT REPORT. We continue to refine our performance measures and, as of Winter 2019, have created NEW OUTCOMES METRICS, which we will track annually moving forward.
PROGRAM ENHANCEMENT
Due to the great influx of families into the homeless system and the enforcement of LA’s Housing First methodology, families moving into housing are less stable than previously, when they had an extensive stay in transitional shelter before entering long-term housing. To adapt, in 2018 ILA began developing a **NEW PHASE I OF OUR FEM MODEL**, in which we provide intensive case management services (ICMS) only to our families. During Phase I, a stabilization period, we focus on helping the family build core competencies (including basic communication and financial skills) that position each family member for a strong mentor match. With these core competencies, the family is better equipped for a successful partnership with their team, and higher outcomes in Phase II. Phase II is the 12- to 18-month mentor-matched program. (Our DHS contract funds 100% of Phase I and 65% of Phase II.)

Our HACoLA referrals and most of the Homeless Outreach Program Integrated Care System (HOPICS) referrals we receive are high-acuity, meaning family members are highly vulnerable and we anticipate that most will utilize our new Phase I initial period of intensive case management to ready them for the mentor experience.

INCREASED VISIBILITY
Our visibility and presence across Los Angeles County continues to grow. We were recognized by Mayor Garcetti’s office as an Activate LA top 20 volunteer engagement organization -- one of only a few addressing the homelessness crisis, and are featured on the city’s Volunteer LA site. NBC LA featured Imagine LA on its I am a Volunteer segment. We co-hosted two Community Conversations at the Ebell of Los Angeles. The first humanized the power of supportive housing through storytelling by the Corporation for Supportive Housing and Stories from the Frontline. The second focused on LA’s child welfare system. We revamped our website with new graphics, photography and more intuitive navigation, and formalized social media outreach, focusing first on Facebook and Instagram.

This increased visibility supported our efforts to recruit volunteer mentors, who represent the key capacity and game-changing element of our model.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
Imagine LA formalized its community engagement (CE) program in 2018 and built a CE team (hiring a community engagement manager and vice president of communications and development). The team created a detailed CE plan with distinct strategies for recruiting mentors, families, resources and funding, which now guides our efforts. **Two notable CE initiatives were creating the Imagine LA Ambassador Program and securing a capacity-building grant to purchase NationBuilder software and upgrade Salesforce to Lightning.** We began the process of migrating data and customizing NationBuilder, which will help us not only manage our mentor, partner and donor data but engage and optimize these groups. NationBuilder is also integrated directly with our website, communications tools, and the back-end financial tools to accept donations.

**The Ambassador Program is a speakers’ bureau launched in 2018 that features Imagine LA FEM program graduates and mentors. We recruit and train Imagine LA Ambassadors to tell their personal stories at outreach and advocacy events.** Our first cohort of Ambassadors has participated in multiple events, serving the dual purpose of humanizing our program and boosting the participants’ confidence and public speaking skills. A highlight was when a program graduate Ambassador presented Imagine LA’s Empowering Families Award to Serena Williams at our annual Imagine Ball fundraiser this year.
ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Operationally and financially, we finished 2018 in a solid position thanks to our dynamic board, highly-skilled staff, a tremendously successful signature fundraiser (Imagine Ball) and long-time and new private and public funding partners, including DHS.

Solid Financials: In 2018, we saw a significant shift towards a long-term, sustainable funding model thanks to securing expandable 10-year funding from DHS (fueled by LA County’s passage of Measure H) to cover the bulk of program costs for both our current families and new families coming into our program.

We continue to actively fundraise to cover additional program services, capacity-building and research and development. Our 2018 signature concert, Imagine Ball, was the most successful ever. We honored Grand-Slam champion Serena Williams, featured surprise performances by comedians Dave Chapelle and Chris Rock, and musicians Michelle Williams and Busta Rhymes, and raised $350,000 in net proceeds. In addition to renewed support from long-time funders, we also formalized partnerships with new funders, including the Lawrence Welk Family Foundation.

Our People: We continue to recruit and onboard highly capable and committed Board members. New member attorney George Phillips, Jr. joined in 2018 and four new members join us in Winter 2019, increasing the Board's diversity and range of expertise. We are especially happy to have an incoming member with lived experience of homelessness. As part of their commitment to the organization, every member actively leverages their personal networks to bring funds, other volunteers and services and resources for the benefit of our families. The Board consistently raises about a third of our annual operating budget.

We also welcomed new staff members, including: a new member of the management team -- vice president of communications and development, a community engagement manager, an events specialist, an executive administrative assistant, and one of the Masters-level social workers who are key to program implementation: our family team managers. In Winter 2019, we created the program director position (promoted a seasoned family team manager and LCSW) and hired two more Masters-level social workers and a community engagement specialist for South LA.

Systems – Building Capacity: This year Imagine LA committed to upgrade and expand our systems to accommodate our growth, support our infrastructure and heighten our efficiencies and capabilities moving forward. In the spring, we were awarded a capacity-building grant by United Way's Home for Good program to implement NationBuilder software and make a significant enhancement and upgrade to our Salesforce CRM database. We spent the last half of the year initializing each; in Spring of 2019, we will have fully implemented both.

The NationBuilder software will facilitate efficient and scalable outreach, vetting and training of volunteer mentors, as well as effective nurturing of donors. Our Salesforce enhancement and upgrade to their Lightning interface includes a large enhancement of our Performance Measurement System including incorporating the Arizona Matrix. The upgrade to Salesforce Lightning facilitates both ease of data entry and reporting. Both systems will be an integral part of Imagine LA's capacity building.
LOOKING AHEAD: 2019-2021 STRATEGIC PLAN
Our 2019-21 strategic plan sets a path for sustainable growth. Our primary goal remains to reach as many LA County families and volunteers as possible with our Family Empowerment & Mentorship model. Beyond seeking to work with a minimum of 250 families and 750-1000 mentors annually by 2022, plan goals include:

GROWTH:
Serve significantly more families, including families at risk of homelessness, with our FEM model.
- Grow existing geography and strategic partnerships (South LA, Mid-City & Whittier)
- Embed the FEM model in 2-3 new markets in LA County (San Fernando Valley, West LA and maybe one more)
- Facilitate the growth of family referrals and resources
- Implement a pilot project to support at-risk families
- Create a separate financial wellness program to reach even more adults and families outside the FEM model

PROGRAM ENHANCEMENTS:
Further refine our FEM model to meet the differing needs of program participants to ensure a lasting impact on families and mentors.
- Implement the NEW PHASED VERSION of our FEM model to facilitate the basic stabilization of newly housed families prior to them being matched with mentors
- Enhance our logic model and performance measurement tools
- Ensure mentors have the knowledge and tools to be successful
- Identify viable workforce development pathways with links to childcare
- Refine the financial wellness module for maximum impact

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:
Mobilize community members to support of our mission and geographic focus.
- Increase the number of volunteer mentors
- Create and execute a development plan to achieve a stable funding base and propel program growth.
- Execute a communications plan to begin to make Imagine LA a household name for volunteering, donating and community engagement.

INFRASTRUCTURE:
Put in place systems that support our program growth and impact and make Imagine LA a great place to work, partner and invest.
- Upgrade our systems to support all facets of community engagement, donor development and program enhancement
- Align infrastructure planning with growth needs
- Support ongoing teamwork and staff wellness, professional development and retention
- Maximize professional efficacy of all staff members
- Support the ongoing development of the Board of Directors

Imagine LA is continuing to grow its reach and impact as quickly as possible given the demonstrated need in Los Angeles County. Equipped with a clear 2019-21 strategic plan, Imagine LA aims to further mobilize thousands of Los Angelenos to help hundreds more vulnerable families maintain housing, improve financial stability, excel in school, and build vibrant relationships and strong two-generational pathways out of poverty. We welcome your continued engagement and are so grateful for your partnership on this life-changing journey.

"What have I learned by mentoring? I’ve learned about passion and about being protective – being sensitive and respectful of another’s situation. I don’t know who gains more from our relationship, [my mentee] or me."

- SCOTT SALE, MD, 8-YEAR BOARD MEMBER, PAST CHAIR AND MENTOR