Charities Housing Opens New Affordable Housing Studios for Low-Income Residents

Troy was homeless and on the verge of giving up before finding a home in Charities Housing’s new Parkside Studios apartments in Sunnyvale. Troy was one of the 2,800 people in Santa Clara County who experience chronic homelessness and are among the most frequent users of public services in a given year.

Formerly an electrician, Troy’s life unraveled when his mother passed away. He was homeless for many years and estranged from his three children until he decided to reach out to his brother for help. His brother referred him to HomeFirst, a local service provider focused on “housing first” solutions to homelessness. Troy was able to redirect his life, and with vigilance and determination, he landed a studio at the Parkside apartments in Sunnyvale.

Parkside Studios is a new 58-unit development in the City of Sunnyvale and is the first affordable housing project to utilize modular construction in Northern California. The site features a community room, laundry facilities, parking, tenant lockers, services, and more. A total of 40 studios are designated to income qualified households at 40% and 45% of area median income, with preference for applicants who live or work in the City of Sunnyvale. The remaining 18 units are designated for special needs.

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First Educare Facility Opens in California

The first Educare pre-school facility in California had its official ribbon cutting ceremony on October 16. Located in the Santee neighborhood of the Franklin McKinley School District, Educare California at Silicon Valley opened its doors in September to 168 financially disadvantaged children aged 0 to 5 years and their families. The ceremony brought together champions of early education, from local families and community members, to partner organizations and politicians.

The celebration was jovial and heartwarming. Speakers included: Jon R. Gundry, Santa Clara County Superintendent of Schools; Alma Soto, Community Representative; Darcie Green, President, Santa Clara County Board of Education and Catholic Charities Board Member; Rudy Rodriguez, President, Franklin-McKinley School District Board of Education; Sam Liccardo, Mayor of San José; Dave Cortese, President, Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors; Congressman Mike Honda; Portia Kennel, Senior Advisor, Buffett Early Childhood Fund and Founding Executive Director, Educare Learning Network; John R. Porter, Jr., Retired Superintendent, Franklin-McKinley School District and Former Board Chair, Educare.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

HOPE STARTS HERE

“A little mercy makes the world less cold and more just…”
— Pope Francis

As we celebrate this holiday season, we ask that you consider how you can help those in need in Santa Clara County. The Christmas Appeal is vital to the efforts of Catholic Charities to reach out with compassion and mercy to those in need.

With your donation, Catholic Charities will help people in our community get what they need to succeed in life, including food, housing, education, healthcare, and jobs. Catholic Charities touches the lives of over 54,000 people every year – people of all cultures, faiths, and beliefs working to turn their lives around. Each new and increased gift will be matched by funds raised by the Board of Directors.

We thank all those that have given and ask that those who have not given to reflect on those individuals who are most hungry, ill and vulnerable among us, and prayerfully consider how you can offer hope and opportunity to those in need.

GET INVOLVED

Show your compassion and mercy this season by donating to the Catholic Charities Christmas Appeal. Contact Marnie Regen at (408) 325-5248 or donate online at www.CatholicCharitiesSCC.org.

DECEMBER 2015  VOLUME 14, ISSUE 46  SERVING PEOPLE OF ALL CULTURES AND BELIEFS

UPCOMING EVENTS

SPRING FORWARD 5K/10K WALK/RUN

April 16, 2016 • SanDisk Campus

The 32nd Annual Catholic Charities Golf Tournament and Auction

Thursday, June 9, 2016
Cinnabar Hills Golf Club, San Jose

2016 ‘Roll Against Poverty™’ tournament

Thursday, August 11, 2016
Campo di Bocce, Los Gatos
Thank you! All year long we are blessed with abundance by a gracious and loving God. It is that experience of being loved by a merciful God that makes our hearts overflow with gratitude and impels us to love our neighbors in need.

As I lead Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County in its 60th season of giving thanks, I am so thankful for our thousands of generous supporters, volunteers, and donors who give their precious time, talent, and treasure to help strangers in need. I am thankful for our skilled and compassionate staff members who dedicate their lives to saving lives from poverty, hunger, despair, ignorance, and violence. I am thankful for the men, women, and children who, when they come through our doors, muster the courage and hope to ask for help to change their lives.

And I know so many of the people we serve are thankful, too. She is the hungry senior at one of our senior centers who gives thanks for the one hot meal of the day. He is a child in our after-school program who gives thanks for learning to read. They are an immigrant family who gives thanks for being reunited thanks to our legal services. He is the person just released from jail who gives thanks for receiving counseling, housing, and a job. You may not hear their thanks, but on their behalf, and 54,000 more of our neighbors in need, Catholic Charities says, “Thank you!”

I invite you to share your thanks, by once again sharing your abundance with the people who need your help today.

Thank you and may God bless you!

All the best,
Gregory Kepferle, CEO

P.S. Each new and increased gift will be matched by funds raised by our Board of Directors.

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ENVIRONMENTAL SAVINGS STATEMENT

Trees - 1151 fully grown
Water - 3,500 gallons
Energy - 12 million BTU
Salt Water - 750 pounds
Greenhouse Gas - 2,208 pounds

Sister Donna Inspires Hope

Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County was honored to celebrate our 60th Anniversary with Sister Donna Markham, OP, PhD, President and CEO of Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA). A presenter at our Out of Poverty Action Summit, she also inspired participants at the evening celebration. An Adrian Dominican sister, she is the 10th president of CCUSA and the first woman to lead the organization. When asked the current top priorities for CCUSA, Sister Donna identified the strategic planning process and bridge-building with other organizations of good will. She explained that CCUSA is in the beginning of a strategic planning process identifying strategic priorities across the country. This will help inform how the national office is organized and will help determine the focus of our advocacy. She appreciated participating in our Summit, which she found informative and helped her to see the unique issues of poverty that our clients face in Santa Clara County.

As for bridge-building, Sister Donna explained that the future of CCUSA depends on its capacity to partner with other organizations and to strengthen existing bonds across the nonprofit sector and with those who serve in the church.

In September, Sister Donna had the opportunity to meet the Holy Father. She asked him for his blessing and says she received the blessing not for herself, but “…for the Catholic Charities family across the country, the 70,000 employees, 200,000 plus volunteers, and board members.”

We thank Sister Donna for being our special guest at our 60th Anniversary events and for being our fearless leader of Catholic Charities across the country.

New Chief Development Officer

Dro Abrahamian was named the new Chief Development Officer for Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County in March 2015. He provides leadership for the Development division and will help plan and execute development and fundraising initiatives as part of the organization’s strategic plan.

“I am enthusiastic that Dro has joined our leadership team,” said Gregory R. Kepferle, Catholic Charities CEO. “His extensive experience in development and his passion for helping faith-based organizations is a perfect fit with our dynamic team. I am confident that he will help our agency become even more successful with our fundraising goals.”

Abrahamian has more than 25 years of experience in non-profit organizational and fundraising development. Most recently, Abrahamian served as the Director of Fund Development and Marketing at Interface Children & Family Services in Camarillo, California.

Previously, Abrahamian provided counsel to Simi Valley Hospital Foundation and Glendale Arts, and served for three years as Foundation President at the Healthcare Foundation at Glendale Adventist Medical Center in Glendale, California.

“I’m excited to join such a well established team, where I can bring my passion and experience to build upon and continue to grow an already great tradition of philanthropic giving here at Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County,” said Abrahamian.

Abrahamian holds a degree in social psychology from the University of Michigan and has a master’s degree in library science from Wayne State University. It is this diverse education that helped shape his unique philosophy on philanthropy that has served him well during his 25 year career.
Creating a Legacy…Something That Will Benefit People Forever

Lewis Richard (Dick) Fisher was a devout Catholic and friend to Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County. In August 2014, he passed away. In May 2015, we learned that he left $2.3 million to Catholic Charities through one common stock. We are saddened by his passing and grateful for the wonderful legacy he leaves for those who are struggling to get out of poverty and become more self-reliant.

Dick was committed to our mission, in part because he grew up in a small, poor town of 1,500 in Vermont. He received a scholarship to attend the University of Vermont and found a job cleaning science labs to help with his expenses. He graduated with a B.S. in Electrical Engineering and Business Commerce. He worked in engineering and sales from 1972-2005 in Silicon Valley. Part of his legacy included a generous gift to his university for scholarships and a generous gift to his parish, St. Francis Cabrini.

Dick’s legacy will enable Catholic Charities to provide services over a long period of time while offering flexibility to address urgent needs. It will help ensure that our critical programs to strengthen families and build economic self-sufficiency can continue. Catholic Charities appreciates Dick’s affection for his “favorite charity” and we are thankful for his commitment to alleviate, prevent, and reduce poverty.

You can include Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County in your will or trust, or make Catholic Charities a beneficiary of your retirement accounts or life insurance. If you have already included Catholic Charities in your long-term plans, please let us know so we may acknowledge you as a Circle of Hope member. For more information regarding legacy giving, please contact Alison Poetsch at apoetsch@CatholicCharitiesSCC.org or (408) 325-5288.

San José Forges Partnerships to Build Community

Greg Kepferle, our CEO at Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County, recently had the opportunity to interview San José Mayor Sam Liccardo for our monthly TV Show, Change Lives for Good. They spoke about the role of the City in addressing the challenges of poverty and income inequality, homelessness, affordable housing, access to resources, education, and more.

Mayor Liccardo began serving as San José’s 65th Mayor in January 2015 and is no stranger to Catholic Charities. He has been a long-time supporter for Catholic Charities’ work in the community to help those in need and has been supportive of our Washington United Youth Center.

When asked about the role of the city in addressing the challenges of poverty and injustice, Mayor Liccardo says that one of the most impactful things that the city can do is to forge partnerships in the community with partners who can bring broad impact in the economy, in education, and in areas where people are struggling to keep up. Catholic Charities works in partnership with the City on different initiatives, including providing after-school programs for at-risk youth at the Washington United Youth Center.

As for strategies that might work for creating affordable housing, the Mayor explains that the City is working on many strategies, including traditional ones, such as inclusionary housing ordinances, and is reviewing rent control ordinances, but admits that these tools are limited. Mayor Liccardo says that the City needs to work with organizations that can help move the needle. For example, Community Technology Alliance (CTA), is a partner that has helped the City identify homeless individuals who are struggling the most, who are the first who need to be housed, and who cost the City the most money. This process helps generate savings that can be used to house others. A few years ago the City identified 1,000 homeless people for this initiative and have housed 840 of them.

“We are seeing progress,” says Mayor Liccardo. “We have reduced the homeless count by 15% over the last few years.” CTA is also a partner of Catholic Charities and Step Up Silicon Valley on a few community initiatives.

Greg also asked the Mayor, “How do people have enough money to make ends meet?” While San José was one of the first cities in the nation to increase minimum wage, the Mayor explained that San José is looking at a regional minimum wage increase, in partnership with the 15 cities in the County. The Mayor also points out that the City has a big skills gap and is working with the Obama initiative called “TechHire” to address the gap. In addition, the City is working on an after-school learning initiative in the Eastside of San José that will ensure that every student is at reading level by the time they are in third grade. Catholic Charities has learned in the past few years that by pooling resources together for our Franklin McKinley Children’s Initiative, we can help children in our community be at reading level or better. The Mayor hopes to replicate that success.

These are not the only important topics that Greg and Mayor Liccardo discussed. We encourage you to watch the interview on our TV show, Change Lives for Good, at www.creatvsj.org/change-lives-for-good.

To learn more about the initiatives that Mayor Liccardo spoke about, please visit wearsanjose.org.
We live in one of the wealthiest and most innovative regions on the planet. Yet one in seven children is poor. We have one of the country’s largest homeless populations and many still struggle to make ends meet. Recognizing that 380,000 county residents still struggle in poverty, Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County convened a Social Policy Breakfast and Out of Poverty Action Summit on October 14, 2015 – to develop a community-wide anti-poverty action plan including education, housing, employment and asset development, healthcare, and nutrition. Strategies aligned along three paths: poverty alleviation, poverty prevention, and poverty reduction. These events were part of an all day celebration commemorating Catholic Charities’ 60th Anniversary.

The Social Policy Breakfast and Out of Poverty Action Summit began at 7:00 AM at The Tech Museum. Key speakers included: Morning Keynote Emmett Carson, PhD, President and CEO of the Silicon Valley Community Foundation; Afternoon Keynote Miriam Rivera, JD, Managing Director, Bay Area Growth Fund; Sr. Donna Markham, OP, PhD, President and CEO of Catholic Charities USA; Randy Pond, former EVP, Operations, Cisco Systems; Dave Cortese, President of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors; Cindy Chavez, Supervisor, Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, and many others.

Approximately 250 participants came from all sectors and represented a variety of organizations, including nonprofits, corporations, and academic institutions. All were interested in moving the needle on poverty. The Summit concluded with an action plan to improve the lives of those less fortunate in Santa Clara County and a commitment to reconvene again in two years after implementing the initiatives that were discussed that day.
The City of San José recognized October 14 as “Catholic Charities Day,” with Mayor Sam Liccardo presenting a commendation to Greg Kepferle, Catholic Charities CEO. Assemblymember Nora Campos, District 27, also presented the agency with a resolution.

The 60th Celebration continued into the evening with a Mass and Celebration of Thanks to the Caritas Society at St. Joseph Basilica Cathedral. Afterwards, Vietnamese dancers, some who were children of former Catholic Charities clients, led a procession from the Cathedral to the San José Marriott. At the evening Gala at the Marriott, three couples were honored for their outstanding years of service at Catholic Charities. The three honoree couples – Carol and Bob Peters, Andrea and Joe Thomas, and Susan and Ray Triplett, received the first ever Matthew 25 Award – “Whatsoever you do for the least of these, you do unto me.”
Everyone was on a roll at Catholic Charities’ Annual Bocce Tournament in August, raising a record $67,453 for programs and services. “We are so pleased to set yet another record with dollars raised to support Catholic Charities. The tournament seems to get better each year,” said Bocce Tournament Committee Chair Joe Gentzkow. Alumni teams welcomed six new teams to enjoy an evening of fun at Campo di Bocce in Los Gatos to “Roll Against Poverty.” Back by popular demand was the chance to win a premium bottle of wine or spirits in the “Wine and Spirits” ring toss. The sold-out event featured 32 teams competing in the tournament, with Lina’s Pallinas winning the championship and Briggs Development coming in second. For information about next year’s Bocce Tournament contact Kathleen Burroughs at kburroughs@CatholicCharitiesSCC.org or (408) 325-5250.

Team Lina’s Pallinas with Catholic Charities CEO, Greg Kepferle. L–R: Roy Moses, Ken Dickens, Greg Kepferle, Brittni Winkelman, and Aldo Giordano

Team Briggs Development with Catholic Chairties CEO, Greg Kepferle. L–R: Chris Bovone, Jeff Rogers, Greg Kepferle, Barry McKay, and Doug Bieter

Team Bridge Bank and team Palline Blu – friendly competitors

Refugee Foster Care Youth Celebrate College Bound Success

This year marks an important milestone for 13 recent high school graduates of Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County’s Refugee Foster Care (RFC) Program. Each student now holds a high school diploma and are continuing their academic journeys in pursuit of higher education. Two are in the California State University system at the Monterey Bay and East Bay campuses. Eleven attend various community colleges throughout the County, including De Anza, Mission, Evergreen, and East Bay. This is an incredible achievement for youth who have surmounted exceptionally overwhelming challenges in school and in life. One large barrier is language – RFC youth must not only learn how to speak fluent English, but must learn academic English that can be applied across subjects such as science, history, and math. The majority of RFC youth are 16 and up; many enter high school with little to no previous schooling experience. Yet, the 13 graduates have the resilience and drive to earn their high school diplomas in a very limited time – for some, in an astounding two years.

Robert entered RFC at 17 and finished high school in two years. Starting in 11th grade, he changed schools twice and moved three times. Throughout senior year, this young man lived independently and paid his own bills, all while playing on the soccer team and serving as an active member on the RFC youth council. His dream is to one day be a social worker. “He’s a really amazing kid,” says Kelley Hartman, Independent Living Program Coordinator. “He is a real leader among our youth and is resilient and humble. So many of the youth have so many barriers and had to work so hard to get where they are.”

Most youth plan to transfer to a four-year college, but depending on their chosen academic track, some may decide to enter the workforce after earning certifications in fields such as nursing or firefighting. “We let them define their goals and define what success is for them,” says Hartman. To learn more about Catholic Charities’ Refugee Foster Care Program, please contact Claire Collins, Program Coordinator, Refugee Foster Care at ccollins@CatholicCharitiesSCC.org.
Washington United Youth Know That
Music Can Make You Smarter

The students in the music program at Catholic Charities’ Washington United Youth Center (WUYC) know for a fact that music can make you smarter. Research has shown that studying music in the young growing brain of children can help accelerate math and reading skills. This can lead to increased scores on tests such as college entrance exams.

Since 2011, more than 100 students aged 7-18 years old have been taking music lessons and have the option to learn piano, guitar, ukulele, and/or take vocal lessons through private or group lessons taught by volunteer music teachers. The students receive loaner instruments to practice at home, thanks to donations and discounts from Music Village. Students can also participate in recording sessions.

The program is very popular in the community. For the students, grades improve and so does their self-esteem. The parents see this improvement and become believers and advocates for the fact that music can make you smarter.

Belita Anatallo, the first volunteer music instructor, a retired Pediatrician, who now heads the program. “It is a great extra-curricular activity that not only leads to better grades, it also can lead to better opportunities, such as college.”

Belita hopes that in the future they will be able to give guitars to the students when they finish their lessons. To make that possible, monetary donations and funding are needed. They also need more volunteer guitar music teachers.

How to sign-up? Lessons are free. Students aged 7-17 years interested in taking the music lessons need to be members of WUYC, a $25 yearly membership fee. Also, a new music program teaching electric guitar will soon be offered to older youth, aged 12-24. Sign-up at the WUYC front desk or call (408) 938-6731. To learn more, contact Sara Reyes, Sr. Division Director, Children, Youth, and Family Development Division at sreyes@CatholicCharitiesSCC.org.

First Educare Facility Opens in California
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

California at Silicon Valley; and many others.

It took many years of discussion and planning to get to this noteworthy event. With the potential to serve more than 200 children in the near future, the model early learning school offers high quality classrooms, a family resource center, a satellite children’s museum (thanks to a partnership with the Children’s Discovery Museum of San Jose), a career academy for high school students, and a professional development institute that will help teach thousands more children in the region.

Catholic Charities runs the First 5 Family Resource Center in Educare and helped bring Educare to the Santee Neighborhood through the work of the Franklin McKinley Children’s Initiative.

Educare California at Silicon Valley was formed by a public-private partnership that includes: Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County, Franklin McKinley Children’s Initiative, Franklin-McKinley School District, The Health Trust, Adobe, AT&T, Buffett Early Childhood Fund, East Side Union High School, Educare Learning Network, First 5 California, and many others.

ABOUT EDUCARE
Educare California at Silicon Valley joins a coast-to-coast network of 21 effective early childhood schools. Educare makes certain that financially disadvantaged young children have the best opportunity for success in life. Educare’s comprehensive program incorporates what science says young children need to flourish. Rigorous research shows that Educare works: the majority of Educare students enter kindergarten with the school readiness skills they need to succeed. Learn more at www.educareSV.org and www.educareschools.org.
Thank You to Our Out of Poverty Action Summit and 60th Anniversary Sponsors!

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