Abode Housing Development recently joined community partners and local stakeholders to celebrate the grand opening of Kifer Senior Apartments — an affordable housing development that is adding 80 new homes for seniors in the South Bay.

Regina Williams, executive director of SV@Home, was the emcee of the May 8 ceremony held in the city of Santa Clara.

Louis Chicoine, CEO of Abode Housing Development & Abode Property Management, was one of the event’s speakers — joining a list that included Santa Clara Mayor Lisa Gillmor and Consuelo Hernandez, director, Santa Clara County Office of Supportive Housing, and several others.

“It’s been said that the true measure of a society is found in how it treats its most vulnerable members,” Chicoine said. “If true, the Kifer site is a symbol of Santa Clara’s strength because it provides housing and services to seniors and veterans, some of our community’s most vulnerable people.”

Kifer Senior Apartments provides 80 units of housing that is affordable to low-income senior households. The six-story building sits on a half-acre property at 3333 Kifer Road in the city of Santa Clara. The housing site is a combination of 30 studio apartments, 45 one-bedroom units, 4 two-bedroom units, and an on-site manager unit. More than half of the units are reserved for seniors experiencing homelessness and eight apartments...
June, of course, is Pride Month — and Abode is proud to continue its tradition of celebrating this important observance of LGBTQIA+ rights.

Our agency will never waver in our belief that all people deserve to be treated with respect and kindness, and that everyone warrants equal treatment no matter their gender identity or sexuality.

Each June, we proudly change our logo to represent the Rainbow Flag and show our solidarity to the LGBTQIA+ community. More importantly, we offer a daily environment that is safe and encourages our staff to be who they are — as they provide the same reassurances to our clients.

LGBTQIA+ individuals are overrepresented in the homeless population, as discrimination, abuse, and harassment often prevent participants from finding support services or shelter space.

Studies show that LGBTQIA+ youth are 120 percent more likely to experience homelessness than non-LGBTQIA+ youth. Twenty percent of those in the LGBTQIA+ community experienced homelessness before the age of 18. And 68 percent of homeless youth had a history of family rejection, according to a survey of homeless service providers.

However, Abode remains committed to fighting for equal rights and against discrimination, working to protect all communities and offer solidarity and support to our LGBTQIA+ friends and colleagues. Abode works with people who are already marginalized by society, and we are dedicated to offering compassion and support to all whose human rights are ignored — or threatened.

Next year, we will open our first permanent supportive housing site that specifically serves Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming and Intersex (TGNCI+) young people ages 18-29 years old. We will provide property management services and partner with a youth-specific service provider for social services. The 42-unit building is located in South of Market Area (SOMA) in San Francisco.

We hope you join us in observing Pride Month in June — as well as celebrating its values and beliefs throughout the year.
Welcome Aboard

We are pleased to announce that David Luu, a Bay Area business leader, is the newest member of the Abode Housing Development Board of Directors. David has over 25 years of experience in banking and financial services.

He is a visionary, driven, and results-oriented leader with a strong track-record in driving operational excellence and strategic execution.

He is currently chief operating officer for KeyPoint Credit Union in San Jose. David also serves on the Girls on the Run of Silicon Valley’s board of directors where he chairs the finance committee.

He holds a Bachelor’s degree in business administration from the University of Phoenix and a Juris Doctor degree from Lincoln Law School of San Jose.

David also maintains a real estate broker license with the State of California.

Please join us in proudly welcoming David to the Abode Housing Development Board of Directors!

To learn more about the Abode Housing Development Board of Directors and Abode’s other board members, you can go online at abode.org.

HOUSING IS THE SOLUTION (cont. from page 1)

are set aside for senior veterans experiencing homelessness.

“We’re excited to add dozens of units of affordable housing at this development,” Chicoine said. “It will strengthen Santa Clara County and help reduce homelessness in this region.”

Kifer Senior Apartments was just one of several affordable housing sites we’ve recently opened or started building in recent months. We opened Doug Ford Senior Apartments in Fremont in February, broke ground at Eucalyptus Grove in San Mateo County in late March, and have scheduled a grand opening for Depot Community Apartments in Hayward in early August.

The best solution to homelessness is a home — that’s why we’re so excited to add these much-needed affordable homes in several Bay Area communities.
Homelessness can happen to anyone — literally anyone. Kimberly Forbes is proof.

Forbes, 63, left a long career in estate and business management and co-founded (with her then-husband) a local nonprofit group dedicated to providing safe and sober housing to men and women recovering from drug-and-alcohol addiction.

She also is a mother of four grown children who forged a successful career in Napa County, where she had led a stable life for more than 30 years.

She never thought one day she’d be without a home of her own.

But misfortune and poor health struck in tandem. Even worse, she was the victim of a crime and suddenly left without a home.

To her credit, Forbes persisted and endured and, after connecting with Abode Services, she regained her own housing and has kept it.
She uses that experience to serve as a member of Abode’s Lived Experience Advisory Board (LEAB). We recently formed LEAB to hear feedback and perspectives from those who have experienced homelessness, in order to improve the quality of our work.

Forbes’ circuitous life journey took its first major turn when she and her husband divorced. She rented a new home, but soon was beset by major health problems. Just as she was set to have surgery for a serious ailment, she found out the person she thought was her landlord had been lying. He was actually a tenant — not the owner — and was not authorized to rent the place. Immediately, she had to move out and could not retrieve two-months rent and an additional pet deposit she had paid in advance — a loss of thousands of dollars.

“I was the victim of rental fraud and I had only two weeks to move with little money, right before Covid hit,” she said.

She and her service dogs were forced to spend some nights on the street, sleeping in the rain, under some bushes near a park.

“It was frightening,” she said. “I was crying and wondering how this could have happened.”

She found out about the Winter Napa Shelter, where she landed for about two weeks. Abode Services, which runs the shelter, helped Forbes find temporary housing at a local hotel. During this time, she had another successful operation, which has improved her health.

She has recovered from the surgery, and regained her own housing. She now lives on her own again in Napa.

“I feel a sense of accomplishment,” she said.

Forbes said her relatively brief but harrowing time on the street opened her eyes about the ways homeless individuals become marginalized by society.

“I saw the stigma of being homeless,” she said. “I saw how you become invisible when you’re without a home.”

As a LEAB member, Forbes now wants to use her experience to help others.

“I think that’s one reason why I was chosen to be on this board; I tend to speak up,” she said. “A lot of people don’t realize they know a homeless person. It can happen to anyone.”
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