



HOUSEWORK

news from transition house • santa barbara, california • spring 2017

Finding Common Ground

By Kathleen Baushke

I first became involved in the issue of homelessness in 1984, the same year Transition House was founded. I wasn't involved with the agency at the time—I was living in downtown Washington, D.C., and became aware of the growing number of people living without housing for the same reasons that homelessness was increasing in Santa Barbara. While faith communities in Santa Barbara were joining together to found Transition House, I volunteered for a low income housing development for seniors while watching advocates for the homeless challenge government, both local and national, to acknowledge the growing number of homeless in our nation's capital.

During this time, an organization called the Community for Creative Non-Violence (CCNV), founded by a former Catholic priest and group of students, worked to bring attention to the issue—often through protests including public hunger fasts and forming encampments on the Capitol grounds and across from the White House.

It was messy and it was uncomfortable. Not everyone agreed with the way CCNV and its supporters were bringing attention to the issue, or even that there was an issue. But CCNV succeeded in getting the Reagan administration to provide \$14 million in funding to renovate a downtown building for shelter—as a result, the Federal City Shelter was able to provide 1,350 beds for the homeless in our nation's capital.

They also succeeded in sponsoring a successful local initiative, "The D.C. Right to Overnight Shelter Act of 1984." CCNV continued to be an advocacy voice that helped leverage congress to hold hearings on the issue of homelessness. As a result, in 1987, congress allocated funding for homeless services and support called "The Stewart B. McKinney



Kathleen Baushke
Executive Director

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Section 8 Cuts For Housing Impact Shelter Families

For many low-income households, including those on fixed incomes, the elderly those with disabilities, and families with children, the Section 8 Voucher program which pays subsidies to private landlords to help cover a portion of the rent, is the only way they can pay for housing.

The Section 8 program is federal funding for very low-income households, usually under 30 percent of the area median income. Section 8 pays a portion of market rate rent for families to private landlords who are willing to rent to households with Section 8 subsidies. These households are required to pay 30 percent of their income in rent. Section 8 funding pays the balance.

In California, nearly all households benefiting from the Section 8 program include children or people who are elderly or disabled. But now, new Section 8 vouchers are no longer available.

According to a statement dated Feb. 14 from the Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara, "Congress has not established a budget for the current Federal Fiscal Year (FFY ending 10/31/17), and we are now operating under a Continuing Resolution. This means that funding for all federal programs is provided at levels consistent with the prior adopted budget which does not account for inflationary costs and increased utilization for programs such as the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Section 8 Housing Choice

"We have stopped issuing new vouchers and it is unknown when we will be able to resume issuing vouchers."

—Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara

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The Whole Family Has Homework After Dinner

On weeknights, families join together to improve their work skills, their child-parent interactions, their academic performance, and their friendship with each other at Transition House’s education facility, the Family Support Center (FSC). At 7:00 pm, after enjoying a delicious dinner prepared by compassionate volunteers in the shelter,



ESL students work together to improve their language skills.

A key component to the HPP is free onsite childcare and “Homework Club.”

parents and kids walk down the driveway to their classes and activities at the FSC. There they are joined by other families who come from the community to partake of

Transition House’s anti-poverty program delivered at the FSC.

Transition House calls this program our Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) because it offers tools not only to our parents and children, but also to Santa Barbara area residents who want to improve their households’ financial stability, thereby removing the trauma of homelessness as a possible outcome to enduring poverty.

When they arrive at the FSC, children watch their parents go to class. We’ve often wondered if kids might feel like parents do when dropping off their kids for the first day of school. Yes, sometimes on the first night, there are a few tears from the little ones, yet children are quickly integrated into activities with the comfort of knowing mom and dad are just a classroom away.

Each family has different needs, but the program offerings address skill sets

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Homeless Assistance Act.”


Ultimately, CCNV helped to humanize people who were experiencing homelessness. Whatever some might think of CCNV’s methods, because of their work, we all learned that “homeless” was only an adjective for men and women who are just like me and you, only without a home.

The groups that founded Transition House were equally as passionate. They, too, were creative, and opened up their houses of worship and their fellowship halls, declaring that they could shelter the homeless immediately and avoid lengthy permitting processes or housing restrictions if they moved their location every 30 days. For two years, they did just that and provided shelter to the homeless until Transition House became a non-profit in 1986 with the ability to hire staff and secure a permanent location.

In the 25 years I have been with Transition House, I have learned that the people who step forward to help the homeless come from a variety of backgrounds with differing life experiences. We grapple about how much assistance government should provide and the circumstances where government assistance is warranted to house poor

families. We struggle with solutions to the circumstances that make people poor—medical emergencies, lack of employment or low wages, high housing costs, discrimination and the lack of opportunity, or mental or physical disabilities that render employment impossible.

Yet, there is common ground. It has always been my opinion that the grace of what we all do at Transition House is our understanding that the societal circumstances which lead to family homelessness are NOT under our control. Our common ground is our belief that human beings—our neighbors, our brothers and sisters—have the right to shelter from the elements, and the opportunity to take life changing actions that lead to self determination and self-sufficiency. We take what control we can by offering families safety, and the chance to move out of poverty.

Like many social service agencies, Transition House is concerned about future funding cuts at the federal level. Roughly one-fifth of our shelter budget comes from four federal funding sources. We hope our supporters will advocate to elected officials, and ask that safety net housing programs continue to receive full funding at the federal level. Homeless families trying to improve their lives depend on it. 

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Dulce: A Sweet Story of Success

By Kunru Cai and Lesley Liang,
UCSB Transition House Volunteers

Dulce. Her name means sweet in Spanish. Dulce is a 35-year-old single mom who has three daughters. She cried frequently while recalling her experiences during our conversation. Before she became homeless, she lived in Northern California with her husband and kids. When her husband lost his job, they could no longer afford their rent and had to move to Santa Barbara to live with Dulce's parents. However, her parents were also struggling, and eventually they lost their home. It was during this time that she got divorced from her husband. Her parents decided to move back to Mexico, but Dulce decided to stay in Santa Barbara and make a life of her own as a single mom.

Fortunately, she was introduced to Transition House by a friend of a friend. After contacting us and considering her options, Dulce decided to move into the shelter once a room was available. She told us that she believed, "God will provide a safe way for us."

Dulce says the hardest time in her life was going through her divorce while being homeless. She explains, "I cried for everything...all the time." Fortunately, her case manager at Transition House taught her how to focus on setting attainable goals. She felt that goal-setting helped lead her out of homelessness. Dulce recalls, "I could not have done it without their support, and the goals they helped me set up for my family."

Dulce was working at an infant care center in Goleta as an infant caretaker. When a position opened up at Transition House's Infant Care Center, with better wages and benefits, her case manager

encouraged her to apply. Part of what Transition House's case manager encouraged Dulce to do was to help her find the best job with the highest pay. With all the encouragement she received, Dulce decided to apply and she was offered the job!

What Dulce likes most about Transition House are the employees and their positive attitudes. She believes that peoples' actions speak louder than their words, and she was very appreciative of the work ethic of Transition House staff. Now, Dulce is one of those hard-working Transition House employees! As a full-time teacher in the Infant Care Center, she is the primary caretaker for four infants ages one to two years—she sure is busy! In addition to caring for their physical needs, Dulce applies what she learned from her case manager every day in helping the infants achieve goals of their own. She notices how proud the babies are when they learn to walk, climb up a ladder, or throw a ball. She, more than anyone, knows how important it is to have a loving, sup-



Dulce caring for the babies in the Infant Care Center

portive person behind them all the way.

Dulce is very happy working for Transition House, and she has plans to stay as long as she can. She said the Transition House philosophy is encapsulated by the quote, "Love your neighbor as yourself." She believes that Transition House treated her as a family member and gave her love, respect, and dignity. She advises others to come to the shelter for help, saying, "Transition House provides the tools for success, such as how to search for a job and set goals. Things can be hard but...do not give up, keep pushing forward, the light is there, you just have to keep looking for it." 🏠

"You were strong for me in each and every meeting and interaction, when I was not. You were focused when I had a million mountains in my life that I didn't even see the point of beginning to climb. You had goals for us when I was so vulnerable and raw that all I was trying to do was survive each moment. You had direction for us when our world was very dark and grey. Your passion pushed us along in a forward direction. Your kindness helped us feel safe and loved and your presence in our lives helped us feel noticed and important and valued. You are a treasure and I appreciate who you are and what you do."

— Dulce in a letter to her case manager

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Voucher program. Due to this underfunding and the uncertainty with the future budget, HUD is now funding Housing Authorities nationwide at a reduced amount. Housing Authorities therefore have no choice but to administer the Program at the current shortfall level, and additionally, if a budget is not established and the Continuing Resolution is extended, this reduced funding may persist into 2018. If a budget is established for the current Federal Fiscal Year, it is expected that there will be cuts to all federal discretionary spending programs, and the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program will be funded at a significantly lower amount than the previous year. Unfortunately, this current and projected lack of sufficient funding requires us to reduce the program size by serving fewer families.

“We have stopped issuing new vouchers and it is unknown when we will be able to resume issuing vouchers.

“During this time, we will be closely monitoring any federal budget cuts and the actual impacts to our agency. If you are concerned about this situation, please be advised that the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development is the agency that contracts with us to operate the Program. Unfortunately, this issue is beyond their control, as it is beyond ours. Any fixes must be decided by Congress and signed by the President.”

Transition House’s ability to move all shelter families to permanent housing will be significantly hampered in its ability to help families achieve housing stability. We support the Housing Authority in their call for advocacy to help preserve service levels for this vital program. 🏠

Transition House Corporate Sponsor Highlight

Yardi Systems: Our Partner for 20 Years

By Cheryl-Anne Batac and Diana Phan, UCSB Transition House Volunteers

Yardi Systems has been one of Transition House’s most generous corporate partners since 1997, making this a 20th anniversary of sorts. As a real estate investment and property management software company, Yardi prioritizes their philanthropic giving for organizations that work to combat homelessness—a perfect fit with Transition House’s mission.



Team Yardi at their Goleta facility

As a fast growing local company, Yardi first began their legacy of philanthropy within Santa Barbara’s nonprofit community. As the company has grown, so has their scope of giving. They now support more than 100 nonprofit organizations around the world.

Yardi includes their employees in their philanthropic process by encouraging them to make suggestions of nonprofits that are close to their hearts. In fact, it was an employee who originally introduced Transition House to Yardi. Another staff member came up with the idea of organizing a Transition House fundraiser where burritos were sold in front of the Yardi building. The proceeds from burrito sales went to Transition House’s Christmas program which provides gifts for the families living

at the shelter.

In 2016, Yardi hit a major milestone: they hired their 5,000th employee. This was an accomplishment to celebrate for everyone in all 35 offices worldwide, including the United States, the Netherlands, Germany, United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates, Australia, Singapore and China. Another feather in their cap was being named one of Forbes’ 2016 top 100 private cloud companies, a significant honor in the business world.

Transition House is proud to be associated with such a community-minded company as Yardi Systems, and appreciate their involvement in helping us work to end family homelessness in Santa Barbara. For more information about the company, visit their website at www.yardi.com. 🏠

Family Homework, continued from page 2

that homeless families often lack—the importance of these skills is recognized not only by our staff, but also by providers throughout our industry.

Classes and activities offered include: Financial Literacy Training; Parenting Class; ESL (English as a Second Language); and Job Club Workshop, a seminar which teaches students how to prepare for job search and employment.

The FSC also houses a computer lab with the entire Microsoft Office suite of programs, GED tutorials and Rosetta Stone. Adults and teens can use the lab for studying or job and housing searches. Some use it routinely to keep up with news and current events if they don't have access to television.

A key component to the HPP is free onsite childcare and “Homework Club.” Youngsters are provided with activities to keep them occupied. School aged children have access to an onsite tutor for homework help. Everyone is offered an evening snack. These evening activities are facilitated with the help of dedicated volunteers who work with Transition House staff to care for the children.

It's a productive (and fun!) way to spend the evening for both parents and children. 🏠

Resources

If you are interested in learning more about homelessness—including research, advocacy and best practices, visit:

The Institute on Children, Poverty & Homelessness at www.icphusa.org

National Alliance to End Homelessness at www.naeh.org

National Coalition for the Homeless at www.nationalhomeless.org

Here are words of appreciation from some of the students at the FSC:

“I don't have the words to explain how thankful I am for all the assistance we have received from the Transition House program. Thanks to ESL/ Rosetta Stone I have improved my communication with my clients at work since they only speak English. This has been the best, and not just for me. My son Anthony's grades have improved because of the tutoring he is offered here in the FSC.”

-Mil Gracias (1 million thank yous)
R.L.

“We like our professor because she is great at explaining everything. Before I joined this program I was unable to write, thanks to this program I learned how to read and write! Thank you for supporting us with our ESL classes each week. And, for watching the kids—I could not have attended classes without childcare.”

-E.A.

“I like coming here to the FSC because it's a really cool place to come to. I happily do my community service here! I think this is a really good program.”

-Fatima, volunteer

**The 20th Annual
MAD HATTER LUNCHEON**
The Golden Age of Hollywood

MARCH 31 • 11:00 AM • FESS PARKER RESORT
See www.transitionhouse.com for tickets!

Transition House's Annual Volunteer Family Picnic

Back by popular demand!

Transition House's Volunteer Appreciation gift will be caps in a variety of colors. Join us for the picnic to get yours!



RSVP to Diana at 966-9668 or dgarcia@transitionhouse.com

Join us on
May 21, 2017
Skofield Park
Las Canoas Rd. • Area A
12:00 - 2:00 PM
Lunch will be served promptly at **12:15 PM**
Awards begin at **1:00 PM**

Monthly Giving

Join the "Home Maintenance Crew"

Thanks to the faithful and consistent support of our monthly donors, who we affectionately refer to as our **Home Maintenance Crew**, Transition House can rely on a predictable source of income each month to help us shelter more homeless families.


Monthly giving appeals to the "Crew" because it is easy, flexible, convenient and rewarding. You simply choose the dollar amount and it is automatically charged to your credit card. Or, you can pay monthly by check. You can increase, decrease or stop your donation at any time. Most importantly you can feel good knowing that you are helping homeless families in our community by assisting us in equipping them with the



Transition House kids encourage you to "Join the crew!"

tools they need to return home.

If you would like to join the **Home Maintenance Crew**, and begin your monthly contribution, you can visit us online at www.transitionhouse.com and click on **Donate**. Choose

the monthly frequency option and your desired contribution amount. If you would like to schedule your payment over the phone you can contact Gina Whitefoot, Development Coordinator, at 805.966.9668 ext.120. 



Foundation Spotlight

Santa Barbara Foundation

The Santa Barbara Foundation has been a generous friend to Transition House since 1988, when they gave us \$18,000 for a capital project for our shelter. Over the years, they have supported Transition House's mission with 76 grants worth over \$1.3 million! In 2016, the Foundation was particularly generous, awarding us four grants totaling \$92,500.

Child Care Scholarships: \$17,500

These funds were awarded to provide partial scholarships to our Infant Care Center for four low-income infants. Typical scholarship families tend to have more than one child, and many are single parents. Most have experienced trauma such as domestic violence, child abuse/neglect, parent incarceration, problems related to substance abuse, or homelessness. The amount that we charge for infant care is determined by a formula that takes into account the family's income, number of children, and expenses. When income goes up, the family pays more for care. This funding allows us to assist more infants.

Early Care and Education: \$15,000

This grant supports our Infant Care Center (ICC) staff in their professional development activities, which total 840 hours a year. Nearly all the methodologies staff are trained in are supported by research, including:

Trauma-Informed Practices with Children, which recognizes that many homeless children have experienced trauma that impacts their development and behavior.

Touchpoints, which helps caregivers promote a sense of competency, connectedness, and empowerment among parents.

Learning Stories, which partners with

parents in tracking their child's development through strengths-based stories written directly to the children.


Reflective Practice, a professionally facilitated weekly session where staff receive emotional support, share ideas, and develop greater confidence.

Capital Grant: \$10,000

This funding allowed us to resurface the walls of five bathrooms in our shelter, which had experienced significant water damage. It is important for the shelter to be well maintained, as it houses 70 people at any given time, which translates to over 300 people each year. As you can imagine, working bathrooms are critical!

Core Support for Basic Needs: \$50,000

This grant supports our ability to provide basic needs like shelter, food, and anti-poverty services through our shelter program. The "core support" part means that we can use the funding any way we want to as long as it is helping us meet the mission of our shelter program. The Santa Barbara Foundation is among just a handful of funders who see the value in providing this type of funding.


We are so grateful to the Santa Barbara Foundation for their commitment to helping homeless families with children in Santa Barbara! 



All of us at Transition House are so incredibly appreciative of all the support we receive from our community. Whether it is a donation of your time, knowledge or resources, please know that without you, we could not do what we do for the families we serve who are affected by homelessness.

This holiday season, the generosity of our community came through loud and clear with those volunteering time, making monetary donations, and participating in our Secret Santa program to help make this holiday extra special for those families residing at Transition House.

At a time of year when we are amazed and overwhelmed by the big hearts of those in our community, we want to take a moment to simply say "thank you" for the support and donations we receive during the holidays and all year round.

This Christmas, the kindness of our supporters helped 41 families with 86 children living in Transition House's shelter and housing programs to receive Christmas gifts! Additionally we were able to help 35 families and 70 children who are not living in our shelter but receive assistance from Transition House. In total 76 families and 156 children enjoyed a memorable and merry Christmas because of the thoughtfulness of our community. **THANK YOU!** 



THE WAY HOME
Transition House

425 E Cota Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 966-9668
www.transitionhouse.com

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2016 Emergency Shelter Statistics

Over the year, 117 families were served in the shelter. The families were made up of:

- 150 adults (115 women and 35 men)
- 231 kids (46 teens, 167 children, 18 infants)

Of the 109 families that exited the shelter during the year:

- 87 found viable housing solutions. Of those, about half entered shared housing situations. 17 moved to our transitional housing facility called Firehouse, and the remainder found permanent rental housing.

- 22 families either moved on to temporary housing situations or their disposition is unknown.

Corporate Partners

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Citrix Online
Cox Communications
Crane Property Management
Deckers Brands
First American Title Insurance
Fox Point, LTD
Hutton Parker Foundation
MarBorg Industries
Meridian Real Estate
Montecito Bank and Trust
Pierron Architecture
Serbin Communications
S & S Seeds
Santa Barbara Home Improvement Center
Santa Barbara Plaza/S & P Investment
Smart and Final Foundation
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WE NEED THESE:

**twin sheets • blankets
pillows • towels**

Gently used items can be donated to our administrative offices at
425 E. Cota Street Monday through Thursday 9AM to 5PM, Friday 9AM to 4PM

THANK YOU!

For more information on becoming a corporate partner, contact Heather Stevenson, Director of Grants and Development, at hstevenson@transitionhouse.com or 805.966.9668 ext. 107.