

First 25 Years: Part Two

From shelter to housing, Abode Services commits to ending homelessness

This is a continuation of our story about Abode Services' history as remembered by our three longest serving employees, Louis Chicoine, Jose Sanchez and Jean Morgan. The first part was published in our Fall 2014 newsletter, now available online at www.abodeservices.org, under the "News" tab.



The Rotary BridgeWay Apartments were the first supportive housing community Abode Services created, and they continue to house families who are leaving homelessness behind.

Abode Services was settling into its new shelter, Sunrise Village, in Fremont when the organization's leadership realized the core mission of the organization had

to expand if it truly wanted to make an impact on homelessness.

It was the mid 1990s, the Bay Area housing market was seeing a historic spike in prices, and government and social workers were looking to approach homelessness in a different way.

"It was about being in the right place with the right method," Abode Services Executive Director Louis Chicoine said. "There were new opportunities being created."

Frustrated by watching participants forced to move from the area to find affordable housing, Abode Services decided to create more opportunities in the Bay Area for people to find affordable places to live. That decision set a path for the organization that included an aggressive expansion, and a new service model called Housing First, that focused on helping people transition into new homes.

continued on page 4

Volunteering Their Expertise

Volunteers who donate their professional services help participants prosper

We are continuously thankful for all our volunteers. Your work, be it painting a wall, cooking a meal, or gathering supplies for a family moving into a new home, allows us to expand our services to reach more people in need.

In this edition of *Voice of the Village*, we would like to highlight some of our volunteers who are sharing their professional expertise with the people in our programs.



Kimberlee Alvari, registered dietitian and Washington Hospital Director of Food and Nutrition Services

Kimberlee is volunteering at Sunrise Village Emergency Shelter to help us create healthy menus for participants. Kimberlee will also provide training sessions for volunteer meal groups to teach different strategies on how to

make a healthy and tasty meal for shelter residents.

“It’s really creating a cycle of good. I’m basically paying it forward with the knowledge I have, and that knowledge will hopefully equip someone to make healthy decisions in the future.” — Kimberlee

Bob Kraut, carpenter hobbyist

Bob was not a carpenter by trade, but always loved the craft. He has brought his incredible carpentry skills to Abode Services on numerous occasions. Most recently, Bob helped construct the inside of our new Hayward office by spending hours installing doors and framing entryways.

“Abode has a program which doesn’t just put a band-aid on a problem; it has the potential to turn a life completely around. I felt privileged to be able to use my skills to further that cause.” — Bob

continued on page 3

VOLUNTEERS (cont. from page 1)



Janie Pang, retired registered nurse

Registered nurses contribute a vital service to our participants by helping keep people at the shelter healthy. Our team of registered nurse volunteers reviews the health of every person staying at the shelter, and helps direct participants to services that address their health needs. Janie recently joined the group after working for 30 years at Washington Hospital, including in the intensive care unit.

“I have always tried to pay it forward. Fortunately, in this stage of my life, I am in a very good position to give back.” — Janie



Anna Jacoby, interior designer and owner of Anna Jacoby Interiors

For the last several years, Anna has been Abode Services’ personal interior designer. Anna’s work has made our locations brighter and more welcoming. She has selected paint colors for the walls of offices where we work and community

rooms where participants live. Anna has also assisted us in selecting furniture, and arranging spaces to foster communications and community.

“Environment is important. It makes a big difference. Volunteering my design services is a way for me to help in an unconventional way.” — Anna

Inspired by these great examples? If you have professional skills that you’d like to volunteer to help end homelessness, please contact Community Outreach Director Jean Morgan at (510) 252-0910 ext. 804 or jmorgan@abodeservices.org.

ABODE'S FIRST 25 YEARS (cont. from page 1)

Abode Services began creating programs to find and develop permanent supportive housing. The organization looked to fellow nonprofits to create strategic alliances, and formed partnerships with cities to develop comprehensive programs to both house people who are homeless, and provide them with the services they need to remain housed.

For example, the organization purchased and rehabilitated a property that became the Rotary BridgeWay housing community in Fremont, providing a stable home for families who had often struggled to find anything they could afford in the Tri-Cities.

Louis remembers a feeling of fulfillment the day BridgeWay opened as he watched the first individuals and families move in.

"I was walking through the property, and there was just this feeling of accomplishment and joy as people who had been homeless walked into their homes for the first time," Louis said. "We accomplished our goal of providing housing, and the families accomplished their goal of leaving homelessness behind.

"I could feel that we had developed a road map for our future," Louis added.

That road map came with a need to inform the community about Abode Services' new approach and ways community members could help even more families secure homes.

Community Outreach Director Jean Morgan helped lay the groundwork, meeting with donors and gathering their input on ways to help. One result of her efforts was the Home Warming program, in which groups of volunteers collect, and then donate, supplies to families moving into a new home. This program continues today, with new groups joining every year.

"Our growth and the community support we receive didn't just happen overnight. It took a lot of work," Jean said. "There were a lot of public speaking events, a lot of nights, and a lot of weekends. But seeing people get into housing, and seeing the joy that our supporters feel in knowing that they helped — that's still such an amazing thing."

Abode Services (with its strategic partner, nonprofit housing developer Allied Housing) continues to expand the supply of affordable housing in our community. This year, construction will begin on Laguna Commons, a 64-unit affordable housing apartment community, a portion of which will provide homes to veterans.

To put even more homes within reach of vulnerable residents, Abode Services also began an outreach effort to area property owners seeking partners who would rent apartments to people referred to them by Abode Services. Today, there are more than 300 property owners working with Abode Services and its participants.

The organization became a leader in the field of ending homelessness. Governments and other service providers now turn to Abode Services to create innovative solutions to the crisis of homelessness.

For example, just last year, Santa Clara County selected Abode Services to be the first organization on the West Coast to use social impact bonds to end homelessness. This Pay for Success project will give Abode a national stage on which to demonstrate the strengths it's developed over the past 25 years — starting with that small shelter program back in 1989.

When Louis, Jean, and Jose look at Abode now, they're proud of the organization's growing impact, and confident that the factors that helped shape Abode — community support, focus on mission, and willingness to constantly improve its programs — will enable it to help even more people in need during the coming years and decades.

"We have been successful because people became tired of just working through emergency shelters," Louis said. "At the same time, Abode Services was there ready to stand up and say, we have a different way of doing this. We will continue to find different ways, as long as we are working toward reaching our goal of ending homelessness."





Thanks to Our Breakfast Sponsors!

Our 2015 Journey Home Breakfast will take place March 5th from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. at the Fremont Marriott. The breakfast is our only annual fundraising event, and support from partners in our community helps make it possible.

We'd like to take a moment to thank the following community partners for sponsoring the breakfast. Thanks to their support, all the donations and pledges made at this event go directly toward helping us develop and expand our programs all through the year.

The 2015 Journey Home Breakfast sponsors are: 8x8, Inc.; Bernard, Balgley & Bonaccorsi, LLP; BKF Engineers; Digital Nirvana, Inc.; Focus Business Bank; Fremont Bank Foundation; Gonsalves & Kozachenko; Hayward-Tri-City Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.; Kaiser Permanente; Mean Well USA, Inc.; Palo Alto Medical Foundation; Sisters of the Holy Family; Symantec; Thermo Fisher Scientific; Washington Hospital Healthcare System; Wells Fargo; and Whole Foods Market Fremont.

We appreciate these community partners' commitment to sponsoring our fundraising breakfast, and all the community support that's making housing and services available to households who desperately need them. To learn more about the breakfast, please contact Director of Development Carol Arata at (510) 657-7409 ext. 203 or carata@abodeservices.org.

Our Future

Your legacy gift to Abode Services through a will, trust, or in some other form will help ensure that future people facing homelessness will have the support they need. A bequest in your will or trust is revocable and provides the flexibility you may need to preserve your assets. A life income gift, while irrevocable, provides you a steady income stream now and has several additional features, including avoidance of capital gains tax.

Bequests, life income gifts, and other legacy options completely avoid estate tax. When you make such a gift, we'll invite you to join the Harriet Despeaux Legacy Circle and honor you in several ways. For more information, contact Carol Arata at (510) 657-7409 ext. 203 or carata@abodeservices.org.

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