

Opportunity Center Community Campaign is Underway

The CWG Board of Directors recently appointed Trina Lovercheck, Ann Gordon and Joe Baldwin as co-chairs for an Opportunity Center Community Capital Campaign, to solicit \$1–\$50,000 gifts for the Opportunity Center from the community at-large. The goal is to raise \$1 million from these gifts toward the overall \$8 million goal.

The group held its charter meeting on September 30 at All Saints Episcopal Church, and has recruited over 20 volunteers for the effort. The effort will include two committees to reach out to the business community, and service and civic organizations, as well as an advisory committee.

Recently, the *Palo Alto Weekly*, which awarded its largest-ever grant (\$25,000) to the Opportunity Center, volunteered also to promote the community campaign. It will be running articles and the traditional “thermometer” during the critical phase of the campaign in the spring.

In addition, efforts are also underway to plan the groundbreaking ceremonies: Bruce Heister, a member of the Major Gifts Committee, has agreed to co-chair the effort, with a second co-chair to be named later.

The next meeting of the Community Campaign Committee will be held at All Saints Episcopal Church on Nov. 6, 7:30 pm. Like more information? Please contact Trina Lovercheck at: 650-494-8520, or Joy Wagner at 650-814-6518.

Please Contact Us:

To reach Jeff Vamos, Capital Campaign Director, or Joy Wagner, Associate Campaign Director:

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Get On Our Mailing List:

If you know of people who may be interested in the Opportunity Center project, we'd love to put them on our mailing list. Let us know by giving us a call or an email.

A Solar Solution: Seeking a “Green” Donor

The Community Working Group is working with its architect, Rob Quigley, to install a Photovoltaic (PV) system on the top of the Opportunity Center, to provide solar power to the building. If a private individual or partnership would be willing to purchase such a system for the building, because of numerous tax credits, write-offs and depreciation, the cost of such a donation would be a small fraction of the total cost. The CWG is seeking such a donor, who would be in a position to purchase the system and receive the tax credits, and future tax benefits from such a donation.

Interested? Please contact Jeff Vamos, Capital Campaign Director, at 650-814-6518.

Unitarian Church Reaches Beyond \$50,000 Goal

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Palo Alto set out to raise \$50,000 for the Opportunity Center campaign—and ended up raising over \$76,000. The latest pledge figure stands at \$76,139, and is still climbing, reports Daryce Peterson. She, as well as Susan McBain and Gail Claspell, formed a steering committee that involved the entire church in the effort, which included a gourmet BBQ and program, and an Easter morning appeal.

“This effort ought to be a model for every church’s capital campaign,” stated Jeff Vamos, Capital Campaign Director.

PLEASE NOTE: Be Sure to Continue Support to UMPA/InnVision

The current “on the ground” service provider, offering assistance to those who are homeless/at risk in the Midpeninsula, is Urban Ministry of Palo Alto, which is a subsidiary of InnVision. InnVision will be the lead service provider in the Center when it’s built. We hope that as you consider your one-time capital gift for the Opportunity Center Campaign, you’ll continue to remember annual giving to UMPA/InnVision.

OPPORTUNITY CENTER Newsletter

FALL 2003



Community
Working
Group

A COMMUNITY RESPONSE
TO HOMELESSNESS

The mission of the Opportunity Center is to promote human dignity both by providing for very basic needs of persons in our community, and by offering them the opportunity to find housing and a stable life. The center serves the entire community as it responds to the problem of homelessness and poverty, which affects everyone.

Capital Campaign Update

We're Over Halfway There! Construction on Schedule

With several major gifts during the past few months, a \$2 million award from the County of Santa Clara (see p. 3), as well as several foundation grants, the Community Working Group (CWG) has surpassed the halfway mark in its capital campaign for the Opportunity Center. The CWG has now raised \$4.3 million toward closing the funding gap of \$8 million. Included in this amount is a state-mandated fund to support the 89 units of housing and an endowment to cover the overhead costs of the services center in perpetuity. The CWG Board of Directors is hopeful that it will be able to exceed even this ambitious goal. “It’s been a struggle—especially in this economy—but we’re feeling very good about where we are right now,” said Larry Brown, Co-Chair of the capital campaign. The support provided by Susan Packard Orr has been especially helpful in pushing the campaign forward. (See story about the reception at Susan’s house, p. 2)

Groundbreaking to Take Place in the Spring

The Board now has the resources in place—through cash in-hand, pledges and financing—so that the Housing Authority of the County of Santa Clara, the developer, can proceed with its construction timeline without delay. Volunteers from the capital campaign are now planning the groundbreaking ceremonies set for this spring. Construction will begin in the late spring, and the construction period will last 18 months. Grand opening is projected for December of 2005.



Goal:
\$8 million

Secured
to date:
\$4.3 million

CLOSE THE GAP:

Our Campaign goal is \$8 million, in order to close the funding gap to build the center. We're over halfway there!

A Tribute to Guy Blase



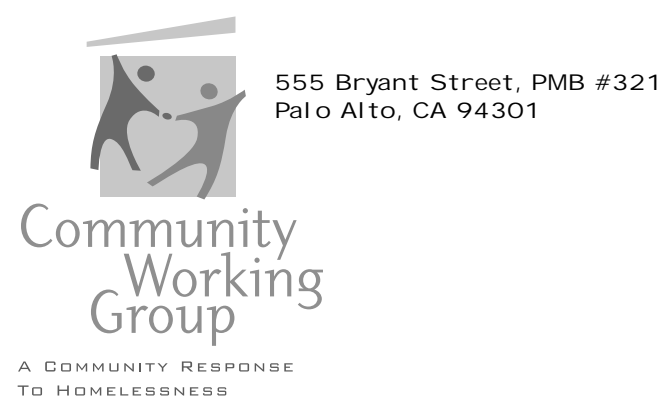
Guy Blase

Guy Blase, a successful lawyer, a leader in the Midpeninsula and an ardent supporter of the Opportunity Center, died on July 5th, after a three-year battle with prostate cancer. Guy was a founding board member of the Community Working Group (CWG), which is building the Center, and was critical in helping the group make connections to key leaders and resources in the community.

“Guy was always a guiding light, an optimist, a powerful personality; I don’t think we could have done this without Guy,” said Don Barr, CWG Board Chair. “Guy knew many of the most powerful in our community, and he also had a big heart for those who are most vulnerable.” Guy served, along with Larry Brown, as the Co-Chair of the Opportunity Center Capital Campaign, and was working the phones almost until his final day. The Board of Directors recently voted to pay tribute to Guy by naming the singles housing “Blase House,” and is turning to Guy’s many friends

to raise the \$500,000 naming rights.

“Blase but not blasé,” read Guy and Bobbi’s Christmas card last year—surely an apt description of a man full of life and compassion. Cece Blase, Guy’s daughter, is carrying on Guy’s work as a new member of the Major Gifts Committee.



Visit www.opportunitycenter.org
for more information.

A Gathering at Susan Packard Orr's House

Over 100 guests attended an informal reception at the home of Susan Packard Orr. Susan, the Honorary Co-Chair of the Opportunity Center Capital Campaign, has been an early supporter of the project. "For years, I had been hoping someone would come along to really address the problem by building a center like this. Then I heard about the Opportunity Center—which seems like a godsend for our community, and a way to deal effectively with the challenge of homelessness and poverty," Susan told her guests.

Guests also heard a description of the project from Board Chair Don Barr, received an architectural "guided tour" from Assistant Architect Maryanne Welton, celebrated a \$2 million county funding award from Liz Kniss, and heard a moving story by Ann Gordon about how homelessness has touched her family life.



Hostess Susan Packard Orr.



Dick Lyman and John Etchemendy discuss the Opportunity Center floorplans.



Jan and Bob Fenwick talk with Eliane Neukermans.



Cole Wilbur and Hugh Burroughs.



Guests listen to the program.



Barbara Foster talks with Tom Fiene.



Peggy Dennis chats with Foster Curry and Nancy Brown.



Tom Wasow greets Susie Richardson.



Supervisor Liz Kniss and Eve Agiewich.



Christine Burroughs talks with Tashia Morgridge.



Judy Kleinberg and John Barton.



Harry Hagey talks with Cindy Miller.

Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors Say YES to the Opportunity Center

In 2000, Peninsula Interfaith Action (PIA) leaders, in front of 1000 people, asked Santa Clara County Supervisory candidate Liz Kniss for her support to allocate \$18 million for affordable housing for the County, and more specifically, to use some of those funds to build the Opportunity Center. Three years later, on September 23, 2003, Supervisor Kniss, with her Board colleagues, voted to award \$2 million to the development of the project. This funding is the culmination of many years of hard work and relationship-building by PIA, the faith-based community organizing group on the Mid-Peninsula, and the Community Working Group. The \$18 million funds were a part of the lawsuit settlement between the County and the San Jose Redevelopment Agency.

The Opportunity Center was selected via a competitive application process, and the project competed very favorably in practically every category, resulting in the full \$2 million that was requested. The on-going financial and regulatory support of the cities and counties of the Mid-Peninsula is greatly appreciated by all involved in the project.