

A View from the Streets: Why We Need the Opportunity Center

By Norman Carroll

Most of us are at least familiar with the pre-supermarket era: having to visit the green grocer, the butcher, the fish market, the deli, a dry goods store. It could take all day, just to get the basics. Supermarkets consolidated those trips, reducing the shopping from a trek to just an hour or two.

Seeking basic assistance through the current process is daunting. It's hours, days, weeks, even months of going to and fro for paperwork and interviews. For example, a trip to the Social Security office in Sunnyvale can begin with rising at 5am (to get the bus pass and ride the bus) in order to get there by 9:00. And, failing with one agency means starting over with another.

The Opportunity Center is intended to provide coordinated access to social services: a place where providers will have a space to come and work on a routine basis and deliver their services directly to consumers, minimizing frustrations on both sides. And without repeated trips across the county. Also, the consumers will feel more comfortable in a "home turf" environment. The Opportunity Center will become a clearinghouse for access to assistance.

The Opportunity Center will be a large part of a solution: helping people get the help they need, so they

can get their lives together. It can be achieved. Thank you for being part of this solution.

Norman Carroll, a formerly unhoused resident of Palo Alto, is a writer and homeless advocate, and a frequent advisor to the Community Working Group board.

Board President and Vice-President Honored with Stanford Awards

Community Working Group Board President Don Barr and Vice-President Tom Wasow were both honored with prestigious Stanford awards recently. Don Barr, Associate Professor of sociology, received the Lloyd W. Dinkelspiel Award at Commencement in June. His Stanford colleague, Tom Wasow, Professor of linguistics and of philosophy and current Faculty Senate chair, was appointed to the Bass University Fellows in Undergraduate Education Program.

The Lloyd W. Dinkelspiel Award is given annually for distinctive contributions to undergraduate education. Don graciously signed over the check that came with the award to the Opportunity Center Capital Campaign. The Bass University Fellows appointments recognize exceptional contributions to undergraduate education, including teaching, mentoring, and supervising research.

Stanford students have already participated in fundraising activities for the Center. They look forward to being involved once the Center is up and running through service learning and community service projects.

Opportunity Center Embraced by Community Holiday Spirit

The Midpeninsula community shared its strong holiday spirit by generously responding to giving letters that were sent out in December. Letters were sent to local faith communities; to a listing of "friends" of the Opportunity Center; and to personal contacts of our Board and committee members. Here was yet one more way that our wonderful volunteers took time out of their busy holiday schedules to share their passion about this project. We have received close to 100 replies by the first week of January (a 10% response rate which shows the extraordinary compassion of this community), with total gifts approaching \$40,000! If you still have one of those special envelopes, please don't waste the stamp—send in your gift and join the community spirit.

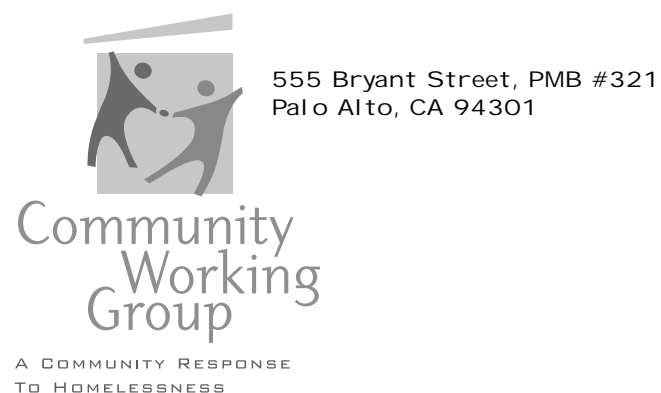
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Website: www.opportunitycenter.org

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.



Visit www.opportunitycenter.org
for more information.

OPPORTUNITY CENTER Newsletter

WINTER 2004



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.

Board Sets May 5 Groundbreaking, Construction to Follow

Now that the Opportunity Center campaign has secured over 75% of its funding gap, and with the community campaign about to get underway, the Community Working Group has set May 5th for a groundbreaking celebration. Dr. Donald Barr, President of the Community Working Group, and Susan Packard Orr, Honorary Capital Campaign Co-Chair will kick off the ceremonies at 10 am at the construction site on Encina Way, just north of the Town and Country Shopping Center. The Board expects the site to be filled with dignitaries, volunteers and supporters celebrating this milestone.

"We have been so gratified at the broad community support this project has received—and we're looking forward to celebrating our success," said Bruce Heister, who is chair of the Groundbreaking Committee. "But, the real celebration is about how this will finally be up and running, and enabling us to help people and the community."
"We've been waiting a long time for this moment," said Larry Brown, Chair of the Capital Campaign Committee.

Construction to Begin in June

The existing buildings on the three contiguous parcels that were merged to create the footprint of the Center will be demolished by the groundbreaking date, and excavation of the two levels of underground parking will begin sometime in early summer. The total construction timeline is expected to last 18 months, with a grand opening sometime late in 2005 or early 2006.

Green Building

Especially given the successful fundraising effort, the Board is making a commitment to building as "green" a building as possible. Plans are underway to install a Photovoltaic array on top of the building for power generation, and other "green" options are under consideration. "We would love to hear from donors who are interested in funding green building options", said Rev. Jeffrey Vamos, the Director of the Capital Campaign.



CLOSE THE GAP: WE'RE CLOSE!

Goal:
\$8 million

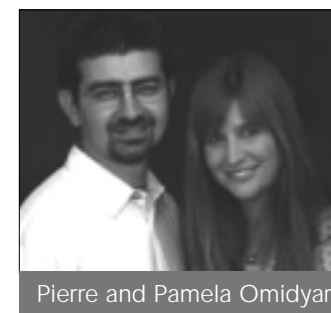
Secured
to date:
\$6.1 million

We've raised \$6.1 million toward our funding gap of \$8 million—and we hope to exceed our goal. Recent additional funding from Proposition 46 will move us even closer.

Every dollar over this minimum goal will enable us to do much more to:

- Cover building maintenance costs and enhance services when the building is complete—to help even more people get back on their feet.
- Enable us to house those in our community who need it most—those with little or no income, those living on the streets.

Opportunity Center Receives Major Gifts

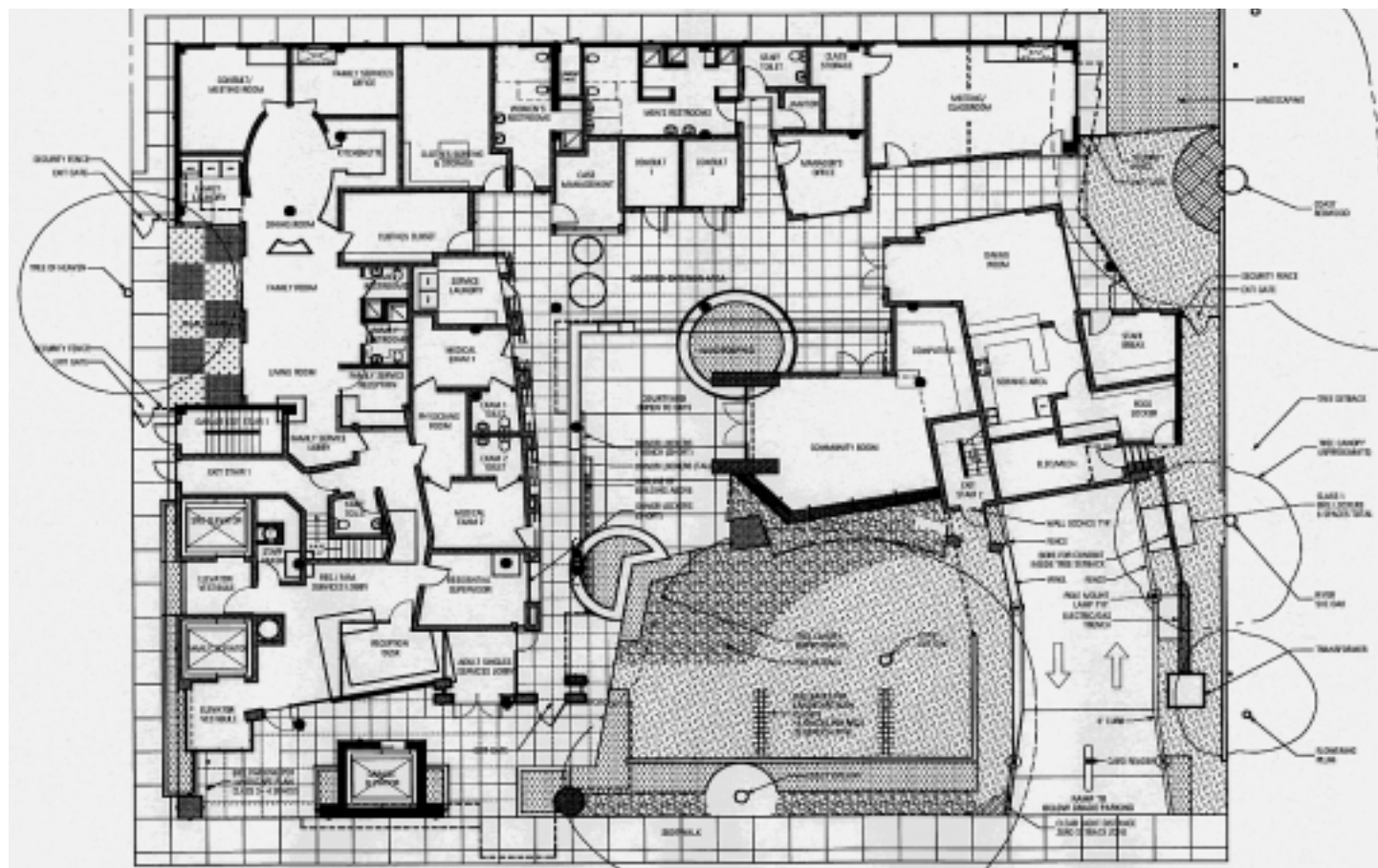


Pierre and Pamela Omidyar

\$1 Million Gift from Omidyar Fund, Major Gifts from Hagey Family and TOSA Foundation

The Opportunity Center Capital Campaign received a significant boost at the end of the year due to major gifts from three prominent local philanthropists, pushing the tally over 75% of the \$8 million goal.

The Campaign learned in mid-November of a \$1 million grant awarded by the Pierre and Pamela Omidyar Fund of the Peninsula Community Foundation. Pierre Omidyar is the co-founder of Ebay and, together with his wife Pamela, has made a major commitment to philanthropic involvement in the community. "We so appreciate the Omidyars'



Inside the Center: Opportunity Center Program Services

Program services for the Opportunity Center will be operated by InnVision through its Urban Ministry Division in collaboration with Clara-Mateo Alliance and other local service providers.

By Christine Burroughs

For those who are tired, cold, and hungry, the Day Service Center at the Opportunity Center will offer a welcome respite. When they first enter, they will be greeted by staff and volunteers who understand how important a warm hello can be. A quick tour of the services and the facility will let them know what their options are: showers, clothing closet, laundry room, counseling offices, community room, computer lab, dining area or medical exam rooms. Daily classes and workshops on job search, housing assistance, money management, and literacy will also be available. The courtyard area will provide a safe environment with an open feeling of the outdoors.

All of the current emergency services offered at the InnVision/Urban Ministry Drop-In Center will be moved into this new space and expanded. The Day Service Center will be open all day for individuals and families to receive phone messages and mail, make calls, connect with a doctor in the new medical exam rooms, access food and refreshments, or attend lifeskills and job training workshops. In addition, clients will be able to connect with a case manager to link them to community resources and housing. Plans are also underway to develop part-

nerships for the provision of both mental health services and alcohol/drug counseling.

Having this full array of supportive services directly linked with the Center's housing units, provides those most in need in our community with an opportunity to stabilize and grow. InnVision has extensive experience in developing and coordinating comprehensive services for homeless and at risk individuals and families and is excited to be managing the service center component of this project. Working together with community volunteers, donors, and other service providers in a central location will ensure a more effective system of care in Palo Alto.

The Chief Executive Officer of InnVision, Christine Burroughs, has led the organization for over 15 years. She supervises a staff of 90, 17 sites and an annual operating budget of \$6.9 million. She has overseen a massive expansion of programs and facilities including mergers and several major new construction and rehabilitation projects. InnVision now serves over 15,000 people a year through a diversified funding base that includes leading companies, foundations, and over 30 government contracts.

Major Gifts (continued from page 1)



Harry and Shirley Hagey

commitment to encourage empowerment that brings dignity and self-respect," said Judge LaDoris Cordell, Co-Chair of the Campaign Honorary Committee, and CWG Board member. "We're honored they're supporting this project as an expression of that commitment."

Harry and Shirley are active members of Holy Trinity Church in Menlo Park and long-term supporters of community philanthropy. "We feel very good about the group of people who have put this together, and are pleased to support such a widespread community effort to help people who are homeless and in need," said Mr. Hagey.

TOSA Foundation has been around for over a decade, their funding generally has a global focus and they do not take unsolicited requests. "We were especially gratified to receive such unsolicited funding from TOSA," said Christine Burroughs, Executive Director of InnVision.

News of this gift was followed by \$250,000 gifts from Harry and Shirley Hagey, and the TOSA Foundation.

Here by teamwork: Thanks to our volunteers and committee members

It's been about five and a half years from the original concept and vision for the Opportunity Center until now—as we contemplate our groundbreaking ceremonies. Such an effort has many moving parts: many individuals who give of their time, talent and resources to make it all possible, each person making a unique contribution.

We want to celebrate the volunteers and committee members who have enabled us to get here. Below is a list of the volunteers and committee members who have been involved in leadership for this project. We celebrate you!

Opportunity Center Campaign

Community Working Group Board

Don Barr, <i>President</i>	Eve Agiewich	Christine Burroughs	Foster Curry
Tom Wasow, <i>Vice President</i>	John Barton	Tom Conn	Larry Duncan
Jeff Vamos, <i>Secretary</i>	Larry Brown	LaDoris H. Cordell	Karen Stiller
Litsie Indergard, <i>Treasurer</i>			

Opportunity Center Capital Campaign Volunteers

Honorary Capital Campaign Committee Co-Chairs

LaDoris Cordell Susan Packard Orr

Honorary Capital Campaign Committee Members

Jim Burklo	Ellen Ehrlich	Larry Klein	John Northway
Owen Byrd	Tom Ehrlich	Liz Kniss	Marlene Prendergast
Al Camarillo	Kathy Espinoza-Howard	Shelley Lewis	Cole Wilbur
Ari Cartun	John Etchemendy	David Mann	Grace Wilbur
Nadine Cruz	Gary Fazzino	Scotty McLennan	Sharifa Wilson
Mary Davey	Rose Jacobs Gibson		

Capital Campaign Chair

Larry Brown

Major Gifts Committee

Larry Brown, Chair

Cece Blase	Ellen Christensen	Bruce Heister	Karen Stiller
Christine Burroughs	Barbara Foster	Trina Lovercheck	Tom Wasow
Hugh Burroughs	Ann Gordon	Rosalind Ravasio	

Special Events Committee

Bruce Heister, Chair Litsie Indergard

Foundations Committee

Henry Organ, Chair Karen Stiller

Community Campaign Committee

Co-Chairs: Joe Baldwin Ann Gordon Trina Lovercheck

Community Campaign Advisory Committee

Betsy Bechtel	Margo Dutton	Bill Johnson	Sandra Pearson
Andy Coe	Alan Henderson	Lynne Johnson	Steve Schmidt

Community Campaign Committee Members

Molly Agras	Ellen Christensen	Wynn Hausser	Don Niederhaus
Suzanne Bayley	Kirke Comstock	Suzanne Jonath	Jeff Rensch
Roy Blitzer	Andy Doty	Deb Krass	Susie Richardson
Harold Boyd	Nancy Fiene	Barbara McBride	Sylvia Sanders
Mimi Breiner	Paul Gilbert	Carl McConnell	Cammy Sunde
Sally Cadigan	Carol Harrington	Hilbert Morales	

Faith Community Committee

Jeff Vamos, Chair

Eve Agiewich	Gail Claspell	Dick Raiter	Jonathan Staples
Joe Baldwin	Rudy Dyck	Jean Ramacciotti	Cammy Sunde
Roy Blitzer	Shirley Ledgerwood		