



community working group

Thresholds

Developing Opportunities for Affordable Homes

With Gratitude

In “To Kill a Mockingbird,” the late Harper Lee offers a penetrating look into human nature, prejudice, justice and compassion. One of the many profound lessons within its pages is voiced by its young narrator: *“I think there’s just one kind of folks. Folks.”*

I agree with Scout. Even here in Silicon Valley, where wage gaps and housing prices so sharply separate the poor from the wealthy, I believe that, fundamentally, we are all just folks. We work hard. We struggle with our demons. We try to overcome our challenges. We love. And whether we are Google executives or single moms living on the street, we try to make tomorrow just a little bit better than today. And it can be better — as long as we don’t have to go it alone.

I’m grateful for our Community Working Group (CWG) supporters. By your actions, you show the extremely low-income individuals and families we serve that they are not alone in their efforts to make tomorrow better. Every moment you volunteer, every pair of socks you contribute, every dollar you donate, matters. With your

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“I think there’s just one kind of folks. Folks.”

— Harper Lee



CWG supporters help extremely low-income clients get into, and stay in, affordable homes.

100% of extremely low-income Opportunity Center residents who were engaged in active case management stayed in their homes in 2015.

Inside...

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When we hear about homelessness and the affordable housing crisis, it's easy to feel overwhelmed. But those who support CWG's efforts to help extremely low-income individuals and families live in safe, suitable homes do more than wring their hands. They act.



Volunteers from a variety of organizations bring and serve meals at the Opportunity Center.

Volunteers from high schools and universities, corporations, faith organizations, service clubs, and the broader community help Opportunity Center (OC) residents and drop-in clients by serving meals, delivering educational workshops, providing after-school tutoring, hosting celebrations, offering health coaching, and more. Community members spent almost 10,000 hours volunteering at the OC in 2015!

Community members also donate items such as clothes, food, toys, and toiletries to 801 Alma and the OC. In 2015 more than 400 low-income children and teens received holiday gifts, selected by their parents from the OC's Toy and Teen Shoppe; while low-income families received more than 300 presents at 801 Alma's Holiday Resident Appreciation Event.

Last but not least, CWG donors provide financial support that is critical to our work to keep low-income residents at the OC, 801 Alma and Alma Gardens in their homes. Financial gifts enable us to protect the affordability of homes at our three complexes, provide rent subsidies, keep the service centers at the OC up and running, and continue our efforts to combat homelessness and sustain the health of our community by providing affordable homes and supportive services.

Every one of these actions helped create opportunity for someone in need, and that can lead to real results.

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generous response to our fall fundraising appeal, we are more than halfway to our goal of raising \$75,000 to address our most immediate funding needs, and I trust that our spring appeal will take us the rest of the way.

Whether you are a longtime friend, a recently returning supporter, or brand-new to our organization, your message is clear: every CWG client can hope for a better tomorrow, because none has to go it alone.

With gratitude,

John Barton
President, Board of Directors,
Community Working Group



Young 801 Alma resident gets after-school help.

Moving Forward, One Step at a Time

For extremely low-income people fending off homelessness — and the despair that goes with it — getting and staying housed is no small feat. Accessing social security or disability payments, managing personal health issues, trying to learn new life or career skills, getting a new job — it can seem like an uphill battle.

Last year **20 Opportunity Center drop-in clients got jobs!**

20



CWG clients have access to computers and classes.

99.5% of Opportunity Center residents who actively worked with their case managers maintained their source of income during 2015.

99.5%

Thank you to the variety of community members and service organizations — especially LifeMoves (formerly InnVision Shelter Network), our service provider at the OC, and Eden Housing, our partner at 801 Alma Family Housing — who joined us in our work and helped clients take many steps forward last year.

Every person who escapes homelessness saves our region a minimum of \$60,000 in services per year.

But every step forward is good news! For our community, it means an enormous cost savings: every person who escapes homelessness saves our region a minimum of \$60,000 in services per year — and thousands more if the individual was chronically homeless. For the individual and his or her family, it means the safety and dignity of a home, and a move toward a brighter future.

23 Opportunity Center drop-in clients transitioned into permanent housing in 2015.

23



CWG works to help extremely low-income individuals live in homes they can afford.

SIGNED, SEALED, DELIVERED.

Your Chance to Spring into Action

Your support makes possible all of CWG's work: building homes that extremely low-income families can afford; maintaining the properties to keep them safe, functional, and attractive; helping sustain the provision of critical services; and providing rental subsidies.

Please continue helping us in our fight against homelessness! Watch your mailbox for our spring appeal, scheduled to arrive in late April! You can help change the world for a person in need.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed it is the only thing that ever has.”

— Margaret Mead



Children living in stable affordable homes do better in school, stay in school longer, and get better jobs when they grow up.



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