

For Immediate Release

Contact:

John Barton

President, Board of Directors

Community Working Group

Phone 650-465-1480

**Community Working Group announces \$20,000 matching grant for gifts made through Silicon Valley Gives**

**Palo Alto, CA** — April 22, 2014 — Community Working Group (CWG), a nonprofit agency that provides affordable housing and rehabilitative services for homeless and near-homeless individuals and families in the Mid-Peninsula, today announced that it has received a \$20,000 matching grant for donations made to the agency through the Silicon Valley Gives online giving day.

Hosted by the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, Silicon Valley Gives will be held on May 6, 2014 and aims to inspire philanthropy in the region.

CWG, the creator of the Opportunity Center, hopes that its participation in the event will raise awareness of the importance of affordable housing, as well as support for the agency's work to provide affordable housing and services for extremely low-income individuals and families.

"Affordable housing options are critical to maintaining the diversity and strength of our community. When people live near their jobs, they can participate in the community, contribute to the local economy, and plan and prepare for the future. In addition, providing affordable housing is the best way to help homeless individuals and families in our community," said CWG Board President John Barton. "And now, thanks to our generous donors and to the Silicon Valley Community Foundation's efforts to promote philanthropic giving, when people donate to CWG their gifts will go twice as far!"

Since 1998, CWG has been bringing diverse segments of the community together to respond to homelessness and poverty in our region. CWG partnered with the Housing Authority of the County of Santa Clara and InnVision Shelter Network to open the Opportunity Center in 2006 and now has two more affordable housing complexes in Palo Alto, 801 Alma Family Housing and Alma Garden.

(more)

In addition to maintaining its current projects and ensuring rents in those complexes remain affordable for the long-term, CWG is continually responding to community requests and researching potential new affordable housing

opportunities. Meanwhile, Board members of the volunteer-run organization are actively involved in diverse issues related to homelessness and poverty in the Mid-Peninsula. CWG Board members serve on the city of Palo Alto's Human Relations Commission and recently convened the city's Homeless Task Force; they also volunteer at homeless shelters and are involved in the effort to save the 400-resident Buena Vista Mobile Home Park, the only mobile home park in Palo Alto, from redevelopment.

Members of CWG's Board of Directors also serve on Palo Alto's Housing Element Community Panel, which is helping the city update its plan for meeting its housing needs for all income levels. As part of the city's 2015-2023 Housing Element, the city will be required to show how it can provide more than 1,100 housing units for very low- and low-income residents to accommodate its "fair share" of expected California population growth. The Housing Element must be certified by the state by January 31, 2015.

Affordable housing is a pressing topic in Palo Alto, where the average rent is more than \$2600 per month — far outpacing the means of police officers, computer programmers and accountants, not to mention teachers and senior citizens. High housing costs also mean that many workers are one unexpected bill or medical emergency away from eviction and homelessness, and already more than 600 homeless individuals and families are estimated to live in Palo Alto and neighboring cities.

For more information on CWG's efforts to provide affordable housing options, or to make a donation, visit [www.communityworkinggroup.org](http://www.communityworkinggroup.org). To qualify for matching through the Silicon Valley Gives event, gifts must be made online by May 6, 2014.

###

Community Working Group is a Palo Alto-based nonprofit 501(c)(3) agency that brings people together to respond with compassion and common sense to homelessness and poverty in the Mid-Peninsula. For more information visit [www.communityworkinggroup.org](http://www.communityworkinggroup.org).