At Sunnyvale Community Services, we work with our clients to help them achieve many of their personal goals: stable housing, food security, and access to fundamental human services. But one of our most important goals is intangible. We want our clients to always feel that they have dignity—from the moment they walk in our door for safety-net services to the day they joyfully become self-sufficient.

One way we strive to provide dignity for our clients is by giving them tools and choices to improve their lives. To that end, we’ve recently revamped our food distributions to give clients more selection when they come to our center for food.

Our new Pantry Plus program lets clients choose two days each month to “shop” in our simulated store for their food supplies. In sharp contrast to the common food pantry model of receiving pre-packaged grocery bags, our clients get to choose from many foods and household items. Do their family members prefer white or brown rice? Would they rather have applesauce, canned pears, or canned peaches? Does someone in the household need a meatless protein?

Each client makes their food choices from a list of available items, and then one of our super SCS volunteers goes to work filling a shopping basket with food. Meanwhile, the client visits our self-shopping area to select other staples, such as toiletries, baby food, and cleaning supplies.

The result? Our clients get more of the foods they like, so they eat better. They aren’t producing food waste by throwing out items they never requested. And they have the dignity of controlling their food choices as if they were buying groceries at a supermarket.

No Sunnyvale family, senior, or veteran should go without food or a roof over their head when SCS is around the corner to help. Every year, we consider how we can increase awareness in our local community about the many services we offer for those in need. With our new Community Navigator position and Community Leader program, we continue to make good on our commitment to broaden community outreach and engagement. Our Community Navigator, Janette Brambila, works as a liaison between our agency and various community leaders who serve a variety of populations in need. Designed to engage local community members and bring awareness to the unmet needs of Sunnyvale residents, Community Leaders serve as liaisons between their communities and Sunnyvale Community Services. Community Leaders receive ongoing training in order to educate individuals about local services and programs including social services, healthcare, education, immigration, and affordable housing in Santa Clara County.
On April 11th, donors and volunteers gathered for our annual celebration of all they do to support the community. This year’s theme was Gold Rush Awards, celebrating 49 years in our community. While the efforts of the Gold Rush events worked tirelessly to raise funds for their personal benefit, the SCS volunteers and donors work and give selflessly to support our most vulnerable neighbors. We thank LinkedIn for hosting the event, Andy Lantz for providing musical entertainment, Jacqueline Otero for taking photographs, and Mike Klein for emceeing the evening.

Client Success Stories

A woman with early onset Alzheimer’s came to Sunnyvale Community Services seeking safe, affordable housing after her roommate began experiencing domestic violence. She also became a victim of fraud and identity theft when a family member of one of her roommates took advantage of her illness and used her credit cards without her knowledge. An SCS case manager helped cancel her credit cards, dispute the fraudulent charges, and find a new home. They also got the woman’s Medi-Cal enrollment reactivated so she could get proper treatment for her Alzheimer’s.

Copied with Medical Bills

Unexpected medical bills are a major cause of financial instability in this country. One such client was on the verge of eviction when she came to us for help. As a single mother, her budget was extremely limited even before she needed two surgeries. She had even begun the process of filing for bankruptcy. At SCS, this client was enrolled in management so we could provide her with long-term wrap-around services, including help with budgeting. Her case manager referred her to a financial coach who reviewed her credit history and presented her with options other than bankruptcy. We provided her with rent assistance and helped her get disability benefits during the time she couldn’t work after the surgeries. Thanks to all these services, the client was able to start paying off her old bills. Her situation has been stabilized and she has gone back to work full-time to support herself and her child.
JRP Electric In-kind Donation

The SCS warehouse is a place that’s constantly evolving to better meet the needs of our food program clients and staff members. JRP Electric is always ready to help when we need to reconfigure the area. For example, they installed wiring and electrical outlets for the new self-choice shopping area in our Food Pantry. That enabled us to install a refrigerator to hold dairy products, salads, and other perishable foods, conveniently placed for our clients to access. Many of their jobs are done as in-kind donations to SCS, for which we’re very grateful.

As our Warehouse Manager Jack Samuels notes, “Through the trials and tribulations of changing our layout multiple times with the change of programs at SCS, JRP has been an incredibly reliable resource. Their dedication to accommodate our busy facility and finish work efficiently has made these many changes possible with no impact to our clients or operations. The staff is always well informed, ready to work with a smile, and very understanding of the space restraints we face serving so many clients in such a small space.”

Thanks, JRP!

Help Kids Start the School Year Right

You can shop online to donate exactly what’s needed at www.roonga.com/scs2019backpackdrive

Donate to SCS without spending an extra dime!

Let your online shopping go the extra mile by registering for Amazon Smile.

1. Visit smile.amazon.com and sign in to your normal Amazon account.
2. Type Sunnyvale Community Services in the charitable organization search box; select us.
3. Do your shopping and Amazon will automatically donate to SCS.*

*You must log on to AmazonSmile each time you shop!

2019 Calendar

Holiday Center Toy Drive
Online and drop-off locations around Sunnyvale. Check our website for more details in the coming months.
svcommunityservices.org

Fall 2019

Annual SCS Holiday Auction
Elks Lodge, 375 N. Pastoria, Sunnyvale

Thursday, November 21
5:00 - 7:30 PM

Giving Tuesday - SCS Open House
Sunnyvale Community Services
725 Kifer Road, Sunnyvale

Tuesday, December 3
1:00 - 5:00 PM

Programs & Services

- Year-round food, providing over two million pounds of healthy food at our on-site pantry, at five low-income Sunnyvale schools, and through deliveries to homebound residents.
- One-time financial assistance for rent, deposits, utilities, medical care, prescriptions, and other critical bills.
- Case management for families and individuals who are homeless or at risk of eviction and need longer-term assistance.
- Kids’ Head-to-Toe Summer Program, distributing backpacks with school supplies, gift cards for new shoes, and extra food.
- Holiday Center, providing toys, household gifts, and extra food.
- Screening and enrollments for Medi-Cal, CalFresh, and other benefit programs.
- Financial literacy/credit repair classes and counseling.
- WorkFirst Sunnyvale, a partnership with Downtown Streets Team to address homelessness through the dignity of work.
- Bus passes and gas vouchers.
- Other in-kind assistance, e.g. diapers, refurbished bicycles, house hold move-in kits.
- Advocacy on policies and programs affecting the most vulnerable.

SCS Wish List

Visit our website for the most needed items.
svcommunityservices.org/donate-scs-donation-wish-list/

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