



Sunnyvale Community Services

Preventing Homelessness and Hunger in Our Local Community

Spring 2022

Ready to Play, Ready to Learn

Summer is here, and children are smiling as they breathe in the fresh air and look forward to days full of laughter with friends. But for many Sunnyvale children, summer is also a time of anxiety. Here in Silicon Valley, one in four children are at risk of hunger. They depend on school meal programs for their basic nutrition, and during the summer months when schools are closed, they are missing meals. For over 25 years, SCS has provided additional kid-friendly food each summer to families enrolled in our food program. This summer promises to be our biggest year yet, with more families than ever struggling with dramatically rising costs of staples like milk, eggs, and cereal.

In August, we look forward to providing each family not only with much needed groceries, but also with a special box for each child stuffed with age-appropriate school supplies. Each child also receives a \$100 Target gift card, enabling families to choose exactly what they need to start the school year. Our drive-through Ready to Learn program will serve a record number of 2,000 Sunnyvale students as they prepare for a new school year.

Our summertime program helps families stretch their money so they can pay the rent and keep the lights on. It also aims to keep smiles on young faces,



so that instead of worrying about whether they will have enough food to eat, they can spend their time laughing and playing outside in the bright summer sunshine. Thank you for supporting our most precious Sunnyvale neighbors. ■



Cheers All Around

Thanks to all who gave to our 2021 Holiday Cheer campaign. You made the holidays bright for families and seniors. A record-breaking 5,588 clients received gift cards so they could pick out the perfect holiday foods and gifts for their loved ones.

Thank you!



Nonprofit of the Year



In April, Sunnyvale Community Services was named Nonprofit of the Year at the Sunnyvale Chamber of Commerce's 56th Annual Murphy Awards. SCS was honored for

the agency's outstanding efforts helping residents with food aid, rental assistance, and other basic needs during the pandemic.



President's Corner

As I complete my term as board president, I remember the first time I walked into Sunnyvale Community Services and saw

how many people needed the services the agency provided.

My first year on the SCS Board of Directors was intimidating. I didn't know how I could have a positive impact on the lives of our clients. But that intimidation turned into a passion to support the agency by volunteering, advocating for our clients, and sharing the agency's mission.

Over the years I have been amazed by our staff's ability to take on sizable challenges, from helping fire victims get back on their feet to the seamless continuation of services for more people than ever throughout a pandemic. Now, in the new building, we are well-positioned to provide safety-net services in a more respectful and efficient manner than ever before.

After I complete my last term on the Board of Directors, I will continue to pledge my time and money to support SCS. I encourage you to do the same. Every hand and every dollar goes toward achieving our mission to prevent homelessness and hunger within our community. No matter how big or how small your contribution, you can make a positive impact on someone's life who needs it.

With gratitude,
Camille Barnes-Mosley
SCS Board President

Emily & Rubin's Story



Emily and Rubin* were thrilled to learn that they were expecting a baby. They both worked hard, holding three jobs between them to make ends meet. Then Emily learned that her pregnancy was high risk and was ordered to avoid lifting heavy items and using stairs until the baby was born. Since they lived on the second floor of a walk-up apartment building, Emily had to give up her jobs as a preschool teacher and cashier. Rubin became the sole source of the family's income.

Emily gave birth to a healthy baby boy, but they had fallen behind in rent payments and faced hefty medical bills. Emily and Rubin heard about SCS and, with the help of our caseworkers, enrolled in our Homelessness Prevention Program.

Emily and Rubin received wrap-around case management to stabilize the family and help them reach their goals. SCS provided two months of rental assistance and referred Emily to Medi-Cal benefits to help cover her medical bills. Our staff helped Emily with her employment search and worked with the couple on their household budget. A few months later, the family is now financially stable. Medi-Cal agreed to cover her past medical bills, and even better, Emily recently found a well-paying part-time job. Thanks to SCS supporters like you, Emily, Rubin, and their baby have a bright future ahead. ■

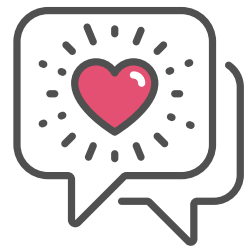
**Names have been changed to protect privacy.*

Biking to School

12-year-old Angel lost his only transportation when a car struck him while bicycling to school. Fortunately, Angel was fine, but his bike had to be replaced. His assistant principal called SCS to see if we could help. Of course we could! We gave Angel and his mom Target gift cards to buy a new bike and enrolled them in our food program so they could stretch their budget and be prepared for the next emergency. ■



We're Listening



In December the Santa Clara County Office of Supportive Housing invited SCS to host one of several countywide listening sessions for people aged 24 and younger who are experiencing homelessness.

Important take-aways

- **Relationships:** Young people value relationships with their case manager, social worker, mentor, etc. They want to feel welcomed, affirmed, and respected. They want their case manager to be someone they can confide in.
- **Holistic support:** Participants listed various areas that are critical for their journey out of homelessness and toward self-sustainability, including life skills, finances, mental health, and transportation.
- **Choice:** Young people want multiple resources and choices for types of support as they move towards stable housing so that each person can choose the

best way to improve their lives. They prefer programs geared directly to their age group.

These listening sessions are just the beginning. A board of unhoused youth will take these findings and collaborate with professionals to plan, design, and approve new and expanded support programs and services for homeless youth across the county.

“This method is powerful,” shared David Hernandez, SCS’s Chief Programs Officer, who was invited to sit in on the listening session. “It gives clients power and autonomy and allows them to influence policies. It’s better to learn directly from the people we’re serving than to assume what they need or want.”

SCS’s programs are informed by feedback collected from client surveys, along with trends we observe in the community. These listening sessions inspire us to think of ways we can more richly involve clients in how we shape our services. ■

Volunteers Are Back!

We’re thrilled to welcome volunteers back into our building! They’re busy packing, sorting, and distributing food to our neighbors in need.

▼ *Netta Gilboa*



▲ *Carl Ching*

NetApp employees ▶



▲ *Trinity Church members*



Virtual Trip to Washington D.C.



On March 1st, SCS Executive Director Marie Bernard had the honor of attending the State of the Union as Representative Ro Khanna's virtual guest. "Access to affordable housing and nutritious food continue to be top priorities for constituents in CA-17 and Americans across the country," Representative Khanna said. "I was thrilled to get to visit the new facility which will help vastly expand capacity and assist more people." ■

◀ Representative Ro Khanna (middle) during his visit at SCS. Also in the photo (left to right) are SCS board members Murali Srinivasan, Shane Jacksteit (former), and Amanda Weitzel; SCS IT & Facilities Manager Colin Jaramillo; SCS Executive Director Marie Bernard; and SCS board member Mary Bradley.

Support Our Warehouse

SCS has a great new warehouse because we made a big investment to meet our community's needs for years to come. We've raised nearly 85% of the funds for our new home, but we still need your support.



▲ SCS Warehouse Manager Manny Natareno said, "The larger warehouse makes a huge difference. It's a gamechanger."

Learn how you can invest in the future of SCS's vital services:

www.svcommunityservices.org/our-new-home

Did You Know?

Many people coming to SCS are exhausted from working two or three jobs to make ends meet. The average rent for a 1-bedroom apartment in Sunnyvale, CA is currently \$2,614.*

This is a 40% increase compared to the previous year. After taxes, it takes at least 192 hours (5 full time jobs) making the minimum wage of \$17.10 in Sunnyvale to pay average rent. That's why we support truly affordable housing here in our community.

*Source: www.zumper.com/rent-research/sunnyvale-ca



We Miss You!

The pandemic has prevented us from getting together, and we miss seeing each and every one of you. We look forward to gathering again soon in person.

In the meantime, we are reaching out to our community through our mailings and online tools.

Use the QR code to donate online anytime.

