



# Sunnyvale Community Services

Preventing Homelessness and Hunger in Our Local Community

## To End Hunger, We Need Affordable Housing

A new White House initiative aims to end hunger in the U.S. by 2030, using a holistic approach to address hunger and bolster economic security for families across the nation.

Ending hunger starts with housing.

In the Bay Area, the high cost of housing is the primary reason people cannot afford to feed their families. Last year, nearly half of the people coming to Sunnyvale Community Services (SCS) agency seeking financial assistance were burdened with rent that is over 90% of their income. Low-wage workers and seniors on fixed incomes must make daily choices, sacrificing medicine, education, and food just to stay housed. Without safe and affordable housing, families also lose access to healthcare, transportation, and their dignity.

In Silicon Valley, the lack of adequate housing is at the heart of food insecurity.

Once a person becomes homeless, it's even harder to ensure access to adequate and healthy food. Food

assistance from SCS helps families use their limited resources toward paying rent and remaining housed. But the enduring pandemic coupled with inflation and continuing lay-off notices have made living in the Bay Area even more challenging. Now, more than ever, local families and seniors are just one bill away from becoming homeless.

For decades, our slogan was "Business is booming, and that's not good." Our food distributions are now exceeding all past records, especially for children and seniors. More than 3,000 individuals are coming for groceries each month, and our food deliveries to seniors and homebound individuals have more than doubled since the start of COVID.

Feeding our neighbors is a shared responsibility, and we are encouraged that government is making the fight against hunger a priority issue in all communities. But it will take more than food distributions to end hunger. Housing and food go together. We are shining a spotlight on the urgent need for more affordable housing here in Sunnyvale and Silicon Valley, so that families and seniors here can thrive, with their basic needs met.

**Marie Bernard**

*Executive Director*



## Our First Open House!

On November 29th, in celebration of GivingTuesday, we held our very first open house in our new building! There were facility tours, a live auction and wine pull! We unveiled our new donor program the Leslie Lawton Legacy Circle.

Thank you everyone who joined us in celebrating GivingTuesday, and to **Star One Credit Union** who matched all donations up to \$10K! ■

## Share the Joy this Season!



Join us in brightening the holidays for neighbors who are struggling to make ends meet. Seniors, large families, and everyone in between will be receiving holiday foods and gift cards so they can buy presents for their loved ones and enjoy a special holiday meal! ■

**Donate →**







# President's Corner

After five years of serving on the SCS Board of Directors, I am excited to begin my term as Board President! In my time as a volunteer with the agency I have seen SCS build on its foundation of excellence and deliver remarkable services to those in need in our community. In every emergency, whether it's an individual who fears losing their home, an apartment fire suddenly displacing dozens of people, or a once-in-a-lifetime global pandemic, SCS always rises to meet these challenges, treating every single person with dignity and respect.

This past August I was proud of our agency's efforts to support back-to-school events where over 2,000 children received age-appropriate school supplies and gift cards for necessities like new shoes and backpacks. As a Sunnyvale School District administrator, I have seen first-hand how much SCS helps our students so that everyone, no matter their income level, can attend school ready to learn.

As the agency settles into its much-improved new location, I know there will be challenges we haven't yet imagined. I'm confident, however, that the agency will adapt and grow to meet the ongoing and ever-changing needs of the community.

**Jeremy Nishihara**  
*SCS Board President, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Information Systems Sunnyvale School District*

# September Thank-a-thon

In September, SCS board members and staff took to the phones for our donor outreach campaign, the SCS Thank-a-thon! We had the opportunity to speak to many of our donors, and those we couldn't reach – we left a message of thanks. If we didn't get to you this time, don't be surprised if you get a phone call from SCS in the near future. Reaching out and connecting with our donors is one of our most cherished traditions. ■

# Announcing the Leslie Lawton Legacy Circle

When Sunnyvale Community Services opened its doors in 1970, no one could have imagined that 52 years later we would serve a record 10,595 people in our community, helping them stay safely housed and providing nutritious food so that no one goes hungry. Leslie Lawton was one community member who cared deeply for the work that we do at SCS. She expressed her support not only as a volunteer, board member, and board president for many years, but also as a donor. When she passed away in 2020, she left a significant gift for SCS in her estate plan.

We invite you to consider following her lead and adding SCS to your own estate plans. Your legacy gift will have lasting value, helping us continue the work that you value in our wonderful community. **Thank you.**

## HOW TO DONATE

1. Speak with your estate planner.
2. Call **408.738.0121** to discuss your gift with Marie Bernard.

## MORE INFORMATION

[svcommunityservices.org/donate-planned-gifts-bequests/](https://svcommunityservices.org/donate-planned-gifts-bequests/)

Nonprofit Tax ID 94-1713897



▲ SCS Board Members Debbie Klein, Rick Crowley, and José León participate in the Thank-a-thon.

# Financial Assistance for Renters



▲ (L to R) Homelessness Prevention Program Manager Roshuna Creswell, Client Services Program Manager Keisha Miller, Self-Sufficiency Program Manager Desiree Torres-Mora, and (center) Chief Programs Officer David Hernandez.

These last two years have been challenging for many of us, with unexpected job losses, rising food costs, and rising rents. Many of our neighbors in Santa Clara County have been impacted and Sunnyvale Community Services (SCS) continues to see a high demand for our emergency financial assistance programs.

SCS is a partner agency in the countywide Homelessness Prevention System (HPS). This program provides financial assistance for low-income households at imminent risk of homelessness. SCS also operates a program funded by El Camino Healthcare District (ECHD) that offers targeted support for households affected by a medical emergency. Participants in both the HPS and ECHD programs also benefit from case management, referrals to affordable housing programs, financial counseling, and connections to public benefits.

Our Housing Case Managers collaborate with landlords to address tenant concerns and ensure households successfully retain or transition into affordable housing and remain stably housed. Our services can be a valuable resource to both renters and property owners by ensuring that everyone in our community has access to safe and affordable housing.

If you know of someone who may benefit from our services, have them contact us. **408.738.4321** or [info@svcommunityservices.org](mailto:info@svcommunityservices.org) ■

# CELEBRATING 10 YEARS A Partnership that works!



▲ Patrick and Adolfo, participants of the WorkFirst program, smile for the camera.

Over the past ten years, the WorkFirst Sunnyvale program has empowered hundreds of unhoused individuals to gain employment and reach their personal goals. Every year, 70 or more individuals have the opportunity to change their lives through the dignity of work.

This program is a partnership with Sunnyvale Community Services (SCS) and Downtown Streets Team (DST) and is supported through the City of Sunnyvale's federal economic development funds.

In January, when federal funding was abruptly cut, the City of Sunnyvale and LinkedIn stepped in to fill the budget shortfall. City funding kept the Streets Team meetings and job training going, and LinkedIn funds filled in the gaps for support services and outreach. The steadfast support of LinkedIn and the City of Sunnyvale enabled SCS and DST to continue helping participants gain hands-on work experience as well as access other critical services.

Thankfully, federal funding is now back on track, and the program is thriving this year. LinkedIn continues to support this workforce development program as part of their commitment to create economic opportunity for every member of the global workforce. Our City continues to have the Streets Team members volunteering on street cleanup and beautification projects in the community while working with DST's and SCS's professional staff on achieving personal and professional goals. It's a partnership that works! ■



# Helping Our Community Get Ready for School!

Sunnyvale kids are starting the school year strong! This year we provided over 2,160 children with age-appropriate school supply kits and gift cards for other essentials like backpacks and shoes. This is a huge jump from last year, when we served 1,755 children, and goes to show how we're seeing the need grow.

These resources mean so much to families who are struggling with the high cost of living. Now, they're able to provide for their children AND direct their limited income to pay for basic necessities.

Thank you everyone for making this possible! We could not have done this without our volunteers and donors! Special thanks to our major sponsors: Google, Intuitive, Dianne & Regis McKenna, Meta, NetApp, ServiceNow, El Camino Healthcare District, and Star One Credit Union. ■



▲ Volunteers and staff ensure that clients are helped quickly and safely!



▲ This family is ready for the big day.



▲ Sunnyvale Mayor Larry Klein pitches in.



▲ Volunteers load up cars at this year's combined drive-through and walk-up format.

## Donor Messages from the Community

"I wish all our children a happy and productive school year."

"Everyone's child deserves the best."

"Our children are our future leaders!"

"Former art teacher, wants to see all children thrive!"

"I believe in the future of our children and want to support their hard work."

"I hope that all Sunnyvale children have a chance to learn and grow."

# A Day at the Fair

## Families Receive Essential Community Resources

In August over 200 parents and children attended the North County Student Resource Fair which was organized by Sunnyvale Community Services and sponsored by the County of Santa Clara Office of Education. While open to the public, this event was designed to reach McKinney-Vento-eligible families. The federal law called "The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act" ensures that children of homeless families have equal access to education and other services required to meet the same academic standards to which all students are held. The fair focused on providing resources in specific areas such as health, education, food, housing, finance. Agencies in attendance provided free vision screenings, medical information, food resources, affordable housing lists, and educational and financial assistance resources. ■



▲ Fun activities for children included a mini petting zoo, while their parents learned about resources.



▲ Kids enjoy free giveaways including books, crayons, and Frisbees.



▲ A family learns about resources offered by Santa Clara County.

## Our Programs & Services

Emergency financial assistance for rent and utilities

Intensive case management

Back-to-School supplies and gift cards

Holiday programs

Year-round food assistance

Referrals to benefits

Workshops on tenant rights, advocacy, nutrition, and financial literacy



# Good things come in large packages



▲ SCS Warehouse Manager Manny and Building Operations Manager Colin are thrilled to have the new generator.

We have a new generator! If our building should lose power, we'd lose hundreds of pounds of fresh and frozen food and have to delay or shut down our food distributions. Second Harvest Silicon Valley recognized our need and procured and funded a backup generator for our building! Our big green generator will keep our cooler/freezer and IT systems going, so we can be our community's safety net if there is a power failure.

An installation this big requires a significant contractor involvement as well as additional funds. When the scope of the project grew larger than anticipated, Sunlight Giving stepped in and donated additional funds to complete the work.

Good contractors are worth their weight in gold, and McLarney Construction partnered with us to ensure all aspects of the project were completed safely and successfully, and donated services to keep our expenses low. Thank you to all our wonderful sponsors! ■

# UC Student Looks Ahead

Kimberly\* is a scholarship student who juggles a job, classes, and a long commute. Unexpectedly her car stopped working and the cost to make repairs was more than she could afford. She could pay for vehicle repairs or rent, and she chose to repair her vehicle. Despite efforts to cover her living expenses, she was facing eviction.

# Quick and Easy Meals for Our Clients



All of us have had difficulty from time to time opening a package of food or unscrewing a lid from a jar. If you're a senior with arthritis or tremors in your hands, this can mean resorting to buying cheap frozen dinners laden with salt and fat, or missing meals all together.

Thanks to a generous grant from Kaiser Permanente, hundreds of older SCS clients who have dexterity or mobility issues receive prepared ingredients that streamline their meal preparation. We provide items such as cooked diced chicken, heat-and-serve rice pouches, and salad mixes. That means seniors can whip up healthy, delicious dinners in just minutes.

Eating better keeps our older clients healthier, which increases the odds that they can stay living independently in their own homes. ■

Sponsored in part by Kaiser Permanente

When she came to Sunnyvale Community Services (SCS) for assistance, we paid her rent and she worked with her SCS case manager to outline a path toward self-sufficiency. Kimberly followed the plan and met her goals. She secured an apartment close to both school and work, cut out non-essential expenses and is on her way to being financially stable with a bright future. ■

# Meet the Fab Six Volunteers



At Sunnyvale Community Services (SCS), we are fortunate to have reliable volunteers who join us in our mission to prevent homelessness and hunger. Every Wednesday, "the Fabulous 6" serve our clients with a smile at our food distribution. When asked why they chose SCS, the consensus was that "they wanted to do something to help our local community while in retirement."

For the past six years, the retirees have become an essential crew, known for their consistency and reliability. During the 2-5PM shift, you'll find the Fab 6 in the back parking lot, directing cars, greeting clients, loading groceries into vehicles, and even offering to stay beyond their shift to ensure that everyone is served. On behalf of everyone at SCS, we say, "Thank you!" ■

# Grocery Rescue Offers Variety & Reduces Waste



Over half of the food SCS distributes comes from Second Harvest Silicon Valley (SHSV), and we raise funds to buy additional food year-round. To help fill thousands of food bags each week, SHSV also connects SCS to local grocery stores who have items nearing their "best by" dates. Through this "Grocery Rescue" program, SCS trucks pick up a wide variety of items to add to our grocery distributions. We're helping reduce food waste and adding healthy choices for our food program clients. ■

# Our Food Calendar is Now an App



One of the questions our clients ask us the most is, "What day can I come back for groceries?" For years we have anticipated this by posting detailed food distribution schedules on our bulletin boards and distributing them to clients when they enroll in our food programs and when they come to pick up their food. We have also posted the schedules on our website. Nevertheless, this

question still comes up. So this year, thanks to two very talented young community members, we can also direct clients to an app right on their phone.

Girl Scout Nitya Kuppireddy created an Apple-compatible app as part of her Gold Award Project, and Boy Scout Dhruv Goyal created the Android-compatible version. We are grateful to these scouts for their compassion and ingenuity. ■

\*Name has been changed to protect privacy





# Calling All Volunteers!

## We have returned to full operations!

Join us in making a profound impact on our local community by volunteering at Sunnyvale Community Services. With the help of over 2,500 volunteers each year we are able to provide emergency food and financial assistance to low-income, hard-working families who are struggling with the high cost of living in Silicon Valley.

Find your niche in our various volunteer opportunities, from food distribution, home-bound senior deliveries, food sorting, and more. There is something for every age and ability.

### Volunteer Shifts

Wednesdays 7:45 - 11AM / 11AM - 2PM / 2 - 5PM

### Produce Distribution Shifts (twice a month)

7:30 - 10:30AM / 10:30AM - 1:30PM / 1:30 - 4:30PM

### Produce Packs (twice a month / every other Tuesday)

9AM - 12PM or 1 - 4PM

### Drivers (Friday Home Delivery Program)

9AM - 11AM

## Sign up today!

[svcommunityservices.org/volunteer-overview](https://svcommunityservices.org/volunteer-overview)

## Now Accepting Food and Other Donations

- Baby formula
- Boxed cereal/oatmeal (low sugar)
- Canned fruit & vegetables
- Gift cards
- Home-grown fruit (must be clean & less than 100 lbs per visit)
- Pop-top soup
- Protein drinks - (ex. Boost, Ensure, Muscle Milk)

For the full list, visit [svcommunityservices.org/donate-items-to-donate/](https://svcommunityservices.org/donate-items-to-donate/)

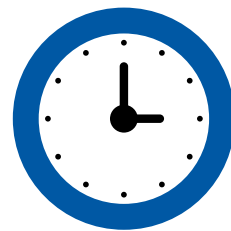


### We love pop-tops!

These no-tools-required, no-cook foods are perfect for our unhoused clients.

## It's Not Too Early to Think About Your 2022 Taxes

You probably know that that you can take itemized deductions for charitable gifts, but you may not be aware of other ways to save on your taxes while supporting nonprofits such as Sunnyvale Community Services.



Here are a few:

### 1 Qualified charitable distributions (QCDs)

Donations made directly to a nonprofit from your IRA are not taxed as income. This is especially important if you're of an age where you have to take required minimum distributions (RMDs). Making a QCD can help fulfill that obligation and benefit a charity at the same time!

### 2 Stocks

If you have appreciated stock, you can transfer it directly to a nonprofit and take the value as a charitable deduction - a nice alternative to paying capital gains taxes.

### 3 Donor-advised funds (DAFs)

These easy alternatives to private foundations are becoming popular. You transfer money to a qualified DAF sponsoring organization and take the tax deduction, then subsequently recommend specific nonprofits to receive donations from your DAF. ■

### Questions?

Check with your financial advisor or visit [svcommunityservices.org/donate-ways-to-donate](https://svcommunityservices.org/donate-ways-to-donate)



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