



# Sunnyvale Community Services

Preventing Homelessness and Hunger in Our Local Community



## Ensure Our Kids are Ready to Learn

I always love to hear children’s laughter during the summer as they play outside enjoying longer days and warmer weather. School-age children are looking forward to summer vacation, but for families who are struggling financially, summer can also bring challenges and added stress.

Here at SCS, we believe that every child deserves a chance to grow up healthy, safe, and housed, and that when neighbors stand together, we can lift each other

## Thank You, Donors!

Thank you to everyone who supported our community at the end of 2022. Through Share the Joy, Giving Tuesday, and the Sunnyvale Challenge – we served 2,589 families with holiday foods & gift cards, and raised \$289,468.



Your generosity continues to make an impact!

up. That is why we need your support to help a record number of **2,500 low-income children** this summer.

**Your generosity** helps SCS to provide school-age children with nutritious food throughout the summer, as well as school supplies and gift cards for back-to-school essentials like shoes and backpacks in August.

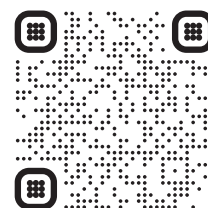
### We can’t serve our young residents without you.

Longtime supporters Dianne and Regis McKenna, and Mary Bradley and Terry Blumenthal have generously offered to match donations to the campaign for a total match up to \$50,000. Your donation today will be **doubled**.

As Regis stated: *“After all, these are our kids.”*

Can we count on your support this summer? Your gift will support our neighbors and help *our kids* in Sunnyvale have a healthy start to the school year and set them up with the resources they need. Scan the QR code or donate online at [svcommunityservices.org](http://svcommunityservices.org).

In gratitude,  
**Marie Bernard**  
Executive Director



Scan the QR code to donate



## New Food Distribution Info

We are now distributing food on a weekly basis to eligible registered households. Program participants will receive groceries and fresh produce.

HOURS **9:00 am - 6:00 pm**

WEEKLY **1st / 2nd / 3rd / 4th Wednesdays**



## President's Corner

Spring is in the air, and many of us are breathing a cautious sigh of relief as the pandemic slides into the

rearview mirror. We are back in the office, a full year of in-person school is over, and summer vacation is upon us. We are the lucky ones. For so many in our community, residual struggles from the pandemic continue. Many families don't have health insurance to cover an infection or other unexpected medical issue that may arise. Inflation is also still here, with soaring prices for food and basic household goods. Our most vulnerable neighbors are making difficult choices between food and medicine, between rent and car payments.

I am proud to be a part of Sunnyvale Community Services, an organization that is actively working to lighten the burden for families. As a local agency laser-focused on housing and food insecurity, SCS works every day to help low-income residents stay in their homes through emergency rental assistance, and maintain a nutritious, healthy diet with a robust food distribution program so that no one in our community goes hungry.

Our agency has grown tremendously over the past few years, most notably as it moved into its new location at 1160 Kern Avenue. With the need at an all-time high, SCS is able to serve more clients than ever, and community organizations have been welcomed to use the new, large meeting spaces to hold events and provide services to clients on-site, so that they can more easily access multiple services in one location. Thank you for your continued support of this essential safety-net agency in our community. If you would like to make a financial contribution, or are interested in volunteering, please visit our website at [www.svcommunityservices.org](http://www.svcommunityservices.org).

With gratitude,  
**Jeremy Nishihara**  
SCS Board President



## Client Story

### A Journey to Safety



For years, Lola\* was subjected to verbal and physical abuse at the hands of her partner. With three children in the home witnessing this, Lola knew that she needed to remove herself from the situation. Lola tried to leave many times before, but she didn't have a place of her own. Fearful that she would lose her children, she chose to remain at home.

Shortly thereafter, things got worse, and during an altercation with her partner, local authorities were called to her home after receiving reports of a domestic incident. A restraining order was placed, and Lola found the courage to leave her abuser. Initially, Lola sought refuge with family members who provided her with a place to stay as she began the process of obtaining full custody of her children. With a determined mind to rise above her situation, Lola began to feel hope again, but it didn't last very long. Her abuser began stalking her.

To keep her family safe, Lola made the difficult decision to leave her temporary residence to not only protect her children and extended family members, but also to avoid experiencing further trauma at the hands of her abuser. To ensure a safe environment for her family, Lola chose to live in her car.

Eventually, Lola was referred to Sunnyvale Community Services' Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) program, where she still receives case management support and assistance. SCS was able to work with community partners to find Lola a safe and affordable home for her family. No longer living in fear, Lola has gained renewed confidence thanks to the safety-net services provided by SCS. Lola is well on her way towards gaining independence as she continues to work with SCS's case management team to address the challenges of being the sole provider for her family moving forward. ■

*\*Name has been changed to protect privacy.*

# SCS is Growing Local Leaders

SCS's Community Navigator program has been training local leaders since 2017. Community Engagement Specialist, Paulina Zapata, recruited and trained 27 residents this past year to become "Community Leaders" (CLs) in the program. With our support, these CLs work every day to create a better,

**The City of Sunnyvale has selected SCS's Community Leaders as 2023 "Volunteers of the Year!"**

more inclusive, and fair community — the community they dream of for their families.

A new mentoring program with Livable Sunnyvale members is helping CLs prepare to speak at City Council and School Board meetings, where they can voice their concerns on housing, transportation, and education and advocate for change where needed.

These leaders are also organizing important community events at SCS, including monthly immigration clinics, wellness programs, and housing rights seminars.

This year, Paulina and CL Claudia Camacho were selected to serve on the City of Sunnyvale's new Human Relations Commission. They will join SCS Board member José León and other commissioners in working to eliminate prejudice and discrimination within the community. That's leadership in action! ■

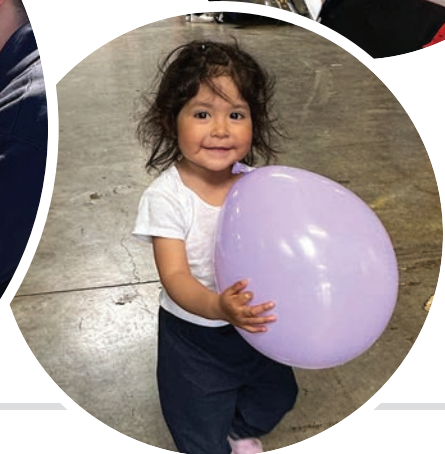
## Kids Day

On May 1st, Sunnyvale Community Services was brimming with excited children exploring various educational exhibits, playing games, and learning athletic skills all under one roof during our Kids Day.

Our Community Outreach team assembled 20 exceptional community organizations to introduce youngsters to coding, drawing, crafting, and athletics like soccer, basketball, or self-defense.

Providing these opportunities is the first step in establishing a strong foundation of support for our youngest residents and empowering them

to thrive as they grow and learn. By investing in our children, we are investing in a brighter future for our Sunnyvale community. ■





# Sunnyvale Community Services

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## Wolf Pack in Action

At Sunnyvale Community Services (SCS), we believe that within the pillars of preventing homelessness and hunger, there are three main areas of focus: education, awareness, and action. When our Food and Nutrition Manager, Cody Sampson, received an invitation from the 4th grade class at the Campbell School of Innovation (CSI) to shed light on the topic of homelessness, he realized it was the perfect opportunity to introduce students to our mission.

Over a Zoom session, Cody described in age-appropriate terms the circumstances that can lead to an individual becoming unhoused. He also explained that it is very difficult to identify if an individual or family doesn't have a permanent residence because at first glance they often can resemble our friends, neighbors, and family, when in reality, they are living in much more precarious circumstances.

“They may be sleeping in their car, couch surfing, in a shelter, and sometimes in the streets. At SCS, our mission is to help prevent people from becoming homeless, and if they are unhoused, we help them get back into a home. For people who are waiting to get into a home, we have a special store where they can come and pick out prepared food, toiletry kits with soaps, toothpaste, and other supplies.” Cody continued, “We can do this because of caring people who donate time, goods, or money to SCS. We take those donations and use them to help our neighbors.” A few weeks after the session, Cody was invited back for a surprise. When Cody arrived at the school, the



entire 4th grade class presented him with 90 hygiene kits to distribute to those in need of services!

The class had organized a student drive for supplies, stuffed, and prepared all the kits.

We are so inspired by this incredible act of compassion from these young leaders, and we are confident that through education and awareness-building, we are planting seeds of hope for the future. ■