



2022 Holiday Report

IT'S A WRAP!

Joy comes from many sources during the holidays. A huge source of joy here at Building Futures was seeing the way community members opened their hearts! Because of donors' generosity, every single person Building Futures serves received a holiday gift. That is more than 400 households! And every child and adult at our shelters received a set of cozy jammies, too. We couldn't be more grateful. From babies to elders, the smiles said it all.

This year, we carefully transitioned back to in person gift-giving, after nearly three years of social distancing. No small feat, given our continuing adherence to health regulations to protect safety.

The holidays can be a time of stress and worry. Imagine facing the holidays while experiencing homelessness or domestic violence. Building Futures is grateful for the businesses, clubs, and faith groups who participated in our 2022 holiday gift drive. We also send thanks to the hundreds of individuals who donated gifts, money, or toward Move-In Kits for families. The smile on a gift recipient's face is a present unto itself. Even when times are tough, the holidays can be a time of magic!



"I was dreading Christmas, to be honest, but Building Futures made sure my sweet kids and I enjoyed gifts and a nice atmosphere at the shelter."



JAMMIE DRIVE TRADITION

For the tenth year running, Merideth Mehlberg Group, her team, and scores of caring Alameda neighbors ensured that Building Futures' families received holiday gifts. We are so grateful for Merideth and her crew for their tireless work to make the holidays brighter with the annual Jammie Drive! Moving forward, the City of Alameda will undertake the project. The City took an active role this year, co-hosting gift drop-off sites, rain or shine! A world of thanks to Merideth, her team, all the Jammie Drive donors, and the City of Alameda!

Merideth Mehlberg (center) with Lainie Acacio of Gather and Grub (L), and Sarah Henry, Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer at City of Alameda (R). Pictured at the wet and blustery Dec. 3rd donation drop-off event!

IT TAKES A VILLAGE...

As they always do, energetic volunteers came to sort and wrap gifts and lend warmth to the proceedings. We are grateful to individual volunteers from the community and those representing from AAA, Alameda Homeless Network, Arbonne, Ghirardelli, Making Waves Studios, Kiwanis Club of San Leandro, Robert Half, Green Dot Corp, and Aderant who signed up to donate their time and talent to help brighten the season for children, teens, and adults served in every one of Building Futures' programs.

ALAMEDA ALLIANCE FOR HEALTH

Staff members at Alameda Alliance for Health joined forces to bring holiday cheer to families served by Building Futures. We're grateful for the large donation of gift cards, which made such an incredible difference!



MARY KAY CONSULTANT KELLY CLARDY

Mary Kay Consultant Kelly Clardy mounted a campaign that resulted in 50 collections of Mary Kay products! Residents at Bessie Coleman Court were thrilled to receive this very generous gift of beauty.



UPS WOMEN IN OPERATIONS

UPS Women in Operations came through for our program participants again, with a beautiful assortment of gifts for children and adults. This generous group conducts drives for Building Futures throughout the year. What a huge help!



"It's my joy to support Building Futures."

—Elic Suazo says that every time he gives, he thinks of his mom.

Download this report online at bfwc.org/holiday-report-2022

Thanks to the following groups and businesses for helping make the holidays brighter for those we serve!

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| Alameda Alliance for Health | Flores Optometry |
| Alameda County Firefighters, Local 55 Toy Program | Friends of Betsy Yuan |
| Alameda Firefighters' Toy Program, City of Alameda | Friends of CJ Connor |
| Alameda Homeless Network | Friends of Judy Harkins |
| All Good Living Foundation | Ghirardelli Chocolate Company |
| Amador Valley Quilters | Girl Scout Troop 33428 |
| Assumption Church and School of San Leandro | Green Dot Corp |
| AAA | Iron Souls Motorcycle Club |
| Aderant | Kiwanis Club of Alameda |
| Bay Area Orthopedic Surgery | Kiwanis Club of San Leandro |
| Berkeley Buddhist Temple | Making Waves Studio and Friends |
| Berkeley Parents Group | Marina Community Center |
| Jammie Drive Donor Families | Mary Kay, Kelly Clardy |
| City of San Leandro Community Development Department | Mary Kay, Marsha Amaral |
| City of Alameda Staff | Merideth Mehlberg Group |
| Coast Construction | Optimist Club |
| Community Realty & Investments | Pallen's Martial Arts |
| Councilmember Pete Ballew | Rigatoni & Strizzi's Restaurants |
| Daisies Girl Scout Troop 33928 | Robert Half |
| ElBraith Painting Company | Robert Lane Mortgage |
| Envirocom Communications Strategies, LLC | Rotary Club of Alameda |
| Fast Real Estate | Rotary Club of San Leandro |
| First Congregational Church of Alameda | SilMan Industries |
| First United Methodist Church of San Leandro | Tina Ory, Arbonne consultant |
| | Toy Safari and Friends |
| | UC Office of the President Staff |
| | UPS, Women In Operations |
| | Women's Joy Group, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, San Lorenzo |

“This is power to my heart. This is about giving back.”

—Iron Souls Motorcycle Club

THANKFUL FOR STEADFAST PARTNERS IN THE COMMUNITY

CITY OF SAN LEANDRO

Our friends at the City of San Leandro Community Development Department held a wonderful gift drive at City Hall.



PALLEN'S MARTIAL ARTS

Pallen's Martial Arts, longtime supporters, conducted a drive and donated two huge bins of toys and other gifts.



CITY OF ALAMEDA

Alameda County Firefighters, Local 55 included us in their annual holiday Toy and Gift Card program, while the City of Alameda Firefighters were part of the City of Alameda staff member's major gift drive. Building Futures was honored to be included in this initiative benefiting Alameda families.



GHIRARDELLI CHOCOLATE COMPANY

Generous members of the Ghirardelli Women's Inclusive Network provided toys, games, chocolate, and ten free unlimited bowling passes.



BERKELEY BUDDHIST TEMPLE

Berkeley Buddhist Temple raised over \$3,000 toward the holiday drive, with the Temple's Dharma School high school group playing a significant role.



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF SAN LEANDRO

First United Methodist Church of San Leandro, longtime participants in our gift drive, brought an absolute bonanza of gifts for children and adults. Special thanks to FUMC's point person for all these years, Kent Kavasch!



IRON SOULS MOTORCYCLE CLUB

Members of the Iron Souls Motorcycle Club brought a truckload of toys and many gift cards. As one group member said, "This is power to my heart. This is about giving back." Building Futures is so grateful to this longtime partner for their generosity to the kids and adults we serve.



ELIC SUAZO, RED OAK REALTOR

Angels do exist! During Christmas week, Elic Suazo, Red Oak Realtor, who nominated Building Futures for a Red Oak Opportunity Foundation ROOF grant—matched their \$5,000 grant with \$5,000 of his own! Every time Elic closes a sale, he sets aside money to benefit the women and children receiving housing assistance with Building Futures.



GIRL SCOUT TROUP 33428

Girl Scout Troup 33428 flew into action early in the holiday season, volunteering to shop for move-in supplies for a mom and her children who had just been housed. Then they kept the generosity flowing—donating over \$300 in holiday gifts!



THESE GROUPS ALSO GAVE WONDERFUL GIFTS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

See more at bfwc.org/holiday-report-2022

ALL GOOD LIVING FOUNDATION

All Good Living Foundation exists to “help the most vulnerable children of the Bay Area in need.” The Alameda-based nonprofit donated a bonanza of toys and other gifts, to help ensure the holiday spirit was felt. The gifts were a beautiful illustration of the Foundation’s belief that “no child should go without. [Hearing about] families or people with young children ... breaks your heart on a totally different level, especially if you have kids,” says a Foundation volunteer.

1 RIGATONI & STRIZZI’S RESTAURANTS

Bev Gregori-Helliwell was one of the community volunteers who planted the seed of what would become Building Futures. Our doors opened at St. Leander Church on Christmas Eve, 1986. Every single year since then, Bev made sure that the shelter—and the shelters we added during our history to date—received a delicious Christmas Eve meal of Rigatoni bolognese, Caesar salad, bread, and apple pie donated by her employer Strizzi’s/Rigatoni. Bev passed away in April, but Ray Bartolomucci, owner of Strizzi’s and Rigatoni Restaurants, made the Christmas Eve donation in her honor. We are eternally grateful to have known the lively and generous Bev.

2 SILMAN INDUSTRIES

SilMan Industries is a “21st-century industrial start-up” based in San Leandro. The group began with the aim of adopting a recently housed family. In the end, the staff members supported multiple families and so much more, providing gift cards for shelter residents of all ages.

3 ROBERT LANE MORTGAGE

Robert Lane Mortgage donated a big collection of items from our wish list for people of all ages.

4 KIWANIS CLUB OF SAN LEANDRO

The Kiwanis Club of San Leandro not only donated \$1,000 for the holiday gift drive but also hosted a mini underwear and sock drive, brought us 27 much-needed rolls of wrapping paper, and signed up to volunteer their time gift wrapping presents for the shelters. We



were also a guest speaker and shared information with their membership about the work and impact of Building Futures in the community.

5 ELBRAITH PAINTING COMPANY

ElBraith Painting Company delivered hand-picked toys to our offices in San Leandro.

6 SAN LEANDRO COMMUNITY REALTY & INVESTMENTS

San Leandro Community Realty & Investments came through with a generous donation of toys and gift cards. Make sure to consider this group for your home purchase and sales needs including home loans.

TOY SAFARI

Owner Helen, Oliver, and the staff and customers of Toy Safari knocked it out of the park with their in-store toy drive. To think, on the day we picked up this bonanza of toys, we’d been worrying we’d never have enough toys to go around! We have a photo of a filled bin and a well-composed shot of some wrapped and unwrapped gifts.

BETSY YUAN AND FRIENDS

Betsy Yuan and friends found Building Futures by entering “help kits holiday gifts” in Google. Betsy and her friends gifted 11 boxes of educational items and toys. Thank you!

DAISIES GIRL SCOUT TROUP 33928

Daisies Girl Scout Troop 33928, who are first-time donors as well as kindergartners and first graders, collected and delivered a large donation of new toys for the children we serve.

FLORES OPTOMETRY

Thank you, Dr. Rosie Flores of Flores Optometry in San Leandro for thinking of our children and involving your optometry patients by hosting a toy drive and promoting the good work we are doing. We are so grateful for your ongoing support and generosity to brighten the holidays for the kids that we work with!

FAST REAL ESTATE

Fast real estate Realtors Susan Trinh and Jen Ouk organized and made their own flyers for our holiday gift drive and kept it local in Alameda by placing a bin at the “Coffee and Tea Traders Cafe.”

