



free from homelessness and family violence

2019-2020 Annual Report

OPERATION SAFER GROUND: A Place for Healing

Alameda's Marina Village Inn is a temporary housing site of Operation Safer Ground! In April, Building Futures began operating the program, part of Alameda County's Project Roomkey. Project Roomkey serves those who are homeless and over 65, medically fragile, or otherwise at high risk of contracting COVID-19.

Operation Safer Ground serves women and families who have experienced trauma and homelessness. Some are survivors of domestic violence. Others have chronic health conditions. Many are elders, but families with children make the scene lively. Guests receive safety net services, and are also connected with a wide variety of healthcare, housing, and other social services to help them obtain and maintain housing and stability. Building Futures provides around-the-clock staffing and service coordination, and links guests with the county's Home Stretch program. Today, 50 adults and 24 children call the 52-unit Marina Village Inn home.

Before she came to the Marina Inn, Marie*, 67, lived in her car for two long years. She would visit the public library or the mall to wash up daily. Then came the COVID-19 crisis. Suddenly, public restrooms were non-existent. For the first time, she couldn't meet her basic needs.

Fortunately, Marie was referred to Building Futures. Now she is a guest at the Marina Village Inn.

At the beginning of her stay, Marie experienced a health scare. She needed treatment at the hospital for a blood sugar issue. Unused to being cared for, Marie was untrusting and uncommunicative. Back at the Marina Inn,

Building Futures' care coordinator earned Marie's trust—and convinced her to accept help. She got on track with medication; she also began participating in community activities.

A housing first agency since 2007, Building Futures sees Operation Safer Ground as a powerful way to support the county's most vulnerable

residents during the pandemic, while addressing Alameda County's housing crisis and health disparities impacting women and children. Marie's progress is a good example. She is on track to being permanently housed. She serves as an informal ambassador for the program, introducing herself to new guests and making all feel welcome.

"I have inner peace, and peace of mind," Marie says. "It's nice to be reminded of the good in humanity."

"We have a unique opportunity here for therapeutic healing with people who have slipped through the cracks," says Dr. Jeffrey Suiter, who directs Building Futures' domestic violence services.

"There is stigma associated with homelessness," Suiter continues. "I hope this program's success will assuage cultural blind spots that equate homelessness with worst-case scenarios."

"The Marina Inn is a truly unique place where people heal and make progress—some for the first time in many years," says Suiter. "It's a healing place."

For updates on Operation Safer Ground, please visit our website at www.bfwc.org.

**Marie's name has been changed to protect her privacy.*



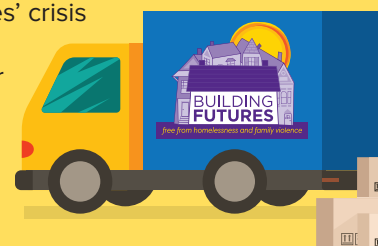
A powerful way to support our most vulnerable residents during the pandemic



*Determined and steadfast
Project Manager, De'Misha Barker*

We Have Moved! OUR NEW ADDRESS IS 1840 FAIRWAY DRIVE, SAN LEANDRO, CA 94577

After over 20 years at our Bancroft Avenue headquarters, Building Futures has moved! Building Futures' crisis line number is unchanged: 1-866-A-WAY-OUT. This office serves as Building Futures' administrative headquarters and is across from Kaiser Hospital. We're grateful to our friends at Kaiser Permanente for a very generous donation of furnishings and to Heffernan Foundation for its gracious funding toward creating a new welcoming space for clients at the headquarters. Building Futures staff is serving clients virtually, and in-person on a limited basis, continuing to provide homeless and domestic violence services. We look forward to providing our robust services in person soon. Stay tuned for news of a ribbon cutting when we can all safely gather again!



From the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I write this letter to you as Building Futures—just like my own household and yours—is facing a seventh month of COVID-19-related restrictions and shelter-in-place protocols. I couldn't be prouder to work alongside dedicated people whose work so often goes unseen. As a member of the Building Futures family, you're likely aware that the majority of the women, children, and men we serve are people of color. The same is true of our staff, including the wonderful five-person executive team which supports me and leads Building Futures' work. All of the amazing Building Futures staff continues to support, and bear witness to our clients' struggles and triumphs. They graciously use their lived experience to support vulnerable people—and care for one another as recent stories of racial injustice have hit very close to home.

With the help of our community, Building Futures is at work on the front lines of COVID-19. Rather than scaling back, we are doing more. Our generous donors, corporate partners, and volunteer dinner donors have made an enormous difference. Unfortunately, one side effect of the pandemic is that Building Futures was forced to cancel our annual benefit event, Jazz it Up! resulting in a loss of \$70,000 in revenue. If you have the means to send a special gift, I hope you will do so today.

I'm inspired by Building Futures' dedicated staff and our clients working hard to improve life for themselves and their children. And I'm moved by the many who have taken the time to share their resources with those who are struggling. Behind each one is a story of resilience and courage.

I sincerely hope you and your loved ones are faring well in this challenging and unforgettable year. I invite you to visit Building Futures' new website (www.bfwc.org) to keep apprised of our challenges and progress. —Liz Varela



Our Leadership Team: (clockwise from top left) **Ana Maria Mahiri**, Development & Communications Director; **Jeffrey Suiter, Psy.D.**, Domestic Violence Services Director; **Camille Moreno, Psy.D.**, Clinical Director; **Rachelle Martin**, Finance Director; **Liz Varela**, Executive Director; and **Sabrina Thomas**, Emergency Services Program Director

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THANK YOU!

FOUNDATIONS

Anonymous Fund at the East Bay Community Foundation

Bernard E. and Alba Witkin Charitable Foundation

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Community Initiatives COVID-19 Coronavirus Regional Response Fund

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COMMUNITY, BUSINESS & FAITH GROUPS (~\$2,500+)

Alameda Homeless Network

Children's Gardening Project Fundraiser

Community Realty & Investments

Daughters of Penelope Diaper Fundraiser

East Bay Community Energy Authority

Forbidden Island Tiki Bar

Garden Fest Foundation

Community Fundraiser

Kiwanis Club of San Leandro

Merideth Mehlberg and Friends' Jammie Drive

Rotary Club of San Leandro

Safe Alameda Matching Gift Fundraiser

Staff-directed gift from Satellite Affordable Housing Association
St. Leander Church

INDIVIDUALS (~\$2,500+)

Kera Bartlett-Binns & Nat Binns

Lucien Carroll

Lisa Cunningham

Cameron Holland

OsaBrava Fund

Eugene Lee, Regina Hoshimi & Jagger Lee

Emily & Rob Rich

Susan & Stanton Schonberg

Carole Schultze

Lee & Perry Smith Fund

Margaret & Stephen Wilcox

Lynzi Ziegenhagen

Anonymous, DAF

JAZZ IT UP! GALA

Cancelled but not forgotten! We are so grateful to our early bird sponsors who helped our COVID-19 response efforts.

All sponsors are listed at www.bfwc.org/2020jazzitup

LEAD SPONSORS:

**NANCY AND
MICHAEL PRETTO**

■ Creekside Plaza Partners



KAISER PERMANENTE

Alameda County Industries (ACI)

Bonnewit Development

East Bay Community Foundation

Flores Optometry, Inc.

Face Reality Acne Clinic

Evelyn & Juan Gonzalez

Gaye Eisenlord

Rob & Emily Rich

We couldn't have done it without you this year!

Many pieces make up the "big picture" that is Building Futures' response to homelessness and intimate partner violence. Here are some highlights illustrating ways the community supported Building Futures and our clients this year:

Generous local businesses like La Piñata, Noodles Pho Me, Alameda Cinema Grill, Trader Vic's, Grodin Financial, and Kokolo Donburi made special donations after shelter-in-place began, making the new protocols and restrictions a little easier to bear. San Leandro optometrist and Chamber board member Rosie Flores and daughter Noemi also pitched in to help, delivering hot meals to our shelters!



At the beginning of the pandemic, masks and cleaning supplies were exceptionally hard to come by. Community members responded with an outpouring of compassion and generosity to ensure that clients and staff were protected, with hundreds of hand-sewn face masks. In May, Alameda County First 5 donated a bonanza of diapers, toothbrushes, books, and face masks.

In October, the San Leandro Kiwanis Club hosted a Texas Hold 'Em Charitable Poker Tournament benefiting Building Futures' children's services. The San Leandro Rotary Club provided gift cards so that all the children at the San Leandro Shelter could have new clothes.



Dinner donors remain the very cornerstone of our volunteer program. At the San Leandro and Midway Shelters, the Alameda and San Leandro Warming Shelters and the street outreach program, dinner donors ROCK IT all year long. Building Futures is always seeking dinner donors. Learn about this program at www.bfwc.org/volunteer



We are grateful to the Community Initiatives Corona Virus Regional Response Fund (through the Silicon Valley Foundation) and the Oakland COVID-19 Relief Fund (a public-private collaboration with the Oakland Fund for Public Innovation and the City of Oakland), who made significant contributions to ensure our services could remain strong and whole.

World Central Kitchen partnered with local restaurants to provide 1,600 meals for Building Futures' clients! In March this international relief agency, founded by celebrity chef José Andrés, deployed its Oakland team to feed communities most impacted by shutdowns. Thank you City of Oakland for making this connection!



Shannon Leigh Design—a high-profile woman-owned firm—donated expertise and *pro bono* services for Building Futures' new headquarters! The result is beautifully designed interior and exterior signage that is fully compliant with ADA and COVID-19 regulations. We connected with Shannon through the San Leandro Chamber of Commerce—two proud members working together for our community!



We marked 20 years in a remarkable partnership with the Alameda Homeless Network. This small band of Alameda volunteers meets a \$120,000 annual pledge to support Midway Shelter! As ambassadors to the Alameda community, AHN's service to the women and children at Midway is nothing short of heroic.

A special thank you to Eugene Lee, Regina Hoshimi, and son Jagger Lee, who made a personal contribution and secured an employer match, resulting in a special \$4,000 donation to purchase new storage sheds for the Midway and San Leandro Shelters, as well as his company Western Gravel & Roofing Supply donating hundreds of masks!

Also grateful to Community Realty & Investments for installing two new sheds in the fall, one for each shelter!

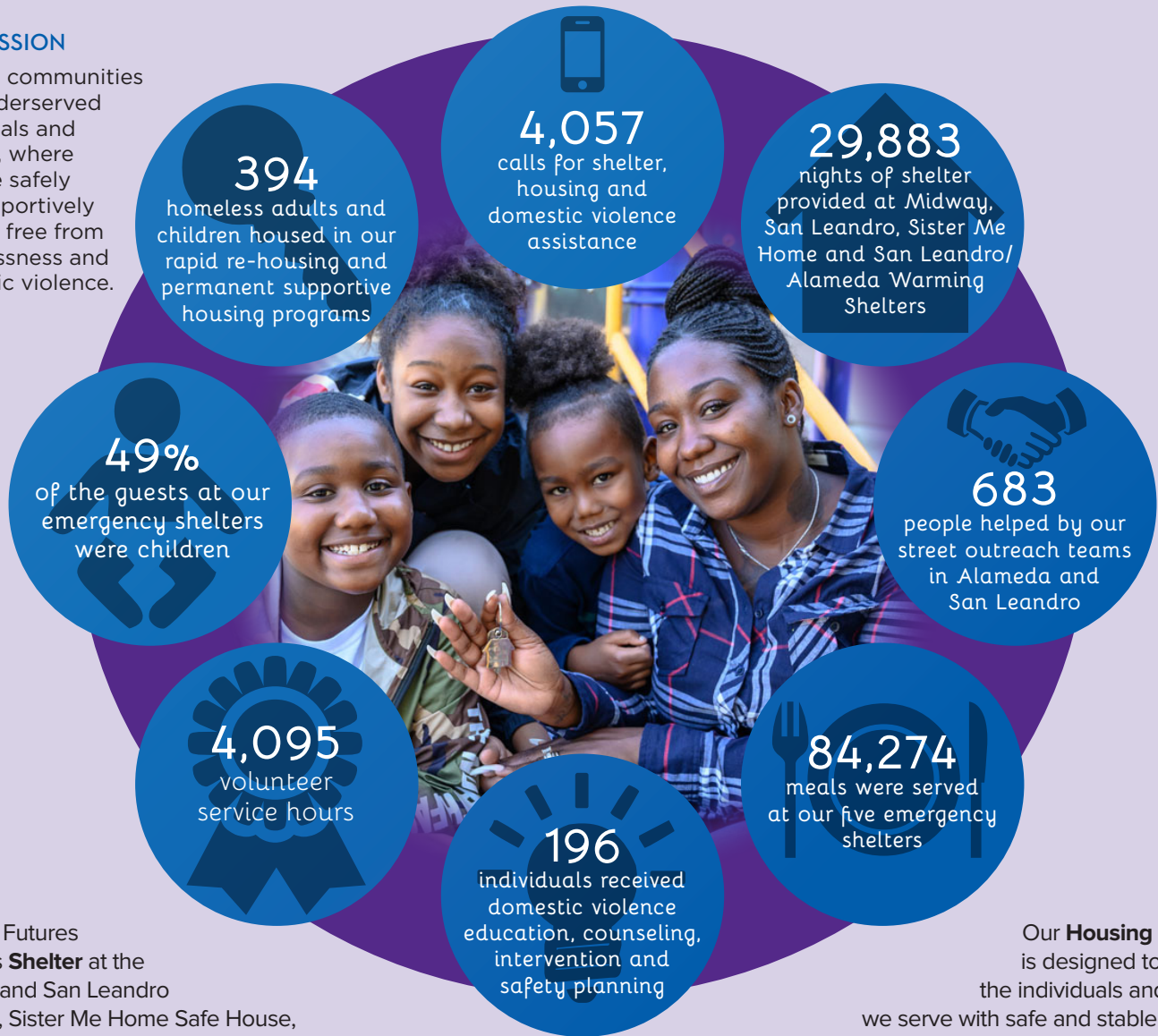


IMPACT by the NUMBERS

Building Futures is proud to share the numbers behind the individuals and families we helped between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020. Every person served is a story of resilience and courage.

OUR MISSION

To build communities with underserved individuals and families, where they are safely and supportively housed, free from homelessness and domestic violence.

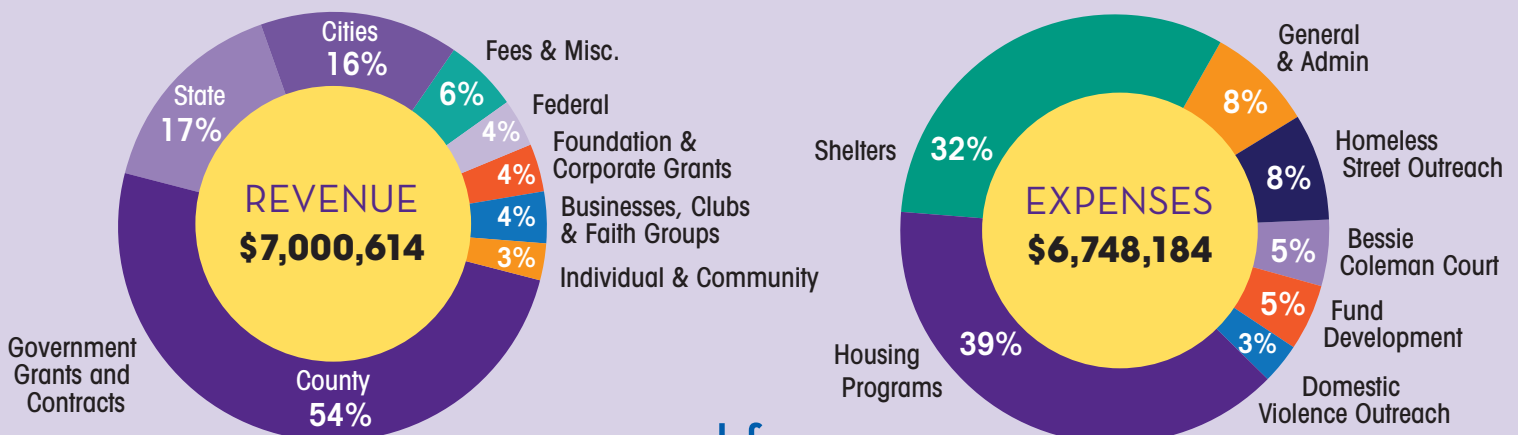


Building Futures provides **Shelter** at the Midway and San Leandro Shelters, Sister Me Home Safe House, and the Alameda and San Leandro Winter Warming Shelters.

In addition to shelter, our **Domestic Violence Services** include outreach, education, counseling, and support services.

Our **Housing Program** is designed to connect the individuals and families we serve with safe and stable housing.

FINANCIALS



www.bfwc.org

Building Futures, 1840 Fairway Dr., San Leandro, CA 94577

The information provided on this page reflects as-yet unaudited data for 2019-20.