



free from homelessness and family violence

# 2023-2024 Annual Report

## HOUSING SUCCESS: MEET JANICE

“I loved taking care of people,” says Janice, an Oakland native and elder. Until she was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis, Janice worked as a home healthcare worker. Later, when her mother passed away, a family member sold the house and kept the money. Janice and three of her siblings had no place to live.

For a time, Janice stayed with her boyfriend. But the relationship became violent. Janice fled with just a few belongings. **“I drove my car directly to the San Leandro Marina,” she says. For two long years, she lived in her car there.**

Three of Janice’s siblings died without shelter. Janice herself contracted Covid twice. One day a police officer asked her if she’d like to be connected with services. **Janice said yes.**

Building Futures’ Street Outreach Team took the time to build trust with Janice. “Randy came to me at the Marina,” Janice remembers. “He found me resources. He would bring delicious food that a staff member’s mother cooked.”

Janice began attending Building Futures’ laundry days in San Leandro. She also met our partners at April Showers, where she could access everything from a shower to a hot lunch to books to clothes and toiletries.

Janice and Randy built trust by sharing stories about their lives. “He felt like a brother to me,” Janice says. Randy helped Janice to document her disability, and provided support, food, and advocacy with appointments and resources.



Janice was proactive and consistent. For two years, she applied for every housing program available. “Part of my work is keeping people’s spirits up,” says Randy. “I always reminded Janice where we started, where we’d come, and what we aimed for.”

**Finally, Janice’s application was accepted. She was elated.** “Once I got my apartment, Building Futures provided me with furniture and all the essentials,” she says.

“Janice is MOTIVATED,” says Randy. “It lifted me to see her strength and spirit and energy.”

Janice still fishes and traps crabs at the San Leandro Marina. “I can’t stay away from this beautiful place,” she says. **“I sit and think and get my head right. Building Futures is a blessing!”**

## ♥ PLANNED GIFTS ARE FOR EVERYONE ♥

*Charitable bequests are most often made by ordinary people who care deeply about the cause they support.*

**You don’t have to be rich to leave a bequest.**

We recently received a call from a longtime supporter. Years ago, as a young mother, she fled from her abuser. She found happiness in San Leandro, where Building Futures is headquartered.

“There was no help for any woman in the 1960s,” she said. “Building Futures has made a huge difference.”

This generous supporter had just met with her financial planner and added a bequest to us to her will. With a planned gift, your legacy endures.

**Thinking of including Building Futures in your estate plan?**

Visit [bfwc.org/planned-giving](https://bfwc.org/planned-giving) or contact Ana Mahiri at 510-357-0205 x204 or [development@bfwc.org](mailto:development@bfwc.org)

*Please consult with an attorney or financial planner, as Building Futures cannot provide legal or financial advice.*

# LETTER from the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Housing is the very cornerstone of a stable life. Families and individuals thrown into homelessness need a safe place to call home—followed by support and resources.

Building Futures helped 2,184 people with our street outreach, shelter, domestic violence, and/or housing services between July 2023 and June 2024. Community supporters and partners make our work possible. Every person we serve has a story of adversity and hard work to rebuild a better life after homelessness or domestic violence. Janice, whose story is on our cover, is such a person.

We've built considerable expertise since our founding in 1988. The process might begin with Building Futures' Street Outreach Team engaging with a person living in an encampment, or in a vehicle, like Janice. It might start in our shelters, or with a call to our domestic violence crisis line. Our wide-ranging housing program equips us to connect those we serve with a place to call home.

Partnerships that address root causes and provide solutions are of crucial importance. One example is Building Futures' partnership with Housing Consortium of the East Bay and the City of San Leandro on the Lewelling Interim Housing & Drop In Center project. The site will open this December. Another partnership with the Alameda Housing Authority will create 90 permanent supportive housing units of housing for homeless and formerly homeless people. (The photo of me is at the ground-breaking event!)

Everyone deserves a safe place to call home. Together, we can build communities where every child, every adult, can thrive. Thank you for your partnership. It really does mean the world!



Liz Varela, Executive Director



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(July 2023–June 2024)

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Alameda, Oakland,  
and San Leandro

development@bfwc.org

510-357-0205

CRISIS LINE: 1-866-292-9688



bfwc.org

## Jazz it Up Sells Out, Raises \$135,000!

Sponsors, attendees, and generous donors made our annual benefit a big success. Our sold-out evening at Nido's was an absolute blast! Jazz it Up 2024 featured delicious tacos, purple margaritas and live jazz by Darlene Coleman and the Steve Carter Trio. All proceeds raised support Building Futures' homeless, domestic violence, and housing services.

Preparations are already underway for an expanded Jazz it Up 2025 celebration, set for Thursday, May 15th at fabulous Yoshi's Oakland! Mark your calendar! See you there!



Board Members Carla Dartis and Cristi Ritschel

### 2024 LEAD SPONSORS



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# 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 domestic violence. Here are some highlights illustrating ways the community supported Building Futures and our participants this year:



Children make up half of those we serve, and we turn to our community year-round for items like back-to-school supplies, baby essentials, and holiday gifts.



In January, our Director of Emergency Services, Sabrina Thomas, received the Oakland Citizen Humanitarian Award, presented by the Living Jazz Foundation at the 20th Annual MLK Celebration.

She was honored for her dedication to ending homelessness and domestic violence as a leader at Building Futures since 2007.



Over the winter months, the San Leandro Shelter received a much-needed interior renovation, funded by the City. The women and children living at our very first service site appreciate the refreshed space!



In 2024, the state of California announced significant reductions in funding for domestic violence services. Service providers came together to make it clear: cutting these crucial services is unacceptable. As of this writing, funding has been restored for one year. We won't back down!



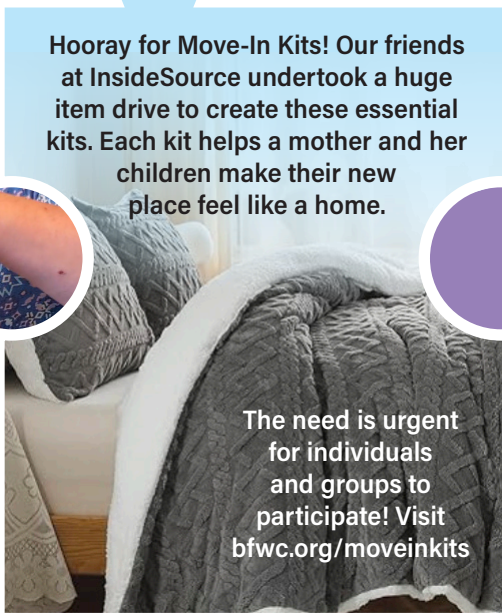
Students of all ages participated in service-learning activities like this hygiene/diaper drive by the St. Felicitas Catholic School community.



For Oakland-based Iron Souls Motorcycle Club, giving to Building Futures' annual Holiday Gift Drive is "about giving back and remembering our own childhoods." They delivered 140 toys and \$800 in gift cards. Thank you to *all* who participated, making the holidays brighter for kids!



**FOOD IS LOVE MADE VISIBLE.** Dinner donors bought, prepared, and delivered meals for the women and children at our shelters. Learn how you—or your group—can help at [bfwc.org/volunteer](http://bfwc.org/volunteer).



Hooray for Move-In Kits! Our friends at InsideSource undertook a huge item drive to create these essential kits. Each kit helps a mother and her children make their new place feel like a home.

The need is urgent for individuals and groups to participate! Visit [bfwc.org/moveinkits](http://bfwc.org/moveinkits)

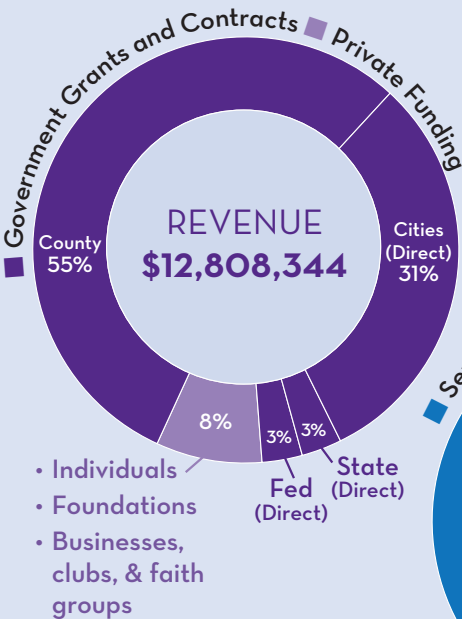
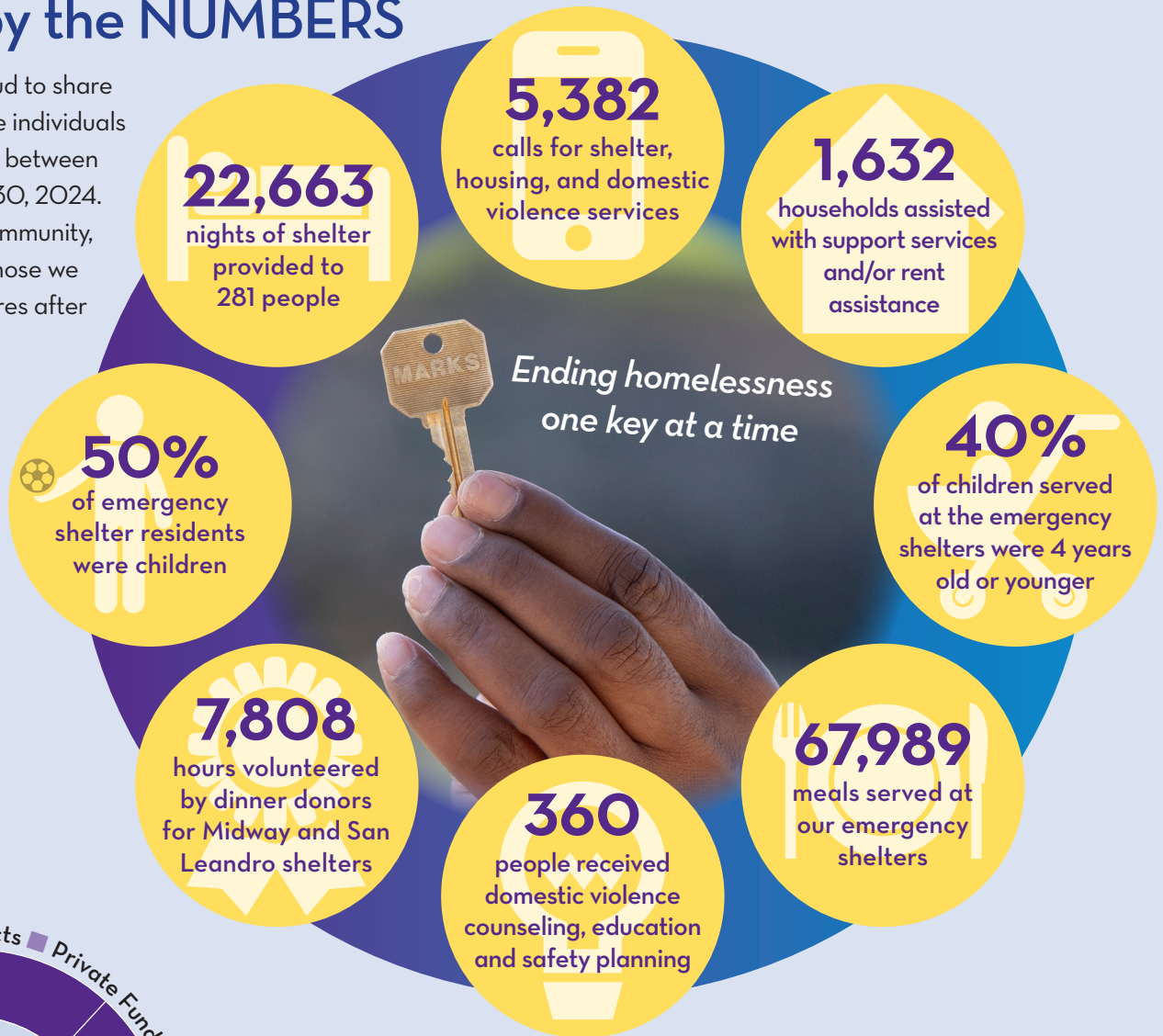


Our friends at Torani donated craft sodas for our Domestic Violence Awareness Month event. Every October we bring awareness to services like our domestic violence crisis line, open 24/7 at 1-866-A-WAY-OUT.

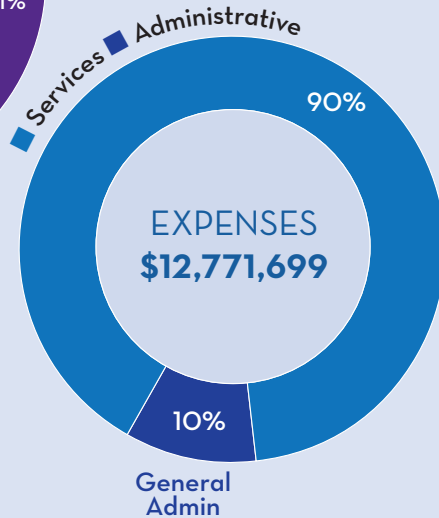


# IMPACT by the NUMBERS

Building Futures is proud to share the numbers behind the individuals and families we helped between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024. With the help of our community, we continued to help those we serve to build new futures after homelessness and domestic violence.



## FINANCIALS



**HOMELESS SERVICES** At the Midway and San Leandro Shelters, women and children receive lodging, meals, and case management which prioritizes housing. Our housing resource centers and street outreach services assess and support Alameda County residents in need of housing and other resources. Street Outreach engages individuals and families and connects them with resources including food, medical and behavior health care, shelter and housing programs, essential items, and more.

**HOUSING SERVICES** Our Housing Programs are designed to help families and individuals to secure and retain housing. We provide both short-term and long-term rental subsidies and tailored wraparound services.

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES** In addition to Sister Me Home safe house, our domestic violence services include outreach, education, counseling, referrals, housing services, shelter, and a 24-hour crisis line.

### BUILDING FUTURES: Alameda • Oakland • San Leandro

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