SPRING/SUMMER SPOTLIGHT

• Celebrating 10 Years at Next Key Center
• Looking Back on First Year at Oma Village
• Culinary Grad, Family of Four Share Stories of Change
• New Initiatives to Solve Homelessness
• Community & Volunteer Spotlights: Children4Change and Stan Burford
DEAR FRIENDS TO THE END… OF HOMELESSNESS,

The ritual of celebrating an anniversary lodges in the acknowledgement of transformation. We are thrilled to have you join us to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Next Key Center and the very first anniversary of Oma Village!

Your unwavering support for these special places has given birth to transformation for hundreds of single adults and families. You will meet some of these folks at our celebration – mark your calendar for Friday, Sept. 21, and watch your mailbox for more details!

Every day, we meet people without a home. You meet them during the pursuits of daily living – traveling to school, shopping at grocery stores, enjoying a cup of coffee or tea. They, as you, are integral parts of the community of Marin and the Bay Area. Like we do, they know the deep value of a home as a place of both transformation and belonging.

Families and individuals who are without a place to call home have to dig deep and marshal internal and external resources together to forge a pathway home. Likewise, everyone at Homeward Bound is digging deep – learning, collaborating, and honing a more responsive system of care with all of our community partners. During the past year, across the county, we have identified some of the main gaps to providing housing and support services, especially to the most vulnerable people in our midst. Collectively, we are retooling and refining, creating a system that sustains more effective working relationships and focuses our combined resources, hammering out opportunities to strengthen our shared safety net.

The impacts of these changes extend across the county. More chronically homeless people have been matched with housing options that include wraparound services to insure their success. Organizations working on homelessness have grown more integrated throughout the county. And collectively, we have endorsed the ultimate cure for homelessness – housing.

The transformation of charity to justice – along with our two anniversaries – are cause for celebration!

In gratitude,

Mary Kay Sweeney, Executive Director
You’re invited to celebrate with Homeward Bound of Marin!

We will gather to honor the 10-year anniversary of the Next Key Center and the first year of life at Oma Village.

SAVE THE DATE

2 p.m. Friday, Sept. 21, at Oma Village

Our special event will unveil the donor wall installed at Oma Village to acknowledge investors in that community and shine a light on contributors who helped open the Next Key Center.

We look forward to telling you about the impact of these programs.

More details will be coming soon about the festivities.

Thank you for sharing our vision that “everybody needs a place to call home!”
Fourteen families compose the Oma Village community, a modern, energy-efficient site in Novato. It opened at the end of 2016 after a $6.5 million fundraising campaign and reached full-house status in spring 2017.

With a playground at the center and a community room where on-site staff coordinates services, it wasn’t long before children joined hands for games and parents swapped stories or occasional child care.

“Creating community is the center of our work at Oma Village. From conceptualizing the program to seeing residents move in and planning events together, we have aimed to cultivate a sense of safety and support in hopes people will meet and exceed their goals,” says Andre Cruz, the program coordinator.

Services include food donations from ExtraFood, art workshops by DrawBridge, volunteer projects like family portrait sessions, or speakers from local programs such as the nearby library.

This year’s plans include new garden boxes, tai chi classes and financial literacy workshops. At the first parents’ meeting of 2018, all the adults wrote letters to themselves about the year’s intentions, which will be mailed back to them in December.

“I’m so grateful for Oma Village: the playground’s great, the parents come out to socialize, the kids run in and out of each other’s houses sometimes,” says Monica A., an Oma Village resident with two daughters who works in pool maintenance.

She adds: “At some point, I want to move to a place of my own and give somebody else the opportunity to have permanent housing that changes their life.”
Profile: Curtis J. Finds Springboard in Culinary Training

When Curtis J. enrolled at Fresh Starts Culinary Academy, he had done a lot of cooking. He never thought about studying it, however, until he became homeless.

His mother cooked at a junior high school and Curtis learned from her, but he realized there were things he didn’t know from growing up with eight brothers and seven sisters.

“I didn’t know the names of different pans. I didn’t know the types of pasta,” he recalls. “Growing up, we only saw green bell peppers. I didn’t know there were red, yellow, or other things.”

Four years after graduating from Fresh Starts, he’s worked at several local restaurants, including Insalata’s and The Cheesecake Factory. He supervises a nine-person team at Miyoko’s Kitchen to break down and clean the suite of 10 machines that make the company’s artisan vegan cheese.

Between that job and a dishwasher/prep cook position in San Rafael, Curtis works a long week. All those hours will take him eventually back to full-time cooking, he says, perhaps somewhere that he takes the lead.

As the first in his family to graduate high school, Curtis says he learned how to focus while observing “a lot of crime, a lot of drugs, a lot of everything. I stayed in school. I knew that was a ticket out.”

He arrived at Homeward Bound of Marin after a living situation ended abruptly, leaving him and a 3-year-old son without housing. When his son rejoined his mother, Curtis made his way to Mill Street Center, our year-round emergency shelter in San Rafael.

“My goal then was to seek out the culinary program and get my paperwork in place for cooking,” he says. “I learned a lot of techniques that were new to me and my knife skills got a lot better. I learned about hygiene and overall kitchen management.”

Driven to maintain ties with his children — his son is now nine and he has a 15-year-old daughter — Curtis says he aimed to make the most of his opportunities. Along with cooking, he has worked as a school janitor, at Goodwill, and at local discount stores.

“If I have to prove myself, I can do it,” he says. “I always stay busy.”

Now living in a Novato apartment, Curtis feels grateful for the chance to get back on his feet and begin building a career with Homeward Bound. “You need to put in 100 percent. It will pay off,” he says.

THE NEXT KEY CENTER: A PLACE TO OPEN DOORS FOR THE FUTURE

Curtis J. (above) is only one of the people who have forged a stronger future at the Next Key Center, which celebrates its 10th anniversary this fall.

More than 200 tenants have lived in the Next Key Apartments, transitioning out of homelessness while gaining skills to succeed in such diverse careers as auto mechanics, nursing, accounting and retail management.

The apartments provide “employment enhancement housing,” where tenants stay up to two years. The Next Key Center also offers a 3,000-square-foot kitchen for Fresh Starts Culinary Academy, The Key Room event space and our administrative offices.

Fresh Starts Culinary Academy now enrolls up to 60 students yearly. The Key Room hosts community events and private parties, employing graduates in catering and service.

The center also houses the Transition to Wellness program, which offers shelter to people without housing who are released from local hospitals. This partnership with service providers and hospitals includes medical oversight, case management and meals. Last year, the savings estimate from avoided hospital stays was $2.5 million.

The Next Key Center drew headlines even before opening with a first-ever nonprofit IPO, our “Immediate Public Opportunity to help end homelessness” by purchasing a $32 fundraising share. Renowned investor Warren Buffett bought the first share and community investors raised more than $1 million for the capital campaign.
King Street Senior Housing: New Initiative in Supportive Housing

King Street Senior Housing, our newest addition to the county’s affordable housing stock, creates space for 11 low-income seniors and an on-site manager in a former convent at 127 King St. in downtown Larkspur.

With our partners at St. Patrick’s Church, we aim to open the doors this fall. The Larkspur Planning Commission voted 5-0 in February to approve a use permit for the program.

An estimated $1.3 million in renovations will come first for the 5,825-square-foot property, which has been leased from the Archdiocese of San Francisco for 35 years. The work includes a new roof, new windows, kitchen remodel and bathroom upgrades.

Since the use permit approval, the project team has been finalizing detailed plans for city review and pursuing funds to complete the work.

“This is the type of Marin housing that makes sense – to use existing housing to meet today’s needs,” says a letter submitted to planning commissioners by the Aging Action Initiative, one of dozens received to support the proposal.

“We are thrilled to be working with Monsignor Padazinski and St. Patrick’s parish to offer financially vulnerable seniors a new lease on life and, simultaneously, to renovate and reinvigorate a classic neighborhood home,” says Mary Kay Sweeney, Executive Director of Homeward Bound of Marin.

The need has never been greater, she adds. At New Beginnings Center, our 80-bed shelter program, the proportion of residents aged 62 and over has risen from 18 percent to 21 percent in one year.

A program coordinator will be assigned to plan services for residents along with the on-site manager, also a low-income senior. Their priority will be connecting residents with community services for medical care, transportation and other needs.

To learn more about this project and how to support it, please contact Deputy Director Paul Fordham at pfordham@hbofm.org or 415-382-3363 x211.

Photography by James Cacciatore.
Agencies Collaborate for Results in Housing

Government agencies and nonprofits have built a new collaboration to bring better solutions to people without housing, especially those who have struggled with prolonged bouts of homelessness. This new initiative puts a “housing first” lens on services and looks at all programs operated in Marin County as a common pool of resources to support families and adults with critical housing needs.

According to a 2017 “Point-in-Time” census of homeless people in Marin, our county has the third-highest per capita rate of homelessness in the nine Bay Area counties with 1,117 individuals. Marin also showed the second-highest percentage of chronically homeless people in the Bay Area.

Homeward Bound of Marin, which operates year-round shelters and supportive housing for hundreds of people, plays a central role in turning the tide. Our partners include Marin Housing Authority, Ritter Center, St. Vincent de Paul Society, Buckelew Programs, Adopt A Family of Marin, county officials and the City of San Rafael.

As partners, this network has set its sights on ending chronic homelessness in Marin County by 2022. There’s a good foundation for this goal. Here’s what we’ve learned:

- A relatively small number of vulnerable people continue to cycle between shelter services and the streets, even though our programs succeed to help many people transition out of homelessness. (Last year, 70% of people leaving our programs moved to stable housing.)
- Service providers lacked a system for ongoing communication and often served the same people without sharing information. The situation proved toughest in helping people who faced homelessness repeatedly and were more likely to have overlapping issues of mental health, substance abuse or disability.

Over the past two years, the collaborating agencies have studied new approaches. We visited programs in Santa Rosa, Berkeley and Palo Alto to see what’s working and attended workshops by Iain De Jung, a nationally recognized leader in “housing first” strategies.

A handful of local officials, including Deputy Director Paul Fordham, joined the “Built for Zero” initiative that comprises 72 counties across the country seeking new ways to end homelessness. We implemented several changes based on the findings. Here’s what we’ve done:

- Formed a countywide Homeless Outreach Team.
- Adopted common questions to assess the needs of each person.
- Launched a new system to share data among community partners.
- Started weekly meetings to check on progress for people seeking help.

We see results. In the first 18 months, this collaboration helped 23 adults transition into housing after repeated stints of homelessness. In the past six months, an additional 30 people have secured housing.

Our next step at Homeward Bound is lowering barriers that prevent some people from entering the shelter system. Mill Street Center will eliminate the $3 nightly fee for shelter and allow people under the influence to stay, as long as they maintain safe and respectful behavior.

There’s broad countywide support among agencies to make these changes. Work has begun on exact plans and timing.

Paul Fordham, Homeward Bound’s Deputy Director, says the changes simply set housing as the most important need. “It’s not trying to heal somebody first, not trying to address every one of their needs, just get them into a housing option as quickly as possible, especially the most vulnerable,” he says.

WHAT WE’VE ACCOMPLISHED

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**Community Partner Spotlight:** *Children for Change*

When a fifth-grader decides to hold a bake sale for charity, that’s kindness. When the student has a specific local program in mind to support and has seen its impact, that’s engagement.

Children4Change seeks engagement and compassion for its participants, says Emily Elder, founder of the group that involves students in third to eighth grade from 300 to 400 participating families. “We’re very excited about working with Homeward Bound,” she adds.

For Mother’s Day, they have organized massages for parents at our Family Center emergency shelter and a gift-making workshop for children. The group also plans to make meals for the Family Center and Mill Street Center, our year-round shelter for adults.

Children4Change works with six schools – five in the Ross Valley plus Davidson Middle School in San Rafael – to help participants “bridge the gap” between the desire to help and making a connection with impact for the community, Emily says.

At Family Center, Children4Change has signed up to deliver dinner on Wednesday nights, when parents have a regular meeting. They also plan to join the monthly rotation of meal providers at Mill Street Center, which serves 55 people every night.

One student who had visited Family Center organized his own bake sale to benefit the program. “That’s the empowering ‘aha’ moment,” Emily says.

For more information, visit children4change.org.

**Volunteer Spotlight:** *Stan Burford*

Most often remembered for 28 years as the helicopter reporter for KGO Radio and KGO-TV, Stan Burford retired after 51 years in Bay Area media. Now with more time available, he’s pursued volunteer activities on the ground at Homeward Bound of Marin.

“My favorite pasttime is working on projects,” says Stan, a San Rafael resident whose father and grandfather worked as general contractors.

His first assignment in 2016 might have scared some people: a room full of flat-packed furniture to be assembled for our new Oma Village family housing site. He grabbed a partner and went to work on dining tables, chairs, bunk beds and dressers for 14 apartments, a task that took three weeks.

Since then, Stan has installed earthquake bracing for large furniture in several programs, hung doors and tackled other fix-it tasks.

“I try to ask every conceivable question before we start so I can meet the vision for the project,” he says.

Stan also has been involved with CERES Community Project, which provides healthy meals to people facing life-threatening illness. His wife, Julie, launched the Marin branch of the program.

He also volunteers for Whistlestop’s CarePool program, taking seniors who need rides to medical appointments or grocery shopping, and recently was appointed to the San Rafael Fire Commission.

Volunteering for Homeward Bound lets him use skills that he learned while growing up in San Francisco, experimenting with hammer and nails in his father’s home workshop.

Stan studied drafting and architecture as a young man, expecting to take over eventually in his father’s business. That changed when he got a job at KSFO at the age of 21. “Flying in a helicopter and working with a dream team – it was heaven,” he says.

His carpentry skills stayed fresh, however, and have been valuable for Homeward Bound to keep properties in good shape for residents.
Finding a place to work on your car when you have no driveway is just one of the dilemmas that Cody and Sierra faced as they worked to climb out of homelessness.

“When you’re homeless, you have to hide it from the world,” says Sierra, recalling how they tried to explain to their daughter, Cali, that everything had to be quiet at night in their camper truck. “You’re not supposed to be sleeping on the street in your car.”

Normal life unraveled for the family in 2015, when Cody was hospitalized with gangrene after injuring his arm. He spent weeks unable to work and they landed at our Family Center emergency shelter in December 2015.

Two years after their shelter stay, things have changed dramatically. Cody regained his health, graduated from the Automotive Technology program at Indian Valley College and found a job with a local auto repair shop. He’s taken eight master technician tests to become the most credentialed staff member at the shop, raising his salary in the process. They expanded their family with a second daughter, Chloe, and moved into a new, larger apartment in San Rafael.

Their path out of homelessness drew from the same process used in car repair, Cody says. “You start with diagnostics. Then you take the right steps one by one in the appropriate direction to get things right.”

The fix wasn’t easy, Sierra adds. They realized quickly that they fell between the cracks: they had too much in savings to qualify for help but their bad credit prevented them from being accepted in an apartment – even though they could afford it.

They worked hard together to learn about credit repair and housing opportunities as their savings dwindled from paying for motel rooms, leaving them resigned to living in the camper truck.

At the Family Center, they found staff ready to help them sort their options and move to a low-cost apartment. “We sold the camper and doubled our money. We had some hospital bills to pay off. We didn’t realize what a big deal credit is,” Sierra says.

Having the Family Center as a base made a huge difference, Sierra says. “Without that chance, I don’t know how we could have turned the tide,” she adds. “It’s just hard to focus when you’re worrying all the time about where to sleep.”

For now, they put as much as possible toward savings for a home. When Chloe goes to preschool, Sierra plans to start working again as a preschool teacher. “We thought we would be average folks,” Cody says. “We never expected to be homeless.”

Make an investment in positive change with a gift to support our programs for homeless families and individuals in Marin County.

You can honor friends or loved ones with your contribution or set up a recurring gift to ensure a strong safety net for the future.

Make a gift online at hbofm.org/donate or by check to:
Homeward Bound of Marin
1385 N. Hamilton Pkwy., Novato, CA 94949

Thank you for your support!
**Homeward Bound Program Map - 2018**

### Adult Services
- **Housing at Last**
  - Multiple Locations
  - 26 beds
  - Permanent Supportive Housing

- **Fireside Apartments**
  - Mill Valley
  - Partnership with Eden Housing
  - 8 senior units (8 beds)
  - Permanent Supportive Housing

- **Warner Creek Senior Housing**
  - Novato
  - Partnership with Eden Housing
  - Support services provided for 60 residents
  - Permanent Supportive Housing

- **Next Key Apartments**
  - Novato
  - 25 studio units (25 beds)
  - Transitional Housing

- **New Beginnings Center**
  - Novato
  - 80 beds (including 16 beds for veterans)
  - Shelter & Transitional Housing

- **Transition to Wellness**
  - Novato
  - 3 studio units
  - (6 medical respite beds)
  - Emergency Shelter

### Family Services
- **Oma Village**
  - Novato
  - 14 houses (35 beds)
  - Permanent Supportive Housing

- **Fireside Apartments**
  - Mill Valley
  - Partnership with Eden Housing
  - 10 houses (35 beds)
  - Permanent Supportive Housing

- **Family Place**
  - Multiple Locations
  - 10 houses (41 beds)
  - Permanent Supportive Housing

- **San Clemente Family Homes**
  - Corte Madera
  - Partnership with EAH Housing
  - 4 houses (13 beds)
  - Permanent Supportive Housing

- **Meadow Park**
  - Novato
  - Partnership with EAH Housing
  - 6 houses (15 beds)
  - Permanent Supportive Housing

- **Yellow Hallway**
  - Novato
  - Partnership with EAH Housing
  - 2 families (5 beds)
  - Transitional Housing

### Mental Health Services
- **Fresh Starts Culinary Academy**
  - Offers intensive 10-week job-training program. Enrolls up to 80 students annually.

### Job-Training Programs
- **Apprenticeships**
  - Offers paid apprenticeships in Janitorial & Building Maintenance and Landscaping & Gardening.
Thank you to:

**Congregations**

- The following congregations for bringing a monthly meal to Mill Street Center: **Aldersgate United Methodist Church, Village Baptist Church, Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Marin and Spirit Rock Meditation Center, St. Luke’s Presbyterian Church, Congregation Rodef Sholom, St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church, Community Congregational Church of Tiburon, Trinity Lutheran Church, Redwoods Presbyterian Church, St. Isabella’s Catholic Church, Hillside Church of Marin, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Marin Lutheran Church, First United Methodist Church of San Rafael, St. Anselm’s Catholic Church, St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, Presbyterian Church of Novato, Korean Presbyterian Church, Marin Covenant Church, First Presbyterian Church of San Rafael, First Presbyterian Church of San Anselmo, Cornerstone Community Church, St. John’s Episcopal Church, Congregation Kol Shofar, and Nativity of Christ Greek Orthodox Church.

- Peace Lutheran Church for ongoing support at the Fireside Apartments.

- Women’s Tuesday Group from Hillside Church of Marin for cooking meals for the Family Center.

- The TNT Club of Trinity Lutheran Church for diaper donations.

- St. Isabella’s Church for Christmas gifts for kids

- Hillside Church of Marin for an Easter egg party at Oma Village.

**Schools**

- San Domenico School 4th graders for cooking meals monthly.

- San Domenico School 5th graders for art pieces for the Family Center wall.

- San Domenico School 7th graders for working in the gardens at New Beginnings Center.

- San Domenico School 5th graders for staffing a food pantry at Fireside Apartments.

- Marin Primary and Middle School, Marin Academy and Marin Country Day School students and families for garden help at New Beginnings Center.

- Branson School for creating a succulent garden at New Beginnings Center.

**Businesses, and Organizations**

- Cake4Kids for donating birthday cakes to our young residents.

- Stone Soup Marin and Anne’s Kitchen for providing monthly meals at Mill Street Center.

- EO Products for donating organic personal care products to our programs.

- Planet Bee Foundation and the Marin Beekeepers Association for ongoing support for beehives at New Beginnings Center.

- The Republic of Tea for donating tea and volunteering in the garden.

- Residents of Novato Healthcare Center and San Rafael Healthcare & Wellness Center for making meals for Mill Street Center.

- Kiosk for ongoing website support, digital marketing and a succulent garden.

- Deseret Industries Store in Sacramento for donating bedding.

- Michael Basso Foundation for back-to-school and Easter donations.

- SusieCakes for pies and cakes for our programs.

- Grateful Gatherings for the living room renovation at Family Center.

- Warm Wishes for backpacks for residents.

- City Carpets One Floor & Home for rugs and flooring.

- Family of Women and San Rafael Village for holiday presents for women in our programs.

- Meritage Medical Network for holiday gifts for residents.

- Children4Change for supporting the Family Center and Mill Street Center.

- Novato Mothers Club for diaper donations.

- SanZuma and San Rafael Harbor Rotary Club for donating fruit trees.

- Jewish Family & Children’s Services for help in the gardens.

**Individuals**

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- Neely Wang for professional photo services for Homeward Bound events.


- Joy Nickinson and Christopher DeLellis for volunteering in the chaplaincy program at Warner Creek Senior Housing.

- Susan Orma, Nancy Elberg, Renata Bihun, Hilary Shelley and Diane Bean for assisting at the New Beginnings Center front desk.

- Mary Ellen Braly, Eavan Marcum and Andy Aренberg for administrative help and support.

- Mary Wright for creating flyers for Fresh Starts Chef Events.

- Natalie & Daria’s Flowers for weekly flowers to New Beginnings Center.

- Dawn Uhalley and Mark Reynolds for taking family portraits.

- Sherri Rogers for ongoing help in the garden.

- Amanda Weitman and Chris Heffelfinger for delivering Saturday lunches at Family Center.

- Gail Schreuder and Jennie Gill for donating move-out baskets to residents.

- Sara Henry for offering art workshops at Warner Creek Senior Housing.

- Adelina Gowdy and family for cooking once a month for the Family Center.

- Carolyn Hammond for sewing curtains at the Family Center.

- Aidan O’Neill for baking cakes for our families.

- Marcie and Donald Leach for bringing deliveries from the Food Bank to Family Center.

- The Spinale Family for meals for the Family Center and holiday gifts.

**Thank you!** If we have forgotten to list you, please accept our apology and know we appreciate all that you do.
Homeward Bound of Marin is ending homelessness with housing, training and hope.

1385 N. Hamilton Parkway
Novato, CA 94949

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YOUR DOLLARS MAKE CHANGE!

Fresh Starts CHEF EVENTS Giving back has never tasted so good!
EAT WELL, DO GOOD WITH FRESH STARTS CHEF EVENTS!

On July 9th, we showcase Michelin-starred Chef Stefano Massanti with V. Sattui Winery. Stay tuned for news about the fall lineup!

Get tickets online at bit.ly/FSchefevents or call 415-382-3363 x243. Proceeds from our events support shelter and job-training programs at Homeward Bound of Marin.

Join us for the most delicious evenings in Marin!

Plan your next event in The Key Room

Our modern, flexible event space with on-site catering offers full service for conferences, company meetings, parties, banquets or other special occasions.

Event & Catering Coordinator Viki Card will help you find the best dates, menus and other options for your needs.

Contact 415-382-3363 x214 or visit thekeyroom.com to get started with your plans.

All proceeds from The Key Room support shelter and job-training programs.