SHELTER RE-OPENS WITH MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS

Hospitality House celebrated the completion of capital improvements to its Shelter with a grand re-opening ceremony on May 4, 2012. Speakers, including the Honorable Willie Brown, Bevan Dufty (HOPE SF), April Veneracion Ang (Supervisor Jane Kim’s office), and others celebrated the Shelter’s importance to the community and its new accessibility. “Due to the age of the building and our long-term occupancy, we were previously excused from ADA compliance,” said Jackie Jenks, Executive Director. “We are thrilled to finally have a completely upgraded, fully-accessible facility to better serve our residents.”

Upgrades include the installation of a new elevator, updated shower and restroom facilities, new beds, and a new design that generally makes navigating the facility much easier.

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27th ANNUAL ART AUCTION EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS

The 27th Annual Art Auction raised more than $75,000 to benefit Hospitality House’s Community Arts Program. Special thanks to our new gallery host, 941 Geary Gallery; new auctioneer, Patrick Walsh; and the many artists, galleries, and sponsors who supported this event! See more at Hospitality House’s Facebook page: www.facebook.com/HospitalityHouse

“To do this work, you have to have love in your heart, and that comes from somewhere...”

MEET JOE WILSON
Hospitality House’s new Community Building Program Manager

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P5: New Faces: Mara Raider & Katie Begell

P6: 2011 Financials & Program Data
This past year proved to be a productive one for Hospitality House. With the additions of the Sixth Street Self-Help Center in 2008 and the Community Building Program in 2010, we had wrapped up several years of program growth that expanded our programs to surrounding neighborhoods and increased access to our services. It was time for our management and board of directors to look inward to ensure that our administration and infrastructure were also keeping pace with this growth.

Two years ago, Hospitality House received a service grant from the Taproot Foundation to develop a Strategic Plan. The Taproot Foundation matches professionals in the corporate world with non-profits needing their expertise in areas that support the sustainability of the organization, such as marketing, finance, board development, and other areas. One of the Strategic Plan’s key components was to better communicate our work to a broader audience. While the Taproot research demonstrated a great deal of respect and support for Hospitality House within the communities we serve, it also found that our message had the potential to reach a wider public. The Strategic Plan called for building better marketing and communications efforts – including the development of a new visual identity and an enhanced online presence.

To that end, a second Taproot service grant in 2011 focused on developing key messaging about our work, which led to our most recent Taproot project to create a fresh visual identity. The result is our new logo, debuted on the front page of this newsletter, and the dropping of “Central City” in our name to be known simply as “Hospitality House.”

Hospitality House is grateful to the Taproot Foundation for its support in developing our new key messaging and visual identity. Over the next two years, we will implement several new communications components that better inform our supporters of what’s going on in our neighborhoods, the latest news from our programs, and what you can do to help. Stay connected online with Hospitality House through any of the means listed in the red box on this page, and thank you for your support!
MEET JOE WILSON
Seasoned activist, community organizer, and social worker Joe Wilson was recently hired for the position of Program Manager to lead Hospitality House’s Community Building Program (CBP). Joe’s long and remarkable career began with Hospitality House, and we catch up with him and get his vision for the program.

You have some history with the House. Can you elaborate?
Thirty years ago, I was homeless. I slept at Hospitality House’s shelter – at a number of shelters, actually. I started volunteering, obtained a staff position, and eventually became the director of the Shelter Program. Since then, I’ve worked in many capacities with many grassroots and non-profit organizations, including Coleman Advocates, the Coalition on Homelessness, Community Housing Partnership, and American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees.

What drew you back to Hospitality House after all these years?
I got laid off from my previous job. I was looking, but didn’t expect this kind of position to open up. I was excited when I learned about it and felt it had my name written all over it.

How has the new job been so far?
So far, so good! The previous manager left a wealth of information that I’m in the process of going through. I’m getting re-oriented to both the agency and the issues facing the local community.

The CBP is Hospitality House’s newest program. What is your vision?
I’d like to see the organization evolve into a vehicle for participant empowerment. The core of the CBP is the Healing, Organizing, and Leadership Development (HOLD) Project. Individual healing and collective empowerment is precisely what this organization is all about. My vision is to use the program as a launching pad for movement-building, to work in coalition with other organizations who have similar approaches. The essence of social change is harnessing the power of collective energy.

What are your short- and long-term organizing goals?
I’d like the neighborhood to be a neighborhood – a place where children and seniors are safe. Residents are constantly under siege in their own homes. That’s no way for people to live. When people can’t provide for themselves, they don’t feel like anything they do is going to make a difference. That’s what the CBP can be about: teaching people the power of their personal stories and linking those stories together.

The neighborhoods Hospitality House serves have some of the highest concentrations of African Americans in the city. Do you feel that institutional racism plays a part?
It absolutely does. It’s extremely difficult not to internalize the negative messages we’re bombarded with every day: that we don’t matter, we’re uneducated, and we’re not worth very much. I’ve been in campaign meetings where people have said: “Don’t bother spending money there; people won’t show up anyway.” Well, that’s exactly what happens. We need to start promoting a better message.

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“Come as you are.” This the mantra of Hospitality House’s community service partner, the Harm Reduction Therapy Center (HRTC), which has revolutionized the thinking and approaches to drug and alcohol interventions in the San Francisco Bay Area and internationally. With trained therapists deployed at dozens of clinics and community centers around the country, harm reduction is the practice that destigmatizes drug and alcohol usage, and instead focuses on minimizing potential harmful effects on its users. While most closely associated with substance use, its principles can also be applied to other high-risk activities and behaviors, such as sex work.

Hospitality House’s partnership with HRTC began as an experiment in 2003 when Hospitality House began receiving frequent requests for on-site mental health and substance use services. “The partnership made sense,” notes Jenny Collins, Hospitality House Program Director. “Harm Reduction is one of our guiding principles, so HRTC’s approach is a perfect match with our own mission.” Currently, three HRTC counselors and one intern offer individual and group counseling at both of Hospitality House’s Self-Help Centers. In addition, therapeutic drumming is also offered weekly at the Tenderloin Self-Help Center (see side box for a complete menu of HRTC services).

Jamie Lavender, who has just passed the five-year mark as an HRTC therapist with Hospitality House, is now leaving his former role to take on the responsibilities of Program Coordinator. “Harm reduction can be applied universally across class lines, because drug and alcohol usage cuts across these boundaries. However, in poverty-stricken areas, there is a greater need for and less access to intervention services, which is why HRTC finds it beneficial to partner with existing community centers that already have established relationships with the local population,” explains Lavender.

When asked about the community’s response to having these services, Jamie responded: “Around here, people tend to vote with their feet. If the community finds a service useful, they will come. Our drop-in hours and group sessions fill up weekly.”
Many of our participants have experienced trauma. In many cases, it goes unaddressed, presenting barriers to engagement with services. How do you address this?

Hospitality House’s principle of incorporating harm reduction into working with participants resonates with me. It’s important to meet people where they’re at, to suspend judgment and allow people to determine what’s going to work for them. Still, we all need help from time to time. For this reason, having harm reduction therapists working with the H.O.L.D. interns is absolutely indispensable. My experiences of having been on the streets and working with disenfranchised groups have taught me to appreciate the value of everyone’s individual path.

What services are currently being offered through the program?

We’re gearing up for another H.O.L.D. session this month. Right now, I’m meeting with the other managers to get a sense of how the different pieces fit together. The program also continues to offer supportive housing and food resources to the community, as well as opportunities for volunteerism and recreational activities. A huge part of poverty and homelessness is the feeling of isolation, and our offerings fill a significant need in connecting people.

I feel like administrative personnel of an organization should also reflect its values.

ANOTHER (NOT SO) NEW FACE: MARA RAIDER, FINANCE MANAGER

Mara Raider, longtime San Francisco homeless rights advocate, recently joined the staff of Hospitality House as its new Finance Manager. Mara brings more than five years of nonprofit finance management experience with the Coalition on Homelessness and the LGBTQ Community Center, but what is unusual about Mara’s background for someone entering into an administrative role is that she has also been working on the ground as an organizer.

While it may seem contradictory to some, Mara is quite content to marry her two passions. “I’m a numbers person, but I also like working with people directly,” she commented. “I feel like the administrative personnel of an organization should reflect its values.”

Mara Raider is the Finance Manager of Hospitality House. She can be reached at mraider@hospitalityhouse.org or 415.749.2144

KATIE BEGELL NAMED BOARD PRESIDENT

Hospitality House’s Board of Directors recently elected Katie Begell as its new President. Katie has served on the Board since 2009 and sits on the Finance Committee. “I was compelled to join the board after witnessing the Treasurer’s involvement, who happens to be my boss,” said Katie in reference to Board CFO, Eric Sullivan. Eric and Katie work together at Dempsey Partners, a global risk management and forensic accounting firm.

With its recent program growth, the board has largely been focusing on strategic planning and long-term sustainability. “As President, I hope to bring a fresh perspective to the Board and its operations, keep the members engaged and involved, and to maintain proper focus,” she said of her new role. “I also hope to support improved Board fundraising, which is a major aspect of our long-term strategies.”
**Tenderloin Self-Help Center**

Number of individuals: 19,521  
Total cumulative visits: 66,457  
Participants engaging in case plans to address their housing, benefits, substance use, and mental health treatment, medical care, money management, and legal assistance needs: 147  
Participants in case management obtaining “positive placements” in housing, employment, school, or a job training program: 54  
Adults receiving case management through Supportive Services for Housing: 55  
Number of adults obtaining, improving, or retaining housing: 53

**Community Arts Program**

Number of artists utilizing the program: 2,405  
Total cumulative visits: 8,125  
Number of visual arts workshops: 121  
Number of creative writing workshops: 23  
Number of exhibitions held onsite and at other locations: 19

**Shelter Program**

Number of men receiving emergency shelter, food, and hygiene services: 607  
Residents receiving extended case management to establish stability in independent housing upon completion of their stay: 49  
Residents moving into independent housing, with family or friends, or into a mental health or substance abuse treatment facility: 12  
Number of residents that addressed their health—including accessing substance abuse treatment, mental health care, or primary medical care: 18

**Sixth Street Self Help Center**

Number of individuals: 6,619  
Total cumulative visits: 23,748  
Number of participants engaging in case plans to address their needs, including housing, benefits, substance abuse, and mental health treatment, medical care, money management, and legal assistance: 73

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*Financials represent unaudited totals. Hospitality House’s annual audit will be complete by the end of the calendar year  
**Reflects reimbursement for shelter capital project expenses*
THANK YOU TO OUR 2011-12 DONORS & SUPPORTERS

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Friday, November 16th

Firehouse 8 - 1648 Pacific Avenue - SF

Visit www.hospitalityhouse.org for updated information

Free & open to the public