Finding Freedom in a Prison

“We’re going to prison!” Mike chuckled as he waited in line to receive a bagged lunch, a drawing pad, and an assortment of art materials. “I’ve never been on a boat,” he confessed, “but I know how to swim.”

As more folks entered through the doors of 290 Turk Street, some wiping the early morning from their eyes, the room filled with a buzz of anticipation and intrigue. Like Mike, many of the folks are participants of our Community Building Program (CBP). And like Mike, it was the first time in awhile that many of them would be leaving the Tenderloin, even for just a day. On this sunny April morning, they were looking forward to the experience of not having to hear the wailing sirens of emergency vehicles screaming up their streets or the luring whistle of someone hawking a pill.

On this day, our CBP and Community Arts Program (CAP) collaborated to bring community members on a field trip to experience the @Large: Ai Weiwei On Alcatraz exhibit.

One of China’s most famous contemporary, prolific dissident artists, Ai Weiwei was considered a champion for the freedom of expression everywhere. Currently under house arrest in China due to acts of protest against his government, Ai Weiwei designed and then shipped his artwork in pieces to be reassembled on Alcatraz. The exhibit, seven installations created for the former penitentiary, addresses issues in a range of media, from sculpture and sound to postcards pre-addressed to political prisoners worldwide that visitors are invited to inscribe. His entire exhibit was a commentary on dissent through the merging of art and social justice, a perfect field trip for the participants and staff members of CAP and CBP.

As the ferry approached Alcatraz, the salty air and trailing seagulls provided a setting of calmness in the midst of anticipation. Some folks pulled out their sketch pads to capture inspiration, while others related stories of childhood field trips.

Once on Alcatraz, the group was greeted by a park ranger who relayed the history of the prison, in particular the unknown facts about people who spent time in deep holes just for protesting their own government — the U.S. government. The group climbed over a hill, past a water tower with the famous red graffiti scrawled on its walls that reads, “Peace and Freedom. Welcome. Home of the Free.”

Communities in Crisis Call For Bold Response

This past February, Hospitality House began the process of developing Hospitality House’s Theory of Change (TOC), a one-page strategic framework to guide our organization’s work and decision-making for the future. The project was made possible through the guidance of CompassPoint Nonprofit Services and the sponsorship of the Mayor’s Office of Housing and Community Development.

This powerful and exciting document was developed over six months and involved a variety of stakeholders, including our participants, community members, staff, and the board of directors. During the first meeting, a workgroup of staff, leadership, and board members were asked to create the Problem Statement. What is the current crisis we’re facing? The statement should excite and provoke.

After much brainstorming and discussion, a common theme surfaced. Powerful sentiments like “The system encourages or condones inequality,” “We live in systems that perpetuate inequality,” “People struggling with poverty are not valued as human beings,” and “There’s a war against the poor!” all spoke to the widening economic inequality in San Francisco. Finally, after over a month of wordsmithing and input, the TOC Workgroup: (back row) Martina Roland, Cynthia Parker-Olah, Windy Clock, Lupe Poblano, Sarah Kent, Shannon Ellis, Jackie Jenkins, Christian Castaing (front row) Allan S. Manalo, Jesse James Johnson, Kenya Hatcher, Ivan Vera, Alexandra Holy
DIRECTOR’S REPORT: Economic Inequality Drives our Community to Take Action
By Jackie Jenks, Executive Director of Hospitality House

It’s been about five years since the “revitalization” plans for San Francisco’s Mid-Market area were set in motion. The proliferation of construction cranes has since reached beyond Market Street, erecting luxury towers and office buildings throughout the South of Market Area, China Basin, Mission Bay, and yes, even the Tenderloin.

With a growing economy inflated by the influx of a highly-paid workforce new to our city, San Francisco is aberrantly transforming into a metropolis of gentrified neighborhoods, overpriced restaurants, absurd monthly rents, and a social structure indifferent to its native culture of diversity, acceptance, and empathy. It is a city with an affordability crisis that continues to widen an already deep economic inequality gap - a chasm made palpable through the stories of daily Ellis Act evictions, the permanent loss of longtime rent-controlled housing, and the increased criminalization of people forced to contend with poverty and homelessness with no end in sight.

This is the story of so many San Francisco communities, and it especially resonates in the neighborhoods that are home to Hospitality House’s programs. Not only are people still struggling to find affordable places to live, many also suffer from the less tangible effects of displacement - loss of restaurants that serve a low-priced meal, displacement of stores and nonprofits that once served the community, and a realization that the place they have always depended on for embracing acceptance may be a place they are no longer welcome. To make matter worse, the peer staff that Hospitality House has proudly employed since our founding almost 50 years ago are among those being driven out of San Francisco by the same economic forces that are displacing so many others. In fact, statistically-speaking, no staff member at Hospitality House meets the income level now needed to afford a place in the city. Those few who remain do so through long-term home ownership or rent control, which is becoming scarcer by the day. The inability of staff to live in the city, and the cost of a commute from more affordable communities such as Stockton, Richmond, or Antioch, makes it increasingly difficult to attract and retain workers, a challenge we share with our nonprofit partners.

Given this new landscape, Hospitality House identified income inequality and its effects on our communities as the single most important issue to be tackled through our new Theory of Change, a one-page strategic framework that will guide the organization’s work and decision-making for the foreseeable future. In this powerful document, the problem being addressed is boldly stated: “Relentless economic inequality in San Francisco robs people of the opportunity to live a life of dignity and self-determination and threatens our shared humanity.”

More specifics about our Theory of Change, including our newly-articulated core values and organizational strategies, are outlined in this issue, and the document is available in hard copy and on our website. As we move forward with its implementation, we are overwhelmed by the work ahead of us and at the same time energized by the people and organizations who join us in this struggle. Thank you for being on this journey with us. Fasten your seatbelts - this is already shaping up to be a wild ride.

[Read more about Hospitality House’s Theory of Change on the front page of this newsletter. Download a copy from our website at www.hospitalityhouse.org]
Theory of Change [continued from front page]

from our staff and participants, we had our problem statement:

“Relentless economic inequality in San Francisco robs people of the opportunity to live a life of dignity and self-determination and threatens our shared humanity.”

During the months that followed, the workgroup conducted several feedback sessions with staff, participants, shelter residents, and board members to develop the Anticipated Changes by asking the question, “If this is the problem, how will we know when it’s resolved?”

The Anticipated Changes need to be specific observable changes that indicate the problem is being solved. The statements should represent an envisioned future that are both larger than what Hospitality House can achieve as an individual organization AND something that Hospitality House will actively contribute to in selecting and designing the agency’s programs.

In the face of the City’s challenges, Hospitality House’s Anticipated Changes include preserving our Tenderloin, Sixth Street, and Mid-Market neighborhoods as places where people struggling with poverty are welcome and can thrive; assuring that our low-income residents have housing and meaningful employment; and building community power such that low-income residents actively participate in making decisions that affect their futures.

Hospitality House’s Core Values

- Community Power: People experiencing the problem will come up with the best solutions.
- Resilience: Anybody can change their lives.
- Dignity: All people have equal value and are worthy of honor and respect.
- Mutual Respect: Honoring the dignity of all people is both a right and a responsibility.
- Self-Determination: People have the right to make choices about how to live their lives.

How would Hospitality House accomplish this? What are the Organizational Strategies?

Grounded in our Core Values and using the same process to obtain feedback, the strategies were crafted to include: building increased capacity for advocacy, organizing, and neighborhood activation; cultivating peer leadership; holding decision-makers accountable; leveraging power by building community alliances; continuing to use a harm reduction “low-threshold” approach; nurturing self-expression through the creative process; and helping people raise their voices and speak truth to power.

As we work to implement this new TOC and develop our work plan for the coming year, Hospitality House is counting on our partners, donors, and allies to join with us in support of these ambitious goals. Our work together has never been more critical. We must take bold action during this time of dramatic and lasting change in San Francisco to assure that our vibrant low-income communities are not swallowed up in the process.

Hospitality House Ballot Measure Endorsements

Every election year, we analyze local ballot measures that have a direct impact on our communities. Here are this year’s endorsements:

PROPOSITION A – Affordable Housing Bond: YES! Authorizes the city to issue up to $310 million in bonds to fund affordable housing programs for vulnerable low and middle-income households.

PROPOSITION C – Expenditure Lobbyist: NO! Requires nonprofit organizations – including small community-based groups – to register as expenditure lobbyists with the Ethics Commission, file burdensome monthly disclosures regarding their activities, and pay a $500 fee. This will stifle the voices of already-marginalized communities and will discourage them from civic engagement and participation in public policy debates.

PROPOSITION E – Requirements for Public Meetings: NO! Amends the Sunshine Ordinance by requiring public meetings, testimony and comments be made accessible through electronic and pre-recorded means. This caters to front groups who will destroy the public process. It will also waste taxpayer dollars, as the city controller estimates that this measure would cost the city an additional $750,000 per year for staffing and operating cost on top of a one-time cost to the city of a minimum of approximately $1.7 million.

PROPOSITION F - Restrict Short-Term Residential Rentals: YES! Limits short-term rentals to 75 days per year (currently 90). Requires hosting platforms to stop listing a unit once that limit is reached. Requires proof of landlord authorization to use the unit for short-term rental. Requires the Planning Department to notify the unit’s owners and neighbors. Prohibits short-term rental of in-law units. Allows neighbors living within 100 feet of the unit to sue to enforce the City’s law and to sue hosting platforms for violations. Makes it a misdemeanor for a hosting platform to list a unit unlawfully.

PROPOSITION I - Suspension of Market-Rate Development in the Mission District: YES! Pauses construction on market-rate housing development of 5 or more units in the Mission for 18 months while the City creates a neighborhood stabilization plan. The stabilization plan will propose measures to enhance and preserve affordable housing in the Mission, such that at least 50% of all new housing would be affordable to low, moderate and middle-income households, and available to Mission residents.

PROPOSITION J - Legacy Business Historic Preservation Fund: YES! Gives incentives to landlords to offer long-term extensions to legacy businesses, including nonprofits. Legacy business are those that have operated for 30+ years, or 20+ if at risk of displacement; those that have contributed to the history or identity of a neighborhood or community; and those with a commitment to maintaining the physical features or traditions of the business.

PROPOSITION K - Surplus Public Lands: YES! Amends the current City ordinance that governs the disposition of surplus property. The current ordinance gives preferences to use of surplus property for affordable housing development and housing for homeless people. This measure expands the existing law to prioritize affordable housing when a public agency wishes to sell or lease unused public sites that are appropriate for housing, and setting minimum requirements for housing affordability.

Remember to VOTE on November 3, 2015 (7AM - 8PM)
Program Outcomes FY2014-2015

Tenderloin Self-Help Center
- 13,848 individuals served
- 146 participants implemented strategies to reduce harm
- 91 participants had a case plan, and 86% achieved at least one goal
- 247 participants attended a harm reduction group, and 40% returned for individual therapy

Sixth Street Self-Help Center
- 6,731 individuals served
- 147 participants implemented strategies to reduce harm
- 74 participants had a case plan, and 81% achieved at least one goal
- 121 participants attended a harm reduction group, and 42% returned for individual therapy

Shelter Program
- 781 homeless adult men received shelter, food and hygiene items
- 100 residents received extended case management
- 7 residents moved into housing
- 13 residents addressed their health care needs

Community Arts Program
- 2,526 artists used the free-of-charge fine arts studio
- 173 art workshops occurred
- 12 exhibitions were held at the CAP gallery and other locations

Community Building Program
- 400 community members participated in 13 events
- 13 interns enrolled in the Healing, Organizing & Leadership Development (HOLD) program
- 15 HOLD interns participated in civic engagement activities
- 143 participants implemented strategies to reduce harm
- 86 participants had a case plan, and 100% achieved at least one goal
- 58 participants received multiple therapy sessions, and 95% achieved at least one goal

Employment Program
- 146 job-seekers enrolled in employment case management
- 78 obtained job placement

FY2014-2015 Financials*

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<td>NET INCOME</td>
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*Financials represent unaudited totals. Annual audit will be published by December 31.

THE CITY

In this city of power
This city of wealth and fame
The lonely, the destitute
Relegated to the shadows of shame
They stand in on the streets
Yet you do not see
You put on blinders to comfort your conscience
So you can live without a sense of guilt
After all they are only drunks, drug users and worse
Not at all human, any part of your world
Contributing nothing to the society you serve
Or so you think
These are people with ideas, ideals and emotions

People who did not ask for this to happen
No one says I want to be homeless
No one wants to deal with that pain
Who will speak for these masses without a voice?
In the marbled place of power
Who will give the invisible masses a face?
Who will give these people back their respect and dignity?
Who will wipe away their shame?
In this city of wealth and fame

Written and performed by staff member John Ellison during the Community Building Program’s Potluck & Poetry event.
Special thanks to our wonderful Donors and Sponsors:

**Five Thousand Dollars:***

- Acri/Reynolds
- Peter A. Alexander
- Alex Davis
- Eddy Kangnavong
- Aki Kaneko
- Anna Kitchen
- David Kowalski
- Celine Lavoie
- Lisa Lee
- Sigrid Leppert
- Brian Libby
- Susan Nonni
- Olga Ofner
- Victor Oliva
- Vida Patel
- Rachel Petrella
- John Phillips
- Tim Pichon
- Yvonne Rojas
- Valeria Salina
- Laura Sarno
- Mark Schelling
- Charlie Schmidt
- Anthony Schwartz
- Alex Shropshire
- Lisa Silverman
- Jill Smith
- Karen Solomon
- Liza Staton
- Andrew Stein
- Joanne Teets
- Andrew Testa
- David Thaler
- Adam Thomas
- Sam Thompson
- Laura Tidmore
- Jennifer Todd
- John Trombetta
- Sarah Uchida
- Hanan Vaissier
- Wallace Walker
- Michelle Wessel
- Stephen Whitlock
- Elizabeth Wilson
- Michele Wolfe

**Four Thousand Eight Hundred Dollars:***

- Anthony Amoroso
- Sabrina Bannigan
- Carsie Barlow
- Thomas Barron
- Emily Bateman
- Jamie Best
- Mark Black
- Aubrey Cohen
- Sarah Conger
- Mike Corbitt
- Jessica Cox
- David Dailey
- Vivian Dampfl
- Arian Daniel
- David Deans
- Sarah DeLille
- David Dent
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- Daniel Elkin
- Kelly Elwood
- Ali El-Maadawy
- Joseph Enzler
- Sara Evans
- Sherry Farkouh
- Phoebe Feltman
- Sarah Field
- Sarah Frey
- Christopher Franks
- Keith Fritts
- Joseph Furman
- Sarah Gayle
- Lauren Gilad
- Emily Givens
- Elizabeth Gohl
- Robert Goldstein
- Sarah Gough
- Michael Graff
- Michael Granahan
- Joseph Greenfield
- Elizabeth Greenleaf
- David Greenslade
- Summer Grills
- Jane Guzey
- Jennifer Hagen
- Abigail Hall
- Lee Harmon
- Shari Harrell
- John Harrell
- John Hargis
- Andres Harris
- Stephen Hays
- Robby Hecht
- Aaron Hendricks
- William Hendricks
- Jennifer Henley
- John Henry
- Alex Hersey
-99

**Four Thousand Seven Hundred Ninety-One Dollars:***

- John Hersey
- Scott Hermes
- Michelle Hines
- John Hinton
- Brian Hobbs
- Alena Hoey
- Paul Hollander
- Mark Holahan
- mennonite
- andrew hughes
- eric hubbard
- jason hubert
- sue hughes
- william hughes
- miri hughes
- rosalyn hughes
- john hughes
- jeremy hughes
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Each year, Hospitality House tries to do a little something special for our participants who may not otherwise have much to celebrate. Below is our wish list of items.

- new socks
- new flip-flops
- new work boots
- pajama sets for men
- hats, gloves, scarves
- hygiene items
- new men’s underwear
- art supplies
- sketch pads
- art portfolios
- backpacks/bags
- healthy food gift cards
- flash thumb drives
- job interview clothing

If you’re able to donate some portion, please contact Allan at 415-749-2184 or email amanalo@hospitalityhouse.org. Thanks for your consideration.

Sorry, we are unable to accept used clothing or furniture. All donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Donors will be recognized in our upcoming e-newsletter.

Don’t Miss
ART FOR THE HOUSE 2015
October 22nd at 6pm
ARC Gallery
1246 Folsom St. SF
Help support your neighborhood artists! For more info:
Www.hospitalityhouse.org

Hospitality House All Occasion Greeting Cards

Designed by and benefiting artists from our Community Arts Program. Dozens of seasonal and non-denominational designs. ONLY $10 per pack and discounts for larger orders. To see full-colored cards and to order online go to:

www.hospitalityhouse.org

Or contact Allan S. Manalo at (415) 749-2184
or amanalo@hospitalityhouse.org