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Our Model

We provide homeless and low-income people with the resources they need to rebuild their lives. First, they volunteer on one of our teams and begin working collaboratively on beautification projects. Team Members are held accountable and trusted to complete tasks, show up on time, and work well with others. Those who show dedication and leadership skills have the ability to rise up to become Team Leads, then Managers, and supervise others with little or no supervision from staff.

In return, Team Members receive a non-cash stipend to help cover their basic needs while taking advantage of our case management and employment services to find housing and a job. Our ultimate goal is to transition Team Members into employment because having a job restores hope and opens the door to other opportunities. Our model is structured to be a transitional program into permanent housing and employment.
In 2004, while on sabbatical from her tech career, Eileen Richardson popped her head into Palo Alto’s food closet to volunteer. Her son Chris is recalled as infamously saying, “Don’t do it mom, you’re supposed to be taking a break. You’ll end up running the place.”

And that’s exactly what happened.

Her days spent serving food to Palo Alto’s homeless and low-income residents was time well spent because it led to a deeper understanding of what homelessness truly looks like in Silicon Valley and eventually the development of Downtown Streets Team (DST).

True to form, Eileen didn’t simply spend her days serving food, she also talked with people and learned their stories, thinking there has to be another way to help these people. After all, they’d had careers, dreams.... but all of it withered away when they lost their dignity, and eventually their hope, while living a life of poverty on the streets of one of the Bay Area’s most affluent cities.

Eileen was determined to make a change.

It just so happened the Palo Alto Business Improvement District (BID) recently conducted a survey to find out what issues its residents wanted to address. Panhandling and debris on the streets topped the priorities. Why couldn’t these two issues be tackled with one solution? The BID and Eileen began developing ideas for DST.

In 2005, Eileen took over the BID and launched DST’s first team with only $45K and four Team Members. She literally handed a broom, a dustpan and a yellow shirt to four men who had been panhandling on the downtown streets of Palo Alto, and asked if they would like to sweep the streets in return for a basic needs stipend and employment services and case management services.

They did and DST was born.

Soon after, the Team expanded beyond the BID and DST became a certified 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Since then we have expanded to San Jose (2011), Sunnyvale (2012) and San Rafael (2013), with more communities to come. Our 10-year anniversary marked a tenfold increase in budget, from $45,000 to $4.5 million.
GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS
$2,709,582

CONTRIBUTIONS
$963,920

OTHER CONTRACTS
$178,992

FEE FOR SERVICE CONTRACTS
$95,100

IN-KIND DONATIONS
$82,773

RENTAL INCOME
$51,518

FUNDRAISING & EVENTS
$44,170

OTHER INCOME
$12,815
SAN JOSE STREETS TEAM
$1,505,728

PALO ALTO TEAM
$564,238

MANAGEMENT & GENERAL
$460,393

SAN JOSE TEAM
$367,981

SAN RAFAEL TEAM
$348,448

NORTH COUNTY TEAM
$355,304

SUNNYVALE TEAM
$337,757

FUNDRAISING
$114,198
In San Rafael’s first year, the team made a significant impact and blew its goals out of the water.

250% The percentage by which we exceeded the city’s expectations for number of active Team Members, which is 29.

190+ People have attended our Weekly Success Team Meetings (that’s 40% of San Rafael’s homeless population)!

70 People have been in our program over the course of the year.

25 Team Members have obtained employment lasting at least three months (our goal for the year was 8).
154 people found a home
{up 81% from last year}

166 people found jobs and kept them for > 90 days
{up 95% from last year}

74.8% retention rate (which is 5 times the “national best practice” of 14%)

14% homelessness decreased by {the first significant drop in 15 years}

800 cigarette butts collected for recycling into park benches and shipping pallets

1.2 million gallons of debris removed from creeks and waterways and three neighborhoods in San Jose

$4.5 million budget

100 times our budget of $45,000 in 2005 (year founded)
Our San Jose Team kicked off 5 years ago with a goal to clean up Coyote Creek, homeless encampments, and also focus on beautifying the three most blighted neighborhoods in the city. With two commendations under its belt and over 8,000 cubic yards of trash hauled away, our San Jose Team has finally expanded to downtown.

The new program is a partnership with Groundwerx, an organization that provides cleaning services in downtown. You have probably seen them sweeping and picking up trash in their bright orange shirts. And now if you see our logo, that’s one of our Team Members!

This story was also breaking news on KTVU Channel 2.

NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH GROUNDWERX

"WE ARE HERE TO SHOW THAT WE DON’T WANT TO BE HOMELESS ANYMORE. I MIGHT HAVE LOST MY WAY, BUT I AM GETTING THERE.

- TEAM MEMBER MARCELOUS"
Our Team Members threw the first pitch at the San Rafael Pacifics in San Rafael. Everyday, our Team Members astound us with their skills and talents. Our San Rafael Team also celebrated their one-year anniversary!
We began fundraising for our first social enterprise: Kartma Street Cafe, the brainchild of Palo Alto Project Zia MacWilliams. She came up with the idea to have a coffee cart that will employee our Team Members, offering them transferable skills, while paying a living wage. Through weeks of brainstorming and expert help from a local design team, we named it Kartma Street Cafe and established a lovable, catchy and intriguing kart. We are in initial crowd-funding stages, including an event hosted in downtown San Jose (pictured below).
Our “We’ll Lift You Up” short video, filmed from the perspective of our Team Members and produced in-house by one staff member and the help of three talented film students from the United Kingdom, New York City and San Jose, the short shows the positive and life-changing impact our staff and program model has made on the lives of the homeless people we serve. It won CreaTV San Jose’s “Nonprofit Short” award.
ABOUT THE DOWNTOWN FOOD CLOSET
Downtown Food Closet was established in Palo Alto in 1976 to provide essential food to homeless and low-income individuals of Palo Alto, Menlo Park, and East Palo Alto. This is the same food closet Eileen visited 10 years ago while on sabbatical. Downtown Food Closet managers have volunteered their time for over 30 years. On average, 65 individuals access the Food Closet per day and over 880 pounds of food are distributed each week. We took over management in September 2014, and re-branded it as Downtown Food Closet, with a new logo.

A HEARTWARMING CELEBRATION
We hosted a ribbon-cutting celebration October 2, 2014 at All Saints Episcopal Church, the same day of our Palo Alto Team's first meeting at this location. Palo Alto Mayor Nancy Shepherd cut the ribbon with our Executive Director, along with Chief of Police Dennis Burns. We awarded our long-time food closet managers for their commitment to helping people in need and enjoyed an array of food, refreshments and live music. The community was invited to stay for our Team Meeting, meet our staff and food closet volunteers.
Our First Team Member Softball Team

Coached by one of our Sunnyvale Team Leads and former minor league baseball player, Walter Barnes, we launched our first Team Member recreational softball team. Each Friday night Walter and the team played together in Washington park as part of Bay Area Community Sports’ co-ed league. Walter said, “It’s not about winning, you come here and enjoy yourself.”

“I can’t tell you what this means to me. To be part of a team with these wonderful people is magical.”

- Team Member Sandra
SUNNYVALE TEAM LAUNCHES DOWNTOWN CONTRACT

Downtown Sunnyvale: we have arrived! Our Sunnyvale Team kicked off a new project in partnership with City of Sunnyvale Environmental Services Department to clean up downtown. In only three hours our team collected over 1,600 cigarette butts and 25 bags of trash. We saved those cigarettes from going down the drain and into the Bay and they will be Terracycled into park benches and plastic pallets for other uses.
We hosted our first awards for property managers and landlords to show our appreciation for their commitment to being socially responsible in housing our MOWGLI Cubs. Our Cubs, people who specifically lived in San Jose’s largest homeless encampment (aka The Jungle) personally presented their awards to the landlords and property managers who housed them. It was a touching and somewhat emotional tribute to people who have opened the hearts and minds to helping us end homelessness. We hope this is the first of many Housing for Humanity Awards nights.
We were selected to host our first Celebrity Bartender Night at the Silicon Valley Club. Between sponsors and tips for our celebrity bartenders, **WE RAISED OVER $46,000.** We raised more than any other nonprofit has in past years. It was a fun, lively night and we look forward to next year.

**CELEBRITY BARTENDERS**
Chris Jackson, 98.5 KFOX
Hon. Raul Peralez, San Jose City Councilmember
Jeff Pope and Marla Davies, 106.5 KEZR
Jim Salata, Garden City Construction
Sal Pizarro, San Jose Mercury News

**FEATURED ARTWORK BY**
Urban Artist SCAPE Martinez

**EMCEE**
Robert Handa, NBC Bay Area/Asian Pacific America
Graduate Rodney shared his heartfelt story about how circumstance and rebellious decisions eventually led to 30 years of homelessness. Rodney is now married, has a home and a job. The room, normally overridden with boisterous laughing and talking, was silent for the duration of his story.
We launched a campaign across Santa Clara called One Balloon to bring attention to homelessness.

We filled black balloons with helium and planted them all over Silicon Valley. Each balloon had the words “Pop Me to End Homelessness” printed on one side and inside they contained info about SV Gives, how to donate and info about our 10-year anniversary. Each balloon also contained two stickers (pictured to the right) for people to wear, hoping we could create a ripple effect of intrigue across the county, to bring awareness to homelessness. While the social media aspect of the campaign did not take off as we hoped, 45% of the people who donated during the 24 hour campaign were new donors and we placed #9 for most unique donors among 338 large nonprofits. The campaign was solely driven through social media and the balloons themselves, planted strategically at different times of the day in the following places:

- Downtown San Jose
  (specifically San Pedro Square and City Hall)
- Google campus and around Mountain View
- Downtown Palo Alto
- NPR
- SV Business Journal
- San Jose Mercury News
- ABC News Channel 7
- NBC Bay Area
- KTVU
- CreaTV

**PRIZES WE WON**

- **$1000 Golden Ticket** sponsored by Silver Spring Networks awarded to the nonprofit with both a mission related to environment and the most unique donors during the 12-1pm hour
- **$2,000 bonus** sponsored by an anonymous donor
- **$2,000** sponsored by the Grove Foundation for the top 10 nonprofits with both a mission related to humanitarian aid and that have the most unique donors during the 24 hour event
- **$250 Golden Ticket** sponsored by Heritage Bank of Commerce awarded to the nonprofit with the most unique donors during the 4-5pm hour
- **$5,000 bonus** sponsored by an anonymous donor

WE FUNDRAISED $23,072.25 over 24 hours
"We Are Fighters" is an appreciation awards ceremony honoring our dedicated volunteers, some of whom have given more than just countless hours of their time, but have also donated their incredible talents to helping change perceptions about homelessness across the Bay Area.

Hosted at the beautiful Gamble Gardens in our founding city of Palo Alto, we awarded our most spirited and creative volunteers who have worked tirelessly for our Team Members.

PLEASE JOIN US FOR
WE ARE FIGHTERS
- A VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION EVENT -
TO CELEBRATE YOU, OUR DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15
5:30-7:30PM
GAMBLE GARDENS
AT THE CARRIAGE HOUSE
1431 WAVERLEY STREET • PALO ALTO, CA 94301

JOIN US FOR HORS D’OEUVRES AND
GARDEN THEMED DRINKS.
SHORT AWARDS CEREMONY TO FOLLOW.

RSVP BY SEPTEMBER 30 TO MARIANNA
EVENTS@STREETSTEAM.ORG

SPACE IS LIMITED
Lemonade Stand Donation
These adorable kids set up a lemonade stand and donated their profits to Downtown Streets Team.

Serve Sunday
Nearly 50 enthusiastic volunteers from Saratoga Federated Church got to know us a little bit better and put together over 800 hygiene kits for our homeless and housed Team Members. We’re pretty sure our Team Members blew them away with their poignant stories about homelessness and the struggles they’ve overcome. Thank you SFC. You rock!
VMware Day

VMware, a cloud and virtualization software company based in Palo Alto, created a full day of employment prep and resume building workshops for our Team Members. Of course, the learning went both ways. Our Team Members walked away with new skills, increased self-esteem and the tools to head out and find a job, while VMware’s employees had the opportunity to learn about homelessness and how to help our Team Members in a substantial, life-changing way. It was a great day for everyone to learn from each other.
The best Christmas gift. Can you see what Oscar is holding in his hand? We’ll give you a clue. Oscar has been homeless for several years and has been working so hard these last few months, completing classes while working 12-hour shifts and being a great dad to his 5 year old son. He’s overcome multiple personal issues and is beyond stoked to tell his son they now have a home. Kudos to Angelique and the team who worked so hard advocating on his behalf! Drum-roll please...You guessed it! Oscar is holding the key to his new home!
“Sarah has been fully engaged since day one. She ended up in jail for 2 months and stayed in contact while she was there and the first thing she did when she got out was look for us. She has always kept a good spirit and positive attitude even at her lowest points. While signing the lease she remained stoic but she couldn’t help but to cry in the lobby. Words can’t explain how happy I am and how proud I am of her.” - Cliff, case manager

Dwayne is on fire! Not only did he get three job offers while he was on our waitlist, he was hired by Levi’s Stadium, he’s hitting the books to finish his college degree AND he started writing short stories again. Plus, he’ll be on KQED this spring talking about youth homelessness. Let’s give him a round of applause!
“I JUST WANNA PLAY A PART IN ENDING HOMELESSNESS BECAUSE I KNOW WE CAN DO IT. WE GOT THE MANPOWER. WE GOT THE LOVE. WE GOT PEOPLE WHO REALLY WANT TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN.”

- Michael
Michael touched the lives of many people by sharing his life’s story as a rebellious teen, and delinquent who frequented California’s prisons, which eventually led to him becoming homeless. Through a significant transformation in joining our team, Michael became a great spokesperson for homeless people, vouching that people who end up there for reasons like he did, can change and become a significant contributor to society.

His story inspired and brought hope to those who needed it, but ultimately, sharing was Michael’s way of giving back - something he felt he owed to himself and everyone he met.
YOU HAVE SHOWN US TIME AND AGAIN THAT THERE ARE MANY MIRACLES YET TO COME, BECAUSE YOU ARE ONE OF THOSE MIRACLES. REST IN PEACE, MICHAEL.
We were featured on NBC Bay Area Proud, a news broadcast series that showcases the feel-good stories happening around the Bay Area. We pitched a story about one of our Sunnyvale Team Members, Walter, who once played minor league baseball and is now coaching our Team Members on their own softball team.

The piece reached far beyond the Bay Area, all the way to the other side of the country where Walter’s kids currently live, who he had not spoken to in years, ever since he moved away. They saw his story and got in touch with him. Turns out Walter has a slew of grandkids he has yet to meet. Hopefully they’ll all come together soon.
BOARD OF DIRECTORS & EXECUTIVE STAFF

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• Matthew Bahls, Associate Director of Development, Stanford School of Engineering
• Chief Dennis Burns, Chief of Police, Palo Alto Police Dept.
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• Jeanne Murphy, former nonprofit Executive Director
• Norm Robinson
• Esther Shih
• Eileen Richardson, Executive Director, Downtown Streets Team

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