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from the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Past & The Present

1957

Sputnik was in orbit. Ike was in the White House. Lucy was on the television. Drive-in hamburger stands lined El Camino Real, and there were two drive-in movie theatres (one on the site of the current Century Cinemas and one in a pasture on Grant Road). All the kids in Mountain View, Los Altos and the then non-existent town of Los Altos Hills went to one high school on Castro Street.

The Summer of Love was 10 years away. It would take another 20 for disco fever to sweep the land. The Loma Prieta earthquake would occur in 32 years, and the Internet revolution was 40 years away.

And now it's 2007, and Community Services Agency (CSA) is embarking on an extraordinary year. It was 50 years ago, in 1957, that a group of volunteers pulled together to form the Mountain View Welfare Council (our original name). They wanted to help the migrant farm worker families who came to Mountain View and Los Altos each year for work in the fruit orchards.

In the 1960's President Johnson declared a "war on poverty." Our name was changed to Commu-

nity Services Agency. The "working poor" changed too—from working in fields and canneries to working in retail and foodservice. But what didn't change and will never change was our commitment to helping our neighbors in need.

And while we don't celebrate the fact that the "war on poverty" is still being waged, we do have a lot to be proud of. We have the capacity to serve more people now than at any other time in our history. We have 13 programs that serve more than 5,000 people each year. Our staff of 20 is augmented by a volunteer force of more than 600. And we continue to be blessed with a kind, caring and compassionate community that supports our work with our neighbors in need.

We will be having all sorts of events in the coming year to commemorate our 50th Anniversary. You are an important part of our success and we want you to be a part of the commemoration and celebration too. Keep an eye on our website, www.csa-cares.org. We'll have a lot of information for you on how you can participate in this extraordinary year.

I look forward to seeing you at one of our many celebrations.

Tom Myers

Executive Director

2006-2007 Board of Directors

- President*
Vera Baum (2002)
Community Volunteer
- Secretary*
Dave Smullin (2003)
Attorney (inactive), Community Volunteer
- Executive Director*
Tom Myers (1999)
- Vice President*
Carol Olson (2003)
Community Volunteer
- Treasurer*
Richard Magnuson (2005)
Venture Capital Investor
- Members*
Matthew Broadbent (2003)
Minister, Foothills Congregational Church
- William James** (2006)
Patent Attorney
- Bruce Karney** (2003)
Knowledge Management Consultant
- King Lear** (2006)
Retired Chemical Engineer
- Kathleen Lynch** (2000)
Consultant, KEL NonProfit Consulting Services
- Duncan MacVicar** (2005)
Management Consultant
- Robert Mullenger** (2006)
Product Manager, Omnicell
- Linda Peterson Fouquet** (2005)
Founder & CEO, Networking Experts, Inc.
- Neal Reiter** (2006)
Subcontract Administrator, Lockheed Martin
- Evita Prasetya Twerdahl** (2004)
Sr. Product Line Manager, Wherify Wireless



caring for our HOMELESS

Getting Older?

The baby boomer generation is about to burst into retirement and while it may redefine the concept of aging (along with retirement) the fact remains that more and more of us are getting older and older. And we really can't change that, as much as we'd like to.

Poverty isn't the only facet of life that seems to be invisible to us as a community according to **Naomi Gomez**, our Senior Services Program Director. "Seniors are invisible in our society, too," she says. "And when poverty and fixed incomes are added to the equation, the needs to be addressed and the work to be done increases substantially."

Our Senior Services program addresses two distinct groups of seniors. There's the "younger" senior—still active, healthy and involved who usually need only a brief intervention or referral and perhaps some disease and medicine management skill training. And then there's the "senior" senior—the individual with more severe mobility and health related issues requiring more monitoring along with a more intensive and integrated care delivery service.

A lot of the services in the community available for seniors are based on income levels. Like Emergency Assistance, seniors come to trust their case manager and to use them as a resource for a lot of needs. "That's the hardest part of the job," says Naomi. "Some of our clients are just above the guideline limit so they don't qualify for some programs or services. But they still have the need." The challenge then is to find other providers for the service or agencies that subsidize the service.



One of the many critical, and more easily remedied, challenges facing seniors is transportation—transportation to a medical appointment, transportation to lunch and/or activities at the Senior Centers in both Mountain View and Los Altos. "We can always use more volunteer drivers," says Naomi. "Or we can use more funding to offer the Outreach Paratransit. Without transportation our seniors become isolated from the rest of us in addition to being unable to access health care. The higher cost of gas impacts both volunteers and the cost of the paratransit."

The goal with our Senior Services Program is to keep seniors in their own homes. It's not only cost-effective to the community, but it means so much more to the quality of life of the senior. Our oldest senior client just turned 101 this year and still lives on her own. Another has lived in the same house for over 80 years; the same house she was raised in.

With so much mobility in our society, not everyone has a family member or relative nearby anymore to take care of those little things like picking up a prescription or extra groceries, let alone the emergency issues. That's why we're here...to care for the seniors.

Senior Services Program

Case Management

In-home assessments, counseling, and referrals helping over 200 seniors each year.

Senior Nutrition Program

Hot lunches with social and educational opportunities at the Mountain View Senior Center feeding over 120 seniors every week day.

Volunteer drivers are needed to help homebound seniors enjoy a hot lunch and company out on the town.



Paul* is a pleasant, serious, and hardworking guy in his 60's, living in Mountain View with his wife Carla*. In 2001 he found himself unemployed in the economic downturn and unable to find a new job because of his age.

During this past 2006 holiday season, Paul's life began to unravel. He and his wife were having a really difficult time making ends meet and were even afraid of becoming homeless. They had been receiving financial support from family members each month to help with living costs. But their eldest daughter was laid off from her job and was going through a divorce at the same time. As much as she wanted she was no longer able to provide any monetary assistance.

Someone from the Mountain View Senior Center told Paul about Community Services Agency. An appointment was made for a Senior Services Case Manager to meet with Paul and Carla at the Senior Center. Paul began to look more hopeful as the Case Manager addressed his concerns and needs and described how our programs could be of assistance.

A date was set to meet at their home to prioritize a list of needs to be addressed. The first priority was to make sure that Paul and Carla did not become homeless, so the couple was connected to our emergency rent assistance program to cover the cost on one month's rent to take some of the pressure off them.

The next priority was to stabilize their income. Paul had applied on his own for Supplementary Security Income (SSI) through the Social Security Administration and was approved for one month receiving a letter asking for more documentation or his benefits would be discontinued. With his case manager's assistance Paul submitted the letter of explanation and all the requested documents prior to the deadline. Paul was confirmed as eligible and would continue receiving the monthly benefit payment. While Carla had limited English skills, our case manager was able to enroll her in the Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI); a program that benefits legal immigrants who are aged or disabled. Approved for assistance, Carla too receives monthly financial assistance.

While eligible for food supplies from our Food & Nutrition Center, Paul and Carla are able to make do on their own with the food stamps they receive. Occasionally they participate in our Senior Nutrition Program at the Mountain View Senior Center, but Carla's arthritis makes it difficult for her to get around with assistance.

Paul feels that Community Services Agency was there for them when they were afraid of losing their home and their dignity. He is now thriving and has called back to thank us for our support and assistance. He is also participating now in a job training program through the Council of Aging Silicon Valley (www.ca-reaces.org) for seniors and recently told us, "Things are really moving in a positive direction."

* Paul and Carla asked that we not use their real names.

from the **BOARD PRESIDENT**
The Next 50 Years



As we commemorate our 50th Anniversary, the Board of Directors (and Staff), will be reassessing our strategic position to develop new organizational goals to address client and community needs. Over the next several months, we will be undergoing an intensive strategic planning process, re-evaluating our mission and vision for the community; essentially, re-examining why we exist, what we do, and if what we do is effective.

We take very seriously the public trust you place in us to help our neighbors in need. We will look internally and analyze our programs and services, talking to our clients about their needs and the challenges they face living here in the Silicon Valley. And, we will look externally to you, the community (our "stakeholders") about your concerns about the poverty, homelessness, and the seniors in our community. We'll also be looking at the changing face of the community, along with our own strengths and weaknesses, and any opportunities or threats looming on the horizon.

We are the sum of our experiences over the past 50 years and we value that hard earned reputation as the community's social safety net for those in need. But just as the more things change and the more they stay the same; the reverse is true, too. We face a variety of new or changing concerns: funding issues (the decreasing governmental funds for social issues), program opportunities and new collaborations for better delivery of services, changing regulations for nonprofit entities, and the ever changing faces (racially, ethnically, and even by age) and needs (the ever escalating cost of living—rents, electricity and even gas) of our client populations.

This process will help us determine what to do; help us look at the broad approaches to be taken (strategies), and the general and specific results to be sought (goals and objectives). The end result will be an outline of our strategic direction(s) in addressing the challenges faced by the working poor and homeless, along with the ever growing numbers of seniors in our community.

This strategic plan will then serve as a guide for us for at least the next five years, establishing appropriate milestones and benchmarks for each goal and objective. The plan is ultimately no more, and no less, than a set of decisions about what to do, why to do it, and how to do it as we embark on the next 50 year chapter of our life.

I invite you to join us in making a difference in the community, in someone's life.

Vera Baum
 Board President

caring for the **WORKING POOR**

Out of Money



It's hard to believe that there is poverty in Silicon Valley. But low-income housing is found amidst the million dollar homes. And although we're not far from the agricultural abundance of the Central Valley, we have individuals and families living in "food-insecure" households. Medical expertise in this country is unsurpassed, but our clients have no health insurance, for them the emergency room is their medical plan.

CSA's Executive Director **Tom Myers** has blogged about "The Invisible Nature of Poverty." His current website blog talks about how CSA is the link between these two worlds that exist side-by-side in our community. Emergency Assistance Program Director **Elba Landaverde** is on the front line in addressing the challenges faced by those called the "working poor"—someone who has a job (or two or three) and still can't make ends meet; or classified as "low- (or fixed) income"—individuals and families working at minimum wages in a service sector job or living on a fixed Social Security check; or just going through a "bad spell" as Kelly in our client story.

According to Elba the hardest part of the job is saying "No." We are a social safety-net agency

Emergency Assistance Programs

Case Management	Assessments, counseling, and referrals for more than 4,200 people each year
Rent Assistance	One-time rent payment to prevent eviction
Utility Assistance	One-time utility payment to prevent shutoff
Housing Assistance	One-night motel voucher for emergency situations
Dental Assistance	Payment for uninsured children dental care
Vision Assistance	Payment for eye exams for uninsured children
Prescription Assistance	Payment for medical prescriptions for uninsured adults and children
Back-to-School Assistance	Backpacks and school supplies for grades K-12
Municipal Recreation Vouchers	Payment for after school and summer children activities
Holiday Sharing Program	Making the Holidays brighter for families with children
Food & Nutrition Center	Minimizing food insecurity and teaching nutrition to more than 4,000 people each year.



Volunteers are needed year-round in the Food & Nutrition Center and in November and December for the Holiday Sharing Program.

intervening and stabilizing client's lives in times of financial or medical crisis. Over the past 50 years however, clients have come to trust us and therefore they come to us for all their needs, the needs for which we have to refer them to other nonprofit or government agencies and the needs for which there are no referrals and nothing that can be done, such as a shipping a deceased back to their family in another country.

For Elba and case manager **Leslie Iglesias** the most gratifying part is helping people—"making their life easier and better; helping them from loosing their apartment." They know how to make the system work on behalf of their clients, advocating against property owners who sometimes won't even give the client their rental agreement when they move in. They run interfer-

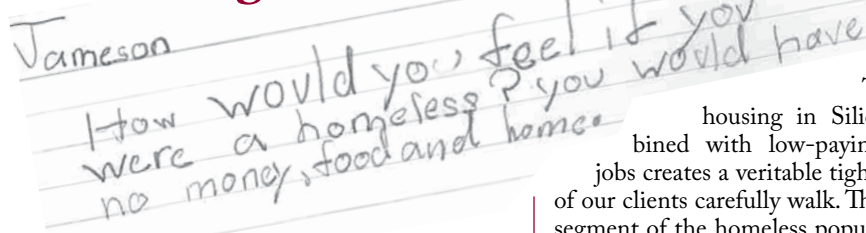
ence. They care.
 "The waitlist for low-income (Section 8) housing was open in April 2006 for one week for the first time in years," says Elba. "We hustled to get clients registered. One 60-year woman made it but there are over 300,000 names in front of hers...what do you think her chances are?"

What keeps Elba and Leslie going is that something the community and our donors don't get to see or experience: the big smiles—and hugs—when a crisis is averted, along with the thank you cards and notes, and even the homemade tamales and flan!

CSA is truly the link between a caring community and those who need that care. It's a job done on your behalf, a caring community, and only with your support.

caring for the **HOMELESS**

Out of Sight



Poverty and homelessness are inextricably linked. With a low-income or minimum wage job, the working poor face difficult choices every day with limited resources. Pay for food? Pay for childcare? Pay for education? Pay for healthcare? Pay for housing? Pay for bus fare? Put gas in the car? But, it's housing, according to a 2006 report from the National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH) that takes the hit, since it requires the largest proportion of income.

Nadia Ilieva is our Alpha Omega Homeless Services Specialist. Now in its second year of transition from a rotating homeless shelter, Homeless Services has case managed more than 130 individuals and families. The greatest challenge according to her is "finding resources for each individual client's needs and overcoming their resistance to register and provide personal data

for the County's mandatory Homeless Management Information System."

The high cost of housing in Silicon Valley combined with low-paying service sector jobs creates a veritable tightrope which a lot of our clients carefully walk. The fastest growing segment of the homeless population is made up of families with children. "We think of homeless people as those under the freeway overpasses or on city streets," Nadia says. "But a family living on a friend or relative's couch is also homeless. And, so is a family living in their automobile."

Homeless people do have however shared basic needs – affordable housing, adequate incomes, and health care. And, some do require additional services for mental health or drug treatment. But the bottom line is the perception of homeless people is not a "warm and fuzzy," which marginalizes and isolates them even more from programs and services.

The fact is that people who do become homeless do not fit one general description. "It's a myth that they are all drug users or lazy people," Nadia continues. "Many of them are homeless even though they have jobs." Forty percent of homeless men are veterans of the US Armed Services and 22% of homeless single mothers come from

I remember the first day I met with **Andrea**. She had come to my office feeling defeated and with a weight of medical problems on her shoulders. This Stanford alum and one time hotel manager found herself struggling to accept her new personal hardships and adjust to a completely different lifestyle than she had previously known.

Her homelessness began in the latter part of 2004. She was involved in a near fatal car accident requiring hospitalization off and on for the next two years. Andrea survived the accident but her life wasn't the same after that. Her physical ailments forced her to stop working. She started receiving State Disability and was able to stay at her apartment in Mountain View. But when her SDI Benefits were exhausted, Andrea started struggling with her rent. She was eventually evicted from her place of over thirty years and started living in her car. Luckily, Andrea started receiving Social Security Disability benefits shortly thereafter and was able to pay her hospital bills, prescriptions and car insurance. On occasion, she would stay with friends or in motel rooms. During this time, she kept questioning herself and wondering if she would ever find a way out of this.

Andrea came to Community Services Agency mainly for assistance with food and housing. With tears in her eyes, she explained to the Alpha Omega case manager that she couldn't believe she was in this situation. Andrea was assisted

with locating affordable and shared housing in Santa Clara County. In addition to housing, Andrea was given access to our food and nutrition center. She met with her Alpha Omega case manager regularly for support and to update the case manager on her situation. Each time Andrea came to the office, it seemed as if she was becoming more and more hopeful. She was applying for housing and working on her credit. Unfortunately, Andrea was turned down by a few housing complexes due to her bad credit. But through it all, she persevered and continued with her housing search.

After months of coordinating with a shared housing program, Andrea finally found a place in Sunnyvale, California. The Alpha Omega program assisted her with first month's rent and she moved in March 2007. Andrea is extremely grateful for the information and services she has received through the Alpha Omega Program. "The Alpha Omega Homeless Services has been a god send to me for so many reasons," she said. "The counseling, encouragement, guidance and support have been so beneficial and rewarding at such a time of need." Until she gets completely situated in her new home in Sunnyvale, she will continue to receive support and services at CSA.

*Andrea asked that we not use her real name.

an abusive relationship.

"Sometimes all they need is to be pointed in the right direction with a little encouragement," she says. "It feels so good when they come back or just drop in to say 'thanks' or share the excitement of 'Today I found a job!'"

Homeless Services Programs

Case Management	Assessment, counseling, and referrals
Food & Nutrition Center	Lunch bags are available in addition to full Food & Nutrition Center services.
Transportation Assistance	Monthly VTA passes; bus tokens to get to job interviews
Personal Care & Wardrobe Assistance	Toiletries, plus gift cards to Target and Payless Shoes
Communication Assistance	Phone cards
Medical Care Assistance	Physicals, check-ups and referrals by volunteer medical personnel.