



HOUSEWORK

news from transition house • santa barbara, california • spring 2019

Four Years Ago They Left Transition House— What T-House Means to Kirk and Susie Today

By Kathleen Baushke, Executive Director

People sometimes ask me if we know how past residents in our program are faring. We try to keep up with families for three years after they leave our program, checking in every six months, but truthfully, it can be hard to keep in touch. Even though we reach out, we cannot always connect with them. I would imagine that being in a homeless shelter may not be an experience these families want to dwell on, and when they leave, they are truly ready to move on.

Kirk was different. Every few months after his family moved to housing in 2015, I'd receive a call from Kirk, filling me in on how he was doing. His calls always brightened my day—his motivation to continue to succeed was inspiring. Recently, I heard from Kirk and decided to ask him and his wife, Susie, how they felt about their time at Transition House.

First, a little background. Kirk and Susie met in 2007 and had two sons, but they struggled with poverty, even while

they worked and attended school. Then tragedy struck when their youngest son passed away. The resulting trauma made a substance abuse problem that Kirk struggled with even worse. Their grief was hard on their relationship and impacted their ability to get ahead financially.

For a while, they managed to keep an apartment and soon gave birth to another son. But ultimately, they lost their

Continued on page 7

Transition House Board of Directors

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Susie, Kirk, Braydon and Joey in 2015



The family together at home in 2019

2018 Emergency Shelter Statistics

Number of Clients Served.....	286
Children.....	182
Adults.....	104
Total families.....	82
Two parent families.....	22
Single parent families.....	60

Ethnicity

Asian/Pacific Islander.....	1%
African American.....	5%
Anglo.....	21%
Latino.....	68%
Native American.....	1%
Other.....	3%

Adults

One or more disabling conditions.....	30%
Victim of past domestic violence.....	50%
Substance abuse issues, present or past.....	39%
Mental illness.....	23%

Employment

Percentage of families maintaining or increasing employment.....	88%
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Education - Adults

High School.....	60%
Attended some college.....	11%
Average grade completed.....	10 th

Residence before Transition House

Santa Barbara City.....	66%
Goleta.....	9%
Carpinteria.....	5%
Santa Maria.....	6%
Lompoc.....	7%
Ventura.....	6%
Other.....	1%

Disposition upon exit from shelter

Market rate rental housing.....	21%
Transitional housing.....	18%
Subsidized housing.....	11%
Shared housing.....	24%
Moved in with relative or friend.....	10%
Unknown.....	11%
Still in shelter.....	5%

Shining the Spotlight on Service

By *Rebecca Truskowski*

I am a graduate student at USC, working toward a master's degree in Visual Anthropology. Last October, I started a cultural anthropological research study focusing on the social service providers at Transition House. This study includes the staff and the volunteers.



Visual anthropologists communicate their

research through photography and film and the end result of my project will be a 30-minute ethnographic documentary with Transition House as the focal point.

After working as a photographer for 20 years, pursuing this degree was the next logical step, as I wanted to add anthropology and filmmaking to my life's pursuits.

In addition to attending classes in anthropology and filmmaking at USC, I drive from Los Angeles to Santa Barbara regularly to film interviews and observe the inner workings of Transition House. I am discovering the benefits and challenges that individuals face when they choose to work in the service of others. I am also examining social service as a career and as a philosophy.

I am grateful that Transition House has allowed me the opportunity to focus on their staff and volunteers as the subject of my film. I am particularly thankful for the individuals who have spoken with me about their work, their motivations and their stories. They have been gracious and welcoming during my visits and allowed me the time and access to ask questions, film interviews, and tour the facility.

My first visits to Transition House were purely observational so that I could develop an understanding of the inner workings of the organization. After some time, I arranged formal interviews with members of the staff and their volunteer supporters. The community at Transition House is open and kind. I have learned a great deal about how empathy, support and encouragement are put into action within a vital, local

Continued on page 4

Volunteer Profile: Mary Stern

Mary is a cook, an author, and a human resources professional. She shares it all with Transition House.

I am involved with Transition House in a few different ways. I'm the organizer of Comfort Food Cooks meal provider group. We are a sixteen member group, including my husband. He is a chef and he enjoys preparing unique recipes that families may not always have the opportunity to enjoy. Our cooking group members were all part of Santa Barbara Newcomers club. We had a team called Lifestyles, and we cooked for 60 to 80 people there and everyone loved doing it, so I just committed that I'd find other opportunities for us to do it. When I talked to Kathleen Baushke at Transition House, I said, if you'd have us, we'd like to be a food provider. And so that's how it all got started and we absolutely love doing it!

I've really tried to encourage all of our team to go out and meet the residents, talk to the kids and help the mothers if they need it—any way that they can be of service other than just providing a wonderful meal. I have also been on the Transition House Board for 15 months, but I have been a volunteer as a meal provider for 4 years. I recently wrote a mystery novel titled “Cuppa Joe,” and the proceeds from book sales are donated to Transition House.

I volunteer in other ways by being part of the board of Partners in Housing Solutions. It is an organization that was started in 2016 and I was part of the founding members for that and again it's looking at homelessness and how we can help house people.

While volunteering at Transition House I had a real eye opening experience with one woman. I went over and said hello to her and she stood up and said, “My name is Sarah, what's yours?” At the time, I was simply going around meeting people and not establishing a

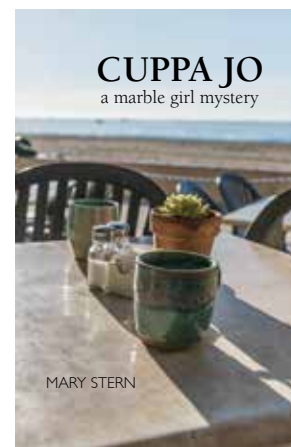
relationship, and so it was important to her to have some sort of relationship, even if it was just for the meal. It was just a great experience. On another occasion with a little boy who was probably eight years old; I asked him, “how long have you lived here?” And he said, “Oh, we've been here three months, I hope we never have to leave, I love it here!” He felt safe and secure for maybe the first time in his young life. The teenagers are the hardest to reach, and so I usually go around and try and talk to them, but on rare occasion have they actually talked to me. It's really hard to be a teen here. You know you can't have friends over, you have a curfew, and they don't want to tell people where they live. And again they may not like it but they probably feel safe here.

I would say my time with Transition House has given me more of a depth of experience. I have a lot of people who ask me about homelessness and they say people who are homeless are those guys who are sitting down outside of the library, pan handling, or the people down on lower State Street that are drinking, and I said to myself, that is not the face of homelessness. I try to educate people on the families who are homeless, the women who are homeless, and the men who are homeless. It gives me more of an opportunity. On one of our dinner group service days while we were delivering food we would be cooking that evening; it was also the same day when Doctor's Without Walls is at the Shelter providing women's health services, there was a woman standing there with a grocery cart full of her things and she turned to me and said, “Do you have any clothes?” And I said, “No, I'm so sorry we don't. We have food, we can offer you food” She said someone had stolen all of

her clothes. And so I asked her to tell me a little about herself. She briefly told me her story, and I said I would meet her at Marshall's and I'd buy what she

needed, and I thought it's probably a fifty-fifty chance whether she'll show up there, but sure enough I got there a little before noon and she was there with her grocery cart full of all of her belongings. We went in and she immediately went to the sale rack. She picked out a few items, and she didn't choose anything else but what she thought she needed. We paid for it and I went outside and she said, “Will you pray with me?” And so I sat down and she said some prayers and I asked her where she lived, and where she spent her time. She said a lot of times she would sleep downtown but she would have to have food with her to feed the rats. I thought to myself, I just can't imagine what that would be like. And it was just heartbreaking to me. I've never seen her again.

That's one of the things in my book. I really wanted to emphasize, the issue of homelessness, of mental illness, and of addiction. So trying to tie all of that into a book that people might find of interest was important to me. Those are the things that I wanted to make sure that people learned about, and I've had people come up to me and say, “I'll never look at a homeless person the same way again.” 🏠



Rebecca, continued from page 2

social services program.

To date, I have attended and helped serve meals and lent a helping hand around the shelter whenever I could. I joined the families at a performance of *The Nutcracker*. Numerous members of the volunteer community and staff have been interviewed, including a filmed discussion with Kathleen Baushke about the rewards and challenges of her position as Executive Director.

I was inspired to examine this subject matter many years ago. Throughout her life, my Grandmother offered assistance to people who needed help or a second chance. She was the oldest daughter of 11 during the great depression after her older sister died as a child. She had to quit school to take care of her brothers and sisters after my great-grandfather left my great-grandmother.

My grandmother was a caretaker by nature. After raising her siblings and her own children, she opened her house to individuals in need in her community. She lent a helping hand, a place to sleep, hot meals and offered education services as she could, without asking for anything in return.

In the coming months, I plan to research the current state of homelessness, and film many more individuals and moments at Transition House. I view the film as a study of the heart and soul of Transition House and the factors that contribute to its success in the community. My time at Transition House has been inspiring and rewarding. I am in awe of those who contribute their time, energy, and passion to helping those in crisis. ⬆

Transition House Non-Profit Partner Highlight

Santa Barbara Rental Property Association

Santa Barbara Property Rental Association's Annual Charity Golf Tournament is a fun and festive time for all who participate and their way of making an impact on Transition House families.

Santa Barbara Rental Property Association (SBRPA)—a non-profit founded in



1929—helps rental property owners in Central California with their business by providing legal forms, education programs, opportunities to get together with other owners, and advocacy on their behalf both at the local, and the state and federal levels.

Laura Bode, Executive Director of SBRPA, tells us that the association largely focuses on the “mom and pop” property owners—many members owning just one rental property. They appreciate the opportunity to educate anyone out there on fair housing laws and anything else that impacts their business. They take pride in their members being responsible landlords in our community.

SBRPA also takes pride in making sure they have resources for renters who find themselves displaced. Laura explains, “I wanted to be able to offer a referral to families who were in need of immediate shelter or help in getting back into housing. I quickly found that Transition House was the only local resource for families with children.” And so, our partnership began.

Three years ago, SBRPA began

supporting Transition House through their Annual Charity Golf Tournament by selecting us

to be the beneficiary. The tournament has quickly gained a reputation for being one of the most well-organized—and fun—golf tournaments around. It is complete with an auction, raffle, dinner, goodie bags and a festive western theme which is incorporated throughout the entire event. Danielle Holzer, SPRPA Board Member and golf tournament organizer, came up with the theme. Being a horse and cattle person herself she thought it would be fun to embrace “the cowboy way” which is known for its kindness, generosity and a neighbor-helping-neighbor mentality. Danielle told us, “After all, that is why we have the tournament—to be kind, generous and to help others.”

The golf tournament not only raises money for Transition House, but it gives us a way to connect to landlords that are willing to rent to our shelter families.

We are very appreciative of all the good work the SBRPA is doing for the rental community and for the immense amount of work that they put into creating a quality golf tournament in support of Transition House and the families we serve! ⬆

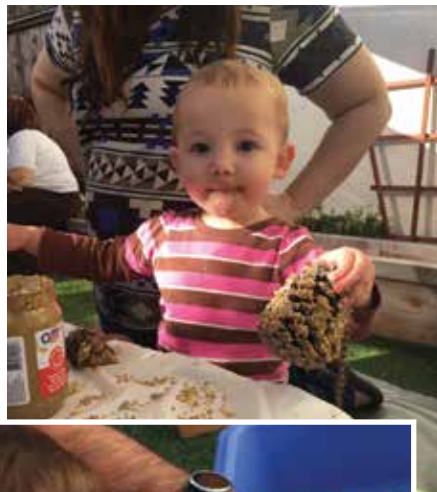
WE NEED THESE:
twin sheets • blankets
pillows • towels

Gently used items can be donated to our administrative offices at 425 E. Cota Street Monday through Thursday 9AM to 5PM, Friday 9AM to 4PM

THANK YOU!



**Mom's Infant
Care Spring 2019
Parent-Child-
Staff Social**



**Making Pinecone Sunflower Seed
Bird Feeders Together!**



Transition House Corporate Partners

- Deckers Brands**
- Montecito Bank & Trust**
- Pacific Premier Bank**
- Santa Barbara Rental
Property Association**
- Santa Ynez Band of
Chumash Indians
Foundation**
- S&S Seeds**
- The Towbes Group**
- Union Bank**
- Yardi Systems**



- American Riviera Bank
- Arnoldi's Café
- CenCal Health
- Patagonia.com
- Cox Communications
- FLIR Systems, Inc.
- Home Improvement Center
- Marborg Industries
- Nasif, Hicks, Harris and Company
- Northern Trust
- Rabobank
- Santa Barbara Plaza/S&P Investment
- Serbin Communications, Inc.
- State Farm
- Underground Hair Artists
- Yoga Soup

Transition House's Corporate Partners program offers a variety of opportunities for local businesses to help our families while getting recognition with our support base. For more information, contact Gina Whitefoot, Development Manager, at (805) 966-9668, ext. 120.

Transition House Auxiliary's 22nd Annual Mad Hatter Luncheon



Join us at the **ROSEWOOD MIRAMAR BEACH MONTECITO**
for the 22nd Annual Mad Hatter Luncheon

Wednesday May 1, 2019 • 11:00am • Tickets \$150

Enjoy a silent auction, raffle grand prizes, and our signature hat contest, along with surprise musical entertainment!
Proceeds will benefit Transition House's homeless children and their parents' return to permanent housing.

For tickets, call Diane White (805) 964-9742.



You Are Invited!

Transition House **Annual Volunteer Family Picnic**

Sunday, June 2nd, Noon to 2:00 pm

Tucker's Grove Park, 805 San Antonio Creek Rd.

Kiwanis Meadows Group Area

Santa Maria Style Barbecue by pitmaster Mike Zaragoza!

Fun Raffle Prizes! • Popular Counting Game!

RSVP to Diana at (805) 966-9668, ext. 115



Kirk and Susie, continued from page 1

home and ended up apart, staying in different shelters and making little progress. Finally, in 2013, Kirk got sober and they came to Transition House. This time, they were determined to stay together.

You might be familiar with their story. Kirk and Susie's family was featured on Transition House's 2015 holiday card. They successfully moved through the three stages of Transition House's program and ultimately found affordable housing in Carpinteria.

When they came to Transition House, both were broken and angry. They did not want to be in a shelter. But once they got settled, here is what they said, "We knew we needed a lot of help, and we were ready to accept it. The staff was so supportive—they gave us a reason to keep going. They were passionate about our situation and believed we could make our lives better. It motivated both of us. Soon we realized the benefits of being there. Everyone was sober and everyone was just like us. It wasn't that they somehow deserved to be homeless—they were there just because they were poor."

I spoke with them on a recent Friday evening and asked them how they are doing now, almost four years after leaving Transition House. They report that they are stable and things just keep getting better and better. They said that they remember living on the streets and they are determined not to go backward. Their sons are doing great in school and they love their apartment!

They still live in low-income housing and are surrounded by others, like them, who struggle with low wages. They feel blessed to be in subsidized housing; they don't want to become complacent. They want to continue to work to improve their situation, earning more and paying their own way. They realize the opportunity their housing has provided them and they don't take it for granted.

The affordable rent has allowed the



Thank you for your generosity this past holiday season. Whether you made a donation of time or resources, you had a big impact on families in our community affected by homelessness.

Santa Barbara neighbors contributed good food and good cheer to serve a memorable Thanksgiving meal—and with leftovers to enjoy over the following weekend.

Our Secret Santa participants helped 71 families with 170 children receive Christmas gifts this year! Their contributions not only helped the homeless children living in our shelter, but also a number of low-income families in our Homelessness Prevention Program that would otherwise not have been able to afford presents for their children this holiday season.

Residents and staff of different faiths practiced their family traditions throughout the season. We even had a Kwanza celebration!

All these families enjoyed a memorable and merry holiday season because of your thoughtfulness, time, and willingness to make a difference. Thank you from everyone at Transition House! 🏠

family to tackle long-term goals to increase their income by improving their education and work skills. Susie is in school, studying radiology. Kirk has secured his license to drive commercial trucks, thereby increasing the income he is able to earn.

All of this they have achieved since they left our program, building on what they started at Transition House.

When I asked Susie what had the greatest impact on her during her time at the shelter, she told me it was the

relationships she built with others. For a long time she had felt alone, but after Transition House, she felt cared for, and this made her a stronger, more confident person. She now believes that, "You are who you surround yourself with."

I asked Kirk what he would tell other families that find themselves living at Transition House. His advice is, "Be patient, follow the rules, go with the flow, and make the best of the worst situation." Kirk says, "There is always hope when there is Transition House." 🏠



THE WAY HOME
Transition House

425 E Cota Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 966-9668
www.transitionhouse.com

Join Transition House's Home Maintenance Crew

12 gifts in **12** months can make a difference in the lives of homeless families all year long.



"I feel good about being a monthly donor. I have peace of mind knowing other moms and their vulnerable children won't have to experience the trauma and fear of being homeless and alone."

- Nicole Soria

The **Home Maintenance Crew** provides a monthly source of income Transition House can rely on. Currently, 64 Crew members provide combined donations of \$4,659 each month, or \$55,908 annually, with individual monthly donations ranging from \$5 to \$725. If you would like to join the Crew, visit www.transitionhouse.com and click on **Donate**. Choose the monthly frequency option and your desired contribution amount. Or, contact Gina Whitefoot, Development Manager at 805.966.9668 ext.120.

Our Maintenance Crew Members

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Arthur and June Aldritt | Diana Lowe |
| Paul Arganbright | Jane Macedo De Veer |
| Warren Barmore | Melinda Mars |
| Lynn and Mike Baushke-Weddle | Gertrude Irene Marsi |
| Jeff and Becky Berkus | John and Gloria McManus |
| James Carrillo | Gregory and Doris McPhee |
| Patricia Carver | Pat Moore |
| Patricia Cox | Donald and Laura Newman |
| James and Sheila Davidson | Dean and Holly Noble |
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| Lisa Felland | Charles and Diane Sheldon |
| Gray Felstiner | Susan Sheller and Robert Roe |
| Charlene Fernandez | Jay and Ruth Shobe |
| Martha Fragosa | Robin and Nicole Soria |
| John Conroy and Claire Frandsen | Deborah Steinhoff |
| Stuart and Deborah Fuss | Heather Stevenson |
| Laina Gallagher | Sally Stewart |
| Ben Graves and Natalie Owens | James and Sally Subject |
| James and Emiko Griffith | Raymond Tracy |
| Jon Hansen | Joanna Von Yurt |
| Jeffrey and Kristi Harb | Don and Jo Webb |
| Stacy Hespanha | Margaret Weeks |
| Philip Holm | Joseph and Pat Wheatley |
| Amanda Hsiung | Christine Whitefoot |
| Dorothea Johnson | Nancy Wright |
| Charles and Valerie Kolstad | George and Judy Writer |
| Residence Recipient | Kevin and Jessica Yacoub |
| Deborah Lewis | Brian and Bonnie Zant |
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