



HOUSEWORK

news from transition house • santa barbara, california • spring 2020

Welcome to Buckley-Kelley Place!

Transition House has a new place for families to call home



On March 20th, Transition House closed escrow on three houses located just blocks away from the emergency shelter, that will permanently house formerly homeless families. The purchase was funded in large part by the **City of Santa Barbara**. Along with helping Transition House buy the homes, the City also awarded the agency \$300,000 to renovate the property. While all three houses are currently habitable, there is significant work—including new roofing, bathroom remodels and site work—necessary to bring the property up to Transition House’s standards.

Transition House’s Board of Directors decided with great enthusiasm to name the property after the family of longtime supporters **Jim Buckley and Patty Kelley**.

Jim and Patty have been monthly



shelter volunteers since the early 1990s, and Jim has also served for many years on our Board of Directors. The Buckley-Kelley family has been part of the T-House team for every major Transition House milestone, whether helping to fundraise for and furnish the newly remodeled shelter in 2006, being part of groundbreaking and ribbon cuttings at our new buildings, or lending a hand at numerous fundraising events over the years. Children Katie and Conor grew up around Transition House, helping during the holidays, assisting with the

WE MISS YOU!

By Kathleen Baushke, Executive Director

This isn’t a newsletter article I ever imagined writing. Here I am, reaching out to all of our supporters as we work together to continue protecting homeless families in a time when our community’s day-to-day activities have ground almost to a halt.

When we were all told (correctly) to “stay home,” the irony was not lost on us at Transition House, because we have 22 families in our care that have no home in which to stay. We decided that we could not go home if they could not. So, our shelter and transitional housing, the Firehouse, remain open.

The last several weeks have brought change in a series of waves. School children were sent home. We opened the shelter full time. We closed our Infant Care Center. We cancelled our evening classes. We closed our waitlist.

Initially, we gave our food providers the option to continue coming to the shelter to serve. Then, we began meeting them in the parking lot for food dropoffs. In the end, we hired our

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Resilience and Inspiration in the Face of Challenges

By Eric Hanson, Shelter Director

Supporting the families of our shelter and second-stage housing, the Firehouse, during this time presents new challenges every day. Through it all, I am inspired and overwhelmed in positive ways by the resilience of our families and the loving support of donors and volunteers.

My focus for the families is down to the very basics: their safety, health, and comfort. Providing this would be absolutely impossible without an amazing shelter staff and a number of dedicated volunteers.

The safety of our families, staff, and volunteers directs every step we take each day. Through the leadership of Kathleen Baushke, we are actively improving and keeping up with Santa Barbara County Public Health and CDC directions. The efforts of Claire Frandsen, Volunteer Coordinator, as well as the operations staff and dining staff, ensures that there are practices in place which minimize risks to at the shelter.

Gathering and keeping an abundant supply of healthy foods is made possible by board members and volunteers such

as **Mary and Regan Stern, Pat and Joe Wheatley, and Ed and Joanne Northup**. As always, we rely on the support of **Foodbank of Santa Barbara County** and now also the **Santa Barbara Unified School District**, which provides breakfasts and lunches via curbside pickup. We are also overwhelmed with gratitude by the food

“Our shelter staff are incredible! To work in the shelter takes a very special type of personality and disposition. They deserve all the celebration, attention, and recognition in the world.”

-Eric Hanson, Shelter Director



Eric Hanson

and resiliency of Transition House’s families. The current limitations, closures, disruptions to employment and income affect all of us in the Central Coast. To many of our families, these obstacles are felt doubly. In spite of this, their morale is high and their spirits unbowed. Our families are extremely grateful for Transition House’s safety and support in this time—a place of shelter where their children can continue to have stability and protection through uncertainty.

I am so moved by the loving kindness of the staff, volunteers and donors who are seeing us through this.

I look forward to a time where I will be able to greet you all with a heartfelt hug. Be safe, be well, and thank you! 🏠

Transition House Board of Directors

Jim Carrillo
President

Pat Wheatley
Vice President

Mary Stern
Secretary

Andrew Gardner
Treasurer

Carolyn Creasey
Auxiliary President

Samantha Alvarez	Ed Northup
Jim Buckley	Nancy Rapp
Steve Epstein	Nicole Soria
Jim Griffith	Jessica Yacoub
Kristin Linehan	

provision of **St. George Community Church** and generous community members who donate money to keep our second-stage families well-fed and healthy.

Through all the stress and unique circumstances that face us, I must emphasize the strength, hope, sense of unity,

Erase your calendar!

These events have been cancelled and will be reschedule again in the future.

**Mad Hatter 2020
Volunteer Picnic
First Friday Tours**

Meet Our (not so) New Volunteer Coordinator

Hello Transition House Supporters! If we have not met, my name is Claire Frandsen and I am the new Volunteer Coordinator. I have worked at Transition House since 2015 as the Bookkeeper and Administrative Assistant, wearing a few hats as I assisted the Finance Director, Development staff, and Program staff. Originally from St. Louis, Missouri, my husband and I moved to Santa Barbara in 2012 when he started a new job here. My background in Studio Art got me involved in not-for-profit work because I enjoy working for a cause that gives back to the community. I was drawn to the new role of Volunteer Coordinator because of the relationships I have formed with Transition House supporters. You are one of the most dedicated groups of people I know. Even from my view in the office, I never cease to be amazed by your kindness, generosity, and willingness to roll up your sleeves. This challenging time has been no different.

I want to extend my deepest gratitude to all our volunteers for their patience and understanding during this ever-changing situation. I never imagined one of my first major tasks of the job would be to ask you all to stay home! Let me tell you, there is nothing like firing up the grill for 60 people two nights in a row to remind us just how crucial our volunteers are! Much to our relief we found a solution to continue dinner service, while also keeping volunteers and families safe, during this period of physical distancing. Transition House is contracting with our neighbor and long-time supporter Arnoldi's Cafe to prepare dinner for our emergency shelter until we can welcome dinner providers back to the kitchen. Thank you to those who dropped off food or ordered takeout in March as we worked toward a long-term solution for our shelter during this time



Claire Frandsen

of physical distancing. A huge thank you to those who have contributed funds to help cover food costs.

Unfortunately, this also means the Annual Volunteer Picnic is postponed until further notice. Instead, I'll be taking what would normally be picnic-planning time to find ways we can stay connected. For starters, I invite you to send a little cheer to Transition House families by mailing inspirational messages, artwork, or cards that we can display in the shelter and the Firehouse. Mail can be sent to Transition House, 425 East Cota Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101, c/o Claire Frandsen. Be sure to include your return address so we can send a little cheer back.

If you are a volunteer and do not already receive our Volunteer E-Newsletter, please contact me at cfrandsen@transitionhouse.com or 805-966-9668, ext. 129 and I will be happy to add you to the list.

We miss you—stay in touch! ↑

2019 Emergency Shelter Statistics

Number of clients served	337
Children	221
Adults	116
Total families	91
Two-parent families	25
Single-parent families	66

Ethnicity

African American	8%
Anglo	11%
Latino	74%
Native American	2%
Other	5%

Adults

One or more disabling conditions	68%
Victim of past domestic violence	44%
Substance abuse, present/past	40%
Mental illness	41%

Employment

Percentage of families maintaining or increasing employment	84%
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Education – Adults

High School	53%
Attended some college	26%
Average grade completed	11 th

Residence before Transition House

Santa Barbara City	68%
Goleta	14%
Carpinteria	11%
Lompoc	2%
Ventura	4%
Other	1%

Disposition Upon Exit From Shelter

Market rate rental housing	23%
Transitional housing	11%
Subsidized housing	11%
Shared housing	27%
Moved in with relative or friend	4%
Other	10%
Unknown	14%

In Service of the Shelter – Shelter Operations Staff Open Up About What It Is Like to Work at Transition House



Maribel Gonzalez



Sophia Smith



Alex Ortiz

How long have you worked at Transition House and what is your shift?

Maribel Gonzalez: I've served as Shelter Operations Staff for over 15 years. I work weeknights from 4:30 pm to 12:30 am.

Many years ago, I lived in the shelter with my three kids, who were 11, nine, and three years old. I didn't know any English, but I learned! I spent every chance I had practicing new words. One day, the Shelter Director asked me if I wanted to work for Transition House, and I was happy to do it!

Alex Ortiz: I have worked for Transition House since September 2019, and I'm so proud to be here contributing to the restoration of families out of homelessness. I work the weekend day shifts. I also take shifts at the front desk at Family Support Center (FSC), and in the evening children's program.

Sophia Smith: I have been an operations staff in the shelter since October 2019. I work the graveyard shift on the weekends from 12:30 am to 8:30 am.

What do you love about your job?

Alex Ortiz: I love meeting and interacting with our families. Each shift I work is different and presents the opportunity for me to practice problem-solving and occasionally conflict mediation. I like that every day is different—I never walk in expecting things to be a certain way, there's new questions that I don't always know the answers to, but I get to be a guide. I get to talk to people, and I can balance urgent moments with calm times.

Sophia Smith: What fulfills me most is being of positive service, helping clients attain their goals. I enjoy that Transition House is here to help families find new strategies and to support the

families in their direction of success. Working in the shelter is an opportunity for me to give back after having been a temporarily displaced homemaker with four children due to a rough divorce. I now provide essential service to others as well as set an example for my children in terms of "the bigger picture."

Is there a memorable moment at the shelter you'd like to share?

Maribel Gonzalez: You know, we'll sing. I'll sing to myself and then one of the parents will be walking by and they'll start singing with me. I play my Spanish songs, and the clients and I, we'll sing together. People love to sing and have music at the shelter.

Alex Ortiz: Serving in the shelter is a humbling experience! I remember an instance where a teen was reacting in anger toward their parent. I sat down with them and actively listened to their

problems. I had been writing in a personal notebook and ripped out a page for the teen to write on. They calmed down and read to me things they had written regarding frustrations and also things they were thankful for. It was rewarding to help them in that way.

Sophia Smith: It is never stale here! What is rewarding is to be “present,” listening to their stories in a trauma-informed, non-judgmental way and being a safe source of aid. I make sure to talk with our clients, and not at them.

What do you like to do outside of work?

Maribel Gonzalez: I am a grandmother and I love my family. I also love to dance, listen to music, and go through positive affirmations.

Alex Ortiz: Outside of work, I’m often weight lifting or practicing yoga and meditation. I also love movies and critiquing films with friends. I majored in Linguistics at UCSB and am now pursuing a certificate in journalism at Santa Barbara City College.

Sophia Smith: I have four kids and six grandbabies! I moved out to Port Hueneme with one of my daughters and I spend my time with my family. I am so proud of my daughter, she is one of the youngest female officers in her rank!

Do you have a message you’d like to share with Transition House volunteers?

Maribel Gonzalez: We are here to be a resource, answer questions about chores, make sure rules are followed and people are safe. There are easy nights and hard nights being a shelter staff person. We can’t predict when it’ll be busy or slow, or if clients will come in having a cranky day or a happy day.

Alex Ortiz: To all Transition House volunteers: thank you for the work you do for our clients. I am especially thankful for the kind and friendly ways volunteers interact with our families! Your warm and respectful personalities make an impact in the emotional well-being of our clients!

Sophia Smith: Like rudder and oars, we all help assist families navigate tumultuous times. Together as staff and volunteers, our positivity is always benefiting the families and will affect them their entire lives. 🏠

During her reflection of work at Transition House, Maribel was inspired to write the following:

To be with my family is my happiness.

I love to go on vacations with them.

I love to listen to music when I feel any stress or sadness.

I like to see flowers, the sky, and all of nature.

I have been working with Transition House for over 15 years because

I love to smile with the residents and give them happy moments.

I like to say words of encouragement to everyone who may need it.

I love the smiles of the beautiful children in the shelter.

I want to see them have what they need: love and peace and happy lives.

There was a beautiful family in our shelter who had lost everything.

They came to Transition House with nothing, and very sad.

When they left they were grateful, with a new apartment, and their life was better.

Thank you volunteers for helping our families!

I invite you to listen to the prayer our children share before dinner:

You are our heroes!



Volunteer Coordinator, Claire, left, and children’s program staff get ready to prepare dinner plates

2020 Census Efforts Continue

Transition House is committed to ensuring our families are counted

The goal of the Census is to count *everyone* living in the United States, including people experiencing homelessness. For Transition House case managers and program staff, it means finding ways to encourage each and every one of our families to participate in the questionnaire.

Deb Michael, Program Director, is helping to coordinate outreach efforts for the upcoming count and states, “Transition House supports the 2020 Census and staff are educating all residents about the upcoming count. Vital programs such as Medi-Cal, WIC, Head Start, and many other critical services receive a fair share of money *only* when everyone participates. This is important stuff! Unfortunately, about one million kids under age five in the U.S. were not counted in 2010. We aim to do our part to change that.”

The survey includes questions on age, race, sex, and household. It’s estimated that each person accounts for \$2,000 a year in federal funds for the next 10 years that can be added to the local community. The Census also affects our voice in government and how our community plans for the future. ⬆

The response deadline for the Census has been extended from July 31 to August 14.



Celebrating Easter this Season

Keeping spirits up for T-House kids.

The festivities looked a little different this year, but the spirit stayed the same. Transition House ICC Site Supervisor, Natalie Robinson, led the charge to provide safe and creative ways to celebrate the season with our shelter and Firehouse families. In all, she thoughtfully assembled and delivered 46 baskets for children of all ages, from infants to teens.

Natalie shared her passion for pulling off Easter celebration, “I really wanted to do something fun for them [the kids].

They are doing such a good job of physical distancing, but you can tell that it’s hard for them. The kids really needed and deserved this.”

Special thanks to the **Transition House Auxiliary** for donating the funds to purchase Easter basket items. We also extend our gratitude to the following Easter donors: **Betty Dominguez, Barbara Herrera** and the **Native Daughters of the Golden West, Alisa Anne Oberjuege, and Monique Lopez.** ⬆



Easter Bunny Natalie Robinson



We Miss You, continued from page 1

neighbors, **Arnoldi's Cafe**, to make dinner for the shelter so volunteers could remain safely at home.

We enlisted a dedicated board member and her dinner group to write menus and recipes and shop for 14 days worth of meals, now being stored at the shelter, in the event that staff gets sick and no one can be at the shelter to serve.

We shored up our shelter staff. We moved our evening children's program staff to the shelter kitchen where they now plate the food Arnoldi's cooks and deliver it to each family sleeping room so that families can maintain social distance by staying out of the dining area.

We gathered up laptops. We bought subscriptions to Zoom and GoToMyPC. We closed the office (except for appointments). We sent most workers home.

We began working on plans to expand access to technology in the shelter, knowing that the "stay at home" order might go on for awhile. We asked our dinner providers to continue contributing cash to help with expenses, along with activities to keep the children occupied while they wait for things to change.

Recently, I saw a recent shelter resident. He is a young man—a 13-year-old who moved to a new apartment in Ventura in March. I brought him and his mom mail that had been accumulating for them at the office. We chatted at a distance outside of his building. I asked him how things were going and he said

pretty good, even though he never got to see his Ventura classroom.

I asked him if he could imagine how difficult things would be if he had to "stay at home" in the emergency shelter. We both laughed—yes, it would be pretty awful! But, I was glad to report to him—and, this is the truth—that the cooperation of the families that he had lived amongst until recently was amazing! Everyone at the shelter is helping out, trying to social distance and stay out of each other's way, and working hard to keep their children occupied. He and I both shared that we were really proud of the shelter families.

After this ordeal is over and it is safe to do so, we'll interview some of our families in residence and tell you stories of Herculean spirit and desire to help in the face of the direst of circumstances.

I am also proud and grateful for all of you. So many of you have reached out to find out how we are doing and what you can do to help.

With our program pared down to the essential service of running the shelter and the Firehouse, there is not much for our helpers to do right now, except to do the same thing you are doing for the people you love—pray we stay healthy and safe, envision our families keeping their spirits up, and send positive thoughts that Transition House can continue to be the place where families can "stay home" together, for as long as they have to. ⬆

Buckley Place, continued from page 1



volunteer picnic, and working as staff in our children's programs.

Planning for the renovations has begun and we hope that construction can start before the end of the year. Our project architect is Christine Pierron who designed the Mom's apartment complex adjoining our administrative office building.

Transition House is grateful for the support of the City of Santa Barbara and for project funder Montecito Bank & Trust, and we look forward to bringing these wonderful homes to the Santa Barbara community. ⬆

We Love Our Auxiliary!

Even though Transition House's Mad Hatter Luncheon scheduled for April had to be cancelled, our Auxiliary did an enormous amount of work leading up to the event. *Everyone at Transition House thanks them!* We look forward to sharing more about luncheon supporters and sponsors in our next newsletter. ⬆



Shelter supplies and donated flowers



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.



If you would like to join our crew of faithful and consistent monthly donors, whom we affectionately refer to as our *Home Maintenance Crew*, you can visit us online at **www.transitionhouse.com** and click on **Donate**. Choose the monthly frequency option and your desired contribution amount.

Or, contact Carmela Carreno, Development Manager, at 805.966.9668 ext.120.

Dear Secret Santa,

Thank you for your generosity this Christmas. Your kindness helped 42 families with 100 children living in Transition House's shelter and housing programs to receive Christmas gifts in 2019! Your contribution not only helped the homeless children at the shelter, but also a number of low-income families who otherwise would not have been able to afford presents for their children this past holiday season. All these families enjoyed a memorable and merry Christmas because of your thoughtfulness, time, and willingness to make a difference.

Thank you for spreading the joy this holiday season!

Warmly,
Transition House Board, Staff, and Families

The artwork on this card was created by children in our programs as a way to thank "Santa" for making Christmas special for them.



Dear santa thank u for my gifts and i loved my gift there so fun to use and good bye. THANKS SANTA?!!