Episcopal Community Services partners with many talented people and organizations in the effort to end homelessness. We were privileged to honor some of them at our first Annual Awards Luncheon on February 8, 2011. We paid tribute to the San Francisco Foundation for its role in fostering community change, most notably for its investment in the supportive housing model as a dignified and cost-effective solution to homelessness. We honored Bobby Bogan for his charismatic leadership in advocating for the rights of homeless and low-income seniors. Formerly homeless himself, Bobby credits ECS’s Canon Kip Senior Center with inspiring him to found Seniors Organizing Seniors, for which he has received regional and national recognition.

At the luncheon, we also honored Sherri Hayes Sawyer, a dedicated ECS volunteer and former ECS board member, and Rita Semel, San Francisco’s foremost leader on interfaith concerns and executive vice-chair of the San Francisco Interfaith Council. Both women have served the community in ways too long to list. Sherri, an advocate for equality in education, has helped homeless students transform their lives by learning to read or obtaining their GED. Rita and the San Francisco Interfaith Council partnered with ECS to start the Interfaith Winter Shelter, which has aided thousands of homeless men since its formation in 1989.

ECS salutes all of our 2011 Annual Award recipients and the many other fine individuals who work to make homelessness obsolete.

(Clockwise from top left) Honoree Rita Semel with Master of Ceremonies Pam Moore, Honoree Sherri Hayes Sawyer and Honoree Bobby Bogan with Director of Senior Services Lolita Kintanar.
ECS’s Canon Kip Senior Center is a warm and welcoming place in times that are increasingly difficult for older adults. Every day, close to 100 men and women gather for a nutritious lunch and recreational activities. Some elders arrive when the doors open at 8:30 a.m. to enjoy coffee and conversation. Many come to catch up with old friends, join an exercise class, or partake in one of the many board games underway. For those who are homeless, the Center is a place where they can relax, seek assistance, and nurture friendships. Senior Center participants include longtime South of Market residents, tenants from supportive housing, and seniors who are staying at ECS’s Sanctuary Shelter across the street. Together they enjoy activities ranging from ballroom dancing to carving jack-o-lanterns. Lunch, prepared by ECS’s professional chef and student interns, is reliably delicious. Staff makes the Senior Center fun by celebrating cultural holidays and birthdays with favorite foods, dances, and entertainment—like Chinese New Year’s lion dancers.

ECS’s Senior Center is also home to the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC). ECS staffs ADRC outstations in 15 underserved neighborhoods from Bayview/Hunter’s Point to Chinatown and the Outer Sunset in order to meet seniors and disabled adults in their own communities. ECS’s multilingual staff provides information on local services, translates documents, and assists participants with paperwork for Medi-care or Social Security benefits. They help clients access hot meals, housing assistance, transportation, and services specific to their disabilities. Last year alone, our ADRC outstations served 5,640 seniors and disabled adults. That’s in addition to the 1,330 people who attended Canon Kip Senior Center for daily meals, socialization, and social services.

According to Brittany Urban, ADRC Program Manager, “ADRC is about homeless prevention. With ADRC, we’re in people’s neighborhoods, helping them access resources they didn’t know existed, helping them to stay housed.”

(Clockwise from top left) Veteran’s Day Celebration, Chinese New Year Celebration, Senior field trip to the Conservatory of Flowers and Senior Center work-out with Wells Fargo volunteers
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Resources and Support at ECS’s Senior Services
Every weekday morning, students from ECS’s culinary training program can be found prepping or chopping in the Senior Center’s kitchen, helping the lead chef to prepare 100 meals for the Center’s elderly and disabled participants. Even though CHEFS students start from very little—coming from the streets or a local shelter—75% of graduates secure work in today’s difficult job market. Part of that success comes from our Senior Center’s congregate meal program, which provides internships and transitional employment for CHEFS students.

ECS’s senior congregate meal program plays a dual role: it provides consistently high-quality meals to Senior Center participants, and it serves as a supportive training forum for CHEFS students. Preparing meals under the exacting but encouraging supervision of CHEFS staff better equips students to make the transition to the demanding and fast-paced settings of industrial and commercial kitchens. Their success stems from practice and staff’s belief in their ability to succeed.

Every year, graduates of the CHEFS program show off their culinary finesse at ECS’s SummerTini by enticing guests with their delectable hors d’oeuvres. Mark your calendars for our Annual SummerTini now—June 10th at 6 p.m.—and prepare to be impressed!

(ECS Volunteers Make the Difference
Every year, over 1,000 people volunteer in ECS programs. Last year, they painted murals and hallways, served meals, created gardens, and led art, music and cooking classes. In our Canon Barcus family housing, they tutored and mentored children and teens. They served meals in our shelters, accompanied seniors to medical appointments, and taught computer classes. ECS volunteers are an important part of our work, and we can always use more! If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering with ECS, please contact Mallory Hasick at (415) 487-3348 or mhasick@ecs-sf.org.)
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Dear Friends,

Thanks so much to those of you who were able to join us at our recent Awards Luncheon—Celebrating Leaders, Ending Homelessness. The City Club was filled with high energy and compassion as we recognized our very special colleagues. Everyone left knowing that there is incredible work being done to address the circumstances that so many of our clients face on a daily basis.

Honoree Bobby Bogan brought the crowd to its feet in talking about his group, Seniors Organizing Seniors (SOS), which grew out of Episcopal Community Services’ work at Canon Kip. SOS demonstrates the power of seniors—in this case, homeless and formerly homeless seniors—in building a supportive community and in meeting their own social and economic needs.

Last year, 10% of the 3,900 people whom we sheltered were 60 or older, as were 11% of the 1,000 men, women and children living in our supportive housing developments. Some of our residents have had long histories of homelessness, but many who have lived close to the edge have found themselves, in this still very difficult economy, no longer able to hold on independently.

As social security benefits remain flat for a third year running, as supplemental security income (SSI) recipients find themselves facing an actual cut, and as public sector support to in-home care and other safety net services for seniors is reduced or eliminated, we anticipate that there will be no let-up in demand.

Mother Teresa reminds us to keep the work personal: “If I look at the mass, I will never act. If I look at the one, I will.” At Canon Kip, in our Aging and Disability Resource Centers, in our shelters, in housing and in our other works, it is the personal connection between volunteer or staff member and client that makes all the difference, and this is particularly valued in our work with older people.

Please continue to partner with us—by your own individual efforts as volunteers and by your continuing and generous financial support.

With appreciation,

Kenneth J. Reggio
Executive Director

PS: If you’d like to receive news electronically in the future, please email gogreen@ecs-sf.org and help us save money and resources.
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Save the Date, FRIDAY, JUNE 10, 2011

A special benefit for Episcopal Community Services

- CHEFS, Conquering Homelessness through Employment in Food Services
- Skills, Education and Employment Services

Live Music - Specialty Hors d'Oeuvres - Live Auction
The Galleria at the San Francisco Design Center 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM

More info: (415) 487-3736 or events@ecs-sf.org
www.summertini.org