

*“My apartment at Canon Kip is my sanctuary. I’ve been there so long, it’s mine, you know?”*

IRA SEIDEN, CANON KIP RESIDENT

## STRATEGIC INITIATIVES TO END HOMELESSNESS

ECS mobilizes very low-income individuals and families to overcome homelessness within a safe, supportive environment. Our comprehensive programs — from shelters, supportive housing and employment training to counseling, educational services, senior services and childcare — are designed to help people develop the skills to find and maintain permanent housing and to live as fully as they can.

## CANON KIP COMMUNITY HOUSE:

# A Legacy of Service and Innovation



WHEN EPISCOPAL Community Services rebuilt the old Canon Kip Community House in 1994, the building became one of San Francisco’s first supportive housing sites for homeless disabled adults. But it also continued a 100-year-old legacy of community service. Founded in 1894 and later named for its dedicated leader, Canon William Kip III, Canon Kip Community House provided immigrant and low-income families with many services, including a nursery for working mothers, a clinic, food and clothing programs, recreational services, and eventually senior services.

*(continued inside)*

# Dear Friends,

HOMELESSNESS ISN'T A NEW phenomenon. A little over a century ago, Canon William Kip opened a night school for working youth and wrote about the importance of education to counter “the life of a homeless boy living on a dollar and a half a week.”

The community center, of which the school was a part, eventually was named for its founder. Canon Kip Community House moved from Second Street to its current Eighth Street location in 1941, continuing to offer a variety of neighborhood services and, in more recent years, focusing in a special way on the needs of homeless and formerly homeless people.

Canon Kip is one of ECS's 12 program locations and the first of our supportive housing sites. In addition to being home to 104 formerly homeless men and women, Canon Kip also houses our Senior Center and our CHEFS culinary training program.

In this issue you'll meet Ira Seiden, a Canon Kip resident, who credits case managers at Canon Kip and The Sanctuary with helping him find his way. Ira and all of us at ECS also appreciate Kelly Wilkinson for leading the way—contributing phenomenally to solving homelessness for hundreds of people in San Francisco. Kelly welcomed Canon Kip's first residents in 1994, when the old building made way for the new. Kelly stayed on as support services manager there for five years, later serving ECS's clients as director of housing and eventually as associate director of our organization.

Kelly has been a guiding force for all of us here at ECS. For 16 years, she has demonstrated warmth, intelligence, and unfailing commitment to helping homeless people get housed, stay housed, and develop to their full potential. This past spring, Kelly and her family left ECS to take up residence on the East Coast. We're grateful for her outstanding service and we wish Kelly only the best!

We're grateful also to you, our partners and donors, as we count on your continuing interest and most generous support.

Sincerely,



Kenneth J. Reggio  
Executive Director



*Kelly Wilkinson with former Board member, Sherri Hayes Sawyer, and current Board member, Tracy Dearman.*

# A Legacy of Service and Innovation (continued from cover)

In 1994, a newly constructed Canon Kip opened its doors to homeless individuals who had at least one disability. Kelly Wilkinson, Canon Kip's first Support Services Manager, pioneered the use of innovative "harm reduction" strategies, enabling residents to develop trusting relationships with staff and creating the conditions for them to prosper. Today, ECS continues this client-centered approach at all of its housing sites by meeting clients "where they're at" and empowering them to see their own human dignity, reduce harm to themselves and others, and build community.



*A legacy of community services:  
Canon Kip in the early 1900's.*

"Like human beings everywhere," Kelly reflects, "residents at Canon Kip have fallen in love, had children, or been reunited with family. Some have passed away, while others have been very sick, gotten well, or, like many of us, learned to manage chronic illnesses. Canon Kip remains very much a community with barbecues, memorials, support groups, and many wonderful celebrations. It is a place where I learned a great deal, mostly from the tenants themselves."

In addition to creating homes for 104 formerly homeless adults, Canon Kip's five-story building also houses ECS's Senior Center, which annually serves over 1,000 low-income seniors, nearly half of them currently or formerly homeless. Neighborhood seniors come to Canon Kip every day for meals, services, friendship, and fun. ECS's highly successful CHEFS culinary training program for homeless adults, which has prepared over 600 homeless adults for jobs in the food services industry, also operates from the site.

Just as in decades past, Canon Kip Community House buzzes with community gatherings and client-centered activities and remains a testament to ECS's legacy of meeting community needs in innovative ways.

# My Sanctuary:

## Interview *with* Ira Seiden, a Canon Kip Resident

WHEN CANON KIP opened in 1994, Ira Seiden's case worker at ECS's Sanctuary Shelter signed him up for an apartment. Ira was ecstatic to have his own place. Back in New York and Florida, he'd been a welding foreman and had earned "good money." But when he moved to San Francisco, his car was broken into and all his welding equipment was stolen. To make matters worse, the woman he'd come out west for told him she was leaving for the Peace Corps, and everything else in his life began to fall apart. He drank. He did things he "shouldn't have." His car died, and before he knew it, he was homeless.

ECS's staff reached out to Ira, gave him cleaning jobs, and helped him move from the Sanctuary Shelter to a hotel and from there to Canon Kip Community House, where he has lived for 14 years. At Canon Kip, Ira swept the hallways and helped his case manager cook the turkeys for the community's Thanksgiving dinner.

What made the difference for Ira? His response is unequivocal. "Humberto," he says of his first case manager at Canon Kip, "treated me like a person who needed help and a few things. Once I got it, I was ready for the world."

Today Ira works for the U.S. Park Police. He proudly displays his USPP cap and describes his work maintaining the Park Police's Presidio stables as "the best job I ever had." He sometimes thinks of moving closer to the Presidio, but then he thinks of what he has. "My apartment at Canon Kip is my sanctuary. I've been there so long, it's mine, you know?"

Like Ira, hundreds of other men and women have drawn on ECS's programs to exit homelessness permanently. With your support, ECS will continue to help people rebuild their lives and create a place they can call home.



*Ira Seiden, Canon Kip resident.*



# Canon Kip Seniors: Life Stories and Memoirs

LOLITA KINTANAR, Canon Kip Senior Center's dynamic director, is constantly coming up with new ideas to help seniors at Canon Kip. Because seniors often become isolated, Lolita has created many kinds of support groups, including groups for homeless seniors, LGBT seniors, seniors with vision, mobility or hearing impairments, seniors in bereavement, and even seniors going "green".

One of the groups serves Filipino seniors, mostly widows and widowers. Mila De Guzman, a freelance editor and writer, volunteered to lead the group in writing exercises and collected their pieces into an anthology entitled, "Our Life Stories and Memoirs."

"Over the years, I watched their faces light up at hearing touching memories or wince at feeling the pain of others," Lolita reflects in the introduction to the book. "I wanted to capture all of these through writing to remind Filipinos and their children that we have a rich heritage that must be cherished and remembered."

The collection debuts seniors' stories about impoverished childhoods, Japan's occupation of the Philippines, the struggles of single parenthood and immigration, and many other losses and triumphs. An inspiring read, it is available on our website, [www.ecs-sf.org](http://www.ecs-sf.org) or from the ECS Development Department.

*Natividad Aguirre and Melecio Torres, members of the Canon Kip Senior Center writing group.*



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Editor: Lana Dalberg, MFA

Contributing editor: Mary Kelly

Photography: Megan Peck, Leah Cerri, David Krebs

## EPISCOPAL COMMUNITY SERVICES

165 Eighth Street, 3rd floor

San Francisco, CA 94103

415-487-3300 fax: 415-252-1743

[www.ecs-sf.org](http://www.ecs-sf.org)

# ECS

Episcopal Community Services

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SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94103

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*Young resident of Canon Barcus Community House.*

# Life at ECS— Ending Homelessness One Person at a Time

- ▶ Temporary shelter for 5,472 homeless individuals last year.
- ▶ Permanent supportive housing for 1,149 formerly homeless individuals in 10 sites.
- ▶ Adult literacy, GED, basic adult education classes, and vocational services for 873 homeless and formerly homeless people.
- ▶ Daily lunch and activities for 1,045 low-income and homeless seniors.