

SHELTER
HOUSING
SOCIAL SERVICES

“I’ve been using photography to reignite those dormant skills, offering our residents a success factor, an ‘I can!’ factor.”

VOCATIONAL SPECIALIST, JAMES POWELL

Opening Doors and Building Community



Vocational Specialist James Powell (second from right) with PBI Photo Group Participants.

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.

WHEN SUPPORT SERVICES Manager Phil Swenson and Vocational Specialist James Powell came to the Pacific Bay Inn, an ECS supportive housing site, they were concerned that so many people appeared withdrawn, disconnected with one another and with the outside world. Phil, James, and the rest of the PBI staff worked on creating a culture of mutual responsibility and spontaneous engagement.

Initially, they empowered the residents with greater accountability for their own environment. This meant, among other things, keeping the kitchen open at all hours of the day, not just during meal times. It meant round-the-clock availability for computer usage, not just during staffed hours. And it meant making the community room available at all times so residents could meet and congregate in a comfortable, family-like setting.

(continued inside)

Dear Friends,

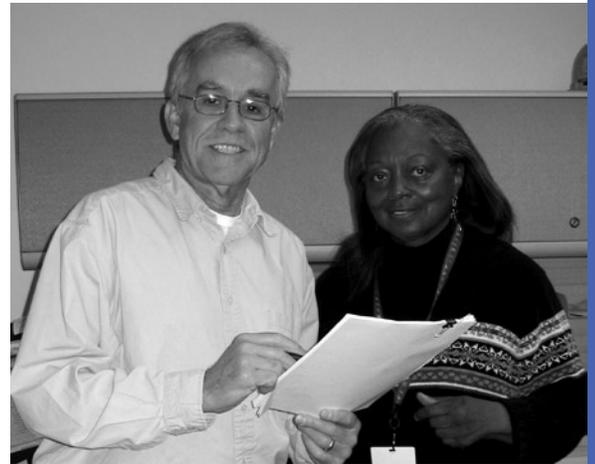
CURRENTLY, THERE'S a fair measure of political and media angst that San Francisco hasn't yet solved homelessness. Sometimes that discontent lays undue criticism on people who are experiencing homelessness and on organizations that, day in and day out, work with homeless people to help them meet their immediate and long-term needs. San Francisco may not have eliminated homelessness yet, and may never do so fully, but thousands of San Franciscans have ended homelessness in their own lives, and there is enormous success in that.

At ECS we talk about ending homelessness one person at a time. We focus on each of our residents and clients as individuals. We know that whatever support we can lend to assist in addressing challenges of poverty, unemployment, limited education, illness, or isolation will help them escape homelessness, remain housed, and live more fully.

This issue of our newsletter highlights accomplishments of our clients and the good work carried on by our staff and volunteers. No greater work, by the way, than what Linzie Coleman, ECS's Director of Shelters, has contributed these past 13 years! Linzie will leave us for retirement to her native Tennessee in just a couple months, and we will miss her dearly. Linzie's personal and confident approach has made such a difference for so many of our program participants and, indeed, for many of our staff, who themselves have experienced homelessness.

Linzie is well-known in our South of Market and Tenderloin neighborhoods, often trekking the mile between Next Door and Sanctuary Shelters with laptop and files in tow. She can seldom walk more than a couple blocks without being hailed by a client or former client: "Can I talk with you, Ms. Coleman?" or "Ms. Coleman, remember me?" One of Linzie's favorite memories is of being approached on BART by a middle-aged man in a three-piece suit, clean-shaven and sharp. "Ms. Coleman, remember me?" Only too well! Linzie learned that, from homelessness, "Paul" now was working on Montgomery Street and successfully raising his two teenage children. Linzie remains grateful for the remarkable changes Paul had made in his life.

Linzie's work and Lolita's, James', and Phil's all have huge impact on our clients. ECS continues that work in our shelters, our 10 housing sites, our Skills Center, and our Canon Kip Senior Center only with your generous support. As always, we're most thankful to you, and we welcome too your volunteer involvement, your calls, and your visits.



*Executive Director
Ken Reggio with
Linzie Coleman,
Director of Shelters*

Ken Reggio

Kenneth J. Reggio
Executive Director

Opening Doors and Building Community (continued from cover)

Over time, a number of residents started a current events group to gather and discuss goings-on in the building and in the city at large. A resident who had worked as a barista began making fresh espresso drinks every week with a used machine that staff had acquired. Other residents appreciated his efforts and let him know it.

Using donated cameras, James Powell started a photography group soon afterwards. The group then began publishing a newsletter, learning layout skills, writing, composition, and editing. The tenants got very involved. “When you hear them in that room,” Phil says, describing their newsletter meetings, “it is like you are at an editorial meeting of the New York Times.”

James adds that, “So many of the people in our building have hidden talents. Their talents and skills have been submerged because so many disappointments and situations have caused them to forget what they can do. So I’ve been using photography and the newsletter to reignite those dormant skills, offering

our residents a success factor, an ‘I can!’ factor. That way, the class is a bridge back to employment.”

Indeed, several success stories have come out of these efforts. One resident has shown his photos in local exhibits and is hoping to pursue a career in photography in New York. Another woman, a spectacular weaver, is volunteering now at the Asian Art Museum. Yet another resident, an elderly gentleman who rediscovered his computer skills through the newsletter group, volunteers as a computer teacher at a local senior center.

PBI residents’ new-found enthusiasm is contagious. Their photo displays and newsletter distributions have interested other tenants in the building. Phil Swenson explains, “There is a tremendous amount of interaction among people who otherwise would not have talked with one another. They’re discovering common bonds and common interests.”

The residents of Pacific Bay Inn are building community, and it shows.



Photos by PBI Photo Group participants

The Stats Corner

Last year, in line with our mission “to help homeless and very low-income people obtain the housing, jobs, shelter, and essential services needed to prevent and end homelessness,” ECS provided services in four areas:

1

Temporary shelter for 5,472 homeless men and women at our Sanctuary, Next Door, and Interfaith Shelters

2

Permanent supportive housing for 1,149 formerly homeless individuals at 10 housing sites, including our Canon Barcus Community House for formerly homeless families

3

Adult literacy, GED, basic adult education classes, and vocational services for 873 homeless and formerly homeless people

4

Daily lunch, classes, and other activities for 1,045 very low-income and homeless seniors at our Canon Kip Senior Center

Volunteers Make All the Difference



Broadcasting program students from San Francisco State sponsored the Hillsdale (one of ECS's 10 supportive housing buildings) at Christmas, buying and wrapping presents for each of the 80 residents.



A group from St. Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church came to Canon Kip Senior Center to write letters to soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan. Many of the seniors, veterans themselves, enjoyed the time spent together sharing their own experiences.



Church of the Advent parishioners brought home-baked cookies and hot cocoa, along with a keyboard, piccolo, flute, and guitar for a Christmas sing-along at The Sanctuary December 19.

ECS thanks all of its volunteers for sharing their time and talent with our clients. Please contact Volunteer Coordinator Leah Cerri at 415 487-3348 or lcerri@ecs-sf.org if you'd like to be part of our work.

Bring Your Dancing Shoes

ON THE THIRD Saturday of every month, more than 100 Canon Kip seniors gather for music, dance, lunch, and cake, celebrating that month's birthdays. It's quite a party.

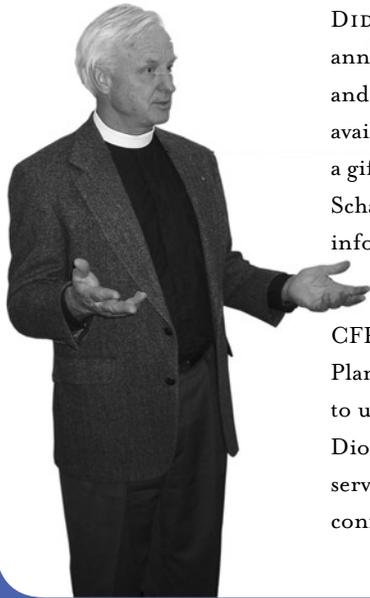
The Canon Kip Senior Band starts the program with music and dancing. These talented musicians lead the group in singing show tunes, classics, and traditional songs from the Philippines. Filipino seniors, who make up a large percentage of those ECS serves at Canon Kip, share their songs, dances (costumes included!), and even some of their food specialties.

ECS's CHEFS program interns prepare the lunch, and seniors volunteer to serve it. Nona Lilia, a 74-year-old Filipina, is a steady volunteer, coming to the Canon Kip Senior Center everyday to serve lunch to her friends and neighbors. Alongside Lilia is a young foreign exchange student from Korea named Ky. Ky shows up often

to help out and finds that it is a great way to practice his English. Darlene stops in often from ECS's Sanctuary shelter to share the meal, and she stays to clear trays and wipe down tables. When Darlene first came to Canon Kip, she kept to herself. Now she knows she is part of the community.

Nona Adora is another Canon Kip party-goer. Adora, who spends at least three days a week at the center, is an exceptional woman. She first approached Canon Kip in 1989 and continues to come for "fellowship with friends and the activities." She also admits to loving "Lolita and the food." (Lolita Kintanar is Canon Kip's able and enthusiastic director.) Adora says, "I am willing to help however I can." And she does. Through Canon Kip, Adora volunteers as member of the San Francisco Commission on Aging's Advisory Board, visiting and reviewing other senior centers in the area.

Introducing Richard Schaper



DID YOU KNOW that charitable gift annuities, donor-advised funds, and charitable trust services are available to those who wish to make a gift to ECS? Contact Richard Schaper at 415-869-7812 for more information.

The Reverend Richard Schaper CFP® recently joined ECS as a Planned Giving Advisor. He comes to us on loan from The Episcopal Diocese of California, and his services to ECS supporters are both confidential and complimentary.

Meanwhile, the fun really picks up after lunch when the seniors start two-stepping, line-dancing, and doing the chicken dance. That means tail-wagging, wing-flapping, and lots of laughter.

At ECS's Canon Kip Senior Center, all are welcome. So, if you have time on the third Saturday of the month, volunteer. And don't forget to bring your dancing shoes!

Canon Kip Senior Center
participant volunteers:
Lilia, Fely and Anita



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WHAT'S INSIDE:

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From the Desk of
the Executive Director

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Life at ECS—

Ending Homelessness One Person at a Time



*Daisy and Roxane participate in
Canon Kip Senior Center letter
writing to soldiers in Iraq.*

SAVE THE DATE!

SummerTini 2008

A Benefit for CHEFS

Friday, June 13, 2008

6:00 – 8:00 pm

YERBA BUENA CENTER FOR THE ARTS

701 MISSION STREET

SAN FRANCISCO

For more information, call 415-487-3736

or e-mail events@ecs-sf.org,

or visit our website at www.ecs-sf.org.