

# Catholic Charities CHANGING LIVES

CONTENTS

A Place to Call Home ..... 1

Volunteer Profile: Patrona ..... 2

New Program Added in East Palo Alto ..... 2

Join the Circle of Angels ..... 2

Dignity is Belonging ..... 3

Get Involved ..... 3

Hope Uncorked ..... 4

## A PLACE TO CALL HOME



As individuals, **Alex** and **Juan Pablo** faced their own challenges on their path to finding safe and affordable housing. Several years ago, Alex dealt with the loss of his partner, and underwent spinal surgery, which affected his mobility and ability to accomplish simple tasks such as cleaning or eating dinner. Juan Pablo was twice diagnosed with cancer and has been in remission for almost ten years.

Through these challenges, both men were welcomed into **Catholic Charities Peter Claver Community** and a new friendship was born. They have formed new bonds with other residents and the staff and are active participants in the program’s activities, including weekly bingo. Alex can always depend on the staff for help with light dusting, delivering meals to his unit, and checking in on his well-being. Through monetary donations, Alex has even gained access to critical medical

replacement items. Juan Pablo has experienced relief, as well, through crucial services and assistance on the various community projects he is dedicated to.

Leaving the uncertainty of unstable housing behind, Alex and Juan Pablo found new freedom as they settled into Peter Claver Community. Alex is now able to spend more time with **Rusty V**, his beautiful golden retriever who knows more than 60 tricks and commands, and to continue his human advocacy working with seniors and the disabled. Juan Pablo, a progressive artist, is now able to pursue his creative talent without worrying about where he will sleep for the night.

Both men are proud of Peter Claver Community residents who are active in the community. Juan Pablo points out that some residents “give back and help as they have been helped,” while Alex praises the staff as “tremendous help both physically and mentally...a top notch group of wonderful and caring people who actually extend themselves to help others.” Juan Pablo recently donated his time and talents constructing a dog house painted with self-made Caribbean colors which he donated to PAWS, a non-profit that provides needed companion animal services to hundreds of low-income San Franciscans. He also is a youth mentor and directs San Francisco’s Mission District annual Dia de los Muertos Procession.

Alex and Juan Pablo are examples of how independence, creativity and involvement are born out of knowing that they belong to a community. The dignity, compassion, and hope afforded to all of our neighbors—youth, seniors, homeless, single parents, and more—is the very groundwork of nurturing individuals to a life of self-sufficiency. ■



**Catholic Charities**

*Strengthening Families  
Reducing Poverty*

SAN FRANCISCO  
MARIN  
SAN MATEO

## Volunteer Profile **PATRONA**

As you enter **Catholic Charities Leland House**, you are immediately greeted with smiles and friendly faces. The home, situated in one of the few neighborhoods in San Francisco currently untouched by gentrification and rising costs in housing, is a safe haven for those living with HIV/AIDS in frail and ailing health. A welcoming atmosphere, then, is of importance. It is no wonder the home is run by caring staff and volunteers who seek to continue the familial community. Of these individuals, one volunteer stands out for her altruistic outlook on life and the people she serves.

**Patrona** moved from a small town in southern Illinois to San Francisco 26 years ago, seeking a new adventure. What she found was a community she would devote herself to for 15 years. "Growing up I was blessed to have parents who were able to care for us. I've realized that others may not have had that same experience," she reminisces with a humble smile.

When asked why she continues to volunteer at Leland House, she contemplates, "The people—after hearing their stories. I try to be conscious and think about what made them who they are. I've never been near homeless, near hungry; so I can't imagine what it's like to have gone through that and to still be here."

San Francisco is constantly evolving and the loss of social community has impacted the most vulnerable. Catholic Charities Leland House stands as a reminder that there is still hope. There are those that care about the well-being of others who, like Patrona, devote their time to serving the less fortunate.

Even while celebrating her 15th anniversary as a volunteer, Patrona tirelessly and with a huge smile worked in the kitchen to prepare a delicious feast for everyone at Leland House. One can understand her significance in the house as every few minutes a resident will chat with her and thank her for her service. ■



Patrona cooking before her anniversary celebration



With Daniel Sauers, Activities Coordinator at Catholic Charities Leland House



Patrona, celebrating her anniversary

## NEW PROGRAM ADDED IN EAST PALO ALTO

A new after-school and summer program for youth has been added to Catholic Charities Children & Youth Services. **Catholic Charities Youth Club at St. Francis of Assisi** offers a safe, supportive environment for more than 100 children in the East Palo Alto community. Programs focus on education through technology, homework support, recreational activities, arts and crafts, and field trips, giving youth the opportunity to grow and thrive. To visit Youth Club, contact the Program Director, **Mar Y Sol Alvarado**, at [malvarado@CatholicCharitiesSF.org](mailto:malvarado@CatholicCharitiesSF.org). More information about Youth Club can be found at [CatholicCharitiesSF.org/our-programs/youth-club](http://CatholicCharitiesSF.org/our-programs/youth-club). ■

## JOIN THE CIRCLE OF ANGELS

Become a monthly donor and be part of our **Circle of Angels**. For as little as **\$10 per month**, your recurring gift will show love and compassion for our most vulnerable neighbors. It's easy to sign up and your donations are tax deductible. Plus, you will benefit from special recognition and discounts on events.

**Join now and receive a \$10 discount to Hope Uncorked!**

(details on back cover)

To become a Circle of Angels member, please contact **Michele Rimando** at **415 972 1276** or [mrimando@CatholicCharitiesSF.org](mailto:mrimando@CatholicCharitiesSF.org). ■



# Dignity is Belonging



Community could be defined as 'the true discovery of what we all have in common.' As human persons, we are social beings with an inherent need to belong. We share neighborhoods, alma maters, faith traditions, or common ancestries.

The profile of **Juan Pablo** and **Alex**, both residents at **Catholic Charities Peter Claver Community**, is a case in point. Both of these men are healthier and more active because they live in a mutually supportive community, surrounded by friends and caregivers alike.

At Catholic Charities, we respect the **dignity** of every person in our care by welcoming them without judgment and inviting them to belong. Likewise, our donors and volunteers like Patrona, give of their time and talents as witnesses to the dignity of their fellow humans. By doing this, everyone involved is valued, every life revered and the promise of community is renewed.

Sincerely and with gratitude,

Jeff Bialik  
Executive Director

“ There is no full identity without belonging to a people. ”

Pope Francis

## GET INVOLVED

### SAN MATEO

**Adult Day Services** offers a range of stimulating activities, the opportunity to make new friends, and an environment of warmth and respect for seniors. Volunteers are needed to support the program's **Thanksgiving Luncheon on Wednesday, November 25, 2015**. Duties include: set-up, serve lunch, engage with clients and clean-up.

Other opportunities at Adult Day Services include:

- Craft Autumn-themed Placemats
- Donate Holiday Decorations

### MARIN

**Canal Family Support** provides targeted reading intervention, educational assistance and enrichment activities that support the cultural, physical, social and cognitive development through a community-based after-school program. Canal will be hosting their annual **Día de los Muertos Celebration on Saturday, November 7**. Volunteers are needed to set-up, lead activities, engage with clients and clean-up.

Other opportunities at Canal include:

- Donate Thanksgiving Food Baskets to low-income families
- Provide academic support to children as a Tutor

### SAN FRANCISCO

This Thanksgiving season, there are several ways that you can get involved:

- **Support our Turkey Donation Drive:** Help feed a family this holiday season by donating frozen or cooked turkeys, canned food items or baked goods. Food items are needed by **Tuesday, November 24**.
- Volunteer at one of our Thanksgiving events during the week of Thanksgiving. Duties include, set-up, serve food, carve turkey, engage with clients and clean-up.



Don't miss this opportunity to help those in need. For more on how to get involved, visit [CatholicCharitiesSF.org/get-involved](http://CatholicCharitiesSF.org/get-involved) or contact Diana Contreras, Volunteer Manager, at 415 972 1297 or [volunteer@CatholicCharitiesSF.org](mailto:volunteer@CatholicCharitiesSF.org).

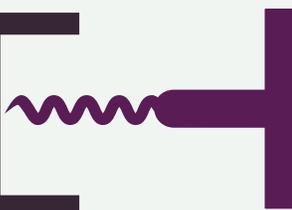


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CatholicCharitiesSF.org

**Find us @**  
 CatholicCharitiesSF  
 CatholicCSF

# HOPE



## uncorked



Thursday, November 5, 2015  
6:00 – 9:00 p.m.  
Sir Francis Drake Hotel  
450 Powell Street, San Francisco

Catholic Charities presents a special evening of wine, music, and auctions to benefit Catholic Charities Children and Youth Services. We hope you will join us as we make new friends, raise awareness, and garner support for children and youth.

To register, please visit [CatholicCharitiesSF.org/Hope-Uncorked](http://CatholicCharitiesSF.org/Hope-Uncorked) or contact [events@CatholicCharitiesSF.org](mailto:events@CatholicCharitiesSF.org) or 415 972 1273.