### Housing First Saves $

Chronic homelessness is defined as long-term homelessness (greater than 1 year) accompanied by a debilitating condition such as serious mental illness, severe substance abuse, traumatic brain injury, developmental disabilities or, typically, multiple issues at once.

In Marin, less than 25% of the homeless community is chronically homeless, however, they account for more than 80% of our challenges.

The average chronically homeless person costs $50,000 per year in public services and generates a significantly higher number of 911 calls and community complaints.

#### Housing First

Housing First reduces the need for costly public services by providing chronically homeless people with permanent housing and supportive services to maintain their housing.

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### A Veteran Finds His Way

Recently, a 34-year-old man in a work uniform started coming to our Free Dining Room to eat every day. He was quiet and kept to himself, but we made a point to get to know him to see if we could offer him more help. We learned that his name was Jamie and that he was a veteran who was not comfortable relying on other help. Jamie was in a dire situation; his hours at work had been reduced and his employer had told him he would not allow him to pay to work and purchase groceries. Jamie reluctantly came to the Dining Room to eat for free, while putting every penny toward keeping his apartment in Corte Madera.

Jamie came to us because he was hungry, but he never asked to ask for more. He was quietly suffering through this crisis without any help while on the brink of eviction. But because he came to the Free Dining Room, Jamie got more than a free meal. Thanks to your generosity, our Homeless Prevention team sprang into action. You paid Jamie’s rent for a month and kept him on track until he could catch up with his next paycheck.

### You Saved Amy From Homelessness

Through her life, Amy constantly made the best of bad situations. Born to parents with long-term substance abuse issues, she was brought up by her maternal grandmother in Colorado. She married at a young age and was blessed with a beautiful baby girl. When her husband became abusive, the marriage ended badly. Thankfully, Amy qualified for a federal housing voucher and came to California to reconnect with her parents.

Amy was fortunate to settle into a tiny apartment in Mill Valley, with her housing voucher covering 70% of the rent every month. But as rental prices increased, Amy found herself paying more and more from her own pocket to cover the difference between how much of the rent her housing voucher would cover and what the landlord was charging her for her land.

Despite her best efforts, Amy became overwhelmed by the cost of living in Marin. When she fell behind on her rent, she called the Society for help. Our caring volunteers wanted to prevent Amy and her 10-year-old daughter from being evicted, but recognized that the problem could not be solved just by paying the back rent that was owed.

Because you believe in lasting solutions, we spent a lot of time listening to Amy. It became clear that there was no reason for Amy to continue to struggle against the upward tide of rent in Marin. The reality of renting with her parents had been disappointing. She missed her grandmother. Once those details came out, you helped Amy change her life for more, the time for the Lower Society volunteers contacted Amy’s grandmother in Colorado and discovered that she desperately wanted her granddaughter to come home. Our housing experts found a property manager willing to work with us to accept Amy’s voucher and tenancy, sight unseen. A very generous donor of the Society stepped in and paid for all of her moving expenses. No longer a slave of becoming homeless in Marin, Amy arrived at her new home – with her daughter, all their belongings, and the family cat – and into the welcoming arms of her grandmother.

### You Reunite Families

Every year, over 100 people are reunited with family support through the Society’s Return Home Program.

### Update from Our Director

A Vexing Problem, A Viable Solution

What is the cure for homelessness? The cure for homelessness is “housing.” On the surface, this is not a difficult question, is it? And yet, in our community we must find this housing, without putting an excessive burden on any one group or community. How do we find housing for high needs men and women experiencing homelessness while also mitigating concerns regarding traffic, neighborhood safety and other important factors? At the St. Vincent de Paul Society, this is the question that keeps us up at night.

How have we tackled this important issue? First, we asked for your help! Thanks to your constant support and generosity, we raised enough funds to create three creative, successful and low-impact solutions that are changing the landscape of homelessness in Marin County right now.

With your help, we have purchased and master-leased houses and apartments in cities in Marin, in that our efforts are scattered community-wide and have a low impact on neighborhoods. They have been no bearing on traffic, as only one person out of every 10 people housed owns a vehicle. Our formerly homeless tenants are thriving in their new environments and are even creating new “family” traditions as they learn to live together in a peaceful, safe and respectful environment together. How fantastic is that?

With your donations, we have created the HOT (Homeless Outreach Team) which focuses on getting people who have been affected, chronically homeless people in our county. Through HOT, you have housed people who are legally blind; who have battled cancer; who have escaped domestic violence; and who have survived the pangs of mental health disorders and addiction. You have provided hope for the woundet at among us. How amazing is that?

With your generosity, we have also launched a pilot program with the Marin Housing Authority to house chronically homeless residents. With the launch of this program, you are educating landlords about the financial benefits of getting high-needs people off our streets for good. This private/public/non-profit partnership is the perfect example of our new and creative approach to ending homelessness in Marin County. How inspiring is that?

According to the most recent statistics, there are only 362 chronically homeless people in Marin who need these kinds of services. Can you see how these new approaches that you helped create will have a profound impact on solving these problems? Last year, St. Vincent’s provided supportive housing to 900 people. Today, it’s 25% and growing rapidly. Your contributions are solving this worring problem with a variety of approaches, one person at a time.

Isn’t this the solution that we all want?