



## Contra Costa Council on Homelessness

# Homelessness Awareness Month 2023 Recognitions for “Outstanding New Project/Program”

The “Outstanding New Project/Program” category is to recognize new projects or programs that enrich the lives of people facing homelessness in Contra Costa County. The project/program must enrich the lives of people facing homelessness in Contra Costa County in some way; does not have to exclusively serve people experiencing homelessness; and must have started after November 2021.

### Nominees

- Anyone, Anywhere, Anytime (A3)
- Art in a Box
- City of Richmond Castro Street Encampment Project
- Clean Start Showers
- GROW
- Make It Home
- Muriel E. Mayes Center
- Opportunity Village
- Project H.O.P.E.
- Rapid Rehousing Concord
- The Compass Center

*The following pages contain descriptions of each nominee as provided by the person (s) who nominated them.*

## Anyone, Anywhere, Anytime (A3)

**Nominated by:** Roxanne Winn, Employee

**Supervisorial District:** They serve the entire county

**Describe the project/program and how it enriches the lives of people facing homelessness in Contra Costa:**

A3 responds to Psychiatric Emergencies. A3 stands for Anyone, Anywhere, Anytime. I would love for the Program to have the program more known to the public, such as an Advertisement on Social Media or local news. It would be helpful to also educate the public that we have a process for our response. It is very important to know that we have such a unique program to fit the type response that is needed.

**For more about A3, go to** <https://cchealth.org/a3/>

## Art in a Box

**Nominated by:** Joan D'Onofrio

**Supervisory District:** District 4 (Clayton, Concord, Pleasant Hill, part of Walnut Creek, and the unincorporated Contra Costa Centre)

**Describe the project/program and how it enriches the lives of people facing homelessness in Contra Costa:**

Art in a Box contains 14 art supplies to be delivered to 500 homeless children in first to eighth grades. The boxes are put together through my Clayton valley/concord rotary club and we just received a grant from our district.. Five other rotary clubs pledged \$500 and \$1000 donations. In fact one of our members is donating 500 colored pencils that amounts to \$3000.

**For more about Art in a Box, go to** <https://pioneerpublishers.com/art-in-a-box-for-homeless-children-of-contra-costa-county/>

# City of Richmond Castro Street Encampment Project

**Nominated by:** Amanda Jenkins, Friend

**Supervisory District:** District 1 (Richmond, San Pablo, El Cerrito, part of Pinole, and the unincorporated communities of Bayview, East Richmond Heights, El Sobrante, Kensington, Montalvin Manor, Tara Hills, North Richmond, and Rollingwood)

**Describe the project/program and how it enriches the lives of people facing homelessness in Contra Costa:**

Housing homeless residents from Castro encampment in Richmond. They have housed over 40 individuals thru an encampment resolution grant from Gavin newsom they are still finding permanent housing for around 50 more people. They have changed so many people lives thru this program.

For more about this project, go to

<https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/4212/Unhoused-Interventions>

# Clean Start Showers

**Nominated by:** Danielle Organ, Volunteer

**Supervisory District:** District 5 (Hercules, Martinez, Pittsburg, portions of Pinole and Antioch, and unincorporated communities of Alhambra Valley, Bay Point, Briones, Rodeo, Pacheco, Crockett, Tormey, Port Costa, Mt. View, Vine Hill, Reliez Valley, and Clyde)

**Describe the project/program and how it enriches the lives of people facing homelessness in Contra Costa:**

The Clean Start Shower program has served over 2,000 people facing homelessness in Contra Cost county. Our homeless communities in Martinez, Bay Point and Pittsburg rely on the clean start shower trailer 3 times a week for all hygiene needs, hot water, clean toilets, clean clothing as well as friendship and emotional support as well as support getting connected with additional services.. All of the volunteers that support the clean start shower program are amazing individuals who work very hard to show everyone matters in this county. Everyone who comes to shower is welcomed as a friend, and this has meant a great deal to many people in unfortunate circumstances.

**For more about Clean Start Shower Program go to**  
<https://thebay.church/connect/compassion/>

# GROW

**Nominated by:** Andrea Altman, co-worker

**Supervisory District:** District 4 (Clayton, Concord, Pleasant Hill, part of Walnut Creek, and the unincorporated Contra Costa Centre)

**Describe the project/program and how it enriches the lives of people facing homelessness in Contra Costa:**

GROW prepares, serves and delivers over 300 meals and hydration weekly, all the while make close and personal contact with a significant majority of Concord's homeless community. Throughout the first 11 plus months this groups of exclusively community-funded volunteers has reunited 5 people with their families, supported 4 people entering/exiting detox and helping them into rehab. Throughout the extreme winter this organization raised to provide emergency shelter for over 40 nights for dozens of people who otherwise would have been freezing outdoors or in leaky vehicles. Tue GROW volunteers continue to connect their homeless friends with existing resources and work to solve problems when existing answers aren't readily available. The organizations mission is to help people while making a positive impact on Concord, for all residents.. The work of GROW has been respected by city leaders as well as county staff, GROW is contacted regularly by case workers for assistance for county clients and organizes aid when possible. This team passionately wants to make a difference and will work with everyone that wants to be part of the solution to find ideas and make the ultimately work.

**For more about GROW, go to** <https://www.growconcord.com/>

# Make It Home

**Nominated by:** Nel Ellwein, Board Member of Make It Home and regular volunteer

**Supervisory District:** District 2 ( San Ramon, Danville, Alamo, Lafayette, Moraga, Orinda, Canyon, Rossmoor, Parkmead, Saranap and a portion of Walnut Creek))

**Describe the project/program and how it enriches the lives of people facing homelessness in Contra Costa:**

Make It Home (MIH) is a non-profit furniture bank. They take donations of gently-used furniture and home goods from individuals and community businesses and then partners with social service agencies to furnish homes for families and individuals in need. MIH recycles, repurposes, and curates gently-used, donated furnishings to transform empty spaces into homes. The organization distributes furnishings to unhoused individuals and families moving into housing, youth transitioning out of foster care, people experiencing domestic violence, refugees, and others in need. There is no other organization in the East Bay that stocks and provides furniture and curates entire spaces like Make It Home. By providing furnishings to those formerly in crisis, Make It Home not only creates a true home for its clients, but also greatly increases their confidence and sense of security. In filling each empty dwelling, Make It Home creates a true home and addresses mental health needs, physical health needs, and financial and social wellbeing for the individuals it serves. With a real bed, a good night's sleep becomes possible. A table allows a family to eat together. A sofa means comfortably hosting friends and case workers, while a desk provides a place to complete homework or other tasks. Rugs, lighting, art, and more make it cozy. Not having to pay for or finance these items reduces financial stress. The results of Make It Home's work are pride of place, dignity, and confidence, which—coupled with other support systems—lead to healthier outcomes for families, children, and adults. These efforts dramatically reduce the chance of individuals returning to the streets and puts them on a positive path. Make It Home opened the Walnut Creek warehouse in September 2022 and demand for MIH's services is growing quickly. From



inception through July 2023 the Walnut Creek warehouse has served 144 households, with 355 people (including 172 children).. Make it Home does this work while also diverting tons of furniture waste from landfill. The work we do reduces the amount of disposable waste, preserves valuable, limited landfill space and reduces CO2 emissions by reusing items.

Make it Home's Walnut Creek warehouse is the organization's second Bay Area location. Its first warehouse is located in San Rafael.

**For more about Make It Home, go to <https://www.makeithomebayarea.org/>**





# Muriel E. Mayes Center

**Nominated by:** Wayne Earl, employee

**Supervisory District:** District 1 (Richmond, San Pablo, El Cerrito, part of Pinole, and the unincorporated communities of Bayview, East Richmond Heights, El Sobrante, Kensington, Montalvin Manor, Tara Hills, North Richmond, and Rollingwood)

**Describe the project/program and how it enriches the lives of people facing homelessness in Contra Costa:**

Muriel E Mayes Center For Women and Children. The Bay Area Rescue Mission opened the Muriel E Mayes Center For Women and Children in May of 2022. This is a 114-bed, year-long residential, comprehensive, Christ-centered, multi-dimensional approach for women and women with children to address the root causes of homelessness, poverty, substance abuse, and hopelessness.

**For more about the Muriel E. Mayes Center go to**

<https://www.bayarearescue.org/bridge-of-hope-center-opens/>

# Opportunity Village

**Nominated by:** Jazmin Ridley, City of Antioch

**Supervisory District:** District 5 (Hercules, Martinez, Pittsburg, portions of Pinole and Antioch, and unincorporated communities of Alhambra Valley, Bay Point, Briones, Rodeo, Pacheco, Crockett, Tormey, Port Costa, Mt. View, Vine Hill, Reliez Valley, and Clyde)

**Describe the project/program and how it enriches the lives of people facing homelessness in Contra Costa:**

Opportunity Village is Antioch's First Non-Congregate Bridge Housing Program designed to serve unsheltered residents in the city. The goal of the program is to help unsheltered residents achieve permanent stable housing through a program rich in support services provided by Bay Area Community Services.

**For more about Opportunity Village go to**

<https://www.antiochca.gov/pscr/housing-programs/ovp/>

## Project H.O.P.E.

**Nominated by:** Neil Gang, Chief/Supervisor, City of Pinole Police Department

**Supervisory District:** District 1 (Richmond, San Pablo, El Cerrito, part of Pinole, and the unincorporated communities of Bayview, East Richmond Heights, El Sobrante, Kensington, Montalvin Manor, Tara Hills, North Richmond, and Rollingwood)

### **Describe the project/program and how it enriches the lives of people facing homelessness in Contra Costa:**

After 2020, The City of Pinole experienced an increasing number of unhoused individuals in our community and felt that there was an increased need to provide immediate resources to these individuals. This information led the City, led by the police department, to create a new initiative called Project H.O.P.E, which stands for Helping Others Through Positive Encounters. Understanding the stigma police departments faced, we knew we wanted to create a program that built authentic relationships, made each person feel invited, comfortable, and valued, and provided resources they could obtain immediately through attending the event. Project H.O.P.E focuses on connecting those individuals experiencing homelessness to vital quality-of-life resources. Project H.O.P.E is for all age groups, including those caring for pets. This event is possible through partnerships and donations from local businesses and City of Pinole community members. Individuals who attend this event are connected to resources such as S.O.S. Outreach, C.O.R.E, Love Apparent Seniors Services, Arlington and Heritage Baptist Church, McDonald meal vouchers, haircuts by Buss Down Barber, pet food from Pets Referral Center, and showers provided by Motel 6. Each recipient receives a hot meal and an Essential Needs Kit, including personal hygiene supplies, a new shirt, socks, and underwear. Although this event occurs in Pinole, these resources are available to those outside the city limits and positively impact the regional unhoused community. Over the last three years, Project H.O.P.E has aided nearly 100 individuals with resources. Although Project H.O.P.E occurs once a year, the homeless outreach efforts are continuous and a part of our mission. Our officers



have access to Essential Need Kits when encountering any individuals in need. These efforts could not be accomplished without the passion, heart, and actions of our Community Outreach Officer, Natasha Valdepena, the creator and coordinator of Project H.O.P.E.

## Rapid Rehousing Concord

**Nominated by:** Leng Power, Staff member at City of Concord

**Supervisory District:** District 4 (Clayton, Concord, Pleasant Hill, part of Walnut Creek, and the unincorporated Contra Costa Centre)

**Describe the project/program and how it enriches the lives of people facing homelessness in Contra Costa:**

Rapid Rehousing Concord utilizes the Concord's Permanent Local Housing Allocation funding to focus on assisting individuals/families currently experiencing homelessness in Concord, to secure permanent housing and provide support to ensure a successful and sustained transition. Though the City of Concord has supported our community partners assisting with response to homelessness through other funding sources, the Rapid Rehousing Concord program is an important shift in how the City is directly allocating resources and designed a program that we are hopeful to sustain and grow. While Rapid Rehousing is not a new approach to homeless response, we have been able to add to the system of care and contribute additional resources to transition households into permanency.. The City of Concord recognized early on that we needed to partner with organizations that had experience in operating a Rapid Rehousing Program which led us to a strong partnership with Hope Solutions. The City of Concord also leveraged the CORE team to ensure consistency in assessment into services and additional resources should Rapid Rehousing Concord not be a viable option for an individual. Since the program started in 2022, RRC has successfully exited 12 households into permanent housing. With housing stability, the children have maintained critical educational connections and a majority of the households also report an increase in income.

**For more about Rapid Rehousing Concord go to:**

<https://www.cityofconcord.org/332/Homeless-Services-Prevention>

# The Compass Center

**Nominated by:** Hope Dixon, Self

**Supervisory District:** District 1 (Richmond, San Pablo, El Cerrito, part of Pinole, and the unincorporated communities of Bayview, East Richmond Heights, El Sobrante, Kensington, Montalvin Manor, Tara Hills, North Richmond, and Rollingwood)

**Describe the project/program and how it enriches the lives of people facing homelessness in Contra Costa:**

The Compass Center at Contra Costa College stands as a place of hope for those facing homelessness and struggling with their basic needs while attending college. Tailored to offer comprehensive support and vital referrals, this program is dedicated to assisting individuals in their pursuit of education and a brighter future. Recognizing that basic needs are foundational to success, the Compass Center serves not just as a support system, but we hope as a catalyst for change.

**For more about The Compass Center, go to**

<https://www.contracosta.edu/student-services/basic-needs/>