



saint john's
PROGRAM FOR REAL CHANGE

WINTER 2016

ENOUGH

MOTHERS AND CHILDREN FIGHTING TO CHANGE THEIR LIVES



DEAR PRESIDENT-ELECT TRUMP AND BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS:

FOR THE PAST DECADE, the Federal Government's approach to solving homelessness—Housing First—is HUD's "one-size-fits-all" solution that attempts to address a growing problem by essentially hiding it. Housing First places people in life-long, permanent housing immediately without a requirement of sobriety, counseling or any engagement in life-improvement services. It is completely up to the recipients of the life-long housing to decide whether they need to change their lifestyles and address the issues that led to their homelessness — including addiction to drugs or alcohol, domestic violence, limited education, lack of job skills and training, mental health, and more.

THE PROBLEM OF HOMELESSNESS has not improved under the decade-long rule of Housing First. No surprise here. While Housing First can work for select segments of the homeless population, providing no-strings-attached housing, in particular to single-mother-led families facing multiple barriers, is often counter-productive because it includes neither the incentive to change nor the tools to change. It does nothing more than apply political duct tape, appearing to make the problem of homelessness go away because, after all, the people are no longer homeless. The impacts on future generations and on society remain.

The misguided notion that Housing First will work for every homeless person is no more effective than saying every child struggling in school needs a history tutor, regardless of the subject in which they are struggling.

Insulating people in permanent housing creates a false sense of progress by reducing the most visible signs of homelessness (i.e., people on the streets).

Moreover, it is a savory temptation and an easy choice for most who find themselves in a crisis. For those struggling with depression, addiction and/or abuse, it can be disastrous as these people tend to isolate which makes it even more difficult for them to see outside of themselves and their misery-- to understand that their pasts need not dictate their futures.

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING STATISTICS from Saint John's Program for Real Change, a program designed for the most rapidly growing segment of the homeless population-- single-mother-led families:

- 76 percent of our clients are victims of domestic violence;
- 74 percent suffer from drug and alcohol addiction;
- 60 percent have criminal records;
- 54 percent struggle with mental illness;
- 40 percent lack High School diplomas or General Educational Development (GED) degrees;
- 40 percent have children in the foster care system;
- 35 percent became parents when they were teens, and
- 100 percent are attempting to raise children while dealing with these issues.

Yes, there are many overlaps in these statistics, which only reinforces the obvious fact that if these individuals were to be provided with permanent housing — without giving them the incentive or tools to make positive changes in their lives — are we really changing anything for them? This is why, in addition to safe, supportive communal housing, Saint John's puts its clients through a comprehensive year-long program that provides the tools necessary for permanent change: mental health services, alcohol and drug counseling, parenting and budgeting classes, job training and life skills. Clients cannot continue in the program unless they are achieving goals and are adhering to their budget including building a savings account.

SAINT JOHN'S IS A "PERSON FIRST" APPROACH, VERSUS HOUSING FIRST. In short, clients earn their housing — and it's up to them to continue earning it. As they are told often: We can't be working harder on you than you are working on yourself.

Homelessness was barely mentioned in the Presidential election. By every credible report, it is ripping holes in the fabric of the country you will now lead. While national data shows the number of people who are homeless dropped by 2.3% in 2015 over 2014, if you were to poll the residents and businesses in any sort of urban area, they would tell you the problem has reached crisis levels. Everyone is talking about this issue, from small business owners to local elected officials, from educators to community leaders. Now it's your turn to engage with us on this topic...

Estimates are that an individual who is homeless costs society between \$40,000-\$150,000 annually. That translates to \$54,000,000,000 to serve the 565,000 people who were homeless in 2015, using the midway point of this range. In perspective, this equates to approximately 1/2 of what the Federal Government spends in one year to educate our country's children.

NEARLY ONE-THIRD OF ALL VISITS TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM are made by people struggling with chronic homelessness. Fifty-four percent of preschoolers in homeless families experience major delays in their development -- compared to 16 percent of their peers. Most concerning, however, is the loss of future productivity of someone who is caught up in the vicious cycle of homelessness, a cost which has yet to be evaluated.

The situation in which we now find ourselves calls to mind a proverb that is frequently quoted — but in government, rarely heeded: Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.

Housing First is seemingly the cheapest way to "solve" homelessness... and its proponents cite short-term statistics that seem quite dazzling. However, HUD continues to delay the release of a comprehensive national study on its Housing First outcomes across the various segments of people who find themselves homeless. What is HUD afraid of? You need this data to address this growing problem, and all who are concerned about how to best manage this out-of-control problem need you to demand it from HUD. Until there's a comprehensive, national study of both the short- and long-term outcomes across all segments of those who find themselves homeless, the case that Housing First is the "magic bullet" is a child's version of an intelligent solution.

I PUT IT TO YOU: CAN OUR COUNTRY DO BETTER THAN THIS? Please engage by setting the policy table with people who are in the trenches yet who are not beholden to HUD's myopic approach. Please also include policy experts who believe that we are all best served when we have the opportunity to live up to our God-given potential. Together, these are the folks who can help you make this country's problem solving great again.

If you choose not to engage, we will soon run out of fish.



Michele Steeb, Chief Executive Officer



saint john's
PROGRAM FOR REAL CHANGE



BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

Today, Saint John's serves up to 180 women and children daily. Although our program is running at capacity, our wait list still includes over 250 people each night. Our expansion will allow us to reduce this wait list by one-third!

creating infrastructure to
support 90 more women and
children.



SAINT JOHN'S SERVES UP TO 180 WOMEN AND CHILDREN DAILY with our program running at capacity. Every night, we have 250+ on our waiting list. With additional space, we can help 90 more. You can help...

Help us expand our program to 90 more women and children daily. We have raised \$1.7 M toward this \$4M effort, with just \$2.3M to go. Your help is needed now to turn this incredible opportunity into an amazing reality for 90 more women and children who are homeless -- but who are far from helpless.

GIVING OPPORTUNITIES. All gifts to Saint John's Program for Real Change (Tax ID: 68-0132934) are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law. Please give your most careful consideration to the following giving opportunities. By giving generously today, you will help secure the future of programs that hold the promise of an end to homelessness.

Naming Opportunity	Available	Level
Building Naming	1	\$750,000
Reception/Lobby Area	1	\$100,000
Teen Lounge — FULFILLED!	1	\$50,000
Classroom — FULFILLED!	1	\$50,000
Garden	1	\$20,000
Laundry Room	1	\$20,000
Women's & Boy's Showers	1 each	\$20,000
Volunteer Area	1	\$20,000
Breakroom	1	\$20,000
Water Fountains	2	\$10,000
Bedrooms (customized at your discretion)	22	\$10,000
Office (plaques displayed outside each office)	8	\$10,000
Kitchen Tables	8	\$5,000
Outside Benches	5	\$3,000
Commemorative Bricks-Family	500	\$550
Commemorative Bricks	1000	\$250

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT OUR CAPITAL CAMPAIGN,
BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE
PLEASE CONTACT:

Sasha Stevens Wirth, Director of Development
Saint John's Program for Real Change
P 916-453-1482 C 530-383-1273
swirth@saintjohnsprogram.org

PARTY FOR CHANGE

NOVEMBER 5TH, 2016 6:00 PM

PRESENTED BY
 **HUGHES**
LAW GROUP

WITH HELP FROM SACRAMENTO AREA BUSINESSES, DONORS, LOCAL PHILANTHROPIC ORGANIZATIONS AND VOLUNTEERS, WE HOSTED A NIGHT THAT WAS TRULY A CELEBRATION!

Our success stories are tied directly to your support of our program - delivering care, hope, and change to over 30,000 people over the past 31 years wouldn't have been possible without YOU.

Together at Party for Change we raised over \$520,000 to help support the women and children at Saint John's.

Real Change happens when brave women walk through our doors and begin the hard work necessary to achieve their goals of independence and self-sustainability. The numbers and needs of single-mother-led families entrapped in poverty and homelessness are growing. Saint John's has a plan to address both the need and the numbers, moving families permanently out of that vicious cycle. 100% of the proceeds of this event will be invested into helping 550 women and children this year create real change in their lives. Your support helps make this plan a reality.

OUR HEARTFELT THANKS GO TO ALL THE SAINT JOHN'S VOLUNTEERS.

Our organization is extraordinary in large part due to our incredible volunteer base. Volunteers like our Board of Directors and fabulous host committee- Stacey Larson (Chair), Maren Conrad, Rina & Dominic DiMare, Joy & David Garibaldi, Kim & Tom Hiltachk, Phil MacDougal, Paul Mitchell, Jenifer & Tony Russo, Libby Sanchez, David Sobon, and Anna Zablah-this event would not have happened without you!

Thank you to Brenda Bisharat who captured the evening's festivities, and Rob Stewart, our fabulous emcee.

THANK YOU, SPONSORS!

A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU TO CHEF JEFF HENDERSON

who developed his love for cooking while serving a nine-year prison sentence. He headlined our event and inspired so many, including the women and children in our program, Chef Jay Veregge and his team and the Plates Café and Catering team who executed such a wonderful meal for over 500 people, the Sacramento Executive Airport and Axis Jets for the amazing venue, and DSA Events for creating such a magical evening.

On behalf of all of us at Saint John's, but especially the mothers and children...Thank You!



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PROGRAM FOR REAL CHANGE

THANK YOU

TO OUR PARTY FOR CHANGE SPONSORS

DIAMOND PRESENTING



TITANIUM CHEF SPONSOR



TITANIUM MEDIA SPONSOR



PLATINUM

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Duffy & Capitolo

Harvego

Kim & Tom Hiltachk

HUB International

KP Affairs

Lang, Hansen, O'Malley, & Miller

MurphyAustin

Nationwide

Pacific Housing Inc.

PG&E

Political Data Inc.

Jenifer and Tony Russo

Sacramento Business Journal

Sierra Health Foundation

Trilogy

Walmart

SILVER

Bayside

Bocceri Board Higgins & Kitz

California Dental Association

Casa Ramos Mexican Restaurants

CBS Radio

CBS 13

Consolidated Communications

Crestwood Behavioral

Farmers Insurance

FirstAmerican Title

Kaiser Foundation Health Plan

Mikuni Charitable Foundation

Milagro Centre

Moss Adams LLP

Nielsen Insurance

Niemela Pappas & Associates

Pfizer, St. Hilaire Foundation

Saint John's Circle

Libby & Kevin Sanchez

SMUD

Michele & Jim Steeb

Teichert Foundation

US Bank

Wells Fargo

Wells Fargo Advisors

Event venue graciously provided by



GRATITUDE

With Jessica L.

Born to a family of addicts, Jessica began to drink heavily after her brother passed away from an overdose. Shortly thereafter, two cousins were shot and killed in separate incidents, all leading to an addiction to meth. Add to that the loss of her job and her home and an abusive relationship, Jessica began to sell meth to support her habit, ultimately landing in jail for possession.

"Saint John's gave me the support I needed; I could not have done it by myself without 'the girls' in the program."

"I hit rock bottom while I was in jail – that time was transformative. It was then that I decided to change, but I didn't know how to live without drugs. The counselors at Saint John's were life-saving, and my job training at Plates made me feel needed."

Jessica now works as a waitress at the DoubleTree Hotel, she has her own car, and lives in her own apartment with her dog.



THIS WILL BE TOUGH.

Tough to put into words the powerful, life altering, joyous event I and hundreds of others had the pleasure to recently witness, the 2016 Employment Training Graduation of Saint John's Program for Real Change. I have been emceeing events for 20 years, mostly in the past five years here in Northern California. I do not compare events. Each has its own beauty and breath of fresh air. But for this one, I have been asked specifically to write about graduation and I gladly accepted. I write this as Rob

LAUNCHING A NEW LIFE WRITTEN BY ROB STEWART

Stewart, not as a representative of KVIE.

The first Thursday of every month, Saint John's Program for Real Change hosts the Guest Chef Dinner. It highlights the best and brightest restaurants and vineyards in Northern California while training the clients in the work force. I have been blessed to emcee this monthly event for almost two years now. I say this, only to qualify that I know what I am about to say as true. As a journalist, I can report this to you.

ONE MONTH AGO, I was asked by Executive Director Michele Brown Steeb to be her guest speaker at her Friday Positive Thinking class. I gladly accepted and after a couple of scheduling conflicts on my part, it worked out. I arrived early, about 9am, to find a woman trying to get up the front stairs with everything she owned. It was dirty and crammed in a small cart. How symbolic. She couldn't get it up the stairs. I asked her to let me help her, and with a blank, almost dead look on her face, she said "sure." When we opened the doors, I said to this lovely broken, shattered soul, "Wait. You are safe now. When you walk through this door, you are walking through the doors of hope, for real change, for a better life." All she could say is "I hope so." I said "that is up to you. And I know you can do this."



WE WALKED TO THE VERY back of the private facility for the Positive Thinking class. Naturally, we keep this location confidential. I once heard a quote that we all have a chapter we don't read out loud. No. Not today. These women did not need to see some white television host standing up there telling them how to live. They needed to know that I know what it is like when life gets broken, when things fall apart, to live in crisis (I have never lived as they have but I wanted to relate) and to let them know that the singer Sandi Patty quote, "Our redeemer (whoever that is for you) somehow uses even what we most regret" is true.

I HAVE HAD MY FAIR SHARE OF GROUP THERAPY EXPERIENCES. I've made it no secret that I quit drinking and sought help exactly three years ago. That got their attention. I had 20 broken women sitting in front of me. I pictured them as broken pieces of different colored glass, and we all know what broken glass makes when put together – stained glass windows. Beautiful art. We talked for about an hour and a half. I cannot, or will not, repeat the horrific stories I heard. I could and would have stayed a week. EVERY woman in this class was broken but not beyond repair, hopeless but not helpless. They kept saying "we are homeless." "NO YOU ARE NOT" I exclaimed. "You live here, with your new family, a family that will always have your back." Out of respect for the class, I'm not going into any more detail. But let me say I have never in my life, personal or professional, met a group of women who had lived in constant chaos, yet wanted to change more than anything on this earth. These are some of the strongest women I've ever met. They've got it.

Which leads me to graduation night. August 4th, 6:30 pm at Plates Cafe, the training facility where many of the women receive employment training. There were a lot of important people there. US Representative Ami Bera and his wife Janine, former County Supervisor and former California Secretary of Health and Human Services Sandy Smoley, Olympian Starr Hurley Jones, Philanthropic Attorney Russell Austin, and Sacramento County District Attorney Marie Schubert. Not to mention the countless people there that generously give to make this program work, but no one was more important than the 11 graduates.

THINK ABOUT WHERE YOU WERE LAST YEAR. Of course, we have all battled heartache, death, had celebrations – life changing events that will stick with you forever. For the 11 graduates from Saint John's Program for Real Change, it was a night that righted a ship so far off course it almost sunk, had it not been for Saint John's Program for Real Change.

Most of these women suffer addiction. They are now clean and sober; a mandate of this successful program. Many had, in one year, gotten their GED, been reunited with their children, found the smile in their soul again (the same smile that was dead on the woman's face I had helped enter a month earlier) and were surrounded by mended relationships to cheer them on to the future. I tried to tell the women, after each was proudly presented with a gorgeous graduation plate with their name engraved on it, that our past does not define us, but can serve as a reminder of what is possible if we do not stay the course. You should have heard the exuberant speeches of the graduates, many who would not speak one year ago, tell about their reunited family, their new jobs, and their apartments. ALL, because someone believed in them and held them to the fire to believe it. I love the power of a visual, and I asked every woman in the graduating class, and those learning skills to graduate next year, to come out to the stage. The women needed real love. I asked everyone attending to hold out their hands to the clients, and for the clients to remember that not only are we here to love you and congratulate you, but now a new phase of hard work is coming, staying sober, employed, and remembering this love, staying away from toxic situations. And when times get hard, and they will, to remember this circle of love. Healing has ripple effects that go far and wide. Saint John's Program for Real Change has made sure that those ripples are waves of grace, and these women believe. We believe that each woman can reach not one, but dozens of people, sharing their story of strength, personal forgiveness, growth, sobriety, employment and housing!

"FROM SAINT JOHN'S PROGRAM FOR REAL CHANGE, IT WAS A NIGHT THAT RIGHTED A SHIP SO FAR OFF COURSE IT ALMOST SUNK"

EARLIER THIS YEAR, I FEATURED SAINT JOHN'S PROGRAM for Real Change on a highly rated episode called "Heroes and Hands" sponsored by Russell Austin's firm. This young graduate came up to me and said "Guess what! I'm known on the streets from my past, selling drugs. Someone came up to me, thinking they were asking for drugs, and they said 'wow – we have seen you turning your life around' and she smiled from ear to ear. "That's the first time anyone has ever recognized me for not being a drug dealer."



Rob Stewart

Here's what I know to be a fact. Saint John's Program for Real Change changes lives. I've seen it, I've watched it, I've witnessed it, and I've experienced it. I cannot imagine a world without this program – where women would be lost forever.

EMPLOYMENT TRAINING GRADUATION

2016

Lilly C.

"You have to fix yourself, look deep inside, before you can be a better person for yourself &



Clarice M.

"I am doing exactly what I said I was going to do,



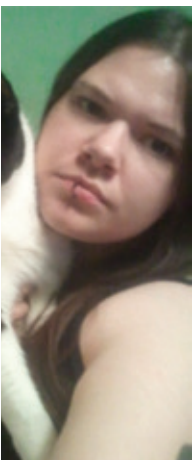
Grace J.

"Saint John's taught me how to peel back the layers so I can heal-that's just



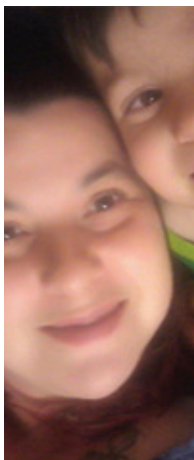
Heather C.

"I was homeless & broken. I came here to get my life back & become stable. With the



Michele P.

"This program taught me responsibility,



your children. The 'old me' didn't believe I could do it. Now I know I can." Currently employed at: Goodwill

determination will take you far." Currently employed at: River City Early Learning Center

what I needed." Currently employed at: Always Best Care

support of Saint John's staff, I am a much happier & healthier person." Currently employed at: Inchins Bamboo Garden

accountability, and gave me hope!"

On August 4th 2016, eleven women* graduated from our Employment Training Program. These ladies exemplify the Saint John's spirit of real change and renewal. We are so excited to walk along side each and every one of our graduates as they begin their lives of self-sufficiency.

Sabrina L.

"On the very day I had decided to give up, Saint John's called. It was a real test

Patricia M.

"I have come a long way from where I was ... I thank this pro-



gram for helping me become the woman that I am today." Currently employed at: Sierra Pacific Synod



of my faith, and I finally dared to hope." Currently employed at: Lotus Casino

Sheri D.

"My mistakes don't define me anymore. The work I've done



on the inside is now showing on the outside. I am finally worthy." Currently employed at: BloodSource

Tara C.

"Saint John's opened their door to me right when I needed it. Now I realize how unhealthy my relationships have been-all



throughout my life." Currently employed at: CONVO

Veronica V.

"God doesn't throw you out. I lost the sweet, lovable Veronica



to drugs, but now I've found her again." Currently employed at: 7 Up Bottling Company

*For personal reasons, our eleventh graduate declined to be included in this article.

SAINT JOHN'S

addresses those with the greatest need

This is a weapon of
domestic violence.

Saint John's Program for Real Change

1 in 4 women is a victim of domestic violence, including economic abuse - where the abuser blocks access to finances*. Allstate is dedicated to helping survivors live free from abuse.

Saint John's served and housed **572** women and children in 2015 (14% Year-Over-Year increase in total women and children served.)

Clients receive up to **460** hours of "hands-on" employment training services.

Clients receive up to **1,200** hours of mental health counseling, education and fiscal training.

While 60+% of our clients test positive upon entry into Saint John's, clients remain drug and alcohol free for up to **18 months...** and beyond.

96% of clients who complete employment training are placed in non-subsidized employment.



Allstate

FOUNDATION

Allstate Insurance, a proud supporter
of Saint John's Program for Real Change

* The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institute of Justice; U.S. Department of Justice - 'Extent, Nature, and Consequences of Intimate Partner Violence'; July 2000 © 2015 Allstate Insurance Co., Northbrook, IL.



be a part of

REAL CHANGE

GIVE MONTHLY become a CHANGE MAKER

What if every week were an incredible week? A week when you felt meaning and purpose. A week when you knew you were literally changing our community for the better. That's what it's like for Saint John's Program for Real Change Monthly Donors. Every month, they support Saint John's programs with a modest amount, and in return, they can be confident that with less than a dollar a day they are opening the door to deserving women and children experiencing homelessness.

\$25 provides 30 nutritious meals to children.

\$75 provides 24 hours of self-sustainability services for one family, including shelter, mental health services, drug and alcohol counseling, parenting, budgeting and exercise classes.

\$100 provides one woman with one day of hands-on employment training services, including transportation and childcare services for her children.



Visit www.saintjohnsprogram.org/changemaker to become a Change Maker today.

SAINT JOHN'S HOLIDAY SHOPPING LIST

Please help us provide a happy holiday for more than 180 mothers and children this season. For donation locations and times, go to saintjohnsprogram.org/donate and click on Make a Difference.

Babies 2 and Under

- Pacifiers, sippy cups, bottles, bibs
- Pull-ups, diapers and baby wipes
- Baby formula
- Toys: light up/noise makers, soft blocks, etc.
- Small bath and bathing supplies
- Diaper rash and teething gel
- Activity mats
- Strollers
- Pajamas
- Board books

Toddlers 2-3

- Themed items: Dora, Bob the Builder, etc.
- Finger paints
- Toy Cars and trucks
- Fisher-Price or Mattel learning toys
- Leap Frog Learners
- Block, V-Tech and building supplies
- Fisher-Price Little People sets
- Art sets, water colors
- Children's CDs & DVDs
- Board Books

Kids 5-9

- Dolls and accessories
- Remote control cars
- Action figures: Transformers
- Art sets
- Toys (no guns or weapons)
- Themed items: Dora, Disney, Avengers, etc.
- Playdough sets
- Backpacks & school supplies
- Dress up clothes & shoes
- Washable paint
- Markers, colored pencils, crayons
- Building sets
- Lego sets and K'Nex
- Big books & story books
- School uniforms-navy/khaki, white polos

Girls 10+

- Flat irons, curling irons & blow dryers
- Manicure and pedicure kits
- Craft kits
- Gel pens, notebooks, diaries
- Jewelry
- Purses
- Make up cases and sets
- Bras
- Concert tickets or special event tickets
- School uniforms - navy/khaki skirts, white polos
- Fragrance & lotion sets

Boys 10+

- Puzzle kits & board games
- Sports magazines & books
- Sports gear, hats, jerseys, t-shirts
- Sporting event tickets & special event tickets
- Duffle bags & backpacks
- Race car sets & tracks
- Basketballs, footballs, frisbees, baseball glove
- School uniforms - navy/khaki skirts, white polos

Mothers

- Robes & slippers
- Stationary sets & journals
- Postage stamps
- Photo albums with frames
- Purses & wallets
- Jewelry, watches & sunglasses
- Duffle bags & small luggage
- Bus/RT passes: \$50 provides monthly bus pass

General Holiday Needs

- Warm clothes - coats, sweaters, scarves, pants
- Socks & slippers
- Robes & pajamas for adults & children
- New towel sets
- Comforters (twin, neutral colors)
- Fitted and flat sheet sets (twin)
- Wrapping paper & ribbon
- Tape, scissors, markers
- Gift cards for Wal-Mart, grocery stores, etc.

Employment Training Needs

- \$75 outfits a mom for work training
- Black pants & black non slip shoes of all sizes
- USB drives for career training & education

Consider becoming a CHANGE MAKER today with your monthly gift of \$25 or more and help provide housing, mental health services, drug and alcohol counseling, classes, job training, childcare and more!

This season, support the many children and families in need: www.saintjohnsprogram.org/beachangemaker. On behalf of our mothers & children... **THANK YOU**



BREAKING THE CYCLE

written
by

Abra Ruthenbeck, Director of Children's Programs, Saint John's Program for Real Change

"Break the cycle of poverty and dependence one family at a time".

As the Director of Children's Programs, I whole-heartedly agree with the Saint John's Program for Real Change vision statement and I see it working every single day. At Saint John's we are always asking ourselves, how can we measure outcomes? How do we know that our program is working? The answer is that there are many ways to measure success, especially with women, but how do we measure success with our youngest clients? What does success look like for a four-year-old experiencing homelessness? What can our program provide and how can it make a difference in a child's future? I decided to focus on one child from our program and look at what a typical experience might entail and what can be learned in a six-month period at Saint John's. I pulled all the photographic documentation from her time at Saint John's and these are the images that stood out.



I'd like to introduce you to Eileen;

she came to us as a four-year-old with her mother and two brothers. She lived with her family at Saint John's and attended preschool during the day. We provide a safe home for children with warm beds, healthy meals and an environment free of violence. We now know more about the devastating, long-term effects of chronic stress on the developing brain and we see children flourish with this new found stability. Once Eileen settled in, she learned important social-emotional skills like how to identify feelings, and was given the language skills necessary to express them. She attended our pre-kindergarten program and was given hearing and vision screenings.

Eileen celebrated Halloween with her friends at a costume party. She arrived all dressed up in a beautiful Elsa costume donated to Saint John's. Elsa was her favorite character and the costume was a dream come true. I often wonder if donors know how important each donation can be and realize the impact the little things can have on the life of a child at Saint John's.

Eileen learned how to make friends, solve problems and cooperate with her peers. She



formed secure attachments to her teachers and learned how to ask for help. She practiced singing songs, counting and writing her name. She fell in love with books and memorized her favorites. She went on nature walks, learned to ride a tricycle and how to use scissors. As her skills grew, so did her confidence level. She went off to kindergarten prepared to succeed.

Finally, Eileen celebrated her fifth birthday at Saint John's in the spring. Her mother had been in the program long enough to find employment and was able to provide cupcakes and a birthday party at her school. Eileen wore a special dress and was glowing with pride as her friends and family sang to her in class.

This is how I define success at Saint John's. I know that we have made Real Change in Eileen's life and the lives of hundreds of children just like her. We have kept her safe, prepared her for lifelong education and provided her with all the special moments that make up a happy childhood. This success is what will truly break the cycle of poverty and dependence.

Transformation vs. Rehabilitation

By David M. Flanagan

WORDS ARE MEANT TO SERVE AS PICTURES OR SYMBOLS to help us gain clarity and understanding into a given story, situation, or point of view. And yet, by the very nature of a symbol, they are too often limited in their ability to do so. Making matters worse, many words take on unfair “baggage” based on how they are used in society, thereby causing increased confusion and misdirection instead.

One such word is Rehabilitation. When used to describe the process and challenges a person undertakes in an effort to really change their lives, often difficult and painful, rehabilitation is often a word used. And while serving as the perfect representation of the subject matter, unfortunately it often carries a “lesser-than” connotation. Rehabilitation becomes then, almost a dirty word. It is for broken people. Weak people. Even bad people.

IN REALITY, nothing could be further from the truth. Unfortunately, despite the beautiful meaning of the word, that negative stereotype actually diminishes or even changes its true meaning. Certainly it does little to provide real clarity into another’s unique, personal story and struggle for change. Rehabilitation is often used in conjunction with our criminal system, revolving around the re-integration into society of a convicted person, countering habitual offenses, also known as criminal recidivism. And while it applies, this definition is severely limited and has distorted our understanding of it. Thus, the baggage attached...is that a certain individual in need of rehabilitation is a lost cause, hopeless, a bad seed, in need of fixing.

SOME MAY ACTUALLY AGREE with that statement. But it is shortsighted and does not apply to a great many number of individuals to whom it is applied. There are many incredible people struggling in life, searching for answers, praying for help and desirous of real change. And while some have not yet found the

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answers, many long to shift the direction of their lives, walk a new path, create independence and enrich, not just their lives, but that of all those around them. They are not bad. They are not broken. They do not need to be fixed. They are simply in a place where the change they so desperately want, lies directly ahead of them.

WHEN IT COMES TO THIS KIND OF CHANGE, a better word, perhaps, is Transformation. With a definition very similar to rehabilitation, it does not have the same negative connotations. To experience real change, or to transform, one experiences a thorough and dramatic change in form or appearance, often both inside and out. Difficult, even painful, it is a time of grace, miracles and incredible beauty. A caterpillar is not ugly or broken. It does not need to be fixed. Quite the contrary. It is a perfect creature. But then, one day it changes, becoming the butterfly, and continues as such on the next step of its journey.

THE TRUTH IS, we are all caterpillars and butterflies. Some of us are still in the larvae stage of our lives. But, we are all the same. None is greater. None is lesser. And while some of us may find ourselves temporarily in a more difficult place and different stage than others, we all are beautiful exactly as we are.

THEN, ONE DAY, with eyes wide open, we happen to look deeper into the mirror than we ever have before, and for the first time we can really see. Real change stares back at us, poised full of possibility and the promise of dramatic transformation. And even when the inevitable pain and struggles accompany, nothing could be more beautiful than that.

— David Flanagan serves on the Board of Directors with Saint John’s. He is a partner in Misfit, a California brand/marketing agency. He is also a co-owner of Red Rocket Auto Tech in Sacramento and the fanatical father of six amazing children.

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WHEN MARY BOHANAN WAS IN SEARCH of a meaningful way to volunteer during her retirement, she turned to volunteermatch.org for help in her quest. With a degree in food and nutrition and a professional career as a clinical dietitian in a hospital, she knew she wanted to help feed families in need. Kismet led her to Saint John's that day in 2005, where coincidentally, the volunteer coordinator turned out to be a distant relative.

"When I realized that Louise was involved, and learned about Saint John's mission, I knew right away that this would be the perfect fit for me," comments Mary. "I love prepping food, serving food and the camaraderie with the ladies, the other volunteers and the staff. I am

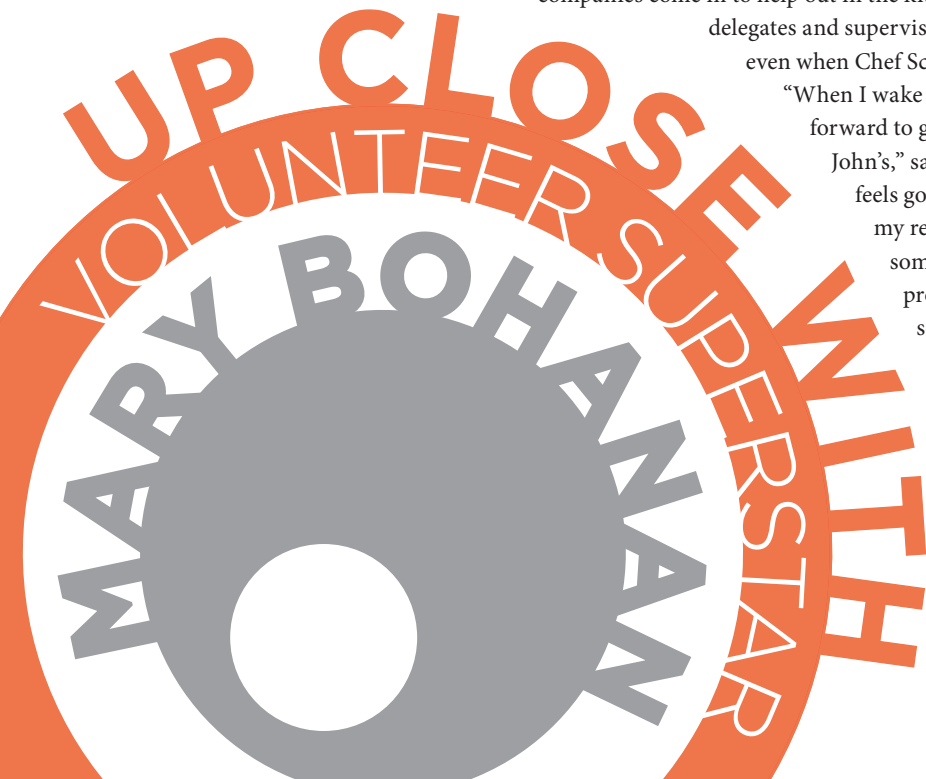
continually inspired by all of these people and their stories."

What has kept Mary coming back for 11 years and counting, month after month, up to four days a week? Even more than her calling to nourish, it's the people. And she loves working with and learning from Saint John's own Chef Scott, a Culinary Institute of America-trained former sous chef of the Serrano Country Club.

"Chef Scott is so creative and talented -- absolutely nothing goes to waste," comments Mary. "He often has to work with whatever foods come via donations from various local food banks and other sources, and he always concocts something wonderful with whatever comes in the door. I learn something new every day."

A typical day sees Mary prepping, cooking and serving, but on days when church groups or companies come in to help out in the kitchen, Mary delegates and supervises the team, even when Chef Scott is not there.

"When I wake up, I look forward to going to Saint John's," says Mary. "It feels good to spend my retirement doing something so productive and so worthwhile. Every day is different, and every day special."



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