Celebrating the Center’s 40th Anniversary

In 1979, as the nation healed from war and political upheaval, our little desert city decided to take a practical step toward peace. The Community Mediation Project was launched with the goal of providing Tucsonans with a safe, respectful, accessible process for talking through conflicts and reaching win-win agreements. In the intervening 40 years — thanks to countless skilled neutral volunteer mediators — this goal has been achieved thousands of times, by neighbors, family members, co-workers, business partners, students, teachers, and others, in disputes ranging from noisy barking dogs to the leadership of organizations.

Following the shooting of Congresswoman Gabby Giffords in 2011, the project joined forces with Tucsonans for Civility to create the Center for Community Dialogue. While still providing free and low-cost mediation, the Center and its volunteers expanded the usage of civil dialogue as a conflict resolution tool in our community. Through Community Forums, large groups of people have their opinions heard, listen to others, and move toward consensus on difficult topics. In facilitated Circle discussions, people of all ages and perspective make connections and share ideas. The Center’s highly rated trainings place these tools in the hands of others and increase their skill in using them.

This fall we have an abundance of reasons to celebrate, and want to share our vision for the future with those who have shared their time and support in the past. In September we will have a celebration unveiling our new expanded location on the Community Foundation for Southern Arizona Campus.

Additionally, on October 20, join us at the Loft Cinema for an exclusive experience combining the thought-provoking film “The Insult” and community dialogue circles addressing causes of violence in our community. Finally, check out our schedule of enriching fall trainings available at ourfamilyservices.org/training.

As we look to the next 40 years of the Center, we see a bright future full of opportunities for growth and ways to apply our practices to new audiences. Our mission is unique in Arizona and rare in the nation. After 40 years, we’re proud to say our desert city continues to take big steps for peace!

Youth Experience Survey Shines Light on Realities of Homelessness

Since 2014, Our Family Services has been a partner in the Youth Experience Survey, a project of the ASU Office of Sex Trafficking Intervention Research. This study focuses on how the life experiences of Arizona’s homeless young adults increase their risk for experiencing human trafficking. Staff from Our Family Services and other homeless serving organizations distribute a survey to young adults to paint a picture of their homeless experiences, health history, and the risks they face as well as the ways they are protected. Because this project is in its fifth year, researchers

Continues on page 3
Happy New Year!

In the nonprofit sector, many of us close out our fiscal year on June 30th. At Our Family, we are now looking back and forward all at the same time. As we celebrate our accomplishments in FY19, we thank you for being our partner in making it possible for us to serve 6,500+ individuals! Did you know that on an average night we house 250 adults and children? You make all of that happen – each and every night!

A few accomplishments from FY19:

- The completion of a large national benchmarking project, looking at how the homeless services of Our Family compare to others across the country.
- With increased funding, we successfully expanded the reach of our Rapid Rehousing Program.
- Addition of a new 4-part curriculum on communication and conflict resolution, aimed at emerging leaders, in the Center for Community Dialogue and Training.
- Successfully raised $100,000 to pay off the solar panels at our Reunion House shelter!

Over the next several newsletters, you will learn more about where we are headed in our new year, staying true to our mission to eliminate homelessness and strengthen our community. We are excited about 2020 and what it has in store for us.

Thank you to our donors and supporters for allowing us to serve the community!

Sincerely,

Beth L. Morrison,
Chief Executive Officer

THANK YOU!

A special thanks to the following foundations, clubs, and businesses who donated or held fundraisers for Our Family from January through June 2019.

2Propel Fund held at the Community Foundation for Southern Arizona
AmazonSmile Foundation
Arizona Diamondbacks Foundation
Arizona Multihousing Association
Arizona Picture & Framing Gallery
Bank of America Charitable Foundation
Barker Contracting
Bashas’ BMO Wealth Management
Casas Adobes Congregational Church
Community Foundation for Southern Arizona
Connie Hillman Family Foundation
DeConcini McDonald Yetwin & Lacy
Distinctive Carpets, Inc.
Fred and Christine Armstrong Foundation
Grace Temple Missionary Baptist Church
Green Things
In-N-Out Burger Foundation
Jay Rochlin
Jewish Community Foundation of Southern Arizona
Jewish Federation of Southern Arizona
Keegan, Linscott, Kenon, PC
KGUN 9 - E.W. SCRIPPS
Kitay Family Foundation
Kittle Design and Construction
Kroger
LGBTQ+Alliance Fund held at Community Foundation for Southern Arizona
Long Realty Cares Foundation
Lovitt & Touche, Inc.
Mamas’ Got Funk
National Bank of Arizona
NPS Merchant Services
Oak Tree Foundation
O’Rielly Family Foundation
Pima Dermatology
Primavera Foundation
QuikTrip Corporation
Southern Arizona Land Trust, LLC
Southwest Gas Corporation
St. Francis in the Valley Episcopal Church
St. John on the Desert Presbyterian Church
St. Thomas the Apostle Church
Stone Canyon Community Foundation Fund held at the Community Foundation for Southern Arizona
Texas Instruments Foundation
The Conway Bennett Fund held at the Community Foundation Boulder County
The Lake Investment Group, LLC
TJX Foundation
Tortolita Presbyterian Church
Tucson Appliance Company, LLC
Tucson Electric Power Company
Tucson Federal Credit Union
United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona
Unity of Tucson
Watermark Retirement Communities
Wines for Humanity
Wist Business Supplies
Women’s Foundation of Southern Arizona
Youth on Their Own
William and Doris Rubin Endowment Fund held at the Jewish Community Foundation of Southern Arizona
Marilyn Haas Community Youth Fund held at the Jewish Community Foundation of Southern Arizona
Zuckerman Family Fund held at the Jewish Community Foundation of Southern Arizona
Youth Experience Survey

Continued from page 1

can track notable trends and make recommendations about how to best serve this vulnerable population. Some of the key findings include:

- The average age of participants’ first homeless experience was 16 years old.
- Over one third of participants experienced sex trafficking exploitation and nearly one third experienced labor exploitation.
- Youth who were sex trafficked were significantly more likely to have come from abusive households, to experience significant mental health challenges, to engage in self-harming behaviors, and to become victims of dating violence.

These sobering statistics are used to inform our approach so that we are serving the complex needs of homeless youth who have been trafficked to the highest possible standards. Additionally, information like this highlights the need for increased funding and support to organizations like Our Family Services, and redoubles our commitment to end homelessness and protect our most vulnerable neighbors.
Southwest Gas Volunteers Gather to Help Homeless Youth

On a Saturday morning when many of us may have spent our time sleeping in or reading the newspaper, hundreds of Southwest Gas employees donated their time to help young people living on the streets. With a DJ in the background, games for the kids, and delicious food on the grill, Southwest Gas employees brought their families and friends and formed an assembly line putting together food packs for our Street Outreach team to distribute to homeless teens and young adults.

Youth living on the streets have a deep mistrust of adults and systems of care because their homelessness may have roots in trauma such as sex and labor trafficking, abuse, and exploitation. Our Street Outreach Team goes to places where homeless youth congregate, providing critical food and hygiene supplies. It may take several interactions, but when our staff can build a bridge of trust with homeless youth it creates the critical link for them to enter one of our housing programs, empowering them to do things like get back in school, and go to work, ultimately paving the way to stability and permanency.

It is heartwarming to see families gathering together to provide food and supplies that help their neighbors in need. We are so grateful to our partners at Southwest Gas for supporting and uplifting the Tucson community. Thank you!

Ride in El Tour de Tucson with AMCF Big Hearts

Registration is now open to join the AMCF Big Hearts El Tour de Tucson Team. Funds raised benefit Our Family Services.

Learn more at: facebook.com/bh4lhtucson