

PARTNERS FOR CHANGE TRI-VALLEY

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ANNUAL REPORT 2017



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Message from Kim Risedorph, President & Chief Operating Officer

Dear Friends,

Partners for Change is celebrating our second year in the Tri-Valley. We exist to help those in need achieve stability by addressing common root causes of poverty. In this annual report we will describe our holistic approach and our successes.



**Rev. Kim Risedorph,
Partners for Change**

I work in a community where we offer hot meals, a shower, and laundry facilities to people who do not have access to these daily basics. And I distinctly remember wondering: by offering these services, do we ever keep some people dependent on them? If a person is motivated, and free from addictions, can we do more? Can we work together to provide a hand up, rather than a hand out?

That's when I began searching for a poverty alleviation approach. The key ingredients of our Partners for Change program* are a community meal together each week, a curriculum that challenges us to set realistic goals, and a partnership between trained mentors and program participants. We walk alongside our participants (called Change Leaders) for two years. We have adopted an effective method that truly changes lives.

On a personal level, Partners for Change is one of the most meaningful ministries I've ever participated in. I'm grateful that Partners for Change works. We have helped individuals and families gain financial stability. What's amazed me is how ALL of us in the program are changed---volunteers and Change Leaders. When we share a meal together (made possible by Open Heart Kitchen) and hear each others' stories, we move beyond stereotypes and judgements. We have built a community of mutual respect, support and care. And I invite you to support this effort through volunteering with us, or making a donation. Together, we can address hunger and poverty in our community.

Thank you!

Rev. DR. Kim Risedorph

*Our local chapter is affiliated with NETworX USA through the Capital Cities C.I.R.C.L.E.S. initiative in Reno, NV.

Mission

To empower people to chart their own courses out of poverty and toward self-sufficiency by creating partnerships with members of our community who mentor them on the journey, and to educate citizens and public officials about our experiences while addressing the root causes of poverty and homelessness.

Programs

Adult Program

Our program consists of a combination of life-skills training and mentoring through partnerships. Each partnership consists of an individual or family working to overcome poverty—known as Change Leaders—with two to four community participants—known as Allies—who befriend the individual or family and mentor them on their journey to self-sufficiency. With the help of these Allies, each Change Leader sets goals that are unique to his or her own needs and circumstances that will lead to developing the emotional, financial, intellectual, and spiritual resources necessary for self-sufficiency and family stability. In similar programs around the country, it takes typically 18-24 months for the individuals or families to work their way out of poverty. It is expected that when a family becomes self-sufficient, they will in turn practice reciprocity by getting involved in the community and supporting new families on their journey through the program.



Helping Change Leaders find stability is the goal of Partners for Change. When participants achieve stability along with fundamental constructive changes in outlook and connection with the community due to inclusion in our program, we have done our job.

Children's Program

During the weekly meetings, we provide on-site care and supervision for ages 0-18 years with a focus on fun, cooperative learning, and mutual respect. In 2018, we look forward to further implementing the newly developed children's curriculum, which mirrors the adult curriculum.



Our Approach

Life-Skills Training

Facilitators guide participants through the 12-week Getting Ahead curriculum (provided by NETworX) and our original supplemental content. We introduce discussion topics and activities to challenge Change Leaders and Allies alike to explore how their belief systems and patterns of response were formed. Each participant commits to attending and being prepared to explore the ideas presented and contribute to the conversation.

The activities are aimed at taking stock of the present, accepting the past, and planning and pursuing a hopeful future. In the Life Survey, participants take a snapshot of their lives, noting whether they are merely surviving, vulnerable, or thriving in areas including health, relationships, emotional well-being, childcare, transportation, and finances. This activity, done multiple times during the program, grounds us in the present and highlights changes over time in life's circumstances that may have been too subtle to notice day by day.



One training module in the curriculum is devoted to Trauma. In that section, we aid participants in seeing any relationship between trauma in their past and poverty. In other sessions, Change Leaders learn about setting SMART goals to better ensure success in the pursuit of self-sufficiency. SMART stands for Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely. Learning this core skill of “project management” is a key for overcoming habits that might have kept an otherwise capable person from thriving. Participants are urged to dream big and to create vision boards.

New & Good

Often, we tend to focus on the problems in our life. The Partners for Change approach is to focus on the positive. This teaches us to be in charge of where to put our attention. It also levels differences across



class, age, race, and other lines by introducing people through their experiences and not by their role within the program. This helps build relationships. At the beginning of each session, we gather in a large circle and one by one introduce ourselves by first name and share something new and good in our lives. This sets the tone for the meeting and offers a way for people who may not have ever spoken to connect.

Building Community

Our program depends on a sense of mutual trust among the Change Leaders, Allies, and Facilitators. This is accomplished in part by informal activities that help develop a sense of community. Before each training session, we share a dinner, which provides an informal setting to discuss what is happening in our lives and in the world. And on special occasions such as holidays, we hold simple parties to celebrate life.

Through weekly meetings, strangers have become friends who get together even on their own time. Recipes, jokes, handshakes, and hugs are shared. We laugh together, cry together, mourn and celebrate, help each other move, fix each other's cars, and so much more. Both Change Leaders and Allies have added to their networks of support and so often express gratitude for the new connections that have improved their lives.



photo by Mariel Chiong



Graduation

After the completion of each 12-week Getting Ahead session, a graduation ceremony is held to celebrate the first step in becoming a successful Change Leader. This ceremony includes a brief speech by a community leader and one of the Change Leaders, and certificates of completion are given to each graduate.



Continuing Support

The initial life-skills curriculum is only the beginning of the process. Success depends on a continuing support system for about 18 months to help reinforce the training curriculum and to help deal with continuing bumps in the road of life.

Upon graduation from the life-skills curriculum, each Change Leader is partnered with at least two Allies, who meeting weekly to discuss what is happening in their lives. An Ally is a mentor who may provide assistance with connecting to community services but does not provide financial support.

Change Leaders are also expected to continue their participation in a continuing education program about three times a month for about 18 months. Activities include guest speakers to address various topics of interest and deep-dive sessions to discuss specific challenges facing a participant and possible ways of addressing them. As always, it is the responsibility of each Change Leader to develop and execute their own plan for how to deal with these challenges.



Child Care

Free child care is provided at weekly meeting to facilitate participation by those having young children. This program provides both recreational and educational activities, and it has included tutoring when appropriate.



Our Impact

We continue to have a high graduation rate for our participants:

Change Leaders accepted since 2016	33
Change Leaders starting in 2017 class	11
Change Leaders graduating in 2017 class	8
Moved on to favorable arrangements prior to graduation	2

In addition to the Change Leaders, we had 40 Allies participate in 2017 along with 14 other volunteers tending to meals, childcare, and cleanup, for an estimated 5,000 volunteer hours. While these statistics are important, it is also vital that we build a community where lives of both Change Leaders and Allies are enriched and support flows among people who have become quite close.

Martha (Ally)

I like that the organization itself is a hand up and not a handout. It's about helping somebody to move forward. The discussion materials and activities are very good, and I go back and



review things from time to time. For example, I thought the privilege walk (which focuses on the advantages and adversity in a person's life) was very moving and opened a lot of eyes. The biggest thing I have learned in this experience is patience and that things don't happen on "Martha time" or on a day timer. Also, I have learned better how to listen and decipher what I'm hearing. I believe it is possible to listen yet not hear another person's true meaning. While in Partners, I have been able to hone the skill of discernment so that I can better connect and be helpful in this process.

I sit and listen during meetings rather than being so ready to speak. I have absorbed a lot that way. Some days, it took all my might, but with this approach, I got so many good tips from others' experiences. In meetings, Change

Leaders learn. Allies learn, too. It's good that we get to share information. I realized that it's important to listen to what people DON'T say as much as to what they DO say. Sometimes it's the best way to understand their full story. This takeaway from my participation in the group has had a big effect on my life. I now slow down, listen, and take the time to talk to people. I try not to zip around and constantly try to fix things.

Usually, I am a fixer, but that is not always what people need. Sometimes we just need to be heard and to know we have been heard. I try to help find the balance between giving people space to tell their stories while not enabling them to *become* their stories. In the process, I now understand that I should be easier on myself. **I am beginning to treat myself the way I would another person—to give myself the grace I am able to give my partners. That newfound patience now extends to me.**

Lastly, being involved with Partners for Change has reinforced for me that it is important to look for the good things in life even when in the midst of hardship. I have had a very difficult year, in that I experienced significant loss. Keeping it in my head to focus on the positives—that I can move and breathe on my own and that I get another day above ground—has been extremely helpful.

We Have Made Real Differences In Real People's Lives

Impact Story 1

Gail

Gail entered our program upon the recommendation of our partners at the school system. Her life was full of hardship, and she was having difficulty holding things together for herself and her son, who was struggling to graduate from high school. After losing her housing, she found herself staying at a friend's home in South San Francisco while her son stayed with friends in the Tri-Valley to maintain his residency and finish his last year of school. Gail delivered a heartfelt message at our first graduation ceremony that touched all. With the support of her partnership, Gail was able to obtain a new job (two hours away) and housing through a contact within the program. Quickly, the stresses of life, including the distance from her son, the commute, and the ever-present fear of her 15 year-old car breaking down (which it eventually did), caused her to hit a breaking point. Gail tumbled back into addiction. An intervention led by the partnership enabled her to locate rehabilitation services, and Gail took full advantage. Though it was hard, she made the decision to move

hundreds of miles away for rehabilitation while her son finished his schooling. While away, the Allies in Gail's group worked hard to assist her son, often tutoring him 3-4 hours per day 5 days a week, so that he could graduate on time. After several months of hard work by all involved, he did just that. Gail finished her recovery program and made the tough decision to stay permanently where she had built a life of good habits and supportive influences. Today, her son is employed and living on his own. Gail is well on her way to the life she envisioned when first entering our program. **She has full-time employment, a place that she rents, and best of all her sobriety.** She just celebrated a year of clean living. She remains in contact with the program and offered that she is proud to have taken on coping skills to manage life's ups and downs with healthy options. She attributes her newfound stability to the commitment of her partnership and her own tireless dedication to achieve her full potential.



Impact Story 2

Stuart

Stuart was one of our first participants. Though he possesses many marketable skills in a number of manual trades and is a trained chef, a back injury had hampered his ability to work. He had been living in his car for fourteen months when he began Partners for Change. Stuart's kindly manner and strong motivation to work and



improve himself were evident early on. This motivation led him to secure housing in a transitional group home operated by a local church. Because making the changes necessary to lift oneself out of poverty is rarely linear, he faced a number of setbacks. An injury required him to have surgery, which led to substantial weight gain (after he had lost 40 pounds, which was one of his goals in the program), his car broke down, he lost one of his three part-time jobs. Not one to shy away from challenge, Stuart persisted and maintained steady progress in our program. Today, **Stuart is living so many of the goals he set for himself.** He enjoys a full-time job making a living wage and was recently promoted. He has a reliable late-model car, and he has left the transitional housing in favor of a rental closer to his work place. As he refocuses on his weight loss journey, we are working with him to tackle another health issue that has gone unattended for far too long and are making progress in developing a treatment program with a local doctor.

Impact Story 3

Michelle

Michelle joined our second session while struggling to make ends meet for herself and her son. After leaving an abusive relationship, her long-standing employment provided barely enough to pay her bills. A regular at the weekly meetings, she was fully committed to the program. Shortly after completing the curriculum and being partnered with her Allies, Michelle embarked on her goal to enroll and attend the local community college to pursue Nursing and Administration of Justice for Victims of Crime. When she shared that she was taking a computer course—without the benefit of having a computer of her own to work on, her partners helped her to secure a used one to better ensure her success. Soon after school started, life became complicated: her serious relationship ended, her mother fell terminally ill, and she had to leave her rental housing. Michelle quickly had to spring into action to hold things together. She was able to find a place for her son to stay, which would allow him to remain in his local school, though she would be separated from him, staying with



friends in San Francisco. Her once relatively short commute to work became an hours-long and expensive trek on public transit often in the middle of the night or early morning when her shift ended. Facing all of these pressures, Michelle’s own health deteriorated. In addition to physical impairments, she fell into clinical depression and experienced anxiety attacks regularly. **Through it all, she never quit.** She leaned on her partnership when feeling sick, unmotivated, or down and credits them with helping to keep her spirits lifted and her attention focused on her goals. She finished her first semester of school and is enrolled once again. With that encouragement, she attended a spiritual retreat that recharged her battery both physically and mentally. She says she feels “like a different person.” When asked what participating in this program has meant to her thus far in her journey, Michelle answers, “This program offered emotional support. I have made friendships that last with people I can talk to. I have learned how to be dedicated. My future will include achieving all the goals I have set while in the program along with my partners, including being an advocate for survivors of abuse and sexual assault. It has (already) helped me to reach the goal of being a stronger person. I feel confident.”

Challenges

Substance Abuse

Addiction emerged as a serious issue for some participants. While we screen for substance abuse at the outset of a new session, the system is hardly infallible. Partners for Change prides itself in dealing with the whole person. Rather than exclude people for whom addiction emerged as a struggle, we offered assistance in finding professional treatment and counseling to address the issue head on. When cleared by the professional, we offer the participant the opportunity to continue in the program.

Housing Instability/Homelessness

Since our inception, each of our Change Leaders has faced some degree of housing instability. From the outset, we were more accepting of homeless clients than similar programs across the country. Even though our program is not designed for the chronically homeless, housing is very costly and limited in availability in the San Francisco Bay Area, where \$105,350 per year is considered low income for a family of four by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. Consequently, we think we would miss important opportunities to assist some who could benefit from our services if we required all to have stable housing. Given our success with some who were homeless, we believe our program can make a major difference for homeless people who are otherwise stable. We continue to learn and assess what works best for this geographic area and will fine tune our selection process accordingly.



photos by Mariel Chiong

Organizational Partnerships

We have developed a close relationship with a number of organizations in the Tri-Valley, which have proven critical to our success.

- The Livermore Valley Unified School District and its Child Welfare Attendance Specialists have been excellent referral sources for Change Leader candidates who are, to date, best suited to benefit from our services. As the relationship grows stronger, they are able to recognize who among their clientele possess the criteria required to participate in Partners for Change and refer them to our program. We continue to foster the relationship and look forward to even greater numbers of referrals.
- City Serve of the Tri-Valley has been a key organizational partnership as well. Their provision of access to wraparound services for people in need has led us to find support through participant referrals as well as resources for our participants.
- Open Heart Kitchen has provided nutritious meals throughout our existence.
- One of our board members leads an annual community bus ticket drive, supported by Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority, to provide free bus tickets for people in need. Change Leaders are among the recipients of these bus tickets, which help some attend our meetings.
- In 2018, we intend to strengthen our relationship and partnership efforts with the Livermore Housing Authority in order to publicize Partners for Change among its low-income clientele.

Outreach in 2017	
Rotary Club of Livermore	Livermore Valley Unified School District
Asbury United Methodist Church	Tri-Valley Nonprofit Alliance
Open Heart Kitchen	City Serve of the Tri Valley
Rally for Love	Stronger Together Festival
Know Your Rights Event	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints
Livermore Needs and Services	Livermore Housing Authority Fair
Tri-Valley Anti-Poverty Collaborative	

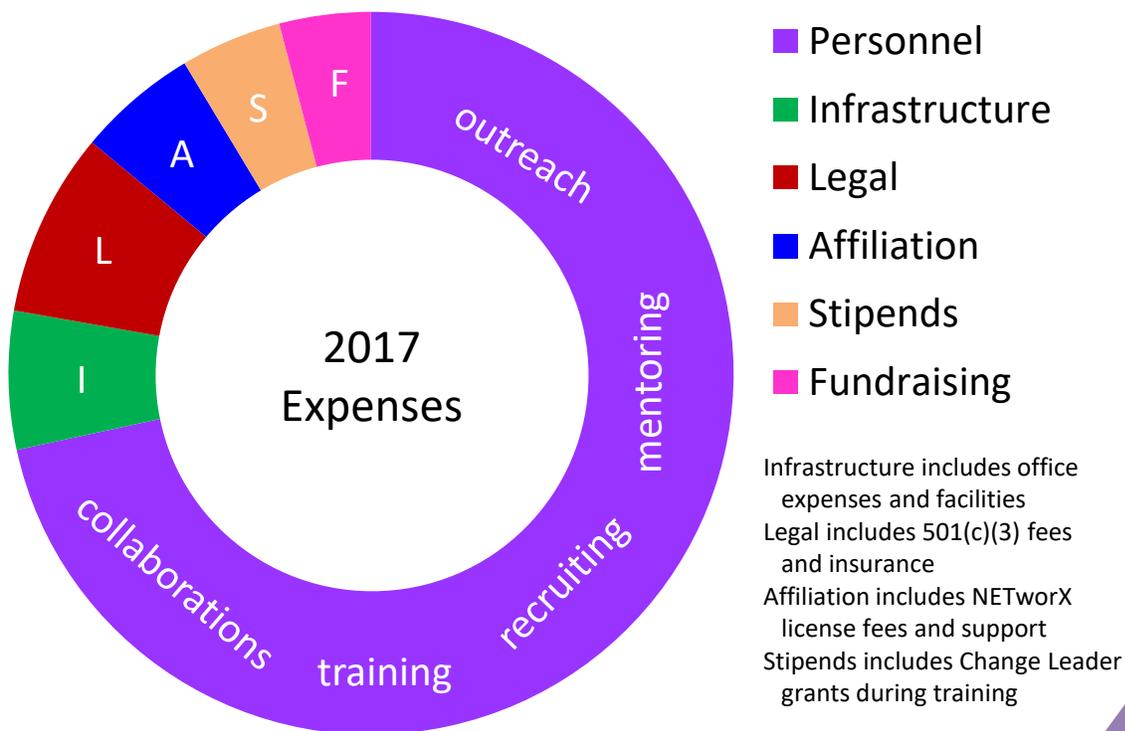


Financial Resources & Management

Partners for Change Tri-Valley was started in late 2015 under the auspices of Asbury United Methodist Church in Livermore, which handled our donations and expenditures in 2015 and 2016. We were incorporated in late 2016, obtained our IRS 501(c)(3) status in early 2017, and set up our own accounting system for 2017 and beyond.

Financial Details

Our total receipts and expenditures in 2017 were \$94,569 and \$83,706, respectively. All our receipts came from donations, as outlined on the next page. The following chart shows the breakdown of our expenses. Our largest expense is for the personnel who provide the training, coaching, and outreach that are the essence of our program.



In addition to these financials, we received substantial in-kind contributions from Open Heart Kitchen for weekly meals for ~35 people per week. Also, Asbury UMC provided administrative support, and both Asbury and the United Christian Church supplied an office and their facility for a nominal rent.

Looking Forward

In 2018, we intend to conduct Session 4 of the Getting Ahead curriculum and strengthen our children's training program. We will explore the possibility of a Spanish-based program. To broaden our financial base, we will pursue grants from various organizations and agencies. Due to the increasing amount of time dedicated by our Executive Director to coaching, our new part-time staff member, Abby Crawford, will focus on facilitating. We will also be adding several new members to our Board of Directors, and interested parties are welcome to apply. Jeff Atherton left the Board at the end of 2017 due to heavy work and family responsibilities, and Kim Risedorph will be leaving midyear 2018 due to pastoral reassignment to San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church. In addition, our weekly meetings will be moving to Livermore High School.

Executive Leadership



Alan Burnham
Board Chair and CEO



Rev. Kim Risedorph
President and COO



Richard Hayes
Treasurer and CFO



L. Jeffrey Atherton
Board Vice Chair



Jacky Poulsen
Secretary



Shana Peete
Executive Director

We Need Your Help

Partners for Change Tri-Valley exists because of the generosity of individual donors who strongly believe in the value of this program. Although we plan to obtain more grant funding from organizations in the future, we expect our primary source of funding will continue to be from individuals. We are able to keep our costs to a minimum, because most of the person hours needed to execute our program come from volunteers via Allies, food servers, childcare, rides, and other miscellaneous tasks.

Every Donation Matters

Please make your donation in one of the following ways:

By credit card at our website www.pfctv.org.

By mailing a check to: *Partners for Change Tri-Valley, 4743 East Avenue, Livermore, CA 94550.*

Also, part of your Amazon purchase will be donated to us if you use smile.amazon.com with our ID of 81-4326240.



Volunteer and Help Make a Difference

Not everyone can make a financial contribution. We have other ways you can help, including becoming an Ally, a childcare provider, a ride provider, or a food server.

Thanks to All of Our 2017 Donors

We wouldn't be able to carry out this important work without you.

\$5,000 or more

Asbury United Methodist Church
Alan and Mary Burnham
Dori & Larry Ellis
Jean King
Lynn & Joan Seppala
Heising-Simons Foundation*

\$1,000-\$4,999

Anonymous
Austin Verive & Shana Peete
Esther Clark
Jacqueline and Peter Poulsen
Jean & David Braun
Jeffrey & Cynthia Atherton

Laurance & Joyce Suter
Linnea Cook & Pieter Dykema
Patrick & Madeline McMenamain
Paul Lerwick
Richard Hayes
Robert & Jacqueline Hoffman
Thomas & Judy Rognlien

\$500 - \$999

William and Jane Nebo
Hindu Community & Cultural Center
Lynnewood United Methodist Church

*corporate matching

Up to \$499

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Brian & Susan Mayall
Charles Howe and Priscilla Morelli
Christian & Catherine Chukwuma
Doug & Mary Ellen Huey
Ellen Peete
Illyasha Peete
Jack and Nancy Marling
James & Lindsey Murray
Karen & David Furst
Laura Bennett
Mark and Maria Triska
Richard & Sharmyn Crawford
Wayne and Jacquelyn Shotts
Livermore Cyclery



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(925) 583-1635 | director@pfctv.org