

# Harbor Interfaith CONNECTED

*Empowering the homeless and working poor in the South Bay for over 45 years.*

Summer 2020

## —Interim Housing, Bridge Housing, Project Room Key—

### New Housing Facilities

One of our *Strategic Plan* goals is to expand housing options for anyone experiencing homelessness in the South Bay. With this goal in sight, we recently began operations of a 40 bed Interim Housing facility, with an additional 100 bed Bridge Housing facility coming on line in the near future to help homeless individuals find permanent residences. Both facilities are pet friendly and operate 24 hours per day.

The Interim and Bridge housing projects address street homeless, two of several projects that have been in the works. The Bridge Housing project is sponsored by Los Angeles City Councilman Joe Buscaino and the Interim Housing project is sponsored by Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn.



Interim Housing (above) opened on March 7, in a remodeled county health building. It has 40 beds for single homeless individuals who have been living in the area near the San Pedro post office. Residents will live there for however long it takes to become permanently housed.



Bridge Housing (left) is under construction while this article was being written. It is scheduled to open in July 2020. The Bridge housing is a

three-year temporary campus located on an under-used CalTrans Park and Ride lot. The structures include a big tent with 100 beds, an administrative trailer, showers, laundry and restroom facilities, and an outdoor area for residents to eat their meals. The food will be prepared and delivered by The Beacon House Association of San Pedro.

Project Room Key (right) opened in April 2020. The site is a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, providing temporary housing for homeless individuals to get them off the streets and away from potential contamination. The facility is one of three in the South Bay. Different agencies manage the other sites.



The Project Room Key site is a motel which, under normal conditions, would be filled with travelers. Our site has 56 rooms. To live in a room, residents must be asymptomatic and have a pre-existing conditions that makes them vulnerable to COVID-19. Once housed, residents work with a case manager to find permanent housing.

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## From the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

Pandemics are not pretty, and many people suffer. Suffering is hard to watch or experience. After three months into our crisis response, the county is moving forward on the Roadmap to Recovery with the recent opening of Phase 3.

Harbor Interfaith, at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and “safer at home orders,” was deemed an essential business. Harbor Interfaith team continued to work on the front lines with our vulnerable populations ensuring resources were available during the pandemic. As you may know, homelessness doesn’t end when a pandemic hits. The need for immediate housing becomes critical.

You—our donors and friends—have continued to support us. The employees and Board of Directors have been overwhelmed by your generosity. You call or email us often to ask what you can do. You continue to support our efforts, and you help us address immediate needs. We couldn’t be more thankful.

### 2020 Homeless Count

In the midst of the pandemic, the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) released the 2020 Homeless Count results:

- ⇒ Los Angeles County’s homelessness is up 12.7% (66,433 people, up from 58,936); 2019’s count was up 12% from 2018’s.
- ⇒ In the City of Los Angeles, homelessness is up 14.2% (41,290 people, up from 36,165); 2019’s count was up 16% from 2018.
- ⇒ Chronic homelessness is at 21,500 people, up from 13,600—a 58% increase.
- ⇒ Senior homelessness increased by 1,059 people to 6,290—a 20% increase.
- ⇒ Veteran homelessness remained steady.
- ⇒ Homeless among Transitional Age Youth (ages 18-24) is up 19%.
- ⇒ Families with minor aged children went up 46%.

Please stay tuned, we will soon share the South Bay homeless count results by City.

*Tahia Hayslet, Executive Director/CEO*

## CONNECTED

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670 W. 9th St.  
San Pedro, CA 90731  
310-831-0603  
HarborInterfaith.org



## Evening of Laughter & Fun(d)raising

**UPDATE:** The annual Comedy & Magic Night produced by the South Bay Auxiliary of Harbor Interfaith Services was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The event was scheduled for Wednesday, May 6, at the Comedy & Magic Club in Hermosa Beach. In 2019, it netted \$100,000 for the agency’s childcare center.

The auxiliary members—saddened but not discouraged—pushed ahead with their fundraising efforts, determined to

meet the goal. It contacted all of its sponsors, and the majority agreed to pay their pledges. Members tapped their friends for cash gifts and encouraged people to buy virtual tickets.

The grand total raised is yet to be announced because money is still trickling in. We thank the Auxiliary, who, despite facing the Mt. Whitney of odds, pulled it off.



# John's New Home

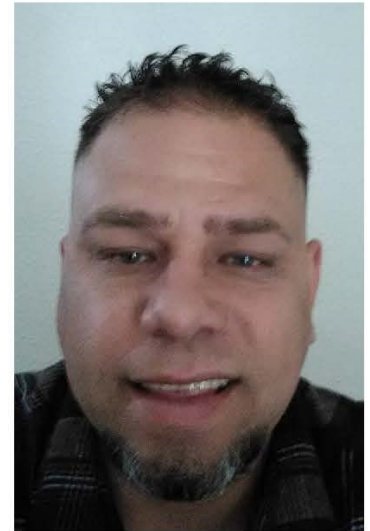
John Navarro, age 41, a San Pedro resident, had been homeless for two years when the bottom fell out. He had a job, but he'd also had a substance abuse addiction that had depleted his income. He didn't have enough money to pay any kind of rent.

About a year ago, he'd had enough. He wanted to turn his life around, and he got help for his addiction. He cleaned up and began putting money away to find housing. Things progressed—he built his savings while dreaming of a permanent home. But the COVID-19 pandemic hit, and the stay-at-home orders caused a layoff.

He came to us for help! He felt discouraged, but he kept his chin up.

The pieces came together when the State of California loosened its closure orders, and his employer brought him back to work. With his income restored, we found him a place to live that he could afford. Today, he lives in an apartment in San Pedro.

John learned a lot from this experience, including about the fragility of life. He continues to save his money for the future and wants to build a career. He is exploring his options.



## How You Can Help

Every day, we receive calls and emails asking what you can do to help. We have appreciated your eagerness to lend a hand. Here are some things you can do. You can bring these things to us in person, mail them, or have a vendor deliver them to us (e.g., Ralphs, Target, Amazon). The address for deliveries is Harbor Interfaith Services, 670 W. 9th St., San Pedro, CA, 90731. Thank you in advance.

**Donate packaged food** for the Food Pantry: single serve chicken and tuna meals, pasta, spaghetti sauce, peanut butter and jelly, canned vegetables and fruits, and boxed breakfast cereals.

**Donate hygiene items** including toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo, conditioner, shaving cream, razors, baby wipes, sanitizers, and child diapers.

**Donate school supplies** for the children: backpacks, pencils, crayons, spiral notebooks, rulers, pens, etc.

**Donate cash for childcare tuition** for parents. The cost of care for one child per week is \$132.



Harbor Interfaith Services  
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## COVID Update: Temporary Changes

Harbor Interfaith Services is an essential service and remains open during the pandemic. Many of you have asked about how we were doing things differently, so we share that below.

Operational adjustments were made based on State and County laws and guidelines.

- No employees were furloughed; everyone pitches in to help.
- We clean surfaces frequently throughout the day.
- All employees and clients wear masks. Mask supplies have been donated by individuals, community and faith groups, businesses, hospitals, and foundations.
- Each public facility has a handwashing station (pictured right). Clients wash their hands as they enter the building to receive services.
- We welcome in-person appointments and walk-ins.
- The childcare center remains open.
- The Food Pantry didn't miss a beat, but it is staffed by employees versus volunteers. Volunteers will rejoin us later.
- Meetings as required are held via conference call or Zoom.
- Onsite donations have been limited to food, hygiene, cleaning supplies, and new items only.



*Family Resource Center Lobby*