



Pandemic Pivoting —Things Turned...

AROUND

Children's Center: Open and Needed

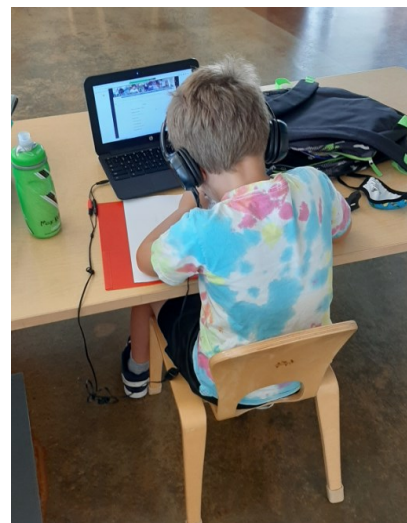
In mid-March, we made thoughtful but quick decisions about what to change and keep the same at the agency. One decision was about childcare. Many parents worked in essential services such as healthcare and food services. Childcare centers had closed across the region, and parents didn't have the option of taking their children to work.

In mid-March when the pandemic began, we surveyed our families about childcare and found several who needed it.

At the end of July, the Los Angeles Unified School District made the wise decision to close its campuses and move to remote learning, so we pivoted again to bring the children here and create work stations for their education. We made staffing adjustments, bought computers, and are now a remote learning sight for the children. The children are enrolled are in grades K

through 6.

This pivot came with an \$80,000 additional cost. Some of you have stepped forward to help, and we are grateful. To support our expansion, you are invited to make a gift. Be sure to denote "HIS Kids" on your donation.



—Bridge, Room Key—

Housing: More of it



landed, we added two more: A Bridge Housing and Project Room Key.

A Bridge Housing, opened in July. It houses up to 100 homeless individuals while we help locate

As you read in a previous issue of **CONNECTED**, we added a new housing facility for homeless individuals pre-pandemic—Interim Housing. After the pandemic

permanent housing for them.

Project Room Key operated from April through the end of August. It was a temporary site—one of many across the county—to house homeless seniors vulnerable to the COVID-19 virus utilizing local hotels.

In addition to the housing mentioned above, we continue operating the transitional housing and family shelter programs and our shared and permanent supportive housing facilities. Each operates with health and safety adjustments designed to protect the residents and employees.



From the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

When I wrote my column for the last newsletter, I updated you on how we were impacted by the pandemic, assuming that I wouldn't be writing about that again. I was wrong. We have adapted, regardless, and will continue to make changes as needed. This

newsletter tells you what we have been doing and where we may be going in the coming months.

One of the quickest adaptations we made was to the HIS Kids program within the Children's Center. HIS Kids has long provided afterschool care for school-age children from Kindergarten on up. When the schools were open, we picked the children up after school and provided snacks, playtime, and homework help. We also offered a day camp program for summer, winter and spring breaks.

One recent change came near the end of July, when we learned everyone would be learning from home. We understood the problem, empathized with it, and quickly realized we should step in and provide learning and care for our school-age children. Many of our families lacked the technology or wireless services needed for homeschooling. Some parents worked during the day; they couldn't leave the younger children home to self-navigate online learning.

In addition to the expansion with our Children's Center, upgrades were required to the agency family shelter and transitional housing facilities. Not only are parents taking classes online, but the children are learning online. Our facilities were not in a position to support the technology needs of 44 families, 130 people.

We are looking forward to 2021, when we expect to resume the weekly Life Skills classes and collection of used clothing and other donations. We eagerly await the return of our dedicated and supportive volunteers.

Every time we pivot, there are added costs and needs. Many of you have stepped up repeatedly as needs have arisen, and I have much appreciated your support. I look forward to our ongoing partnership as we continue to adapt to these ever-changing circumstances while helping the homeless and working poor reach their full potential.

*Tahia Hayslet,
Executive Director/CEO*

CONNECTED

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Fall 2020

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Evening of Laughter & Fun(d)raising

Because of the pandemic, the **South Bay Auxiliary of Harbor Interfaith Services** had to cancel its May 2020 Comedy & Magic Night event. The event supported the agency's Children's Center.

Members were disappointed, but they got to work, determined to raise funds. Friends and agency supporters donated the price of a ticket. Group members connected with sponsors who agreed

their funds can support their efforts. The Auxiliary also solicited donations from friends, family, and business associates. Their efforts were successful, netting \$76,000. We couldn't be more grateful.

The Auxiliary is planning a virtual event for May 2021. The Auxiliary shows just as much enthusiasm for a virtual event as the live event. We will keep you informed as their plans unfold.

The Holidays: What's Next?

For those of you who have been with us for a while, you know that we have special events in the fall to help clients feel the holiday spirit. The first event is a Thanksgiving food basket distribution. The basket includes turkey, stuffing, vegetables, and desserts.

The next event is a block party. Donors adopt families for Christmas and present gifts to them at an outdoor event that includes a meal, sharing time, and games for the children.

The third event is a Christmas food distribution similar to Thanksgiving, but

we substitute ham for turkey. We also distribute toys to the children.

HIS plans for the 2020 holidays include

- * Thanksgiving drive/walk-by distribution November 23rd and 24th 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- * Christmas drive/walk-by distribution December 21st and 22nd from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- * Adopt a family and deliver directly to the family or drop off at our offices.
- * Donate food and new toys to distribute at our events. Gift cards for teens are also helpful.

To donate visit HarborInterfaith.org, Support.



What to Donate for the Holidays

Turkeys, hams, canned yams, boxed cake mix, frosting, canned vegetables, boxed stuffing, gravy, mashed potatoes, etc.

Also toys and gift cards.

...or donate cash so that we can purchase the items.



Making a Home

Our Interim Housing building provides dormitory-style living for up to 40 homeless individuals. We provide case management, health monitoring, meals, and a comfortable place to live. The ultimate goal is to get clients into permanent housing. At Interim, the staff has been making the best of the county's stay at home orders for the residents. One activity is for case managers to present awards to residents. Examples of awards include small tokens of appreciation distributed for things such as "Most Improved Resident," "Attendance" (in bed during night check), and "Most Tidy."



When Can I Volunteer?

Volunteers are a critical piece for providing services to clients. Typically, they operate the Food Pantry and Clothing Closet, provide clerical support, and tutor the children. Volunteer groups clean and paint the facilities.

The pandemic led to a suspension of the volunteer program until it was safe to return everyone to service. Monthly, we revisit their return. To prepare for bringing volunteers back, we created a plan to return them in waves while keeping their health and safety a top priority.

When can you resume volunteering? We will make the volunteer return announcement via email, social media, and will post on our website.

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Return Service Requested

Two Success Stories

A Silva Christmas



Nicole Silva had addiction issues, which led to losing custody of her daughter, Annabella and landing her in prison. Once the prison term ended, mother and daughter were reunited, and the two moved into our Family Shelter. This

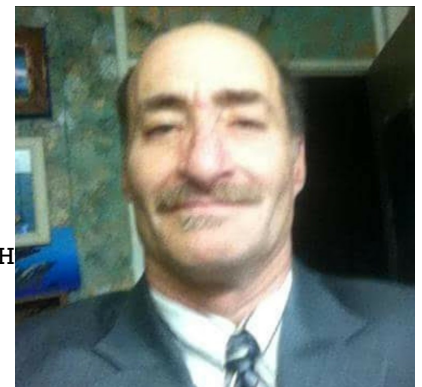
was the first time they'd been together for quite some time, and they shared a Merry Christmas after that long separation—presents, food, and all.

While in the shelter, Nicole saved money and found a home within two months. We provided her with financial assistance in the form of move-in support and monthly rent. Today, Nicole has a full-time job, and she and her daughter live happily in their new home. Nicole is working on her GED and wants to build a career. Annabella is a senior in high school and plans to attend college.

Arthur's Home

Arthur, a homeless client living in our Interim Housing facility, had survived for three years in his broken-down van before he allowed Harbor Interfaith to help.

Arthur on H



Staff enrolled him in the program. Today, Arthur receives three meals a day, a clean bed and a shower, regular sleep, and help from a case manager.

Shortly after his arrival, he secured a full-time job as a salesperson and reunited with his family. Right now, Arthur is looking for permanent housing, a place to call home.