



FALL 2023 NEWSLETTER

Serving Cupertino, Saratoga, Los Gatos, West San Jose, Monte Sereno and the surrounding mountain regions since 1973

50 YEARS OF SERVING THE COMMUNITY

Fifty years ago, a remarkable journey of community care began with the pioneering efforts of three nurses - Harriet Jackson, Julie Venkus, and Sue Borgstorm. Today, we stand proud, celebrating the golden anniversary of West Valley Community Services. In the 1970s, the three nurses envisioned a community center that offered information on transportation, childcare, medical care, and more. By August 1973, their first month of operations, 14 families received assistance, and around 100-125 calls were referred to mental health, housing, child care, emergency aid, clothing, and transportation services. Recognizing the need for a dedicated leader, Marilyn Christian became the first Executive Director. Other directors followed over the past 50 years, including Ruth Platt, Sally Brennan, Jan Stephenson, Mary Ellen Chell, Jaclyn Phuong Fabre, Naomi Nakano-Matsumoto, Josh Selo, and currently Sujatha Venkatraman. The organization was renamed West Valley Community services in 2007 to better represent its geographic scope and today we serve thousands of clients in West San Jose, Cupertino, Saratoga, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, and surrounding areas.

Today, West Valley Community Services has expanded its programs significantly. Serving as our community's support system, here are some ways we ensure that low-income and homeless individuals and families receive the necessary support for a stable and brighter future:



Food Market



Case Management and Referrals



Reach Your Destination Easily (RYDE)



Lived Experience Advisory Committee



Park-it Market (mobile food market)



Emergency Rental and Utility Aid

Over the past 50 years, WVCS has remained a steadfast pillar of community support. This 50-year milestone isn't just a celebration, but a reminder of a community's power to unite against hunger and homelessness.

BACK TO SCHOOL 2023 SERVES MORE CHILDREN IN NEED

West Valley Community Services' annual Back to School program stands as a testament to the transformative impact of community support. This year, in collaboration with dedicated donors and community sponsors, we served 372 students. As a beacon of hope for families with children in need, this program ensures that every child embarks on the new academic year with dignity. The students head to school this year equipped with essential school supplies, like pens, pencils, notebooks, backpacks, new clothing, and shoes.

West Valley Community Services' Back to School program not only illuminates a path toward a future where all children can thrive, regardless of their economic circumstances but also leaves an indelible mark on their educational journey. For many students, these will be the only sets of clothing and shoes they will have for the whole year. Thank you for bringing smiles to so many children's faces and joy to their lives!



Thank You! Event Sponsors



Event Partners



Individual Sponsors



Previous Annual Chefs of Compassion Sponsors



A GIFT IN HONOR OF:
MRS. PADMAVATHI &
MR. K.V. RAMAKRISHNA



A Gift From
Michael Rubin & Family

A Gift From
Anonymous Donor

A Gift From
Jeanne Bradford



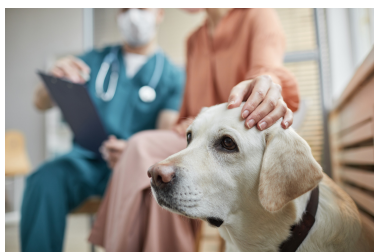
The Gift of Hope Program on is an annual event that helps our community members with essential household items and gifts, providing hope during the challenging holiday season for those in need.

SERVING THE COMMUNITY THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

West Valley Community Services is dedicated to providing comprehensive services under one roof for our clients. When a family is facing eviction or poverty, the complexities of going from door to door to seek services is an extreme challenge. Rather than requiring them to go from one place to another in search of assistance, we actively collaborate with a network of partners throughout the county to ensure that they receive the needed resources under one roof here at West Valley Community Services. Together, we bring these essential services directly to our clients, ensuring their convenience and peace of mind.

We actively partner with:

- Catholic Charities to help connect clients to public benefits
- Community Health Initiative to help clients enroll in Medi-Cal or Medicare plans
- Santa Clara Behavioral Health to connect clients to mental health providers
- Pacific Health Clinic and Tzu Chi for health screenings (dental, hearing, blood pressure, diabetes)
- Walgreens for flu shots
- Humane Society of Silicon Valley to offer pet clinics
- T Mobile Assurance to provide free cell phones
- Work2future to offer employment services on site
- Idylwood Care Center for cooking demonstrations with ingredients from our food market



Clients not only receive assistance in crisis, but also ancillary services on site, which promote physical and mental wellbeing. We are deeply grateful to our partners for making all of these services possible!

FOOD BARREL DRIVES

The fall season is here, and so is the start of our annual Food Barrel Drives for West Valley Community Services. As our community members struggle with limited budgets and rising costs of housing, gas and food, we continue to see an increasing need of support from families. Thankfully, local communities, businesses, schools, and faith-based organizations have all been a major source of food for our clients through the food drives. Last year our barrel drives contributed over 92,700 pounds of canned and packaged food items that helped feed the food-insecure children and families in our community.

We'd like to thank the members of the following organizations for their continued support over the past 3 years: Cupertino's National Association of Letter Carriers, Goombah's Car Club, The Boy Scouts Polaris District of Cupertino, Saratoga & Sunnyvale, the Moreland School District, and Shri Gajanan Seva Temple. We are honored to be your partner in fighting hunger in our community.

Many community volunteers have helped us sort and stock the thousands of pounds of food for our clients who come and grocery shop in our no-cost markets. In case you would like to volunteer or host a food drive, feel free to contact kohinoorc@wvcommunityservices.org

Thank you again for partnering with us to help children, seniors, individuals, and families who are struggling to make ends meet and put food on their tables in our communities!



FROM HOMELESSNESS TO HOPE

Lisa, her husband, and their nine-year-old daughter had no choice but to live in a tent and a car because they could not afford housing. In October 2022, Lisa began her temporary employment with West Valley Community Services through a job program. Through this opportunity, she received both case management and support services. Lisa was able to reach her goals of obtaining a driver's license, creating a resume, and exploring job opportunities and career growth. West Valley Community Services was also able to help Lisa and her family with temporary housing while she participated in the job program. After a few months, Lisa, her husband and daughter were able to move into a stable home.

Lisa is thankful for the opportunities and support that West Valley Community Services provided her with throughout the job program. She is also grateful that she no longer has to tell her daughter they are camping, instead of living in a tent, to protect her innocence.

We are grateful to our supporters who help children and families in our community.



"Thank you for helping me, from the bottom of my heart...There are no words to describe how much support I received. [West Valley Community Services] saved me and my family from sleeping outdoors and in our car. We are forever grateful." - Lisa

PURPOSE-DRIVEN BRANDING

Thanks to our generous supporter Bright Horizon Global Foundation, we now have our beautifully branded canopies that will be serving our clients at our outdoor events and community gatherings. We are also grateful for the barrels that are being used for food drives.



We are also grateful to our other community partners who have supported us towards having our branding on our agency vehicles.

Board of Directors

Dr. Lloyd Holmes

Board Chair, Executive Committee Chair

Janet Farabaugh

Vice Chair

Chris Alabi

Treasurer, Finance Committee Chair

Gomathy Bala

Secretary

Jennifer Gargano

Fundraising & Outreach Committee Chair

Nagesh Kanumury

Governance Committee Chair

Anita Rao

Vice Governance Committee Chair

Cathy Casas

Michael Rubin

Joan Cummings

Monica Chandra

Leadership Team

Sujatha Venkatraman

Executive Director

Dr. Kohinoor Chakravarty

Chief Development and Communications Officer

Greta Mensah

Director of Client Services



Like us - Follow us - Engage with us
WVCS is online!