DRAMATIC CHANGE IS POSSIBLE!

When Chad was 19, he moved to California and was instantly shocked that, even with roommates, he couldn’t pay his rent. For nearly a year, Chad lived on the beach, in hotels, and “crashed” with friends before he found the Cov.

When he moved into our Safe Haven program, his confidence was shattered, he struggled with feeling “behind” his peers, and felt like school was a luxury. He was not ready to take advantage of CHC’s services. Within weeks, Chad ended up homeless again. Upon returning to CHC, a couple months later, Chad knew what he had to do. When his immediate needs were met and he began to feel secure, Chad started nursing school. Chad recently shared, “I instinctively knew something was different about the Cov staff. They treated me with respect and believed in me. I knew I had to take advantage of the opportunity.”

Not long after, Chad became a Certified Nursing Assistant and was able to get a job at a nearby convalescent center. Chad also enrolled in community college and moved into one of CHC’s Supportive Apartments. Over time, he developed a strong relationship with his case manager, Fiona, who helped him set goals for the future. Chad shared, “It took me awhile to learn that you have to take constructive criticism in order to grow. I can honestly say that I wouldn’t be where I am today without the support and loving push that Fiona gave me.”

Now, over two years later, Chad is still working as a nursing assistant and is working two jobs! Chad is one class away from finishing his nursing degree and recently moved into his own apartment!

“Never judge a book by its cover, and never give up on people. Dramatic change is possible with anyone!” Chad emotionally shared.

UNPRECEDENTED GROWTH

With an estimated 15,000 homeless youth in California each night, Covenant House California is committed to doing more, each year, to meet the need for these young people. CHC’s strategic plan targeted a number of new services and funding streams that will enable us to sustainably support the growing and changing needs of homeless youth for many years to come. As the result, 2016 saw the beginning of some incredible strategic growth for Covenant House California!

CHC added Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) to its continuum of care in LA; we began housing a Charter High School specifically for homeless youth on our LA campus, we opened specific beds and services for victims of human trafficking; we began an Alumni Services Program to keep prior residents more connected and supported...

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A Life Worth Living

One year ago, Nate was homeless. Today, he is spending the holidays in an apartment of his own. Nate is a participant in the Cov’s Hope to Opportunity (H2O) program, our Rapid-Rehousing program. This relativev new model of service centers upon the idea that some youth need temporary encouragement, support, and financial assistance as they get back on their feet. The Cov pays the rental application fees, security deposit, utility assistance, and monthly rent on a sliding scale. All the while, participants, like Nate, are working with case managers on financial literacy, employability, life skills, and all the other things that make a person a good tenant and citizen of their community.

“The second I talked about it with staff, I knew it was the right program for me,” said Nate. “I knew it was going to be hard work, but it’s worth it every single day.” Nate now lives and works in LA’s revitalized downtown area and is thankful for the difference between one year ago and now. “Having my own place—a place to come home to at the end of the day to have peace and quiet—has made life worth living for me.”
Ms. Lon
Growing an Alumni Community of Love

Nearly 30 years ago, Covenant House California opened its doors in Hollywood. Around the same time, Ms. Lon Usher saw on TV that young people were killing each other in gangs, and instantly felt called to move to Hollywood and do what she could to help. In 1990, she officially opened her arms and heart to our youth as a staff member at the Cov. Over the years, she’s seen more than 186,000 young people come through our doors, and she’s personally interacted with most of them. Naturally, when it came time to hire a coordinator to reconnect with our Alumni at the Cov, we looked no further than Ms. Lon!

When asked what she enjoys most about being CHC’s Alumni Coordinator, Ms. Lon recently shared, “I just love hearing about where they are in life. We have some amazing alumni! We have police officers, executives, social workers, teachers, parents, CHC staff, and many who act as mentors and come back to inspire our current residents. I am so very proud of all of them! I’m glad we now have an official alumni program where we can continue to care for our former residents by offering them needed medical and mental health care, life-coaching, career services and a loving community. Just because a young person moves on from the Cov, never means they move on from being a part of our family. We have a monthly meeting for our Alumni where we gather as a family to encourage and support one-another. I just love watching our Alumni group grow and bond. There is no more powerful testimony of success to our current young people than to see someone who once walked in their shoes doing alright. I’m amazed that God has kept me here so long. Most people in our world burn out in 5 years. Nearly 30 years later, I guess God’s not done with me yet because I have more energy and love than ever.”

If you are a CHC alumni, Ms. Lon would love to hear from you at alumni@covenanthousecalifornia.org.

HOW WE KEEP OUR YOUTH SAFE
OUR HOUSING OPPORTUNITES

SAFE HAVEN
Short-term care (1-90 days)

RIGHTS OF PASSAGE
Two-year on-site transitional living program

SUPPORTIVE APARTMENTS
Two-year off-site transitional living program

HOPE 2 OPPORTUNITY (RAPID-REHOUSING)
Permanent housing, supported by CHC up to 24 months, before youth takes over
A NOTE FROM OUR CEO

Like many who work with homeless youth, I regularly get asked... “How do you stay positive, when you see so much tragedy and heartache in the lives of young people every day?”. The answer is simple… I also get to see remarkable stories of success and resilience, each day! I get to see young people getting their first jobs, or being the first in their families to graduate from high school, or simply being safe from abusers for the first time in their lives. I get to work with staff who joyfully serve youth with compassion, and excitedly share stories of connection and accomplishment. Being a part of so many incredible journeys is a privilege and a joy. Nothing is more motivating than knowing that, if we had greater capacity, we would be able to see more young people celebrating success.

Every New Year brings all the excitement of new dreams and possibilities, along with the anxiety of starting anew, to raise the support we need to accomplish our mission. And while 2017 is no exception, it also a year in which we are planning for, and expecting, unprecedented growth. Growth that will enable us to serve more young people in both Northern and Southern California. I am so grateful for your partnership and support, which demonstrates to our youth that there is a community who believes that they deserve more!

Bill Bedrossian
President and CEO
Covenant House California