Open Doors

Absolute respect and unconditional love for all youth overcoming homelessness and trafficking

On any given day, Jeremiah will stop by our campus in Oakland to catch up and make sure his Cov family members are doing ok. His presence has always been a special one. Just a year ago, on a journey to find himself, he arrived at DreamCatcher (serving youth ages 13-17), a program of Covenant House California. Almost immediately, he was determined to make something of himself, even in the middle of a pandemic. He started a business in the food industry called King Jerry’s and made flyers to wash cars. Jeremiah took advantage of the Cov’s assistance to help him find a job in addition to his own ventures. An entrepreneur at heart, he would bravely go to work as numbers of coronavirus cases began to climb. It didn’t stop him from seeking out his end goal of having a place of his very own. Day after day, he would wake up with a smile on his face lifting others up with his happy demeanor and positive outlook on life. Ten months after he found his way to the Cov, Jeremiah was able to make his dream come true and move into his own apartment! Today, he is busy taking care of his home, developing new recipes for his Cov family to try, and showing us that true strength lies within us all!
As we approach the one year mark on COVID-19, Covenant House California is hopeful that we will continue to stay safe as vaccines begin to be administered. To date*, over 60 frontline staff have been given both doses of the vaccine!

Additionally, we continue to have weekly testing on our campuses with rates of our youth and staff falling significantly lower than California’s average of 7.61%*. These low rates are a testament to our safety protocols that were put into place last March and continue to be upheld to this day!

We have not only made it a priority to take care of just our physical health but our mental health too. Our campuses have been filled with celebrations like Black History Month and Day of the Dead. Monthly book clubs, weekly yoga classes, and daily art courses helped us develop new interests. We were able to show our love to others by sending Valentine’s Day candy grams while awareness events on voting and Human Trafficking were held to inform our youth and staff.

Throughout this past year, our youth were resilient in finding new jobs, applying to colleges, and moving into their very first apartments! They patiently stayed on campus during lockdowns and didn’t give up on finding normalcy in a world filled with the unknown.

Covenant House California is grateful for our brave young people, selfless frontline staff, and dedicated supporters who helped us during this trying year!

*Data as of February 2021.

Santa Clara

Our newest project in Santa Clara is expected to be completed by the end of April 2021. As a transitional living site, this campus will become home to 30 youth overcoming homelessness! Renovations, including painting the entire property and updating living and communal spaces, are currently underway!

This special location will include rooms for families with young children, a meditation room, and career center. In addition, a CISCO-funded technology infrastructure will give youth the opportunity to do virtual interviews and online college classes.

We are excited to open our doors to the young people who need us living in Santa Clara. Special thanks to our partners at CISCO and Santa Clara County that made this dream a reality!

Orange County

The first ever shelter to serve transitional-aged youth overcoming homelessness in Orange County will open its doors by the end of summer 2021! Located in Anaheim, we will house 25 young people providing them with basic human needs and urgent medical care.

Youth will receive nutritious meals, take a shower with new personal care products, receive new clothes, and sleep in a warm, safe bed. They will be surrounded with supportive services that will help them thrive!

Oakland

Even in the middle of COVID-19, we made progress on site developments, which will increase our capacity to serve even more youth.

In February, we were able to open our newly renovated kitchen in Oakland! Youth are now able to enjoy a warm meal alongside their Cov family in an updated space, that will enable us to serve up to 30 more youth, per night, in the coming years. Along with eating together, some youth are even enjoying learning how to cook in a safe, uplifting environment.

Learn more about our other sites throughout California at covenanthousecalifornia.org/capitalcampaign
Blessings in the Midst of Chaos!

This past year has been one of the most chaotic in our lifetimes. For many of us, the pandemic has created additional stress, has required us to change and adapt our routines and homes, and has been a major inconvenience. But for our unhoused neighbors, the effects of the pandemic has been nothing short of devastating. Understanding that effect the pandemic would have on youth experiencing homelessness, early on, we knew that we could not afford to reduce or close any of our programs. In fact, we knew we would need to do more than ever, as those around us reduced services or closed their doors. As expected, housing options, employment options, access to school, health care, and other services became nearly impossible for someone experiencing homelessness. What we have experienced, in response to our commitment to expanding our mission, has been nothing short of miraculous!

Our community has responded in such incredible ways… enabling us to provide more meals and health care visits than ever, to keep young people housed for longer than ever, and to continue to move full force ahead on our expansion projects in LA, Oakland, Santa Clara, Anaheim and Hayward. In fact, now 2/3rds of the way funded for our $15 million capital campaign, we are in the final phases of fundraising, so that we can open these new beds and sites; giving us the capacity to house an additional 125 youth each night, and serve more than 1,000 more youth each year! Thank you for the prayers, support and generosity, which has enabled us to thrive and continue serving our young people so well!