



Poverello News

(559) 498-6988 • www.poverellohouse.org

CREATING AN ATMOSPHERE OF HEALING

Living on the streets while experiencing homelessness is tough. There is no place to shower, get out of the heat or cold, and rest. Even if you are working to improve your life choices, the environment around makes it difficult for life change. Violence and fear are your constant companions. People recoil when they walk by you because you are dirty and unable to shower regularly. You feel invisible because people walk by you and pretend not to see you. Rarely do you get a smile or offered a comfortable, safe place to sit. These factors make it difficult to recover from homelessness. Poverello House recognizes that moving people out of homelessness starts with creating an “Atmosphere of Healing.” It first starts with the little things, such as offering shaved ice on a hot day or a soft, warm blanket on a cold morning. Healing continues with a shower and laundered clothes and a safe place to sleep. Case management, mental health services, and drug treatment programs enable a person to move out of homelessness and into a feeling of hope and well-being.

Poverello House is upgrading its facilities to provide such an “atmosphere of healing.” To provide refuge from the heat, Poverello House planted additional trees and constructed a solar structure that provides shade and fans

throughout the courtyard. We installed new flooring, lighting and painted the walls in the dayroom to be more inviting. The Tuff Sheds in the Village of Hope were replaced by Pallet Shelters that provide heating and air conditioning in every unit. Our drug rehabilitation aftercare house got a make-over that included an upgraded kitchen, living room, bathrooms, and more. The goal of the upgrades were to provide a “home-like” environment as they complete their recovery.

This “atmosphere of healing” is furthered by following Papa Mike’s philosophy of “serving with a kind heart and warm smile.” A kind heart, warm smile, and warm meal are where the journey towards healing starts at Poverello House. We are dedicated to ensuring that no one feels invisible when they come onto our campus to access services. When coming to Poverello House, you should feel like you are a welcomed guest, regardless of your circumstances. Our vision for our campus is that we will provide an atmosphere where the trauma of homelessness ends and the healing begins. Once the healing begins, positive life change begins to blossom. This is our greatest hope for “all who pass our way.”



“PICO HOUSE” BEAUTIFULLY REMODELED

Part of the Men’s Residential Drug Rehab program includes aftercare. The first phase of the program starts with six months on the Poverello House campus. Once completed, many have the option to continue in the aftercare program. This program is an additional six months and takes place at “Pico House”, our off-campus facility. It is known as “Pico House” because the first aftercare property in the program was on Pico Street. Although a new property has been purchased in a different location, the name has stuck!

Through a generous grant from the Isnardi Foundation, the front house at the “Pico House” property has been fully renovated and remodeled. The house now has a fully renovated kitchen, three renovated bedrooms, remodeled bathroom, new flooring, new paint, new dual pane windows and a new HVAC system. The house also has new décor, furniture, kitchen supplies, and more! This house provides six beds for those in aftercare and will now provide a beautiful “atmosphere of healing” for men working towards a new life of sobriety. This project would not be possible without the partnership of the Isnardi Foundation and their dedication to improving the lives of people in our community.



SHOWER & LAUNDRY ROOM RENOVATION PROJECT



Poverello House provides shower and laundry services daily. Last year, Poverello House provided 25,000 showers and nearly 7,000 loads of laundry for those experiencing homelessness in our community. For many, a shower and access to laundry facilities are taken for granted. However, for those on the streets and in our shelters, these services are crucial. The current facility on our campus was constructed in 1992. You can imagine that the high volume of usage for almost three decades has required a renovation as soon as possible. We are seeing a regular increase in demand for these services.

Plans have been completed for a new shower and laundry facility. There will be eight private shower units, which will include two ADA units. There will be new drainage, ventilation, and a changing area in each shower unit. The laundry room will be converted to a full-scale commercial laundry room. The new commercial washer and dryer units will allow us to quadruple our current capacity. This project will make a significant impact on countless clients for years to come.

We are raising capital funds to construct the project now and would appreciate your support to help pay for this essential renovation. The cost of the project is approximately \$450,000. If you would like to give a restricted gift for the shower and laundry room renovation, please contact CEO Zack Darrah at zdarrah@poverellohouse.org or call us at (559) 498-6988. We need your help to provide showers and laundry services for those experiencing homelessness in a facility that brings dignity to clients!

POVERELLO HOUSE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CHAIR
Victor Salazar

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT
Curtis Davies

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT
Prashant Patel

SECRETARY
Paula Capozzi

TREASURER
Hank Bennett

PAST CHAIR
Stephanie Negin

Nick Amendola
Charles Farnsworth
A. Thomas Ferdinandi
Christopher Hansen

Constance Jones
Adam Mendes
Tim O'Neill
John Pardini

Andrew Slater
James Walls, Jr.
Rob Veneski

AUGUST WISH LIST

- Bottled Water • Toilet Paper
- Travel-Size Hygiene Items
(razors, shaving cream, shampoo, conditioner, lotion, bar soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, combs, lip balm, cotton swabs)
- Socks • Twin Sheets • Towels

Donations are Accepted
Monday - Friday
8 am - 5 pm
Saturday - Sunday
8 am - 1 pm

412 F. Street, Fresno
Donation lane located on
G Street between
Ventura and San Benito

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER A PLACE OF HEALING FOR EVERYONE



Zack Darrah,
Chief Executive
Officer

As you can see in the newsletter this month, Poverello House has been going through transformational changes. It really does look like quite a different place than when I first started back in November of 2019. Pallet Shelters, solar shade structures, a new green space with trees, a renovated day room/dining room, a colorful library, new planters with flowers, and more have been part of creating a whole new environment. I feel we are in the process of creating something truly special. I have come to understand the mission statement at Poverello House as the guiding force behind what we do and what direction we are going. We believe in the dignity of all people. We believe in enriching people's lives. We believe in being good stewards of the resources provided to us. These beliefs lead to action; if that were not the case, then we would not really believe them!

For me, one action resulting from our belief, included creating a place of healing for everyone at Poverello House. What would an "atmosphere of healing" look like? We have begun to answer this very question. Those we serve experience trauma beyond what we could ever understand. I want our campus to be a place that immediately feels like a place of peace, comfort, calm, and love.

There was a lot of work to do to get there and we have plenty more to go. The many renovations and new parts of our campus are only part of it. We are working now to bring murals, more green space, more shade, more seating, and other amenities to the campus to create that "atmosphere of healing" that our clients need every day. Creating this experience on our campus advances each of the three beliefs that form our mission. I have clearly seen the positive impacts of these changes when talking with our clients!

Not one bit of this would be possible without the vision of our founder, "Papa Mike" McGarvin. He lived out the mission of Poverello House with his life. I never got the privilege of knowing him. However, I see his spirit daily on our campus. The work he started was motivated by healing others through love, compassion, and treating everyone with dignity. My hope is that the work we are doing and will continue to do carries forward his legacy forever. May all who come to our campus revel in an "atmosphere of healing" that lasts far beyond their time with us.

Humbly,

Zack

HELPING CLIENTS DURING THE FRESNO SUMMER

Extreme summer temperatures are a serious concern for those experiencing homelessness in the Central Valley. On the streets, there are challenges with staying hydrated, cool, and healthy. Triple digit temperatures can be a serious health risk for those that we serve. Poverello House goes to great lengths to meet the unique needs of the community during the extreme summer temperatures. First and foremost, this includes distributing cold/frozen water to keep people hydrated. Since the start of summer, we have been giving out over 500 bottles of water daily. We cool the water in our refrigerators, freezers, and in large ice chests to prepare them for distribution. The HOPE Outreach Team distributes these on the streets, freeways, canals, and anyone who comes on campus. Cooling is also provided throughout campus. Our air-conditioned day room is open throughout the day and AC is provided for all our shelter beds. The new solar structures in the courtyard provide shade with large fans. It should be noted that this is the first summer that clients are staying in the air-conditioned Pallet Shelters in the Village of Hope! Advancing our mission continues regardless of the weather outside. Hydrating and providing cooling for those experiencing homelessness in the community is certainly part of "enriching the lives and spirits of all who pass our way." We believe that this work can save someone's life! If you would like to provide water or other support to help keep people cool during the summer, please contact Kristina Flores at kflores@poverellohouse.org.



To heal is to touch with love that which we previously touched with fear.

– Stephen Levine.

