



POVERELLO NEWS

JUNE 2024

HOPE POINTE ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY!

In June 2023, the City of Fresno acquired the Clarion Pointe, a former hotel property located on Blackstone Avenue. Renamed Hope Pointe, the Emergency Shelter will accommodate 120 beds, offering vital bridge housing services to support the unhoused community. Hope Pointe staffs twenty-four Guest Services Specialists who handle the day-to-day shelter operations, six 24-hour Security Specialist on campus, five Navigators dedicated to assisting guests on a 90-day housing plan, and seven Outreach Specialists who connect individuals on the streets to shelter services at Hope Pointe.

Hope Pointe celebrates one full year of operations on June 12th. That is one year of incredible enrichment activities and dedicated services to our guests. In one year, the Hope Pointe Navigators housed **93 INDIVIDUALS!** Those successes are permanent housing, diversion back to family, and shared sober living.

Hope Pointe guest, James Sweeten was born in Fresno in 1973. James spent his young adult years in Turlock before returning to Fresno, where he met his wife. Despite facing challenges that led to their separation, James has been working diligently for the past decade to rebuild his life.

On September 20th, 2023, the Outreach Team encountered James in front of Poverello House. When asked if James was interested in services, he said, "It was a dream come true; someone saw me, and I wasn't invisible." Mr. Sweeten was placed at Hope Pointe Emergency Shelter that very day.

Assigned to his case, Chevelle Parks, Hope Pointe Navigator, was described by James as being as tenacious as a Pitbull. She identified and addressed his needs with unwavering dedication.

HOPE POINTE SHELTER A YEAR OF OPERATIONS



MEALS PROVIDED:
70,924



NIGHTS OF SHELTER:
25,420



SHOWERS:
26,201



LOADS OF LAUNDRY:
59,917

February 16th, 2024, James transitioned to shared housing, which he decorated to reflect his childhood memories and upbringing! Ed Boling and Lindsay Childress, Housing Stability Navigators, regularly interact with James to provide resources, encouragement, and ensure his well-being. James shared that it is nice to be remembered and cared for.

Mr. Sweeten wanted those facing similar challenges to know that progress takes time and remaining consistent can lead to success. His current aspirations include increasing his income and reuniting with his wife. James said, "I am far from done, but I am so far ahead of where I was."

Expressing his gratitude, James acknowledges the unwavering support he received, attributing his perseverance to the belief and encouragement Poverello House staff invested in him. We wish James the best on his next endeavors, and will continue to support Mr. Sweeten throughout his journey forward.



JAMES SWEETEN WITH HOUSING STABILITY NAVIGATORS LINDSAY CHILDRESS AND ED BOLING



Zack Darrah
Poverello House CEO

PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CITY OF FRESNO BRINGING HOPE TO MANY

Greetings friends! In this month's newsletter, you have read about the incredible partnership with the City of Fresno that is providing services to hundreds at Hope Pointe. I am blessed to get to spend time weekly at Hope Pointe and I can tell you that is a truly unique environment for serving those experiencing homelessness in our community. The quality of the property is fantastic. The enrichment activities are exciting and uplifting. Most importantly, the incredible staff is ending homelessness for some of the most chronically unhoused individuals in the community!

I just had the opportunity to engage with one of our guests on her moving day. I have known her for several years and she has struggled to find permanent housing. She was overjoyed as we packed up the truck full of her belongings. She thanked me and our team profusely for

walking this journey with her. Hope Pointe is where she found hope that in the future, her homelessness would end for good. I thank God that Hope Pointe is part of the journey for so many walking towards a new life.

None of this work would be possible without a deep partnership with the City of Fresno. From my first day at Poverello House, they have partnered with us to ensure that we are able to

serve as many people as possible. We went through Project Offramp together. Then we navigated the pandemic together. We started the HOPE Outreach Team together. We have provided Rapid Rehousing rental support together. The Village of Hope continues to provide dignified and effective pathways out of homelessness in our community. Hope Pointe is yet another way that we are partnering with the City of Fresno to end homelessness in our community one person at a time. As you can see, all this work together is about bringing hope to those who may feel that there is no hope for their future.

I want to thank Mayor Dyer, his team, and the Fresno City Council for their unwavering commitment to our partnership. We are making incredible impacts in people's lives at Hope Pointe and far beyond. I look forward to all that we will do together in the future!



Zack



Hope Pointe Building



(left to right) Senior Director of Shelter Services Bobby Hubbard, Council President Tyler Maxwell, City Official Steve Montes, and CEO Zack Darrah.

SUMMER CONDITIONS:

THE EFFECT ON THE UNHOUSED COMMUNITY

As temperatures rise and summer sets in, the conditions for the unhoused community become increasingly challenging. Unlike wintertime, where the focus on providing warmth is a bit more manageable. Summer brings its own sets of difficulties, and it is crucial to come together.

Without access to air-conditioned spaces and water, those experiencing homelessness are at a higher risk of heat-related illnesses such as heat cramps, heat exhaustion, heat stroke, and severe dehydration. The signs of heat exhaustion are extreme fatigue, heavy sweating, dizziness, nausea, and pale skin. If untreated, heat exhaustion can lead to heat stroke. At that point, the individual is no longer sweating, they become red, dry, and very hot. The life-threatening hyperthermic conditions cause the body temperature to rapidly rise above 103 degrees. Until emergency medical arrives, caregivers are asked to cool the person by: removing extra layers, fan, wrap in a wet sheet, wet sponge the forehead, or spray with cool water. Drinking water will lead to vomiting and stomach cramps.

Additionally, summer weather can lead to an increase in insects, which poses health risks. With limited access to healthcare, insect bites among the unhoused can lead to infections and potentially diseases if not treated promptly. The increased heat also spoils any perishable food faster than average, causing more health risks.

Summer conditions can be detrimental to the unhoused community. The City of Fresno does its best to provide cooling centers throughout the day, but limited access to drinking water creates barriers. In the 2023 Point in Time (PIT) tally count, 31% of those experiencing homelessness reported having a serious mental illness.



Security passing out waters to guests in the courtyard.

*According to the Texas Homeless Network, there is a 40% increase in hospitalizations for mood disorders like depression and mania. Mood disorders are eight times more likely to be associated with the unhoused community than other mental illnesses.

By educating others about the specific challenges faced by the unhoused during the summer, we can foster a greater sense of empathy and encourage more people to contribute to solutions. As a community, we can make a significant difference by taking collective action. Simple acts of kindness, such as distributing bottled water, sunscreen, hats, and insect repellent, can provide immediate relief and protection.

Poverello House accepts donations and volunteers seven days a week. The Outreach team can distribute summer kits to the unhoused community that is staying on the streets. Together, we can create a safer and more compassionate environment for everyone, especially those who are most vulnerable in our communities. Let's come together to support our unhoused neighbors, ensuring that no one has to face the heat of summer alone.



BOTTLED WATER

SUNSCREEN

CHAPSTICK

COOLING
TOWELS

PORTABLE FANS

*** A 2023 STUDY COMPLETED IN MARICOPA COUNTY, ARIZONA, SHOWED THAT**

130 UNHOUSED INDIVIDUALS DIED DUE TO HEAT-ASSOCIATED CONDITIONS.

*How Extreme Weather Harms Unhoused People. Pallet Shelters. <https://palletshelter.com/blog/how-extreme-weather-harms-unhoused-people/>

*The Disproportionate Impact of Climate Change on People Experiencing Homelessness. Texas Homeless Network. <https://bit.ly/4ccYZxi>



Papa Mike's Cafe
RUN FOR MEALS
2024

