



POVERELLO NEWS

MARCH 2024

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP CELEBRATING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Women's History Month is a time to celebrate the achievements and contributions of women throughout history. A critical aspect of women's history is the rise of women in leadership roles. In the context of non-profit organizations, women have played a significant role in driving positive change and making a difference in their communities. Did you know that a recent study found that 75% of all people working in non-profit organizations are women? Just as so many non-profits throughout the country rely on a female workforce, part of the success of Poverello House is the leadership of some incredible women.

Poverello House's leadership team, we have a hierarchy consisting of Coordinators, Directors, Senior Directors, and Executive Officers. This month, we honored our female leaders by engaging in discussions on women's leadership with our Senior Directors and Officers. A recurring theme emerged during these conversations. Each woman described her leadership style as something she values in a superior. While this may vary slightly for each of them, they all sought more in their leadership roles. They emphasized a supportive approach in female leadership, showing empathy and understanding towards their team members' personal lives. They also highlighted the significance of maintaining a work-life balance and practicing self-care.

SARA MIRHADI, Chief Programs Officer, has served at Poverello House for 10 Years. Her journey of balancing motherhood and career aspirations is a testament to her determination. Sara shares that her daughter and the younger generation are inspiring. The fearlessness and confidence she sees in her teenager has reminded Sara that taking risks in her career is important. Sara stated that in the past, she overcompensated by trying to prove herself every step of the way. She made sure to have a strong handshake, good posture, and appropriate attire at all times. Now, Sara can be the example she never had to so many other women.

LINDA BOWMAN, Chief Financial Officer, has been with Poverello House for 4 Years. With a wealth of experience in finance and accounting spanning decades, she brings a unique perspective to her role. Despite often finding herself as the only woman in various professional environments. Ms. Bowman's resilience



Sara Rios, Kristina Flores, Sara Mirhadi, Linda Bowman, and Kathleen Murphy

and expertise have made her a trailblazer in her field. Linda shared that she hopes to uplift other women in this field and is currently mentoring a member of her team, Kaori Galvan-Capetillo!

KRISTINA FLORES, Senior Director of Development and Communications, has served Poverello House for 9 Years. Her nurturing nature creates a safe space where her team can

flourish and grow. Mrs. Flores leads with compassion and understanding toward a healthy work-life balance. Her team consists of the youngest members of the team and she is always motivating them to enter each room with confidence; as that is what she would advise her 18-year-old self!

SARA RIOS, Senior Director of Client Services, has 6 Years of

service at Poverello House. Ms. Rios has shared that in the past, she was often discouraged and felt that it was difficult to be treated respectfully by leadership. Coming to Poverello House, Sara wanted to be the representation she had never received. She embodies the spirit of perseverance, showing that despite the obstacles faced, women have the power to rise above and exceed all expectations.

KATHLEEN MURPHY is the newest member of this team with 1 Year of service time! She is the Senior Director of Mental Health Services. Looking back on her own journey, Ms. Murphy's advice to "Live out loud" serves as a powerful reminder to embrace authenticity and live life to the fullest. By encouraging others to be true to themselves and express their voices boldly, she fosters a supportive environment where individuals can thrive and make a positive impact. Encouraging individuals to seek mentorship and improve their communication abilities, Kathleen underscores the value of learning from others and effectively sharing one's thoughts and ideas.

Women leaders play a crucial role in shaping our world and driving positive change across all sectors of society. Their unique perspectives, experiences, and leadership styles bring diversity and innovation to decision-making processes, leading to more effective and inclusive outcomes. By empowering women to take on leadership roles, we not only create more opportunities for women to succeed but also benefit from the wealth of talent and expertise they bring to the table.

NAOMI'S HOUSE - 22 YEARS OF COMPASSION

The Holy Cross Center for Women served as a daytime refuge, offering a safe space for women facing homelessness. It provided essential amenities such as showers, clothing, and childcare support. Services also included engaging activities like sewing classes and self-care sessions under the guidance of the Sisters of the Holy Cross. While the center offered vital support during the day, staff witnessed the harsh realities faced by these women over night, exposing them to dangers and violence.

Recognizing the urgent need for nightly emergency shelter, CEO, Jim Connell, enlisted the expertise of his team. This sanctuary catered specifically to single, unaccompanied women experiencing homelessness, bridging a crucial gap in services for this vulnerable demographic. Naomi's House got the namesake from Ruth 1:1-22 in the Old Testament of the Bible. The story of Naomi is one of resilience and redemption as a woman is thrown into destitution by circumstances beyond her control.

In May 2002, the transition of the yellow house (previously occupied by a family for a decade), to accommodate Naomi's House marked a significant milestone. Poverello House facilitated the relocation of the family to support the establishment of a shelter that provided a secure nighttime haven for women previously exposed to the threats of the streets after dark.

Naomi's House emerged as a beacon of hope for single, unaccompanied women experiencing homelessness but not actively escaping domestic violence. This program filled a critical void in the community. By adopting a low-barrier approach, Naomi's House extended its support to all women in need of assistance.

Sara Mirhadi, the Chief Programs Officer, joined Poverello House in 2013. She highlighted the evolution of Naomi's House from solely offering nighttime shelter before 2010 to implementing case management services in 2012 and embracing the Housing First model. Sara shared that Poverello House is seen as a progressive organization. Naomi's House was one of the first shelters to adopt the Harm Reduction model; where clients can access contraception. Naomi's House practices de-unification, a process of women temporarily relinquishing custody of their children. This process may seem abnormal to the general public. However, when experiencing homelessness, addiction, mental illness, and other barriers, it provides no other option than ensuring safety. Safety related to the life of addiction, against sexually transmitted disease or pregnancy, or the guaranteed safety of children while navigating out of the situation at hand. There are countless reasons a person may be experiencing homelessness. Poverello House wants to ensure that everyone's needs are met while staying in our shelters.

Goals for the services offered by Naomi's House and Poverello House revolve around expansion! There is a critical need for tailored services dedicated to women and their rehabilitation. Poverello House aims to secure a larger facility to accommodate 50 shelter beds exclusively for women facing homelessness. There is a lack of resources for women in general. Poverello House aims to bridge those gaps as best as we can. With the help of the community, we will continue the legacy of this work starting over 22 years ago! Thank you for helping to make this resource available to the vulnerable women that are on our streets.



Before Poverello House obtained Naomi's House. A family lived onsite.

**IN MAY 2024,
NAOMI'S HOUSE
WILL CELEBRATE
22 YEARS OF
OPERATIONS TOWARD
SERVING SINGLE UNHOUSED
WOMEN IN FRESNO, CA.**





"I PREFER TO CALL THEM 'ACTION BOARDS,' AS WE ARE LOOKING TO CREATE SOMETHING THAT WILL INSPIRE AND MANIFEST IN YOUR FUTURE THROUGH YOUR ACTIONS, RATHER THAN MERELY A VEHICLE FOR DAYDREAMS," - TARA SWART, AUTHOR OF "THE SOURCE: THE SECRETS OF THE UNIVERSE, THE SCIENCE OF THE BRAIN."

MORE THAN A BED.

Poverello House operates four temporary shelters, each designed to serve specific demographics. The Village of Hope and Hope Pointe assist both couples and individuals experiencing homelessness. Village of Hope accommodates 65 beds, while Hope Pointe offers a larger capacity with 120 beds. Dedicated Client Services Specialists and Shelter Coordinators diligently organize events and enrichment activities to foster client engagement and motivation.

Recognizing the importance of holistic well-being, the shelter organizes a variety of engaging activities to uplift spirits and bolster mental wellness. From group games to arts and crafts sessions, residents are encouraged to partake in self-care initiatives that provide a welcomed reprieve from the challenges of shelter life. The camaraderie fostered through shared experiences and connections among residents serves as a pillar of emotional support, instilling hope and optimism for a brighter tomorrow.

SUPPORT THE SHELTER ACTIVITIES BY DONATING SUPPLIES!



Rock Painting at Hope Pointe Shelter.

Through a combination of creative outlets, social interactions, and mental health resources, the shelter creates a nurturing environment where residents can address immediate needs while embarking on a journey of healing and personal growth.



Residents engage in bracelet making at Hope Pointe Shelter.

At Hope Pointe shelter, residents have recently engaged in the creation of vision boards to articulate their aspirations during their stay. This practice, popularized in recent years, offers individuals a platform to visualize and manifest their future objectives and aspirations. Neuroscientist Dr. Tara Swart explained in a "Motivational Clinic" article, "Looking at images on a vision board primes the brain to grasp opportunities that may otherwise go unnoticed. That's because the brain has a process called 'value-tagging,' which imprints important things onto your subconscious and filters out the unnecessary information."

Encouraging motivational engagement has significantly uplifted both client and staff morale. Clients participating in enrichment activities demonstrate a greater commitment to following through with their housing plans and maintaining alignment with their case management.



POVERELLO HOUSE
CALL FOR
HOPE
= TELETHON =

April 18
2024

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Volunteers will be answering phones, greeting callers, and taking donations.

Volunteers may be on camera.

Volunteers must be 18 and older.

Our goal is to tell the story of Poverello House's work in the community and raise funds to support the operations of our rapidly growing organization

Multiple Volunteer
Shifts Available
Beginning at 4:15 AM
Ending at 7:30 PM

We will have
Coffee, Food,
and Fun!

Scan QR code



Want to
Volunteer?