



POVERELLO NEWS

MAY 2024

POVERELLO HOUSE ENRICHMENT CENTER

In August 2021, Poverello House began a new program for mental health services called the Enrichment Center. The Enrichment Center was created to provide individual and group therapy services to the unhoused community and those grappling with addiction. The Enrichment Center offers a unique opportunity for people who are historically underserved to engage in mental health services.

Kathleen Murphy joined Poverello House in 2023, and in January 2024, she transitioned into the role of Senior Director of Enrichment Center Services. She plans to expand the services and break barriers for our guests! Her team has hit the ground running and is excited to see the expanded services make an impact on our population served. Her team consists of two licensed clinicians, Ana Damacio and X. Vang, and Tadd Patrick, who is working towards his licensing.

When asked why they decided to go into this field of work, they all had a collective answer: Helping Others. Some of them may have started school with a different path, but they all found their way to counseling and wanting to help people. They understand the importance of mental health awareness and want that to be

communicated throughout the organization!

Vang shared that we are all second victims of mental illness. If you, your family, friends, etc., struggle with mental health, everyone within that support group gets affected. The team shared it is important to break stigmas against mental health and make it an open topic.

Vang works with our men enrolled in the Men's Residential Rehabilitation Program. He provides one-on-one therapy and group counseling. Vang shared that working with the residents is different than our unhoused population, as the men enrolled in our rehab program already have a grasp on what they need support with. Vang said, "The rehab men are in the 'pre-stage' and are ready for change." Vang stated the men have a preconceived idea of counseling due to the NA or AA curriculum, and the lingo is similar to therapy.

Clinician Tadd Patrick works closely with shelter guests who struggle with substance abuse disorder, as well as offering therapy to the families at Family Hope Shelter. He is balancing multiple programs and has implemented group therapy at Hope Pointe! Tadd shares that playing a role in their progress and seeing his guests move



Tadd Patrick, Enrichment Center Clinician

forward with their goals is why he wanted to become a therapist. Tadd said Poverello House's approach to therapy is more of a casual setting to make guests comfortable. Our motto is to meet guests where they are, and the Clinician team really understands the importance of meeting guests in their preferred space. We have expanded that concept with a Street Clinician!

When asked how they approach a new guest, the team said to start small. Start with a conversation and listen. Kathleen expressed that Poverello House has created a safe space for guests, and having that foundation helps with the initial approach. Vang shared that we are the last resort for people seeking help, so having access to mental health services is just another part of our mission and what we are trying to accomplish as a whole.

At the Enrichment Center, we believe in the power of healing and growth. Our dedicated team is here to provide guidance and support every step of the way, empowering individuals to embark on a journey towards improved mental well-being and a brighter future.

(left to right) Ana Damacio, Tadd Patrick, X. Vang, Intern Ethan Trotter, and Kathleen Murphy.



CLINICIAN TEAM

STREET CLINICIAN

BRIDGING GAPS AND BRINGING CARE TO THE MARGINALIZED

In September 2023, Poverello House introduced a Street Clinician! Two years following the inception of the mental health program, we have extended supportive services to reach individuals on the streets. The Street Clinician works alongside the Street Navigation team to provide supportive services to those experiencing homelessness in their preferred area. Street clinical therapy is vital to the demographic Poverello House works with. To provide therapy to someone directly at their place of comfort is an incredible accomplishment for mental health services.

Ana Damacio originally went to school with the plan of becoming a teacher. In her childhood, her teachers became a safe space for her. Going into her career, Ana knew she wanted to help people similarly. This led her to Victim Services and Criminology, which ultimately placed her with Poverello House.

Ana shared that she had known of Poverello House but was unaware of all the services offered. She said that Poverello House “breaks barriers for our guests. We are meeting them where they are comfortable and not asking them to travel.” One of the biggest preventatives for our guests to receive mental health services is transportation and the stigma around asking for help. When Ana goes out with the Street Navigation team, she bridges that gap for the underserved. She shared, “A

lot of people welcome me in, and once they hear I’m a therapist, they want to talk to me.”

When asked about more challenging guests who are unresponsive to navigation services, Ana stated that sometimes, “our guests with severe mental illness are unaware of their psychosis.” Whether influenced by substances or experiencing a psychotic episode, they may not be open to receiving help. The team prioritizes safety and comfort, persisting in their efforts and trying again later. Through experience, the team has realized the importance of patience and consistency. Kathleen recalled a woman who remained unresponsive to both herself and Ana for weeks. However, one day at the Café, the woman was thrilled to see Kathleen and Ana! Gradual progress is essential!

Our commitment to mental health advocacy has led us to expand services beyond traditional settings. By reaching out to individuals not only in shelters but living on the freeways, canals, etc., we aim to provide accessible and compassionate care to those who may otherwise be overlooked. Through Outreach, Street Navigation, and now a Street Clinician, we strive to offer a helping hand and create fewer barriers to our community members.



X.Vang, Enrichment Center Clinician



Kathleen Murphy, Senior Director of Enrichment Center Services

UC-SAN FRANCISCO BENIOFF HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING INITIATIVE
Study by Margot Kushel

82% of people experiencing homelessness said they had a mental health condition or substance use challenge in their lifetime.

66% of people experiencing homelessness said they were currently experiencing mental health issues.



Ana Damacio, Street Clinician

EDSEL DALISAY 22 YEARS OF SERVICE

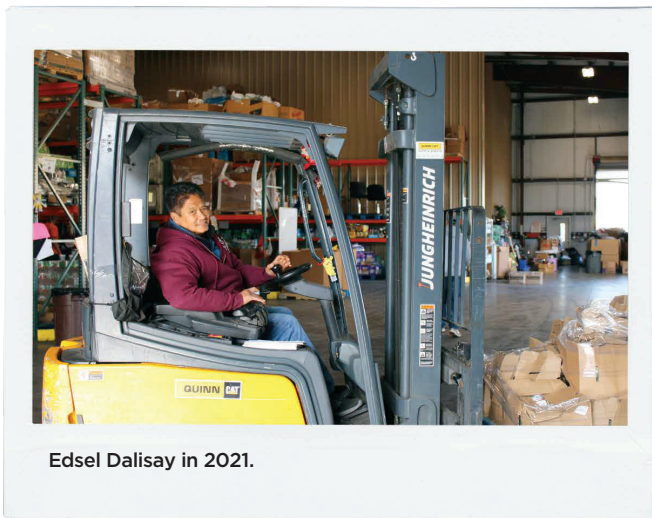
In 2002, Poverello House had nearly twelve staff and was seeking a Maintenance Specialist to join the team. Back in the day, when the newspaper was our source of information, job opportunities were advertised! So, in July 2002, Edsel Dalisay saw the ad in the paper and mailed in his resume for the maintenance position at Poverello House. Twenty-two years later, we are sad to say goodbye to Edsel as he is retiring!

When asked about his first day, Edsel said, "I showed up at the Santa Clara gate and thought, 'What is this place?'" If you've ever been to 412 F St, I'm sure you have had the same thought! Edsel moved to Fresno from the Bay Area, where he was doing maintenance work at hotels. His experience was with hospitality and customer service. After the first weekend at Poverello House, he was unsure if he wanted to come back. However, he did! His most cherished memory is actually from that first weekend! He got a real taste of POV life. A woman crashed her car into the Poverello House gate, and Edsel thought to himself, "What did I get myself into?"

Edsel has been blessed to see the organization grow substantially. At the start of his time here, the maintenance shop was merely a patch of dirt on the side of the property. Edsel acquired skills like performing oil changes and car tune-ups with minimal tools. He credited Paul Stack, the Chief Operations Officer, as a mentor who taught him a great deal. Edsel mentioned applying the life skills he learned at Poverello House to his personal life and being thankful for contributing to the guests' journeys, regardless of the impact.

Edsel shares that he is proud to be part of Poverello House and was blessed to work closely with our founder, Papa Mike. During the early years of Poverello, Paul, Edsel, and Mike would start each day with a debriefing session before sharing breakfast with our guests. Edsel recalls fond moments, such as Mike playfully trying to surprise him on Sundays by having the buildings unlocked before Edsel arrived to open for the day. These are cherished memories for Edsel.

We will miss Edsel and wish him the best on his next adventure!



Edsel Dalisay in 2021.



EDSEL STARTED AT POVERELLO HOUSE IN JULY 2002!

Edsel Dalisay in 2023 holding a photo of 2006 Edsel in the old warehouse.





Run...Don't Walk to
Register for the 5K!



Don't Run? Us either!
Volunteer to Support.

SATURDAY, JUNE 1, 2024
5K RUN 2-MILE WALK

WOODWARD PARK
START TIME 8:00 AM

