

# West Valley Community Services

## Fall 2019 Newsletter

Serving Cupertino, Saratoga, West San Jose, Monte Sereno, Los Gatos and the surrounding mountain regions since 1973

### WVCS' Annual Back to School Program helps 200 children

It was cold and dark on August 3, 2019 when almost 150 volunteers arrived at the Old Navy in San Jose for the 2019 Back to School program. But the early hour did not bring down our spirits, as everyone was assembled to help prepare 200 children to go back to school ready to learn this fall.

For more than 20 years, WVCS has been offering this important program. Low-income families and children living in poverty in our community already face a big challenge. With parents struggling to put food on the table and a roof over their heads, there often isn't money to buy the clothing or supplies students need when the school year begins.

But here in the west valley, our caring community comes together each year to meet the needs of young people in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade as part of the annual program that provides clothing, shoes, backpacks and school supplies to a growing number of children each year.

This program helps clients like Rina, who has been living in her car with her children. Rina had been visiting WVCS for other services when she learned about the Back to School Program. **Thanks to donors like you**, and our partners listed below, Rina's children received everything they needed to head back to school this fall!



Thank you to our Back to School sponsors & partners:

**HERITAGE**  
BANK OF COMMERCE®



**Rotary Club of Saratoga, Girl Scouts of Northern California, Kentwood Ohana, Famous Footwear and the individual donors and volunteers for supporting this year's event!**

Uniting the community to fight hunger and homelessness since 1973

# 9th Annual Chefs of Compassion a big success!

With delicious food, inspiring stories, and more than 400 people in attendance, the 9th annual Chefs of Compassion fundraising event was a big success. The special evening included a tribute to community leaders Judy and Bill Wilson and El Camino Health for their support of West Valley Community Services. NBC Bay Area Reporter Janelle Wang shined as the evening's emcee, and the room was moved to tears by the story of one of our clients who was formerly homeless, but now has a home to call her own thanks to donors like you.

The evening was capped off by pledging to fight hunger and homelessness—and thanks to the community's generosity, **the event raised more than \$260,000.** To see a gallery of photos from the event, please visit [www.chefsofcompassion.org](http://www.chefsofcompassion.org). A special thanks to everyone who made a donation in support of the fight against hunger and homelessness!



## Our Partners in Compassion



Shatayu Bhattacharyya  
Laurie & Larry Dean  
Martha Fisk  
Bill Gorman  
Nancy & Chuck Harper

Jim Jackson  
Barbara McArthur  
Stephanie & George Tyson  
Kevin Winston

## WVCS Legacy Society



Making a legacy gift to West Valley Community Services enables you to make the most of your personal philanthropic objectives by supporting the cause you care about. As a member of our Legacy Society, you can:

- Allow your personal values to make a lasting impact on the community
- Help West Valley Community Services continue to fight hunger and homelessness in your community
- Inspire others to join in your commitment

**For more information, contact Kohinoor Chakravarty at [kohinoorc@wvcommunityservices.org](mailto:kohinoorc@wvcommunityservices.org) or 408.366.6096.**

## Volunteer Spotlight: Martha Fisk



Martha's first volunteer opportunity came in the winter of 2016 during Gift of Hope, West Valley Community Services' annual holiday program. Martha loved her volunteering role of wrapping gifts for the clients so much that she involved her twin sister Marsha, cousin Janet and her other friends and relatives in supporting the mission of WVCS. Thereafter Martha invited Josh

to speak at the American Antiques Club, where Martha was a member. Since then, every year around February the American Antiques Club members deliver 40 bags filled with various toiletries and personal essential items for our community members who are homeless.

Compassion, and a desire to give back was a value instilled in Martha since a young age. "It makes me feel tremendous when I see the joy on the faces of the children at Back to School program and the parents receiving gifts during the holidays. It just validates for me that it is the right thing to do!" West Valley Community Services is very grateful to Martha, her friends and family for all their support!



### GIFT OF HOPE 2019

Give hope to a low income or homeless family in our community this holiday season by donating or volunteering to distribute gifts or adopting a family living in poverty.

**For more information**, contact Trishya at 408.255.8033 x 307 or [trishyam@wvcommunityservices.org](mailto:trishyam@wvcommunityservices.org).

Gift of Hope 2019 is made possible by:



And in partnership with Quota International of Cupertino & Assemblymember Evan Low

## Preventing Homelessness in Silicon Valley



WVCS is one of seven nonprofit agencies that makes up the countywide Homelessness Prevention System (HPS). This system provides critical financial and legal assistance to low-income families and individuals at imminent risk of becoming homeless. The HPS program provides temporary financial assistance (rent, deposit, or utilities payment) to families or individuals who are struggling to maintain their housing. In the first two years, the entire project served 841 households and 95% of them are still stably housed.

Sarah is a WVCS client that benefited from HPS. Sarah was a hairdresser and worked two jobs to make ends meet. Sarah got divorced four years ago. Her husband was an alcoholic and he would steal Sarah's credit cards, driving up debt and ruining her credit. When Sarah had to take time off from work for six weeks to recover from knee replacement surgery, things got worse. With no income and no savings, Sarah feared she would become homeless. That is when Sarah reached out to WVCS, and she qualified for rental assistance through the HPS. With this support, Sarah could remain housed and focus on healing. While still recovering, Sarah continues to work with her case manager to work on her financial situation, but is grateful to donors like you for helping her remain in her home throughout this difficult time.

# An Inspiring Message from our partner, Envestnet, Inc.



For the past 4 years, WVCS has been partnering with Envestnet, Inc. to support our programs and services. We sat down with two of their leaders - Jim Lumberg (Co-founder, Executive Vice President) and Viggie Mokkarala (Executive Vice President, Strategic Development) for a conversation about why they support WVCS.

Q - What would you like our readers to know about Envestnet and how you share your success with the community?

A. Envestnet delivers financial services and solutions. We are one of the first companies to democratize the delivery of financial knowledge in an easy, affordable and accessible way to everyone. So caring about the community, solving problems and sharing our successes is in the very DNA of our company.

Q. We know Envestnet is a solutions based company. Tell us about the solutions you are bringing to the community in need?

A. We recognize that there is much need in the communities where we operate and where our employees live and work. It is our vision to bring relief and hope to these communities. We bring solutions to people in need when they find themselves in unexpected challenges in life and need help navigating their finances. A big part of that is providing education and providing other resources, which we do through non profits.

Q. What would be your message to other corporations regarding philanthropy?

A. It makes sense to invest back in the community because it is the community from which we draw our employees and the quality of our employees and the organization is dependent on a healthy vibrant community.

Q. Is there anything else you would like to share?

A. We want to say thank WVCS for the work you do - we would not be able to serve the community without your help. This is a true partnership. Please accept our gratitude for enabling us to be of service to the children and families in the community.

## Poverty Simulation

November 2, 2019, 10am-noon

Cupertino Senior Center, 21251 Stevens Creek Blvd

Free and open to the community

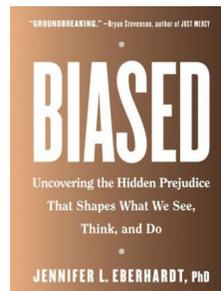


The Poverty Simulation immerses participants in the reality of a Silicon Valley that grows in disparity as much as prosperity. During the interactive simulation,

participants work to overcome barriers to social services, live off in-sufficient income, and encounter unforeseen economic obstacles along the way.

To RSVP, visit [www.wvcommunityservices.org](http://www.wvcommunityservices.org)

## Social Justice Book Club



The next meeting of the Social Justice Book Club will be on **Tuesday, November 6 at 6:30 pm** at WVCS. We will be reading *Biased* by Jennifer L. Eberhardt, PhD. Join us for a lively and engaging conversation, light snacks, and fellowship! The Social Justice Book Club is free and open to all!

For more information about the Book Club, or to RSVP please contact Josh at [josh@wvcommunityservices.org](mailto:josh@wvcommunityservices.org).



Like us...follow us...engage with us...WVCS is online!

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