



IMPACT! newsletter



June
2019

How your investment is changing the future for individuals and leading the way to life in recovery!



Building 209's Veteran Garden: A Little Dirt Never Hurts

Step Up welcomed the volunteer teams from Home Depot, AXA XL, and Calsense to the West Los Angeles Veterans Affairs Campus to collaborate on the constructing and planting of edible garden beds (*pictured a Home Depot volunteer*) and a small citrus grove in Building 209's own backyard. Volunteers participated alongside the Building 209 residents for the day-long event. The edible beds include tomatoes, peppers, zucchini, cucumber, eggplant, strawberries, and basil.

Team Home Depot funded the project with a grant of \$8,000 to cover the costs of materials that included raised beds, drip irrigation, all planting material, sheds, gardening tools, and patio furniture. The Vets have formed a gardening club to monitor the watering and maintenance. Volunteer opportunities will continue to be offered for engagement in garden projects. The residents and staff are looking forward to the mid-summer harvest!

PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

The #1 requested supportive service...



Sheila (*pictured*) had a plan; find a Mary Richards inspired career, buy that middle-class dream home and retire. In 2008, her 20-year tenure at Bell Corp. qualified her for a mortgage and she bought her dream home. According to the lender, the financial markets were fine. Two years later, her mortgage ballooned and Sheila could not make the payments. The bank foreclosed and Sheila lost everything. The trauma she endured from experiencing homelessness for six years

impeded her recovery. Sheila did not give up.

In July 2015, Sheila received keys to her own apartment at Step Up on Colorado. "The pain from being homeless still resides with me. Yet, with the support of the life skills staff, I'm finding the self-confidence I once lost," says Sheila. Today, Sheila leads the Step Up On Colorado Tenants Advisory Council and is an advocate for shattering the stigma of mental health conditions and homelessness.

A SENSE OF BELONGING

Mutuality, safety, and respect...



Kaira Yates (*pictured*), a first-year intern in social work at Cal State Northridge, conceived of a drop box for Step Up clients as a value-added service. Two privately protected drop boxes containing a notepad and pens have been placed at the Step Up on Second Street and Ocean Park locations in Santa Monica. The purpose of the drop box is for clients without a phone to communicate with field-based staff about a variety of issues including

setting an appointment, needing medication or additional resources. The staff checks the box once a day and can find the clients at the locations they indicate on their notes.

Yates has finished her internship at Step Up. "It was a pleasure having Kaira at Step Up and I can't wait to see how she develops in her professional life," said Jai Long, a Lead Service Coordinator.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Productivity and social connectedness...



Nathaniel Neubauer and Contemporary Catering came to Step Up through event planner Cassandra Santor. Raised in New York, Nathaniel (*pictured with*

Step Up's Ariella Spector) experienced homelessness for a brief time and wanted to give the Step Up clients an opportunity to work and hire them for future events. The Donor Appreciation Soiree Honoring Marleen & Bruce Rognien provided the perfect training ground for nine Step Up Workforce Development participants to learn to prep, cook, and serve the menu items designed by Contemporary Catering: manchego stuffed dates, smoked chicken quesadillas, and crab and shrimp with jalapeño pesto.

Step Up is grateful to Nathaniel for donating the delicious food, consulting on the event, and transporting the rentals for our Donor Appreciation Soiree.

Learn first-hand how Step Up is ending homelessness



Join us for a Breakfast Tour

- June 5 - Step Up on Vine
- June 7 - Step Up on Colorado

For more information about the tours: please call Julia Salazar, Director of Annual Giving at (310) 696-4510 ext. 2210