

ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016

# FAMILIES FORWARD

DIGNITY • EMPOWERMENT • HOPE



There's No Place Like Home

## MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dear Friends of Families Forward,

### We believe every child deserves a place to call home.

Because of you, and your dedicated support, last year we were able to help 585 children and their parents build a new life in stable housing after being literally homeless. Every month we receive calls from more than 200 families that are in some type of housing crisis. Some have already lost their home and some are about to. Every family we meet is looking to support themselves and their children. They simply need a bridge of support and services to help them with a new start. With your continued involvement, you are giving each one of these children a chance for a normal life to at least be safe, and hopefully, to thrive.

### The simple answer is housing.

There is only one solution for a homeless family – housing. There is a severe lack of affordable options in Orange County, especially for hardworking families whose wages have not kept up with housing costs. Many of the local families who walk through our doors are facing an unexpected crisis in their lives that caused them to lose their home. We coach them through the issues that caused the crisis and they set goals to regain their own stability. However, the most challenging part of this equation is to find a place where a family can afford to live. You will see a continued focus in our efforts to address the need for affordable housing in Orange County. No single organization can achieve this on its own and it will take the determination of all of us working together – in government, the business community, caring citizens, the building and development industry and nonprofits to create neighborhoods that meet the needs of our local community.

### Increased partnership leads to more housing availability for families.

This past year, we made significant progress in securing more housing options for our client families both through ownership and partnership. We added 4 new units of affordable housing in Lake Forest which is reflected in our financial results. We had significant capital and in-kind contributions from local cities and the building industry which accounted for the majority of income in excess of expenses for the year. We also expanded our partnerships with affordable housing developers, apartment communities and private landlords all over the county, in an on-going search to find affordable options for families.

We wish we could share the remarkable story of each of the 160 families who, through hard work and determination, returned to stable housing last year with the help of our programs and services. At the moment each family moves in, the emotions of joy, gratitude and hope fill the room. ***There truly is no place like home.***

Sincerely,



**Jack Stemper**  
President, Board of Directors



**We believe every child deserves a safe place to sleep tonight, and every night.**

*"I can finally see the light at the end of the tunnel, and even though I still have issues that stress me out, I have a full-time permanent job I can rely on. Thank you so much to Families Forward for helping me and my family get back on our feet, and reach stability. I couldn't have done it without your support." - Darlene, Families Forward Client*

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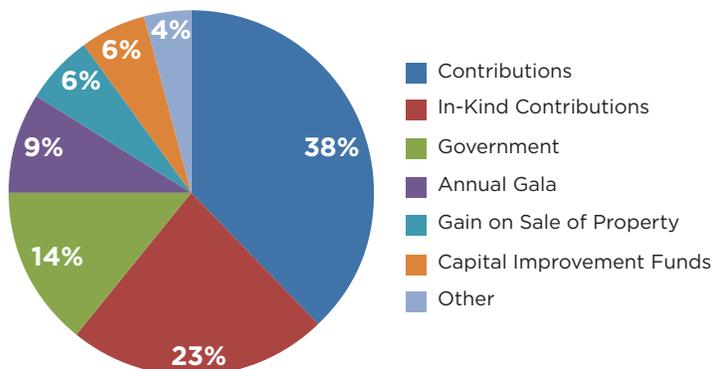
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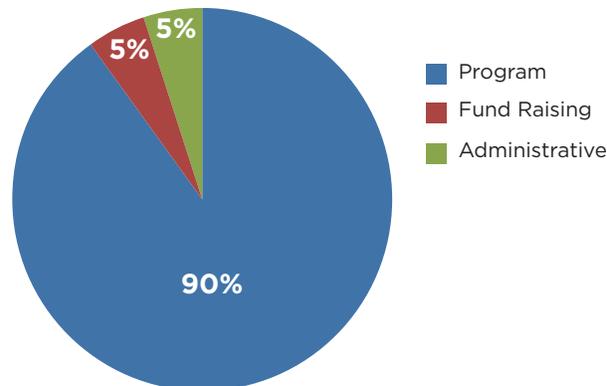
## AUDITED FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

October 1, 2015 - September 30, 2016

### REVENUES \$5.35M\*



### EXPENSES \$4.40M



	(000's)
Current Assets	\$ 2,698
Homes & Other LT Assets	\$ 7,867
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ 10,565</b>
Liabilities	\$ 401
Net Assets	\$ 10,164
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 10,565</b>

**For the seventh year in a row, Families Forward earned Charity Navigator's top 4 Star rating, placing our agency among the top 3% of rated charities nationwide.** Through Families Forward's careful management of resources, an extensive volunteer corps, and thousands of food and product donations, **90% of all financial contributions directly fund programs and services to client families.**



\* The strength of our budget comes from a balanced approach of government, corporate/foundation and individual contributions to implement our programs and services. This past year, significant capital and in-kind contributions from local cities and the building industry accounted for the majority of income in excess of expenses for the year. In addition, there were significant unrealized gains on investments at year end.

# THE CHALLENGES FAMILIES FACE IN ORANGE COUNTY

## Imagine Wondering Where Your Children Will Sleep Tonight.

- More than 5% of Orange County students, or 26,064 children, are homeless or unstably housed.\*
- In 2016, the hourly wage needed to afford a median-priced one-bedroom unit was \$25.46, equivalent to an annual income of \$52,960. A minimum wage worker must work 102 hours a week to afford this type of apartment in Orange County.\*\*
- For low-income families, median income has declined 10% while rents have increased 19% since 2000.\*\*\*

## Children Struggle When They Go To Bed Hungry!

- 1 in 5 children living in Orange County are “food insecure” and are often hungry.
- 237,969 children, 49% of Orange County’s students, qualify for free and reduced-price lunch, a strong indicator of poverty.\*



Due to the high cost of basic living needs in Orange County, including rent, transportation and childcare, families can suddenly lose their housing with any unforeseen expense or disruption. A job loss, sudden illness or rent increase can often push a family beyond their financial limits and result in them losing their home.

## A proud veteran struggles to keep his family in a safe home

Sean spent four years serving our country in the Marine Corps. He excelled and was promoted to Corporal and awarded the Navy Achievement Medal. However, his training in the armed services couldn't prepare him for his greatest struggle: protecting his son and daughter from being homeless.

Prior to coming to Families Forward, Sean was proud that he could care for his family. He had been renting an apartment with his then-fiancée and their young son, while also helping his pregnant adult daughter and her son. Unexpectedly, he and his fiancée decided to separate. In the process of separating, his ex-fiancée broke the lease on their apartment, leaving Sean and his family homeless and owing 2 months of rent. Although he has steady employment as a mail carrier, the family lived paycheck to paycheck. A family friend paid for a motel for a couple of weeks. Sean wanted nothing more than to provide a stable home for his pregnant daughter, his son, and his grandson.

Sean worked with Families Forward to identify a place that would be affordable and in a good location. After just one month, the family moved to permanent housing. Today, the family is doing great. They love their new home, and Sean's daughter gave birth to her second son. During the most recent conversation with Sean, he stated “things are feeling like normal, more and more each day.”



\* Orange County Children's Partnership. *The 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Report on the Conditions of Children in Orange County*. 2016.

\*\*Orange County 2016 Community Indicators Project.

\*\*\*California Housing Partnership Corporation and The Kennedy Commission report, August 2014.

## FAMILIES FORWARD'S IMPACT

### Families Forward Creates A Brighter Future

In 2015-16, Families Forward served **9,000** children and adults in crisis.



**Families Forward's Housing Program** helps families with minor age children regain stable housing. Supportive services for these families may include counseling, food, medical services and career coaching to ultimately help each family achieve self-sufficiency.

- **160 Homeless Families (585 children and their parents)** achieved safety and stability in Families Forward's Housing Program.
- **93% of the families graduating** from the program secured their own housing and have not returned to homelessness in Orange County.

**Families Forward's Homeless Prevention Programs** include services to help families maintain self-sufficiency and independent housing.

- **Food Pantry Program:** staffed by community volunteers, our Food Pantry served 6,724 children and adults.
- **Community Cares Program:** 75 volunteer healthcare professionals volunteered 144 medical services at no cost to our housing families.
- **Career Coaching:** 215 individuals received career coaching services through workshops and one-on-one coaching.
- **Community Counseling:** 332 individuals from 187 families participated in counseling sessions to build confidence and self-sufficiency.
- **Community Resource Fair:** Over 606 children and adults participated in the fair, receiving health services and general information provided by 61 local community service organizations.
- **Back to School:** 1,336 children received clothing and backpacks filled with school supplies to start the new school year.
- **Thanksgiving:** 892 families received holiday meal baskets.
- **Adopt A Family:** 2,033 children from 804 families received holiday gifts.

### Volunteers - Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Dedicated community volunteers provided more than 20,000 hours of service, significantly increasing the number of families we can serve.

- Individuals, families, faith, service and school groups, businesses and government organizations gave nearly 2,500 generous charitable gifts and grants to help local families.
- More than 300,000 food items were generously donated by local families, community groups and businesses through more than 200 food drives conducted by groups and individuals.

Contact Families Forward today to find out more about volunteering opportunities. Your involvement will change the life of a family in need.



Families Forward exists to help families in need achieve and maintain self-sufficiency through housing, food, counseling, education and other support services.

### FAMILIES FORWARD'S VALUES GUIDE ALL OF OUR EFFORTS

Dignity • Empowerment • Accountability • Community Spirit • Hope



## Thank You - Your Financial Support Changes Lives!

Families Forward is grateful for every gift of financial support. Due to space limitations, the list below includes Circle of Impact donors who made gifts of \$5,000 or more between October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016.

Please visit our website at [www.families-forward.org](http://www.families-forward.org) for additional information on our supporters and the impact of their generosity.

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Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy in recognizing our donors. For questions, please call 949-716-5870.

**For information on how you or your organization can help, please contact us:  
8 Thomas • Irvine, CA • 92618 • (949) 552-2727 • [www.families-forward.org](http://www.families-forward.org)**