

FAMILIES FORWARD

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FAMILIES FORWARD HELPS COLLECTIVELY RAISE \$1,789,854 DURING “HELP THEM HOME” GIVING DAY TO BENEFIT ORANGE COUNTY’S HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES

Overwhelming Community Response Generates More Than \$1M Above Initial Fundraising Goal for Families Forward and 18 Colleague Nonprofits Addressing the Urgent Needs of Local Homeless During the COVID-19 Pandemic

NEWPORT BEACH, Calif. (April 23, 2020) — On April 22, Families Forward partnered with the Orange County Community Foundation (OCCF) and 18 colleague nonprofits to host *Help Them Home*, a Giving Day for Orange County’s homeless. In its third year, *Help Them Home* raised \$1,789,854 for organizations that serve the local homeless population’s greatest needs and the county’s most urgent demands. Families Forward more than doubled their original goal to raise \$210,250. This astoundingly positive response from the community generated more than \$1 million above the initial collective goal of raising \$700,000 for the day. In total, *Help Them Home* has now raised more than \$3.3 million since 2018.

As the COVID-19 pandemic unfolds, nonprofits are facing unprecedented challenges in their ability to deliver services due to operational changes and reduced funding. The \$1,789,854 raised through this year’s *Help Them Home* campaign allows the participating organizations to continue their critical work in service of our county’s homeless individuals and families.

“As we stand together to face COVID-19, it becomes more important than ever to support our nonprofit sector and the vulnerable populations they serve, including our homeless neighbors,” said Shelley Hoss, president and CEO, OCCF. “We are incredibly proud to host *Help Them Home* and provide this opportunity for our generous community to stand behind the nonprofits working tirelessly to combat homelessness.”

The 19 nonprofits participating in the *Help Them Home* Giving Day included Build Futures; Casa Teresa; City Net; Colette’s Children’s Home; Families Forward; Family Assistance Ministries; Family Promise of Orange County; Friendship Shelter; Grandma’s House of Hope; H.I.S. (Homeless Intervention Shelter) House; Home Aid Orange County; Illumination Foundation; Mercy House; Pathways of Hope; South County Outreach; SPIN (Serving People In Need); StandUp for Kids; Thomas House Family Shelter; and WISEPlace.

“We are overwhelmed with the response to Giving Day from our supporters,” said Madelynn Hirneise, CEO, Families Forward. “Thanks to our generous donors, we unlocked matches from Decorative Arts Society, A Little Help Foundation and our Board of Directors, helping us raise more than \$200,000 in just 24 hours. With the financial uncertainty facing families in Orange County due to the COVID-19 outbreak, we are experiencing a dramatic increase in need. Every donation made during Giving Day helps provide support for the most vulnerable families in our community.”

Help Them Home is one of several Collaborative Giving Days to be held throughout 2020, and the latest of a series that from 2015 to 2019 has raised more than \$8 million for Orange County nonprofits. OCCF first challenged Orange County residents to “give where their heart lives” during the inaugural i♥oc Giving Day in 2015, raising more than \$1.8 million for 347 participating nonprofits. In 2018, OCCF restructured i♥oc as an expanded opportunity for nonprofits to connect with one another in support of their shared missions. In 2019, the eight collaborative Giving Days raised more than \$1.6 million to benefit local organizations.

Additional collaborative Giving Days will be announced over the coming year. For more information, please visit oc-cf.org/iheartoc.

About Families Forward

Since 1984, Families Forward has worked with families to help them achieve self-sufficiency through housing, food, counseling, career coaching, education, and other support services. Operating with a guiding principal of support with accountability, last year Families Forward improved the lives of nearly 10,000 children and adults by providing safety-net services through the framework of our values: Dignity, Empowerment, Accountability, Community Spirit and Hope. For more information about Families Forward please contact us at 949-552-2727 or visit www.families-forward.org.

About Orange County Community Foundation

Founded in 1989, the Orange County Community Foundation (OCCF) works with donors, strengthens the local nonprofit sector and works to find solutions to community needs. Since its inception, OCCF has awarded nearly \$690 million in grants and scholarships and ranks in the top two percent in grantmaking activity among more than 780 U.S. community foundations. For more information, visit oc-cf.org or call 949-553-4202. Be a part of our conversation on [Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). View OCCF’s 2019 annual report [here](#).

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