

Conard Bulletin

Our mission is to build welcoming communities and caring relationships that empower people and restore hope. We are a nonprofit organization that specializes in Supportive Housing and Mental Health Services in San Francisco.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Anne Quaintance
EO/Executive Director

*“This newsletter
is for the
community...”*

Welcome to the first edition of the Conard Bulletin, a quarterly publication for all who want to hear the latest news about Conard House. This newsletter is for *the community of Conard House and includes legislative action items, feature interviews and what's on the horizon*. The Conard Bulletin launch is timely as Conard House continues to navigate through the over yearlong Covid-19 pandemic with a focus now on wellness, access to vaccines and to reopen safely.

An enormous thank you to the champions in the feature articles and to the writers, editors, designers and photographers. Readers can find and share the Conard Bulletin online and print to display in their rooms, offices and community spaces.

The Conard Bulletin aims to promote the values of Conard House below as we stand united for a San Francisco where housing and healthcare are human rights.

EMPOWERING
PEOPLE
RESTORING
HOPE



A CLIENT'S EXPERIENCE WITH MONEY MANAGEMENT



Matthew moved to San Francisco in 2000, looking for a place that would accept him with open arms. After going to school in San Mateo and then at San Francisco State University, Matthew, at age 25, wanted to live in a city "filled with a lot of good people, a lot of good vibes, and a lot of good feeling." Matthew ended up homeless and, for around 8 years, spent time on waiting lists for housing. Eventually, he found housing in the Tenderloin neighborhood where he has made a home for himself, gardens, reads, and designs his own t-shirts.

In 2012, after spending time as a patient at South of Market (SOMA) Mental Health, Social Security required that upon leaving, Matthew have a Payee Service, which he was initially against. A payee is a person or an organization that receives someone's Social Security or Supplemental Security Income to help manage their benefits. Matthew found out about Conard House because they were right there in the SOMA Mental Health office where he was already going regularly. "It was Jover, Conard House Case Manager, who I spoke with first, and I asked him how I could be involved because I needed to find a payee. He told me that if I was a patient there at SOMA, I could come get services at Conard House. That's when I signed up with the organization."

One of the main components of

Conard House's Community Service programs is the Money Management program. Conard House offers Money Management and Client Advocacy Services to more than 1,100 adults with three locations in the Tenderloin and South of Market neighborhoods. (From website.)

To this day, Jover Labao is Matthew's case manager. "I'll let Jover know if I have something I need money for and he'll help me figure it out. When I didn't have a case manager, I spent all my money in the first couple days of the month," Matthew explained. "I'd then have nothing for the rest of the month. Jover has really helped me maintain my funds." Despite being reluctant at first, Matthew says, "I realized how beneficial it was for me and was really happy that it was a requirement because it allowed me to space out my funds so I would have money all throughout the month."

Senior Program Director, Kalifa Coulibaly, explains that, "as case managers, we empower and encourage our clients to get involved in any decision making regarding their money management or 'budgeting' plan, as well as give them the opportunity to make any changes." One main aspect of the case management job is to provide ongoing advocacy with Social Security Administration and referrals to other service providers in order

to maintain the clients' financial stability and housing if applicable. According to Kalifa, "most of our clients' money is spent on rent, food, utilities bills, medical bills and other personal expenses. When people first begin working with us, they usually face budgeting and housing issues."

Matthew has formed connections with multiple staff members at Conard House. He explained that, "If Jover is not around and I have a problem, Brandy, another Conard House Case Manager, is more than willing to help out and same with Kalifa. Whenever something comes up, like if they get my mail from social security and there is a form that has to be filled out, they'll always help me with that. And then they make sure it gets mailed off and sent in so there's no backlash."

Matthew says he "would definitely recommend Conard House to a peer." In fact, Matthew's partner now receives services from Conard House North as a result of Matthew's experience.

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ADVOCACY AT CONARD HOUSE

Conard House addresses some of the most critical issues that San Franciscans face today, specifically, homelessness and mental health. We address these issues through the direct services we provide as well as by staying educated on and supporting legislation that is working to better our city. Therefore, Conard House is proud to support California (CA) State Assembly Bill 71, also known as the "Bring California Home Act." This bill is sponsored by Assembly Member Luz Rivas and calls for CA to invest \$2.4 billion annually in new funding for homelessness solutions. This new



legislation would have an enormous impact as it would, for the first time, establish a statewide approach and permanent source of funding to counteract the systemic pattern of homelessness in California.

Help make a difference! Email our target Assembly Revenue & Taxation committee members with one [click](#).

To learn more about the 'Bring California Home Act' visit their [website!](#)

INTERNSHIPS AT CONARD HOUSE

Earlier this year, Conard House launched their new Internship Program, with the Development and Marketing Teams bringing on three new interns.

Mira Terdiman, Development Intern, has been working alongside Angie Brown, Development Director, to research and write grants, launch fundraising campaigns, learn about city policy and budget process to source funding opportunities, as well as work on foundational materials like Conard House's 60th Anniversary Annual Report and case statement. Of her experience, Mira says that, "I am grateful for what Conard House has taught me about the importance of permanent supportive housing as a

means for healing and rehabilitation for vulnerable San Franciscans (previously [those] unhoused, suffering with mental illnesses). This knowledge has helped me become more involved and informed about other housing and mutual aid efforts in the city!"

Anabel Shenk, Development Intern, was brought on to create and develop the new Conard House E-Newsletter. In the past few months, Anabel has researched and collected information for the newsletter and created a template. She conducted interviews of clients and staff, wrote articles, found images, and put together the visuals for the newsletter you are reading now! Anabel says, "it has been an honor to work alongside the Conard House staff. Everywhere you look, there is a story to tell. My hope is that this newsletter grows and adapts with Conard House and continues to shed light on the

amazing people and programs that exist here."

Jeannie Moreno has recently finished her time at Conard House as a Social Media/Marketing Intern. Jeannie's internship included monitoring and managing content for Conard House's social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram) researching new and proposing adjustments to current marketing strategies, collecting and analyzing data, and much more. We are all very grateful for Jeannie and all of the incredible work she put into strengthening Conard House's social media and creating more awareness for our organizations and our mission.

If you are interested in interning at Conard House and/or learning more about the opportunity, we want to hear from you! Visit our [website](#) to learn how to come on board.

DIVE INTO FOOD SECURITY

The Supportive Housing communities at Conard House provide 700 homes to people living with mental health conditions or who might have previously faced homelessness. One of the main challenges that Conard House residents face every day is food insecurity. According to the SF BOARD of Supervisors Food Security Task Force, 1 in 4 San Franciscans are at risk for hunger due to low income. Conard House Senior Case Manager, Emily Pope works at Supportive Housing Plaza Apartments. Earlier this year, Pope embarked on a Food Security Project to try and get a better sense of what is and isn't working for residents and their access to food. Anabel Shenk, Development Intern, was able to interview Pope about her experience so far and get her perspective on the project. The following is an edited transcription of the interview.

What is the food security project?

From my perspective, it is a community needs assessment. It is laying the groundwork so that we can find funding opportunities to get the things that we need and understand gaps in services and in the ways that people are given access to food. We are really just trying to understand what our residents have, what they need, and what isn't working. We already do address the barriers to Food Security and work with residents and refer them to meal delivery programs, food vouchers, and more. We know that there are resources out

there and that a lot of people are well connected, but some things just still aren't clicking. We have the time and resources to really develop a model for our food security intervention, so it is important that we are doing it now. A lot of the project is just wanting to hear directly from residents about their experience.

What have you accomplished so far and what are your goals?

I began with site tours. I went to most of the supportive housing



The Community Kitchen at the Plaza Hotels

sites and really got to take a look at the physical spaces and understand some of the physical barriers. I saw what the community kitchens looked like. I also wanted to understand the neighborhoods that our sites are in. Most of our sites are in the Tenderloin, Hayes Valley, and South of Market. I found that most of our residents live in food deserts which are places in the city where there is very limited access to both affordable and nutritious food options.

I then did a focus group with most of the case management staff, as well as some program directors, who all have experience as direct

service providers. A lot of the answers I got reinforced what I have taken from my own experiences as a case manager. For example, there are many food resources in the city, but it is hard to keep track of them in an organized way and find consistency for our residents. We all agree that an ongoing information and referral system for case managers with up-to-date food resources would be very helpful. Another example is that on-site food pantries are something that every site wanted, which feels very attainable. A bigger goal is trying to provide our residents with

basic utensils and kitchen equipment. That also feels do-able as long as we find the right people to provide that for our population.

We are now working on a resident survey, which will be going out this month. We are going to have the survey translated into Spanish and Chinese so that more residents can participate. I've put together

a lot of the gaps that are apparent from a provider perspective, so now I'm eager to learn about it from a resident's perspective. What about your background, Emily? Why are you so interested in food security?

I started volunteering at soup kitchens and hot meal sites when I was still in middle school. It was something I did with friends growing up in the Sacramento area. At the time, there was definitely a homeless population, but it was not nearly as large as it is now. That's how I got interested. And then, in college, I volunteered with a student run organization called

DIVE INTO FOOD SECURITY (CON'T)

the Suitcase Clinic that did health and wellness as well as social service clinics for all of the homeless and low-income folks in the Berkeley area. At a lot of the clinics, we tried to provide food which was a huge challenge.

At one of our clinics, we had this amazing weekly meal with a volunteer chef who would come in and teach us food prep skills. We would all sit down and eat really good food that was made on a very tight budget because the food was mostly donations. The work I did with that social services clinic, working with people who were very marginally housed, if housed at all, is why I do what I do now.

What made you want to start this Food Security Project at Conard House?

I continued being very worried about food security as I saw that the residents at Conard House were struggling to find consistent, reliable, and affordable food options. As I was becoming more and more involved in addressing food security, I also had to begin a project for my masters of public health program that was hands on. Naturally, I landed on this food security project. I plan on implementing something here at Conard House by mid-May.

The timing of the food security project also coincided with Anne Quaintance starting here as our new CEO/Executive Director. She brought with her a wealth of experience in this field. It has been so helpful and valuable to consult with her. I already feel like I know so much more about systems of

food security.

Have you noticed any significant shifts in food security during COVID?

When COVID hit, there were all of these initiatives to get delivered meals on site and link people to resources who were not mobile or did not have food providers. Things are now available that were never available before by delivery. For example, you can now buy home delivered groceries with your EBT (Electronic Benefits Transfer) which is incredible.

I already knew a lot about available



The Communal Food Sharing Table at the Plaza Hotels where residents share leftover pantry items and delivered meals with their neighbors.

food resources from doing this job for a few years, but it was really interesting to see how things shifted during COVID and how a lot more people became aware of how fragile food security can be. I think a lot more people are getting involved as the pandemic made everything feel more urgent.

In your analysis, have you found anything new or surprising about food security at Conard House or in San Francisco in general?

Something I have come to realize is that a lot of residents will choose hunger over eating something unappealing. I personally shut down

when I am hungry and always need to know where I'm eating next. That's probably a part of the reason why I've always been so fixated on food security. I'm always surprised that residents are accomplishing things while hungry and skipping meals. I've been realizing that finding meals that are culturally appropriate and that taste good to someone can be one of the biggest barriers to stay nourished.

Something that I already knew, but that is coming to light through this process, is the correlation between rent and food security. There is a direct correlation between how much of someone's income is going toward their rent and how food insecure they are.

What are the biggest needs for this project?

Eventually, I'll need help with data entry, so if anyone would like to volunteer, let me know! Once the data collection phase is over, we can

make some conclusions. Then that's when we'll need momentum to decide where to apply funding, what opportunities there are, and make more concrete decisions. I feel like I have a lot of support around this initial phase of the project and my current duties, but we'll have to re-evaluate once we have come to some conclusions and solutions.



CONARD HOUSE - A HISTORY



Conard House was founded in 1960 by social activist Elaine Mikels and her mentor, Conard B. Rheiner, a Unitarian minister. In 1959, Mikels first became aware of the need for transitional communities for people with mental health challenges when she noticed patients returning from Napa State Asylum to San Francisco un-equipped for independent life. Mikels started Conard House with a mission to create a community to support those with mental health challenges so that they can live and work with pride and autonomy. Today, Conard house provides services to more than 1,450 individuals. Conard House operates 9

residential hotels and 19 private apartments across San Francisco, providing homes to 700 individuals with mental health conditions or who have faced homelessness. Conard House also provides Money Management and Client Advocacy Services to over 1,100 adults. A lot of people would be facing homelessness without the daily resources and services that Conard House provides...

Read more about the founders of Conard House on our [website](#).

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CONARD HOUSE ANNUAL REPORT - 60TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION



sonal accounts from residents and clients. Also in the annual report, you'll learn about resident demographics, how Conard House is addressing the critical issue of homelessness in San Francisco, ways Conard

This year, Conard House released an Annual Report featuring the culmination of its history, achievements, programs, as well as per-

House has adapted during COVID-19, and more.

Visit our [website](#) to read the full version of our Annual Report!



Your Gift will be matched up to **\$20,000** through May 31, 2021

Consider making your most generous gift to Conard House today!

To join Conard House as a supporter, advocate, or volunteer, please contact us, and follow us on social media to receive updates!

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