

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.



Anne Quaintance
CEO/Executive Director

THE CONARD HOUSE PET FAIR: A FUN AFFAIR FOR ALL



It's here- the Spring/Summer 2022 Conard Bulletin and there's impactful, innovative and, yes, sometimes astounding themed articles. The Conard House Community of residents, clients, staff and volunteers face incredible obstacles and still find the strength to *empower people and restore hope*, believing that everyone has the right to livable housing and mental health care, economic justice and human rights. Please take the time to read the articles directly from the Conard House community that I'm so proud to be a part of every day.

The Conard House Pet Fair this summer, in partnership with Full Belly Bus (FBB), was a booming success. At Conard House, we recognize the immense impact an animal can have on one's life; love and care flow both ways between owner and pet. However, the costs of caring for an animal, even shopping for pet food, can really add up. At Conard House, we never want this to be a barrier to our residents' ability to have pets of their own.

In a conversation with Paula Benton, the Founder and Executive Director of FBB, she emphasized the importance of animal companionship: "pets help us find comfort, give us responsibility and help us just get out of bed in the morning."

Currently, Conard House is home to 80 animals across our various locations, and many of their owners have been able to reap the benefits the partnership has offered. The Virtual Pet Personal Shopping Sprees began at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic as a way for residents to select and receive supplies for their companion animals at no cost via a virtual meeting online. The supplies were then delivered to the residents, making it so they did not need to leave their homes to provide for their pet. As quarantine

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The Conard Bulletin

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Empowering People • Restoring Hope

THE MARILYN INN: A BIG BOLD STEP INTO THE FUTURE

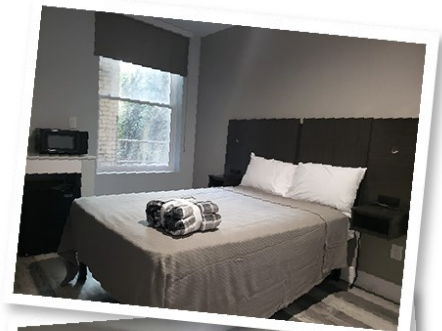
The Marilyn Inn, the latest addition in the Conard House portfolio, is a big and bold step forward in the Conard House commitment to improving the living conditions, health and well-being of vulnerable San Franciscans in recovery.

Located in Nob Hill, one of San Francisco's swankiest neighborhoods, The Marilyn Inn offers thirty units of transitional supportive residential space, dedicated to providing homes and essential services. Program participants find respite from otherwise difficult living situations. The goal of this Transitional Supportive Housing Program is to help residents thrive in their recovery so that they can successfully transition to permanent housing.

Similar to the clinical mental health services provided at other sites, staff at the Marilyn provide individual and group therapy, psychosocial case management and crisis intervention. Also, like all Conard House sites, residents pay a maximum of 30% of their income but, at the Marilyn, instead of signing a lease, residents complete a program acceptance agreement that mandates program participation as a basis for residing at the Marilyn.

Program participation includes meeting with a case manager at least once a week and completing the in-house day program which includes daily groups such as psychoeducational groups, nutrition, exercise, communication, social relationships, mindfulness, symptoms management, and other therapy groups. Additionally, there is an expectation to observe a daily curfew, residents may not have overnight guests and overnight stays elsewhere must be approved by Conard House clinical staff in advance. Lastly, outpatient substance use treatment and 12-step recovery programs are highly encouraged for those residents who struggle with substance use as there are sobriety expectations. Residents who choose not to participate in the program are not able to stay. Residents also have the option of an approved day program outside of the Marilyn.

Residents love living at the Marilyn Inn because it is such a beautiful place with wonderful amenities in each suite. Residents also love living in this part of The City because the environment is free of the triggers that can hinder their success in the program.



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WHAT IS DEIB WITHOUT BELONGING?

Let me begin with a quick introduction of myself. My name is Katherinne Rodriguez, pronouns she/they. I started out as a Case Manager II at the Washburn, a transitional 2-year housing site, and I am currently Program Director II at the Plaza supportive housing site. I have been with Conard House for three years now and I am excited to see the new trajectory we are taking and hope to continue to grow within the company.

During a recent Conard House Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (DEIB) training, the question, “What is inclusion without belonging?” elicited a long pause among those of us in attendance. As I pondered the question, I thought back to

my earliest days at Conard House, and the simultaneous feelings of being part of Conard House as a colleague, but also feeling completely unseen and alone. I didn’t feel like I belonged, and many times I struggled with imposter syndrome and I felt like I was more of a hindrance, than an asset to the team. Despite those feelings, I strived to bring our mission statement to life through the success of our residents and clients.

As part of DEIB staff training, all attendees were tasked with reading an article before attending the training session. The article, “Putting the “B” in your DEIB Strategy: Why

Belonging is Essential,” posits that a company committed to fostering a culture of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion must also be dedicated to building a sense of Belonging among both employees and clients.

To that end, Conard House welcomed a staff member, pursuing their master's degree, to conduct a quality assurance project as part of their education. The project consisted of a survey and interviews of Conard House residents and clients

strategy in our new strategic plan.

As the project concluded amidst the COVID 19 pandemic we had to decide what services were critical and how to deliver those services safely – protecting residents, clients and staff. Conard House staff were now considered by the City and County of San Francisco to be essential service providers. The pandemic presented Conard House with formidable challenges and, in order to serve Conard House resi-

dents and clients, my responsibilities expanded and with that my confidence and voice.

For me, the intersection of reevaluating our cultural competency and navigating a pandemic, demonstrates the necessity and

value of focusing on DEIB. As a member of the newly restructured DEIB committee, I want to have a safe space where hard conversations are encouraged, where members are committed to being challenged in order to create a working space of not just tolerance, but celebration of differences.

The DEIB committee members understand that the committee can serve as a function of compliance with funders, such as the San Francisco Department of Public Health. However, all members are committed far beyond compliance. Each member is committed to holding Conard House accountable for creating an environment where people



focusing on the cultural sensitivity in how Conard House services are delivered. What we learned, as an organization, was that there was a gap between the perception and actual delivery of services that are culturally sensitive. We also learned that members of the staff carried some of the same sentiments as the residents and clients through the simultaneous development of Conard House’s Strategic Plan. To my delight, Conard House’s new CEO/Executive Director put the results into action by revamping the Cultural Competency Committee into what is now the DEIB Committee, and making a firm commitment to DEIB by implementing DEIB as a

CONTENTION ON NEW SF DISTRICT MAP - “UNITY” V. “CLASS WARFARE”



A final draft map of the San Francisco supervisorial districts (San Francisco /redistricting Task Force).
https://www.sfexaminer.com/the_fs/findings/san-francisco-s-hotly-contested-redistricting-map-finally-approved/article_7f732bca-555f-5a7d-96fe-58b413671fc6.html

In April 2022, San Francisco’s Redistricting Task Force proposed a new district map based on data from the 2020 decennial census. SF’s eleven districts are redrawn every ten years to reflect shifts in the City’s population, with certain neighborhoods growing at faster rates than others. Legally, all districts are required to be roughly equal in population, and the redistricting process must abide to the Voting Rights Act (VRA). The VRA provides specific regulations to protect the voting power of minorities and other protected groups, and is in place to combat gerrymandering and voter suppression. Each district is represented by an elected supervisor; therefore, shifting district lines often impacts who represents certain voters in city government.

The Redistricting Task Force, assembled by the Mayor, Board of Supervisors, and Elections Commission, was comprised of nine members who represented six of the eleven districts. Members had experience in both local and state departments, political organizing, business, and more. What all members must share, in order to qualify, is an interest in SF politics and communities. You do not need to be a US citizen or a registered voter to serve.

Conard House residents live in seven of the eleven districts, in both supportive housing buildings and shared apartments. CH believes in protecting community interests at every level possible; therefore, redistricting, both the process and outcome, is important to both staff, residents and clients.

2022’s redistricting process was particularly demanding, with the committee meeting for over 200 hours over the course of 5 weeks, at least twice as much as in the previous cycle. Seven rounds of maps were presented by the task force, and public comment was welcomed on nearly all of them. However, many residents were disgruntled by the lack of transparency from the commission, with task force meetings running to as late as three in the morning to avoid long public comment. The final map was ratified days after the mandated redistricting deadline, sparking potential legal ramifications for the task force.

Although at a glance, the new district map may look similar to the previous one [hyper link it], there are a few key changes that sparked debate. The primary shift impacted Districts 5 and 6, the latter of which had seen significant population

growth since 2010. SF’s Mission Bay neighborhood has almost doubled its population in the past ten years, and is now home to both Oracle Park and Chase Center, as well as 7,000+ new apartment units (with approximately 15% of them affordable). While District 6 (D6) used to include the Tenderloin, South of Market (SoMA), and Mission Bay, new developments and population growth have shifted those boundaries.

The final map, which was ratified in a 5-4 vote on April 22, 2022 redrew the Tenderloin out of District 6 and into District 5 (D5), separated from SoMA and Mission Bay. The Tenderloin, a neighborhood located in eastern SF and home to many of Conard House’s PSH properties, was formerly represented by Sup. Matt Haney and now Sup. Matt Dorsey.

Many advocates in SF believe the new split will dilute the power of minority voters and separate cultural groups with shared community interests. For example, San Francisco’s Transgender District—founded in 2017 as the first legally recognized trans district in the world* runs through the Tenderloin and

*<https://www.transgenderdistrictsf.com>
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GUS FINDS A PLACE TO CALL HOME

We love it when a Conard House resident wins! At Conard House, we want to spread the good news of a resident success story. Conard House Director of Property Management, Eliah Bornstein, shared the following story about Gus, a new Conard House resident he assisted for placement in a Conard House residential unit.

Gus arrived at Conard House for his housing intake appointment feeling a little apprehensive, but also hopeful, because he was finally able to obtain permanent supportive housing.

Gus was unaware he would have the option to choose the Conard House unit he liked best and, to his excitement, while touring the available units, Gus shared his story with Eliah. Gus expressed how frustrated he felt for being what he calls “episodically homeless.” He shared that he could not understand why having two jobs did not meet his need to find and maintain clean and safe housing. Spending a lot of time in homeless shelters was an unbelievably terrible experience for Gus, so bad that the better alternative, for him, was



to sleep on B.A.R.T. (Bay Area Rapid Transit) trains. Gus told Eliah how happy he was to get his room at Conard House. He says he loves his space because it is simple, but genuinely nice and secure. In his words, he was able to, “[nail down] a home base,” a place to call home.

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NOVEMBER 8, 2022



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across Market Street in SoMA. The April 2022 map divides this historic neighborhood into two, potentially diluting the power of district voters who want to protect trans tenants’ rights, businesses, arts and culture, etc.

District 1 faces a similar dilemma, with the addition of Sea Cliff, a predominantly high-income neighborhood. Residents of the Richmond, which has historically been a part of District 1, are nervous that this shift will dilute the voting powers of Asian residents, with a decrease in

the Asian population in D1 of about 1.4 percentage points. These are only two examples of the numerous contentious changes both proposed and approved by the task force over the past few months.

Keeping all communities of interest together can be a challenge. While neighborhoods in D5 and 6 were disrupted, the task force intentionally left neighborhoods in D9-11 (including Potrero Hill, Bernal, the Mission, Bayview, and the Excelsior) largely intact after much debate, helping maintain the voting power and connectedness of districts with

large percentages (upwards of 40% in D10 and 11) of Asian and African American and Black residents. Along with other San Franciscans, CH believes in a fair redistricting process that prioritizes community interests. Redistricting impacts both political power and representation; the district we live in determines who appears on our ballot and who ultimately voices our needs in city government. Now that the lines are drawn, all San Franciscans can work to hold their supervisors accountable and protect the needs of our communities.

THE CONARD HOUSE PET FAIR: A FUN AFFAIR FOR ALL
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ended, the Virtual Pet Personal Shopping Sprees did not; residents continue to enjoy the convenience of this program today.

This is Conard House’s very first Pet Fair launched by Liliana Suarez, Conard House Director of Supportive Housing & Community Services. Residents, staff, volunteers and, of course, the pets gathered for the fair and shopping spree for pet supplies. Residents brought home necessities for their animal companions.

Liliana and Paula noted how happy the residents seemed and that the fair was fun for owners and pets alike, especially since all of the animals were very well behaved. During a brief interview, Paula was moved as she shared a story about witnessing an extraordinary act of kindness at the end of the fair. She explained one of the last residents to attend the fair arrived with Maddy, his companion animal. Maddy greeted all of the volunteers with a “handshake” and stole everyone’s heart. Maddy’s “Dad” shopped for and received several items, including a new harness, blanket, toys and a beautiful silver-lined red doggie coat. At the end of the fair, another pet owner really admired the coat so Maddy’s “Dad” gave it to the admirer’s companion animal, knowing he would be unable to receive another one that day. The act of humanity and selflessness is heartwarming and what makes Conard House a community. 🐾

WHAT IS DEIB WITHOUT BELONGING?

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feel a true sense of belonging and inclusion. The committee aims to foster long-lasting change where, “a workplace can consider itself a community, where people feel a sense of comfort, connection, and contribution, where we see belonging in action.”

Shout out to Alejandro Vilchez, our DEIB Consultant, for keeping space where we needed to experience growing pains and have those hard conversations through awkward moments, and to Angie Brown/ Director of Development for her initiative and positive energy. Last, but not least, to all individuals on the committee who take the time, give their energy and stay present. Thank you for your commitment, especially during these tough times.








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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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