

**California Lutheran Homes and Community Services** 

### Having a Home Gives Former Foster Youth a Good Start in Life

CLH Looks Back on Four-Year Partnership with OC United

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> Amy Gaw Director of Operations and Foster Care Initiative





#### A Message from the President & CEO

At CLH, "legacy" is very important to us. The CLH Foundation is the legacy of Lutherans whose faith and good works established the work we carry on today. Lutherans who built churches, hospitals, schools, and senior communities. Lutherans who learned to serve from generations of parents, grandparents, pastors, Sunday school teachers, and many others.

We continue to spread these Lutheran legacy roots by providing housing and human services throughout Central and Southern California. As our work became known, like-minded others joined us, helping us plant new roots in underserved communities. CLH's history is a rich tale of accomplishments in affordable housing, programs, care, and services.

In this newsletter, we highlight current projects made possible by legacy gifts, sums of money, or property left to CLH by individuals and congregations.



Amy Gaw Director of Operations OC United

## Four Years and Dozens of Lives Later

CLH Looks Back on Partnership with OC United



Four years after CLH purchased an apartment building where young women aging out of the foster care system could live, the organization that runs the transitional housing program says the partnership has been a blessing.

Amy Gaw, the co-founder of OC United, an organization that supports former foster youth in getting a fresh start on their adult life, said this wouldn't be possible without CLH's partnership.

"We wouldn't be able to do this without the collaboration of CLH, and we're very grateful," said Amy. "CLH letting us use this building was lifechanging for OC United." Amy estimates that several dozen young people, ages 18-26, formerly living in foster care, have called the two- and three-bedroom apartments home, some with their children. Amy keeps in touch with many of the women after they complete the program, and is happy to report that most are doing well and getting on with lives and careers.

#### **CLH Apartment Building Houses Women in Need**

Sabrina had lived in foster care and on the street most of her young life. "Being homeless was really scary," she said. But her situation started to turn around when OC United invited her to live in the apartment building it rents from CLH.

Sabrina, 26, is so grateful for the help she got, that she's happily giving back, working as a case manager at a shelter she once called home. "People can relate to my story," she said. "I'm trying to help shelter residents get back on their feet." Sabrina finds fulfillment in giving back to society just like OC United and CLH did for her.

Sabrina lived for a few months in the apartment building that CLH rents to OC United for \$10 a month, and began the process of building a life and career. "I started making friendships with the other girls and we became a family." She's now living on her own, working, and advocating for others.

#### How You Can Help

Your gifts help CLH work through established partnerships and new opportunities to transform lives. Help us move young adults from street life to secure housing with all the skills necessary to thrive.

## Renting the Building for \$10/Month

CLH purchased the apartment building in 2018, and rents it for \$10/ month to OC United. CLH also funded renovation of the badly neglected building.

CLH first learned that OC United needed housing when an OC United board member reached out to CLH's former CEO and current Director of Special Projects Bill Jennings.

"The need for a place for women and single moms was extensive, and CLH stepped in and bought the four-plex," said Amy. "We moved the first woman into an apartment on Christmas Day in 2018."

This four-plex apartment building is one of two facilities that CLH owns and rents to non-profit organizations to house those in need. CLH also rents a single-family home and apartment in Los Angeles for \$10 a month to the Biddy Mason Charitable Foundation, which uses it for offices and apartments for former foster youth.

OC United's program is called THRIVE (Transitional Home Recognizing Independence, Value, and Empowerment). In addition to providing housing, THRIVE offers programs that facilitate selfsufficiency by teaching life, financial, literacy, and employment skills through services, mentoring and community relationships.

"Our work with OC United helps CLH fulfill its mission to provide funding and other assistance for those in need of housing and human services through partnerships with congregations, community-based organizations, and local agencies," said Deacon Nancy Ackerman, president and CEO.

"Meeting the needs of former foster youth in our communities is paramount to their success. Our partnerships to provide young adults with a place to call home as they begin their adult lives and careers are a hallmark of our mission," she said.

#### Legacy of a Lutheran Congregation

This collaboration is a very nice fit, added Deacon Ackerman, since OC United is a faith-based organization. CLH purchased the four-plex apartment building with a large donation from St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Monrovia, California. The congregation sold its church building and gave the proceeds to CLH, with



the understanding that the funds would be used to support low-income housing in the area.

"Renting the building to OC United honors the legacy of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Monrovia," said Deacon Ackerman.

"The longer I do this work," said Amy, "the more I realize that partnership is exactly what it takes it takes to help these young people. It takes all of us coming together with our strengths to meet a need. Having a partner like CLH makes collaboration more meaningful."

OC United would like to expand the number of apartments it can provide, and said it can easily fill more units. It also runs a house for young men aging out of foster care.

"It doesn't get more real than this. The opportunity to make a difference is really great. By working together we can absolutely impact lives," said Amy.

#### A Message from the CEO Continued from page 1

In reading these articles, I encourage you to look beyond the gifts' history to the impact they make. Because that's what legacy is all about – impact. Lives transformed; hope restored. That's our faith, our work, our legacy.

If this is something you'd like to be part of, or want more information, please give us a call.

— Deacon Nancy Ackerman

## HomeAid to the Rescue in Apartment Renovation

Thanks to partnerships with community organizations like HomeAid Orange County, CLH can provide help to so many.

The four-unit apartment building that OC United rents from CLH for \$10 a month, as transitional housing for former-foster and at-risk young women and their children, was renovated by HomeAid Orange County, the local expression of the national organization that constructs housing to help end homelessness.

CLH board member Scott Larson, CEO of HomeAid America, first connected with the project when he learned that CLH purchased an apartment building that needed extensive renovation.



Scott Larson, CLH board member

"It was a total physical redemption," recalled Scott of the building which is named the Quad. "The Quad was virtually inhabitable. It was in serious condition but we saw the future with renovation and the program that would be implemented there."

The HomeAid Orange County team replaced drywall and painted, reworked plumbing and electrical, renovated kitchens and baths, installed new roofing and landscaping, and repaired major structural issues. HomeAid saved CLH about 40 percent on renovation costs because local contractors donated materials and volunteered their services. "The work we do is all about partnership," said Scott. HomeAid's mission is right in line with CLH's, which is also built on community partnerships. "We're so thankful for our relationship with HomeAid," said Deacon Nancy Ackerman, CLH president and CEO. "This is truly God's work, our hands."

HomeAid Los Angeles is also involved in improvements with the singlefamily home that CLH owns and rents to the Biddy Mason Charitable Foundation for office space and housing to serve foster youth.

"The relationship with CLH is HomeAid at its best," said Scott. "We improved a community, a physical building, and life for dozens of young women now and for years to come. This project fit every one of our core values as an organization and mission to help build new lives for those experiencing or at-risk of homelessness."



4 Housing projects moved into the permits process and breaking ground this year. **1.3** Million critically needed essential items distributed to 70 housing projects.

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**128** People called the Family CareCenter their home and safe haven in 2021.(37 families)

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\*Statistics coursesy of HomeAid. www.homeaidoc.org

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The pandemic caused adjustments in workflow and prevented our newsletter publication. We're taking the opportunity now to bring the list up to date. Thank you for your understanding.

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In general terms, a charitable gift annuity allows a donor to make a generous gift to a nonprofit with cash, securities or other assets. The donor takes a partial tax deduction for their donation and receives a fixed income stream from the investment for the rest of their life.

When you give a charitable gift annuity, CLH invests it in a separate account. In return, you receive a fixed monthly or quarterly payout from the investment account for your entire life. The payout amount is based on your age at the time of the gift. At the end of your life, the remainder of the gift goes to CLH.

In addition to the income stream, a tax deduction at the time of the original gift may be available. The deduction is based on the estimated amount that will eventually go to CLH after all annuity payments are made. A portion of the payments you receive may also be tax-free for a period of time based on statistical life expectancy.

We know this can be complicated to understand. We're happy to sit down and discuss it with you. For more information, contact President and CEO Deacon Nancy Ackerman at nackerman@clh.us, or call 818-434-4264.

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Age Rate	71 ▼ 4.8%	72 ▼ 4.9%	73 ▼ 5.1%	74 ▼ 5.2%	75 ▼ 5.4%	76 ▼ 5.6%	77 ▼ 5.8%
Age Rate	78 ▼ 6%	79 ▼ 6.2%	80 ▼ 6.5%	81 ▼ 6.7%	82 ▼ 7%	83 ▼ 7.2%	84 ▼ 7.4%
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#### **Mission Statement**

California Lutheran Homes provides funding and other assistance for those in need of housing and human services through partnerships with congregations, community-based organizations and local agencies.

#### WE GET A WEB HOME OF OUR OWN

## Check out CLH's new website at www.californialutherahomes.org.

After providing housing to so many people, it's nice to have a web home of our own. In the past, our web presence was a shared page on a partner's website.

On our new site you'll find our mission, programs, team and board members, news releases and newsletters, our partners, and even an online donation page. The colorful site displays our new logo prominently, and shows photos of our properties, programs and partner collaboratives.

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