

Annual Report 2024



Words From Our Executive Director

Dear Friends and Supporters of Casa Esperanza Transitional Home,

As 2024 ends, please join our team in celebrating another successful year of positively impacting the lives of 8 women and 19 children who call Casa Esperanza and Harpy Eagle duplex home. Our founders embarked on a mission to address poverty in Bakersfield among families by providing a transitional home with a 24-month learning experience in a safe and secure environment. Casa Esperanza successfully addresses the fastest-growing segment of the homeless population: women and children. When families arrive at Casa Esperanza, they encounter many obstacles to overcome, including a lack of self-esteem, the ability to thrive, and behavioral or developmental challenges due to poverty, trauma, and stress-related conditions. Through Casa Esperanza's thoughtfully designed program, they are overcoming these obstacles.

During 2024, Casa Esperanza made exciting strides towards our mission to provide a consistent and stable home environment coupled with engaging learning experiences aiding in trauma recovery and alleviating poor educational outcomes for women and children. Casa Esperanza provided 260 hours of education, developing cognitive, behavioral, money management, and career planning skills. 100% of our participants increased their capability to achieve a sustainable living with an above-minimum-wage job through higher education completion, enhanced cognitive and behavioral wellness, and building financial security, which will help them as they transition to their own stable housing.

We are thrilled to share that we have ambitious plans for our future. We intend to extend our vision to include a multi-purpose building on the property and replicate our success in an educational building. This creates new opportunities to expand education services beyond our families living at Casa Esperanza Transitional Home and to help serve other families experiencing homelessness. We cannot do this life-changing work without you; your continued support will make these plans a reality.

As we wrap up our 2024 journey, I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude to each one of you—our community donors, board of directors, staff, and grantors. Your unwavering financial support and volunteer hours have been the driving force behind **Casa Esperanza's** success. It's a privilege to lead our powerful vision and work alongside you to serve families facing the daunting barriers of poverty and lack of self-esteem. Your support reminds these families that they are **important, successful, and capable**.

As we enter 2025, I wish you all a year filled with good health, happiness, and fulfilling your aspirations. Together, we can continue to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.



With much appreciation,
Diane Contreras

Our Founders

If It Is Meant To Be, It Will Be!

It all began with a simple question and a casual answer. Two women from the church asked if I was familiar with a highly successful transitional home for women in Los Angeles. I answered, “Yes, I know the founder, Sister Judy. We were in the same group when we entered the Sisters of St Joseph of Carondelet.” When asked if I thought Bakersfield could use a similar home, I answered, rather normally, “Yes, we can look into it.”

Subsequently, five women came together in pursuit of such a dream. We had no money, no house, no donors, no database, and, essentially, little or no “know-how”. Soon, however, in December 2014, Casa Esperanza was incorporated as a 501(c)3 not-for-profit public benefit corporation.

How incredible that in 10 short years, we progressed from nothing to a state-of-the-art, beautiful, reconfigured home on Panorama Drive across from Bakersfield College. We also purchased a large home beautifully transformed into a duplex for the continued support of women graduates of the program on Panorama Drive.

In September, the five founding women were honored at Casa Esperanza’s annual Hearts of Hope fundraiser. These women provided the impetus for generous hearts in the Bakersfield community, who were excited about the integral aspect of our program and offered their talents, expertise, and financial support. These gifts of heart, talents, expertise, and financial support now bless the women and children who today are being supported in their desire to become financially stable and live in a way that reflects their dignity. “If it is meant to be, it WILL be.” That was our firm belief from the very beginning. YES! It was meant to be! **Founder, Sister Marie Francis Schroeffer.**

Today, the fruits of our founder's labor are known through transforming our women's and children's lives; we acknowledge their farsightedness, deep devotion, and selflessness to the idea of a place to call home for families experiencing homelessness lives on at Casa Esperanza Transitional Home today. Thank you Sister Marie Francis Schroeffer, Alice Reis, Joan Keavy, Rev. Deb DeBoer, Sharon Borradori and Marty Steinman.



Pictured from left to right being recognized at our Hearts of Hope Fundraiser

- Cathy Buckley, representing her deceased mother, Alice Reis
- Sharon Borradori
- Joan Keavy
- Sister Marie Francis Schroeffer

Meet our Casa Esperanza Families



Meet Serena, Casa Esperanza's Lead Participant.

Serena left behind a life filled with trauma and homelessness when she joined Casa Esperanza in September of 2023. "Casa Esperanza is my driving force. Knowing I can make a home someday for me and my children." Serena continues to work on her education which will help her secure a better future for her family. She has a passion for helping others, especially troubled teens in the juvenile justice system. That passion led her to pursue a higher level of education. Serena has excelled academically and is considered an inspiration to others who have faced similar challenges in life. She has excelled in her progress, and personal accountability earned her the position of Casa Esperanza's Lead Participant. She is not only a participant but a mentor to others.



Meet Jessica, a mother determined to embrace change.

Jessica came to Casa Esperanza after years of struggles with addiction, legal problems, and other obstacles. She was determined to get back on track for herself and her 11 children. Her determination and focus found at Casa Esperanza allowed her to concentrate on her future career path and reunification with her children. She has earned her GED and works full-time as an In-Home Supportive Services worker. She is enrolled at CSUB in the California Consortium of Addiction Program and Professionals to become a substance abuse counselor. Through her perseverance, Jessica is proving that it is possible to overcome addiction! Jessica's motto is "Learn, Live and Love" to remind her that every opportunity is a gift and a blessing.



Meet Mariah, from New Jersey to Bakersfield.

Mariah was raised in a large family full of addiction and ended up living on the streets. Mariah's 4 children were in the foster care system when she came to Casa Esperanza in May of 2024. She has since been reunited with all 4 of her children. Mariah is pursuing a degree in social work in hopes of assisting others to regain their life and family. She is focused on her children, her education and a path to success and their own home. Mariah embraces the thought "Allowing my past to not hold my future hostage" gives her strength in her journey at Casa Esperanza and in life.

Meet our Casa Esperanza Families



Meet Emily, who proves teenage decisions do not destroy the future she envisioned.

In March of 2024 Emily and her son joined the Casa Esperanza family. She was a young teen mom but was determined to stay in school and was successful in obtaining her diploma. Many financial barriers and a strained family relationship lead Emily to the brink of homelessness until she found Casa Esperanza. While at Casa Esperanza, Emily remains active in the community, sharing her story with other teen mothers in the “Baby and Me” program through Social Services, working with other young mothers to provide support and resources. She was awarded a scholarship to further her education and expand her career opportunities. With Casa Esperanza's and her community's support, Emily overcame the obstacles in her life and is on her way to achieving her dreams.



Meet Carmen, defined by Resilience and determination.

Carmen and her daughter experienced many obstacles. Despite the challenges she faced early on, Carmen has proven to be a resilient and determined individual willing to put in the hard work necessary to improve her circumstances. She and her daughter arrived at Casa Esperanza in June 2023. At Casa Esperanza, She has found a supportive community of staff and fellow residents who have encouraged and motivated her. Through her dedication and perseverance, Carmen has made great strides in her academic and professional pursuits. With the help of the resources and support provided by Casa Esperanza, her High School diploma, and newly acquired job skills, Carmen is well-equipped to pursue her goals and succeed in whatever she chooses.



Meet Griselda, who's willpower provides for her children.

Griselda and her children came to Casa Esperanza in October of 2023 after years of feeling entrapped in an emotionally and physically abusive marriage. Griselda, being a high school graduate and paralegal in Mexico, worked hard to come to the United States and create a better life for herself and her children. However, homeless Griselda did not lose sight of her aspirations to make a better life for herself and her children. She was determined to enter the Casa Esperanza transitional program. She is working hard to fulfill her dreams by attending ESL courses and working. Griselda stated, “I live and work for my children's happiness and safety.” Griselda focuses on her education and acquiring a home so that she and her children can be safe from danger.

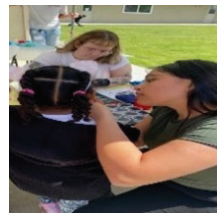
Education Sessions

SESSIONS	DESCRIPTION
<p><i>Life, Educational, & Career Planning</i></p>	<p>Education on building a sound life plan and self-investment, understanding the value and long-term success of education, and career goal setting to achieve generational success. Participants learn the importance of goal setting and the fulfillment of achieving goals. Participants learn how commitment supports positive productivity and goal achievement.</p>
<p><i>Budget Planning</i></p>	<p>Education on building a sound life plan and self-investment, understanding the value and long-term success of education, and career goal setting to achieve generational success. Participants learn the importance of goal setting and the fulfillment of achieving goals. Participants learn how commitment supports positive productivity and goal achievement.</p>
<p><i>Tackling Tough Social Skills</i></p>	<p>Educational group sessions, learning to build skills for work and life. Participants recognize their strengths, problem-solving skills and potential in the workplace to be productive and successful in mainstream workforce.</p>
<p><i>Partners In Parenting</i></p>	<p>Educational group sessions, understanding parenting effectiveness through healthy communication while incorporating techniques to encourage parent and child activities. Participants have gained problem solving skills (self-regulation, active listening, supportive redirection and assertive boundaries) and appropriate discipline (time out, learning exercises, positive rewards system). Participants and children have communication and behavior improvements.</p>
<p><i>Understanding & Reducing Anger</i></p>	<p>Educational group sessions, learning to identify anger, self-awareness, appropriate self-regulation, and response. Participants utilize cognition to identify anger, resolve conflict with positive responses and reduce or eliminate anger triggers.</p>
<p><i>Second Step Children Antibullying & Healthy Character Social Skills</i></p>	<p>The entire family learns to recognize and respond appropriately to bullying. They build social and emotional wellness and healthy relationships within the family structure. Participants work as a team with their children, building trust and communication. Children learn ways to cope with social barriers and participants support and encourage children with positive affirmations.</p>

Education Sessions

SESSIONS	DESCRIPTION
<i>Financial Literacy</i>	Education on how money works for women, importance of healthy relationship with money and building credit, resolving/reducing debt, credit repair, building, protecting wealth, and maintaining financial wellness. Participants achieve at least a 52% increase in credit score (Average entry credit score 474 average exit credit score 718) and maintain financial stability for independence.
<i>Breaking Free From Poverty</i>	Educational group, learning to overcome barriers, relapse, trigger avoidance, and choosing life-changing goals. Participants identify their linkage to poverty and begin to break the cycle of poverty evidenced by their ability to follow individual set budgets and increase savings. Participants developed the ability to set attainable goals and increase self-sufficiency.
<i>Successful Women Entrepreneurship Program</i>	13-week cohort, education in all aspects of obtaining skills and aspects for business ownership. Participants develop a successful business plan, proto-type and aspects of a functional business.
<i>Frist-Time Homeownership</i>	Group Sessions to build understanding of all steps of qualifying for a first-time homeowner. Participants understand FICO scores, how to qualify for a mortgage loan, how to maintain mortgage payments and other expenses successfully.
<i>Nutritional & Healthy Eating</i>	Group Sessions that emphasize the importance of nutritious meal planning and selecting healthy eating habits. Participants learn portion control, label nutrition, avoid diabetes, reduced risk of heart disease, increase weight loss and prepare healthy meals for the whole family. Participants increased physical wellness and health.
<i>Homecoming Program</i>	Achieving a sustainable housing transition plan to obtain affordable housing. Participants understand how their credit score factors into renting/leasing, rental budget and household expenses, identify programs of affordability, property search and application process.

Volunteer Opportunities



Start Making A Difference In Our Families' Lives!

Casa Esperanza community volunteers serve a vital role in furthering our mission to provide services to homeless women and children and in support of their transition to permanent housing and stable employment. At Casa Esperanza, volunteers are an esteemed part of our community, working together with staff to break the cycle of homelessness and poverty one family a time.

Following are some of our volunteer program opportunities:

Cooking En La Casa

Cooking En La Casa Chef is an opportunity to demonstrate healthy ways to prepare family meals and enjoy a meal with our families.

Transportation

Driver volunteers assist with safely transporting our families to events.

Clerical support

Please help support our staff by providing clerical support.

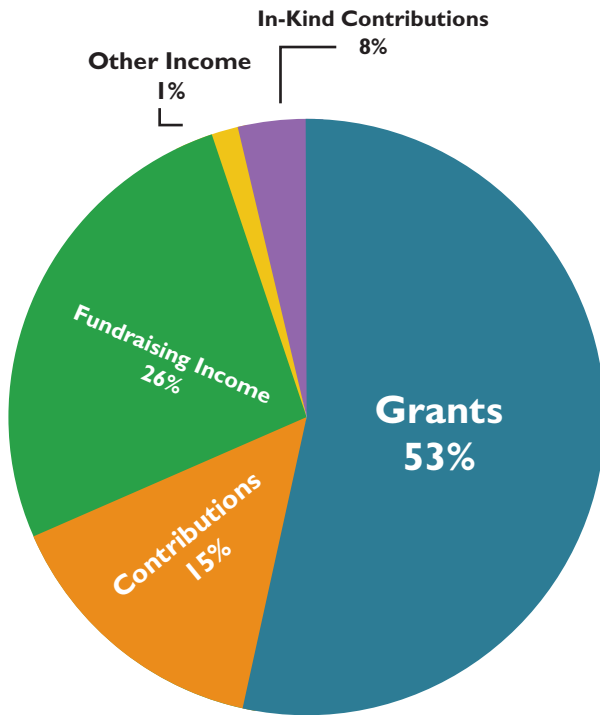
Lend a Hand

Volunteer during events, parties, and holidays utilizing your experience, knowledge, and skills to enhance the experience for the families at Casa Esperanza.

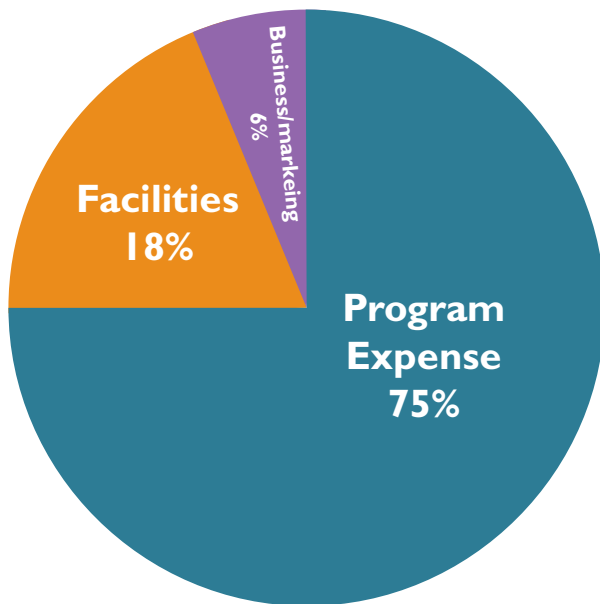
Volunteer to assist in Children's activities which are instrumental in developing the children's understanding, cognition, key self-concepts, socialization, and bonding in communal living.

Please consider volunteering with us. If interested, contact Susan Harrison 661-742-1018.

2023-2024 Fiscal Year



Revenue Pie Chart



Expense Pie Chart

Revenue & Expenses

Revenue:		
Grants	\$ 457,147	53%
Contributions	\$ 131,515	15%
Fundraising Income (Net)	\$ 226,563	26%
In-Kind Contributions	\$ 9,579	1%
Other Income	\$ 32,073	4%

Total Revenue: **\$856,877** 100%

Expenses:		
Program Expense	\$ 314,650	75%
Facilities	\$ 77,283	18%
Business/Marketing	\$ 27,007	6%

Total Expense: **\$418,940** 100%

Net Revenue: **\$437,937**

Notes:

1. Grant revenue includes \$210,015 for Capital items. (Harpy Eagle remodel)

Cost Per Person

Program:	
Salary & Benefits	\$ 225,581
Other Program Expense	\$ 89,069
Accounting/HR	\$ 8,972
Facilities	\$ 22,749
Auto Expense	\$ 4,593

Total : **\$ 350,964**

Per Resident: (15 persons) **\$ 23,398**

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\$5000 & Above

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Grant Partnerships For 2024

- Dignity Health
- Citizen Bank
- US Bank
- Sisters of Mercy Fund
- Bakersfield - Kern County Homeless Collaborative



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We invite you to consider supporting **Casa Esperanza**. Your contribution creates lasting transformations in the lives of homeless women and children, offering them hope and stability. Yet, the impact extends beyond mere philanthropy. Investing in us yields remarkable returns.

The financial burden of homelessness is substantial, estimated at \$50,000 per person annually due to increased medical emergencies, heightened law enforcement costs, and higher rates of incarceration. In contrast, our comprehensive services, including housing and essential support, total \$23,398 per person. This represents less than half of the community's financial outlay.

Choosing to invest in **Casa Esperanza** not only generates positive community change but also provides an opportunity for your philanthropy to make a tangible and measurable difference. Your support doesn't just lighten the financial load; it nurtures hope, dignity, and a brighter future for those in need.

Join us in creating meaningful change and be part of transforming lives for the better.



Contact Us

info@EsperanzaBakersfield.org
[@casaesperanzabakersfield](https://www.instagram.com/casaesperanzabakersfield)
www.esperanzabakersfield.org

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