On a sunny day in February, a long line of guests streamed through the doors of St. Anthony’s new Dining Room, eagerly awaiting a hearty meal of oven roasted chicken cacciatore. One floor below, residents of St. Anthony’s Fr. Alfred Center for addiction recovery were prepping for the next day’s meal of red beans and rice. Every day, these residents participate in St. Anthony’s Job Training Program, feeding thousands of low-income San Franciscans while learning valuable skills and earning their Food Handler Certification for California.

On this particular morning, hundreds of containers of Organic Girl lettuce were stacked neatly on a stainless steel counter. John, a participant in the Job Training Program, was rattling off numbers, eyeing the stacks of lettuce and estimating how many barrels he would need for 3,000 single serving portions.

St. Anthony’s Job Training Program introduces participants like John to the challenges of working in a fast-paced, restaurant-like environment while simultaneously addressing the roller coaster of emotions that come with battling addiction.

Scribbling on the outside of the box, he jotted down a few numbers and murmured, “6 cases, 50 boxes, 20 containers, 8 barrels… I need 110 containers of lettuce.”

Behind him, Eric, a graduate of the program, now a prep chef, glanced around the spacious kitchen at pallets of onions, carrots, pears, apples, and racks of donated Valentine’s Day desserts stacked 10 feet high.

“Today’s prep is light. We’ll start with the lettuce, move on to dice 50 pounds of peppers and zucchini, 2,000 onions, 360 pounds of cornbread, and 600 tortilla shells.”

Participants in the Job Training Program prepare an average of 3,000 pounds of food a day to be served as hot meals in the following days.

For John, and all 80 members of the Job Training Program, every day gets them further from life on the streets and closer to the promise of a full-time job.

“Last week I was in jail,” proclaimed John, “75 days at 850 Bryant.” In the days before jail, John was doing anything but counting containers of lettuce. “What was I not doing? I robbed, I stole, I drug-dealed.”

The struggle of growing up in the Tenderloin had taken a toll on him. “I can’t live like that anymore. I want a 9 to 5.”

Change for John and many of his cohorts means a radically different life; one that moves away from the hustle of the street and towards the bustle of a place like St. Anthony’s. Instead of looking for their next fix, they work together to form the backbone of the prep kitchen. For five months they slice and dice their way to a better life while learning valuable culinary and professional skills to prepare them for a competitive job market.

Mornings in the prep kitchen are much like getting ready for a big family dinner. The whirring of machines pierced by the clanking of pots and pans is background music to the laughing and sometimes yelling that brings people closer together who are struggling to find their purpose in life. For John, that means connecting with something that is far bigger than any individual.

“It’s your classic ant colony. Everybody’s moving, everybody’s got a function. It’s called life.”

John is trying to reclaim his life in the program. He has a fierce determination to complete the program and establish himself as a working professional.

“The best therapy for me is to look out across the street where I see the hustlers. I can see me from yesterday. I’m here for a difference. Period.”

For details about the Job Training Program at St. Anthony’s, see the Spring 2014 Spirit Newsletter, ‘A Hands-on Approach to Job Training’ stanthonyssf.org/spiritnewsletter.
Low-income seniors and people with disabilities often experience hunger, homelessness or extraordinary housing cost burdens, difficulty affording medical care, and limited access to basics like clothing, transportation, laundry, or hygiene items. St. Anthony’s helps address these needs by providing benefit payee services, financial management, and social de-isolation to 947 seniors and 2,077 people with disabilities. In addition, St. Anthony’s offers basic necessities and social services to these populations by providing warm, healthy meals in our Dining Room, fresh clothing through our Free Clothing Program, housing searches through our Social Work Center, and groceries through our food pantry. Thirty percent of all Dining Room guests are seniors or people with disabilities who receive Supplemental Security Income or State Supplementary Payment (SSI/SSP) as their only form of income.

In California, SSI combined with SSP is funded jointly by the Federal and State governments to provide income support to seniors and people with disabilities. Current SSI/SSP grants for single Californians are $889 per month, which falls below the Federal Poverty Level, and is significantly less than the income level needed for self-sufficiency. Unlike other low-income households, California’s 1.3 million SSI/SSP recipients are not eligible for food assistance (like CalFresh or food stamps). They must rely entirely on SSI/SSP to pay for rent, food, transportation, and utilities.

Since 2010, California has cut its share of SSI/SSP benefits down to the federally permitted minimum and has eliminated cost of living adjustments on the state portion of the SSI/SSP grant. Every year that we do not address poverty among SSI/SSP recipients, families and local communities lose income that is designed to support economic viability and basic human dignity.

In addition to providing social services, St. Anthony’s collaborates with organizations across California on numerous advocacy initiatives by petitioning the Governor and state lawmakers to support struggling seniors and people with disabilities. Increasing California’s portion of the SSI/SSP payment so that the benefit is at least above the poverty level can provide that support.

California has taken many positive steps since the recession to address poverty, lack of opportunity, and lack of health care among its low-income residents. We have reestablished funding for schools, health care, and higher education, and are taking steps to restore the safety net. Despite these strides, however, according to the U.S. Census Bureau’s Supplemental Poverty Measure, cuts made during the recession have left California with the highest poverty rate in the country.

As California’s economy continues to recover, our state budget and social policies should work to improve the lives of all members of our communities, including low-income seniors and people with disabilities.

Sign our petition at bit.ly/CA4SSIPetition to add your voice to the growing number of Californians who want to bring SSI/SSP benefits above the poverty level. The status quo — keeping SSI/SSP grant levels the way they are — means keeping SSI recipients in poverty and at risk for homelessness, malnutrition, and poor health.

St. Anthony’s Advocacy Program is supported in part by MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger.

Raising SSI will raise recipients out of poverty

The status quo means keeping SSI recipients in poverty and at risk for homelessness, malnutrition, and poor health.

WHAT’S CHANGED

DINING ROOM FREE CLOTHING PROGRAM STORE SOCIAL WORK – FCP WAITING AREA

Have you moved or changed your email address? Please let us know by emailing info@stanthonysf.org, or calling 415-241-2600.
Going the distance!

Daniel Andrade first volunteered at St. Anthony's with a group of co-workers in 2012. He returned as an individual volunteer in August of 2014 upon deciding he wanted a career change — to become a social worker. In addition to applying to schools, he applied to be a skilled volunteer with our Social Work Center. St. Anthony’s has been fortunate to have Dan volunteer two days a week at the Social Work Center’s Information Desk in the Dining Room. As an Information Desk volunteer, Dan interacts directly with Dining Room guests during meal service, offering resource materials and referral information for services beyond food such as shelter, health care, Veteran affairs, and substance abuse recovery.

When Dan started in August 2014, St. Anthony’s was still using the temporary Dining Room at 150 Golden Gate. He says the biggest change he’s seen at the Information Desk since the new Dining Room opened at 121 Golden Gate is the much-improved quality of the experience for the guests. Due to space limitations in the temporary Dining Room, the Information Desk was located in the lobby where guests would file by as they came in to eat. “People were hungry!” Dan says, and the first priority for folks in line was to get inside the Dining Room to eat, not to stop and talk about other needs. The exit from the temporary Dining Room bypassed the lobby altogether. “Now that we’ve actually inside the Dining Room, the guests come to us after they’ve eaten and are much more relaxed and interested in connecting to additional support resources. “Location! Location! Location!” he explains. Placement of services does make a difference.

“Personalism”— one of St. Anthony’s core values — is something Dan sees in action from the Information Desk. “There’s such a great diversity of people in the Dining Room, and we treat each person with dignity and respect.” Dan responds to our guests with this personalism; his calm, mellow manner and great sense of humor encourages people to feel comfortable asking for help. He feels the most satisfaction when he can help a non-native English speaker. His ability to speak some Spanish really helps facilitate “opening the door to so much more.”

Dan learns from the social workers too; they are his informal mentors. He’s especially impressed by the way the social workers empower the guests to do their part to make something happen. Dan’s been learning that if you feel you must be able to resolve each person’s needs and challenges, not only is it impossible, but “if you try, you’ll burn out!” He is finding that you can encourage people to do their part and take the next step. Soon guests are working with the Dining Room and Info Desk staff to make strides toward a better quality of life. The healing partnership between our guests and social workers forwards St. Anthony’s mission of creating a society where all persons may flourish.

St. Anthony’s Social Work Center receives support from the Joseph L. Barbonchielli Foundation.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BARRY J. STENGER

A WORD FROM

An event speaker once joked, “We don’t want to change. We want to be transformed, but we don’t want to change.”

At St. Anthony’s, we are feeling the difference — and the connection — between change and transformation.

Change was all the work that went into planning St. Anthony’s new Dining Room, finding the right people to build it, organizing the capital campaign to fund it, working with guests to get their trust and support, working with staff to move to a temporary space and then to the new space without disrupting service, relocating the Social Work Center and the Free Clothing Program.

Transformation is what we are seeing now: The Social Work Center and Free Clothing Program share a waiting room that, like the new Dining Room, is more spacious and full of light. Social Work clients can sign up to get free clothing while they wait. Guests of the Free Clothing Program can see a social worker which can lead to long term improvement in their lives.

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The larger Dining Room enables us to double the number of volunteers to serve the daily meal. Why is this important? Increasing one-day volunteer groups gives us the chance to introduce many more people to San Franciscans living in poverty and to change, or rather transform, the way we think about people who need help.

And when the storm came in December, we were able to bring people inside for emergency overnight shelter and provide dinner and breakfast. Both the change and the transformation continue. The temporary Dining Room at 150 Golden Gate is now being converted into a room for community meetings and presentations and a smart classroom where the Social ACTion Program can conduct poverty workshops and the residents of our Fr. Alfred Center for addiction recovery will receive job training. There will also be room at 150 to provide free clothing to twice as many families each day. The Tenderloin Tech Lab has expanded into the old Social Work Center to help more than 1,000 low-income guests learn how to use a computer and the internet for job searches, housing, and social services. Our Franciscan founders believe that service should come from joy and that joy comes from service. These years of change have been challenging at St. Anthony’s. We have embraced the changes to better our services, and at the same time, in the same place, have experienced a joyful transformation.
We are also prepared to serve the community with Renel Brooks-Moon, the voice of the San Francisco Giants, serving as mistress of ceremonies. Serving Hope is an opportunity for community members and philanthropists to collectively leverage their influence and generosity to help advance and develop our Job Training Program that provides hard- and soft-skills training to clients in the Fr. Alfred Center recovery program. Thanks to the generous support of our recently completed Capital Campaign, including contributions from the prior Raising the Roof Galas, our Free Clothing Program, Social Work Center, and Dining Room are now all under the same roof at 121 Golden Gate Avenue. We are better equipped to provide our guests with access to multiple services, while simultaneously fostering a sense of community and peace. Serving Hope will celebrate and acknowledge these strategic advancements, as well as promote our continuing commitment to provide San Franciscans living in poverty with vital services like our Job Training Program.

To attend Serving Hope, you can purchase tickets at stanthonysf.org/events or contact Helene Sims, Events Manager, at hsims@stanthonysf.org or 415-592-2768. We look forward to seeing you on April 30th!

St. Anthony’s is grateful to our collaborative partnership with Zendesk, the Presenting Sponsor for Serving Hope.

SERVING HOPE: A BENEFIT FOR ST. ANTHONY’S

Join hundreds of other St. Anthony’s supporters under the mesmerizing and enchanting dome of San Francisco’s City Hall for the inaugural Serving Hope: A Benefit for St. Anthony’s, on Thursday, April 30, 2015, 6 p.m.

With Renel Brooks-Moon, the voice of the San Francisco Giants, serving as mistress of ceremonies, Serving Hope is an opportunity for community members and philanthropists to collectively leverage their influence and generosity to help advance and develop our Job Training Program that provides hard- and soft-skills training to clients in the Fr. Alfred Center recovery program. Thanks to the generous support of our recently completed Capital Campaign, including contributions from the prior Raising the Roof Galas, our Free Clothing Program, Social Work Center, and Dining Room are now all under the same roof at 121 Golden Gate Avenue. We are better equipped to provide our guests with access to multiple services, while simultaneously fostering a sense of community and peace. Serving Hope will celebrate and acknowledge these strategic advancements, as well as promote our continuing commitment to provide San Franciscans living in poverty with vital services like our Job Training Program.

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TENDERLOIN TECH LAB 2.0

Every year, St. Anthony’s Tenderloin Technology Lab helps 1,200 low-income people learn to use a computer to fulfill vital needs. After our Social Work Center moved above the new Dining Room, we renovated the vacated space to increase access to multiple services, while simultaneously fostering a sense of community and peace. Our new Community Learning Lab is wide enough to allow a guest and a tutor to work side by side. The new Tutoring Lab provides space for volunteer tutors to meet one-on-one with guests to work on resumes and search for jobs. The six computer stations are now on tables wide enough to allow a guest and a tutor to work side by side.

The new Community Learning Lab is equipped with an 80-inch touch screen and 11 student touch screens. Students can follow the teacher’s movements and make the same motions to achieve the same results. It’s technology our guests need to use for grocery purchases, library checkouts, and medical authorizations.

In the new Study Lab, guests can get help with projects that do not require a computer: applications for jobs, housing, and benefits or proofreading of job-seeking documents. The new Flex Lab can be adjusted for use as a drop-in computer lab, classroom, or meeting room at need. You can read more about how St. Anthony’s bridges the digital divide at tenderlointechlab.org.

The Tenderloin Tech Lab has been generously sustained by Ray and Joan Robinsonson, Bank of America, Wells Fargo, and the Alexander M. and June L. Maasin Foundation.

Get Involved

► Volunteer
► Donate
► Advocate

At $250 a month, your sustaining donation will help ensure that St. Anthony’s can continue to provide vital services to San Franciscans living in poverty with a consistent, steady and reliable source of income that helps us meet our guests’ daily and long-term needs. Monthly Donors make up 10% of our annual giving fund.

BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR!

Please consider making an ongoing monthly donation to St. Anthony’s. Your recurring donation continues uninterrupted for as long as you like. Your regular gifts of support directly help San Franciscans who live in poverty. We are grateful for the many loyal St. Anthony’s donors who give on a monthly basis. They provide us with a consistent, steady and reliable source of income that helps us meet our guests’ daily and long-term needs. Monthly Donors make up 10% of our annual giving fund.

Consider becoming a sustaining donor! It’s easy and convenient for you. Simply visit stanthonysf.org and click “Donate Now.” Choose your donation amount and payment method and check the box indicating you want to make this a monthly gift. Or call Pat Gallagher at 415-592-2765 for other ways to become a sustaining donor.

Thank you for your generosity.

Pitching for Change

38th Annual Penny Pitch

What began in 1977 as a friendly wager between two Washington Square watering holes has become a cherished San Francisco tradition that has raised over one million dollars for St. Anthony’s. Join us for the 38th Annual Penny Pitch & Raffle on Friday, June 5, 2015, at MoMo’s, 760 2nd Street, across from AT&T Park, for a fun way to help provide vital services to San Franciscans living in poverty. With support from our sponsors, vendors, and community leaders, last year’s event raised over $100,000 for St. Anthony’s Dining Room.

No RSVP is necessary to attend, but if you want to get in on the action, form a team of six people and register today. Visit stanthonysf.org/events to register, or contact Helene Sims at hsims@stanthonysf.org or 415-592-2768.

St. Anthony’s is grateful for the support of Janet and Pete Osborne, hosts of the annual Penny Pitch.

PREPARED FOR DISASTER. BIG D. SMALL D.

Is a rainstorm a disaster? How about a cold night? For most of us they’re not, but if you’re living on the street, they may well be. Pneumonia, untreated, can be fatal. Living on the street, they may well be. Pneumonia, untreated, can be fatal. For most of us they’re not, but if you’re living on the street, they may well be.

We were also prepared to serve the community when the day of the big ‘D’ comes. Our new building at 121 Golden Gate Avenue is a cornerstone of a city-wide plan for disaster preparedness. In the event of a major disaster, St. Anthony’s will assume the role of communications and assistance center for the Tenderloin neighborhood and the city in general. Our building is equipped with the resources to administer a food and water distribution program, and to treat people with emergency medical needs.

Small ‘d’, big ‘D’, or no ‘D’ at all, St. Anthony’s is here, every day, to provide essential services to people in need.

St. Anthony’s disaster preparedness program has benefitted from the support of the Walter & Elise Haas Fund.

ST. ANTHONY FOUNDATION

Programs

► Dining Room
► Free Clothing Program
► Social Work Center
► Medical Clinic
► Fr. Alfred Center Residential Drug and Alcohol Rehab Program
► Tenderloin Technology Lab

Get Involved

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