

Contra Costa Council on Homelessness

Homelessness Awareness Month 2024 Recognitions for “Outstanding Volunteer”

The Contra Costa Council on Homelessness wants to recognize individuals or groups who have enriched the lives of people facing homelessness in Contra Costa County through volunteer efforts. Outstanding efforts can be demonstrated by length of involvement, by a strong concentration of service or impact of efforts. The nominee must volunteer in Contra Costa County and the volunteer activity must be without pay

Nominees

1. Contra Costa Crisis Center's Call Center Volunteers
2. Daniel Aderholt, American River Homeless Crews #1
3. Daniel Aderholt, American River Homeless Crews #2
4. Doreen Oberg, GROW Concord
5. Liana (Lili) Baldazo
6. Maurice Tierney, SOS Richmond
7. Nichole Gardner, Facing Homelessness
8. Sandro Trujillo, RR Ministries
9. Sonia Leopold

The following pages contain descriptions of each nominee as provided by the person (s) who nominated them.

Contra Costa Crisis Center's Call Center Volunteers

Nominated by: Kaitlyn Coughran, Volunteer & Training Manager

Nominee's outstanding contribution to ending homelessness:

Our volunteers at the Contra Costa Crisis Center support individuals experiencing homelessness by answering the 211 Information and Referral Line which connects Contra Costa residents to local resources including, but not limited to, homeless resources. Last fiscal year, our agency took 8,737 homeless resource related calls and connected Contra Costa residents to a total of 73,403 resources across all calls.

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness:

Without the efforts of our volunteers, those 8,737 individuals experiencing homelessness would not have been connected to vital resources. Therefore, the community as a whole is positively affected by the efforts of our outstanding volunteers and values the selfless service our volunteers provide.

The Contra Costa Crisis Center is nominating our group of 30 volunteers that serve our agency within our Call Center in order to provide recognition to all of our volunteers' selfless service.

Supervisorial District: They serve the entire county

Daniel Aderholt, American River Homeless Crews

Nominated by: Claudia Aderholt, Wife

Nominee's outstanding contribution to ending homelessness:

My husband Daniel Aderholt has been helping our homeless and their pets in Contra Costa County every day for over 43 years. The fact is my husband Daniel Aderholt has personally saved over 9,000 peoples lives in Contra Costa County these last few weeks by handing out food and supplies and clothes to survive living on the streets in the last few weeks of August and September 2024 to our homeless in Antioch and all over Contra Costa County. My husband Daniel Aderholt and his American River homeless crews non profit members just recently handed out over 9,438 MRE meals to our homeless in Antioch , Pittsburg and Concord and Martinez and also in Oakland and Tracy California in the last week alone.. because Golden Hills Christian Church Outreach closed it's doors leaving over 1,357 homeless in Brentwood ,Antioch and Pittsburg and Concord to starve with no other food places being available to feed all these people.. we have also supplied our homeless with brand new clothes and pet food for their pets to survive living on the streets as well. My husband Daniel Aderholt and his American River homeless crew members deserve to be recognized for their hard work saving our homeless and their pets lives every day in Contra Costa County as well. From Claudia Cardoza Aderholt

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness:

He treats everyone like their his family and makes sure everyone has food and clothes and supplies to survive living on the streets every day. My husband loves our homeless with all of his heart and has saved 1,000's of lives each day

I don't know anyone who is more loving and dedicated in helping our homeless then my Daniel Aderholt.

He has several times discharged himself out of the hospital after having cancer surgery that same day and goes helps our homeless to make sure nobody starves or dies. That's how crazy and dedicated he is in helping our homeless people.

Supervisorial District: They serve the entire county

Daniel Aderholt, American River Homeless Crews

Nominated by: Daniel Aderholt, Self

Nominee's outstanding contribution to ending homelessness:

I have personally fed and clothed and handed supplies to our homeless of Contra Costa County every day and each week and we make sure nobody dies by making sure they have supplies for them and their pets to survive

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness:

The difference we make is between life and death of our homeless and their pets.. we make sure nobody goes hungry and have supplies to survive living on the streets.

I have devoted my life in helping our homeless population and their pets. I have been helping our homeless of Contra Costa County all my life since I was 8 years old and I'm 54 years old now and I was homeless myself once as a child In Antioch, California who ran away from Abusive group homes.... There's nobody besides my family in this world I love more then our homeless of Contra Costa County.. I will always help them until the day I die.

Supervisory District: District 4 (Clayton, Concord, Pleasant Hill, part of Walnut Creek, and the unincorporated Contra Costa Centre)

Doreen Oberg, GROW Concord

Nominated by: Andrea Altman, co-volunteer and now friend

Nominee's outstanding contribution to ending homelessness:

Doreen has volunteered with GROW for over 2 years and has accepted more responsibility along the way. What makes her a hero is that all she does take in creates a huge positive impact in the lives of our homeless friends. Besides coordinating our meal service 3 nights each week for up to 40/night, she also cook, looks for food donations to share with other cooks that she has personally recruited, finds new volunteers to help serve meals, coordinates our shower program with our hotel partner and takes care of all things pets. Her specialty is working with people one on one to become friends, trusting of each other, and able to hold that persons hand until they are ready to walk without support. Nothing stops her from helping others or finding resources to help others. Our group now has 7 women who are clean and sober for 7+ months and Doreen was a big factor in that success.

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness:

As a co-founder of our nonprofit, I can say that leadership values her work highly. I've never met a more dedicated and committed volunteer, working for the betterment of our homeless community and those who serve it. Even more important than her colleagues are the 20 or so homeless people who know she will be where she says, when she says, with food, hydration, warm clothes or blankets and whatever else is required for survival that moment. She also doesn't believe in geographical boundaries, she connects to homeless people in need throughout the area.

Doreen is extremely special to many.

Supervisory District: District 4 (Clayton, Concord, Pleasant Hill, part of Walnut Creek, and the unincorporated Contra Costa Centre)

Liana (Lili) Baldazo

Nominated by: Larena Baldazo, Mother

Nominee's outstanding contribution to ending homelessness:

My daughter Liana, 10, has been wanting to purchase and collect blankets to donate to our unhoused neighbors. Life and a newborn baby delayed things and she recently reminded me about her plan. I reached out to VESTA and EHSD's Volunteer services and they confirmed that they could support Liana's effort but that they must be sleeping bags. Liana and I ordered some from Amazon and she created a video to share with friends and family. While I didn't hear back from many people, I had boxes of sleeping bags delivered to my doorstep the very next day. Liana is continuing to collect and I am amazed at how big her heart is. We will be dropping off in bulk to 400 Ellinwood (VESTIA/EHSD Volunteer Services) where they will distribute to all offices in CCC where General Assistance recipients come to. Liana has a learning disability and is deaf in one ear and her situation has given her a unique perspective and a soft, yet strong, heart.

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness:

The homeless were positively impacted by having sleeping bags available. The truth is, while we may not be able to change their situation, we can show kindness to make things less difficult. That is what Lili has done. The drive is still going, so I don't have a final count on the sleeping bags.

While I don't think that showing love and kindness needs a reward, I completed this form because this case has shown me just how innocent and loving our children are and it is up to us to empower that love and kindness so that it may grow as they age.

Supervisorial District: District 1 (Richmond, San Pablo, El Cerrito, part of Pinole, and the unincorporated communities of Bayview, East Richmond Heights, El Sobrante, Kensington, Montalvin Manor, Tara Hills, North Richmond, and Rollingwood)

Maurice Tierney, SOS Richmond

Nominated by: Morgan Richie, SoS Richmond

Nominee's outstanding contribution to ending homelessness:

Maurice Tierney is a Volunteer Photographer for SOS Richmond. Maurice has been making images for SOS since it's early days. His portraits of staff are incredibly beautiful, thoughtful, connected, and well composed. This, among other things, is a significant way that we represent our staff in a way that is real, dignified, and shows the true spirit of the individual.

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness:

Maurice's portraits of staff help change the narrative about homelessness by bringing forth each person's character in a way that the viewer connects with. When you view his portraits, it's nearly impossible to hold on to constructs which perpetuate negative stereotypes. All of us at SOS Richmond are proud of our Who We Are webpage because of Maurice's sensitive portraits.

Supervisorial District: District 1 (Richmond, San Pablo, El Cerrito, part of Pinole, and the unincorporated communities of Bayview, East Richmond Heights, El Sobrante, Kensington, Montalvin Manor, Tara Hills, North Richmond, and Rollingwood)

Nicole Gardner, Facing Homelessness

Nominated by: Aly Brown

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness:

Nichole and her nonprofit org team work directly with those experiencing homelessness, feeding them and often coordinating housing opportunities to get them off the streets

Supervisory District: District 3 (Bethel Island, Blackhawk, Byron, Diablo, Discovery Bay and Knightsen, as well as the cities of Antioch, Brentwood, and Oakley)

Sandro Trujillo, RR Ministries

Nominated by: Marjori Lizarraga, wife and RR Ministries secretary

Nominee's outstanding contribution to ending homelessness: *Sandro Trujillo and RR ministries Team*

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness:

The nominee's service, led by Sandro Trujillo and the RR Ministries team, makes a transformative difference in the lives of individuals and families facing homelessness. By working tirelessly to pick up and distribute food and clothing, the team ensures that unhoused families and those in need have access to essential resources that provide both comfort and dignity. In addition to providing basic necessities, the team offers guidance, advice, and connections to critical resources, helping these families navigate challenges and work towards stability. One family that was positively impacted includes a mother and her two children, who were struggling to make ends meet after losing their home. With the support of the RR Ministries team, they received clothing, food, and vital resources that helped them regain their footing. The advice and assistance they received empowered the mother to find stable employment and ensure her children were well cared for. The nominee's service is highly valued not only by the families they serve but also by the broader community. Local families who can't afford tutoring for their children greatly appreciate the free tutoring center provided by RR Ministries. This center supports children in achieving their academic goals, preparing them for graduation, and equipping them for future career success. By offering these resources, Sandro Trujillo and his team are giving children the opportunity to break the cycle of poverty and build brighter futures. Community members, educators, and service providers recognize the invaluable role the nominee plays in helping families in need. Their commitment to offering food, clothing, advice, and educational support makes a lasting difference in the lives of those they serve, helping them to not only survive but thrive.

One key aspect of Sandro Trujillo's volunteer work that deserves recognition is his unwavering dedication to building lasting relationships with the families he serves. Beyond distributing food, clothing, and offering tutoring, Sandro goes above and beyond by checking in with families regularly, ensuring they feel supported not just as recipients of aid, but as valued members of the community. His approach fosters a sense of belonging and hope, which can be especially transformative for those facing homelessness or severe hardship.

Another remarkable quality is Sandro's leadership and ability to mobilize others. He inspires the RR Ministries team to share his vision of compassion and community service, creating a ripple effect that amplifies their impact. Through his leadership, volunteers are empowered to step into roles that allow them to meaningfully contribute to the cause, expanding the reach and effectiveness of the ministry's efforts. What sets Sandro apart as an outstanding volunteer is not just his hard work, but his heart for those he serves. His empathy, passion, and relentless drive to make a difference have truly transformed lives and brought hope to many in their darkest times.

Supervisory District: District 3 (Bethel Island, Blackhawk, Byron, Diablo, Discovery Bay and Knightsen, as well as the cities of Antioch, Brentwood, and Oakley)

Sonia Leopold

Nominated by: Steve Leopold, Father

Nominee's outstanding contribution to ending homelessness:

Sonia Leopold created a GoFundMe account to raise money to purchase critical supplies for unhoused people in Contra Costa County. She was able to raise nearly \$900 through her GoFundMe page. Additionally, she set up a lemonade stand at Heather Farms Park and raised money by offering free lemonade and asking for donations for supplies for unhoused people. She then went to Costco and purchased supplies with the money she raised; toothbrushes, soap, toothpaste, food, socks, jackets, hats, razors, underwear, etc. She then made bags, many of them with handwritten notes in them, filled with the supplies she purchased. Finally, she distributed the bags of critical supplies to unhoused people throughout Contra Costa County: Martinez, Pleasant Hill, and Concord

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness:

The impact Sonia made on individual's facing homelessness can not be overstated or truly put into words. The smile she brought to people's faces when they knew that someone cared about them enough to go to them and give them some help, to simply be thought of and recognized as an individual who has feelings and needs, to be dignified as someone who has worth and value, this is just some of the way Sonia made a positive difference in people's lives. Everyone who Sonia gave supplies to values the work she did. They expressed great gratitude and admiration that she would do so much for someone she didn't even know.

Sonia is a 12 year old 7th grader at Valley View Middle School.

Supervisory District: District 3 (Bethel Island, Blackhawk, Byron, Diablo, Discovery Bay and Knightsen, as well as the cities of Antioch, Brentwood, and Oakley)