



Contra Costa Council on Homelessness

Homelessness Awareness Month 2021 Awards for Outstanding Volunteer

The Outstanding Volunteer Award is 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. Nominees must volunteer in Contra Costa County and the volunteer activity must be without pay.

Awardees

1. Ady Olvera (District 4)
2. Antwon Clorid (District 1)
3. Boys Team Charity (District 5)
4. Colin Jack Fliehmann (District 4)
5. Denise Mills (District 1)
6. Linda Mino and Tom Hall (District unknown)
7. Meredith Fleming of St. John Missionary Baptist Church (District 1)
8. Robert Gregory (District 3)
9. RR Ministries (District 3)
10. St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Walnut Creek (District 4)
11. Stan Fleury (District 1)
12. Vanessa Calloway (District 1)

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

Ady Olvera

Nominated by: Laura Nakamura

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

Nominee's outstanding volunteer service: Concord Communities Alliance would like to nominate one of our own for the "Outstanding Volunteer" award. Our nominee is a resident of Concord who has been actively raising awareness of the issue of homelessness in Contra Costa County, and very specifically in Concord. Her focus on this issue intensified immediately at the onset of the Covid 19 pandemic when shelters were shut down and fears that unsheltered communities would become super spreader death camps. She has been an outstanding volunteer leader in efforts to ease living conditions for homeless residents of Concord and Central Contra Costa. She has worked with tenacity, humility, and thoroughness to organize residents for specific policy proposals and direct their collective energy efficiently towards local government officials. She has very appropriately made a point of seeking the involvement of homeless residents themselves and ensuring that their knowledge and priorities are reflected in advocacy.

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness: She has worked tirelessly to bring the community groups, faith-based organizations, and residents together to push for concrete, long term solutions for the benefit for the whole community. She has also been instrumental in raising the voices of those experiencing homelessness to ensure they are heard and validated during the process.

Concord Communities Alliance values her tenacity. Through her leadership she has organized meetings, pod casts, live-streaming interviews with law enforcement and city leaders. She co- led efforts to organized community meetings and help CCA facilitate a stakeholder forum with over 50 attendees from city, county and community groups. She has acted as an encampment sweep observer to witness and document the treatment of the unhoused as they are uprooted. She has collaboratively led the CCA Housing and Homelessness Action Team and has involved several unhoused individuals in the conversations and recognizes that the voices of those most impacted must be elevated.

Our nominee has been a constant presence in the effort to uplift the voices of low-income communities, unhoused communities, communities of color, and other underrepresented

folks in Concord and beyond. She works to make spaces accessible for everyone and makes sure that people feel welcome and seen so they are comfortable sharing their stories and working towards community solutions. She is willing to meet the unhoused where they are today. When she hears that someone is sick or hungry, she reaches out to all those she knows and responds generously. So while she is organizing to meet the long term needs of the unhoused, she is present to do what she can for their immediate needs.

She has always ensured that we meet our unhoused neighbors where they are and as they are, find ways to hear from them directly in meetings, to truly help them meet their needs. With the full support and involvement of many members of Concord Communities Alliance, she has been doing some amazing and challenging work with raising awareness and bringing people together to elevate this issue. She is brave and persistent. We are proud to nominate Ady Olvera for the Outstanding Volunteer award.

Antwon Clorid

Nominated by: Mike Kinney

Supervisory 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)

Nominee's outstanding volunteer service: Antwon Clorid is an advocate for the homeless, placement of individuals with drug or alcohol problem into successful recovery programs and the recruiting the unemployed in good paying union jobs in construction and warehousing in Richmond & Contra Costa County.

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness: I have followed Antwon Clorid's volunteerism for a decade. I have personally witnessed him feeding the homeless, getting homeless people into shelters and being enrolled into successful drug and alcohol recovery programs here in Richmond, CA. I have witnessed because of both his passion & activism have truly changed homeless peoples lives and landscape. Antwon Clorid truly believes in empowering the less fortunate individuals in society. He believes that a person's conditions does not dictate their position in life. Antwon always says, "*Everyone needs a second chance at first life.*"

Boys Team Charity

Contact: Raina Foster

Nominated by: Julie Clemens

Supervisory District: District 5 (Hercules, Martinez, Pittsburg, portions of Pinole and Antioch, and unincorporated communities of Alhambra Valley, Bay Point, Briones, Rodeo, Pacheco, Crockett, Tormey, Port Costa, Mt. View, Vine Hill, Reliez Valley, and Clyde)

Nominee's outstanding volunteer service: Boys Team Charity has been volunteering for SHELTER, Inc. for just a few years. They always come with a desire to help, and have a supportive attitude about our participants. The pandemic didn't stop these generous teens and moms! Even with restricted access to our programs due to health precautions, the group continued to provide celebrations for the families at our Mt. View Family Shelter, and organized in-kind drives.

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness: The children, and adults, at Mountain View Family Shelter were challenged during the pandemic to keep themselves entertained and engaged. Without the extra financial resources to invest in at-home entertainment, the special occasions set up for them by Boys Team Charity made a huge impact on helping these families feel connected to the world and gave them hope for a brighter future.

Colin Jack Fliehmman

Nominated by: Louise McGuire

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

Nominee's outstanding volunteer service: Colin Jack Fliehman visits unhoused people daily, brings them home-cooked meals, makes the community aware via Facebook of individuals and their needs.

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness: I am sure that Jack's caring attention makes recipients feel loved. His byline is " LOVE, KNOWN AND NOT ALONE". I am sure that everyone who knows about Jack, cares about the unhoused and follows his posts values his work, because they value people. Jack invests a huge amount of time and money in getting up in the middle of the night, preparing meals and driving around delivering them and connecting with those he helps.

Denise Mills

Nominated by: Denise Mills

Supervisory 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)

Nominee's outstanding volunteer service: This nominee volunteers with Contra Costa Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council, in order to assist youth coming from the Justice system. The council(JJCC) will advise the Board of Supervisors on the development and implementation of a multi-agency juvenile justice plan is composed of several critical parts, including, but not limited to an assessment of exiting law enforcement, probation, education, mental health, and health services, drug and alcohol and youth services resources which specifically target at risk juveniles, juvenile offenders, and their families, an identification and prioritization of the neighborhoods, schools, and other areas in the community that face a significant public safety risk from juvenile crime. The Council will also coordinate on a countywide basis the work of those governmental and non-governmental organizations engaged in activities designed to reduce the incidence of juvenile crime and delinquency in the greater community, develop information and intelligence-sharing systems to ensure that county actions are fully coordinated, and provide data and appropriate outcome measures.

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

Working with JJCC there are some youths that become homeless when they are released so we try to get them as much referrals as possible, they are led to reentry programs that assist with housing, employment, and education. Being someone who was homeless at one time in my life, the tarmac issues that come with homelessness can be quite overwhelming. I can relate. So I commit to helping the homeless, knowing how lost and afraid the journey can be. I had to figure out where the help was going to come from, now that I have those tools, I can be a great help to those that are homeless. by giving incite oh how to obtain housing and to stay permanently housed. This Nominee is a Team Player has encouraged both co-workers as well as the youth she works with. She has a GREAT compassion the work she does.

Linda Mino and Tom Hall

Nominated by: Suzanne Martin

Supervisory District: Unknown

Nominee's outstanding volunteer service: Linda and Tom have supported Hope Solutions for over 10 years. Together they have volunteered 158 hours with Hope Solutions

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness: Linda and Tom are active as Volunteer Outreach and Services committee members. They also have provided different furnishings and housewares and supported Ruby Slippers and will continue to do so. Tom purchased and delivered food for Homework Club for many years. Linda helped set up Garden Park Apartment units for incoming residents, she provided many kitchen kits for incoming families. She volunteered during Summer Camps, which has been her favorite memory with Hope Solutions and has also helped with translation for families trying to find housing.

Meredith Fleming at St. John Missionary Baptist Church

Nominated by: Nicole Jones

Supervisory 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)

Nominee's outstanding volunteer service: This lady is the true epitome of volunteerism. Meredith Fleming comes to our organization-Greater Richmond Interfaith Program (GRIP) every weekday to help in the kitchen or wherever she is needed. Her church group used to cook lunch every 3rd Thursday for our homeless consumers and the residents, but once the pandemic started, the group couldn't come due to the closure of our kitchen for outsiders. The group consisted of elderly women, so of course seniors were being told to stay home.

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness: She comes and helps make sandwiches, put together lunches, chop vegetables, put together hygiene kits, helps sort and pass out the mail, mops floors, wipes tables and gives us a little kick in butt when we need it. She serves in the kindest way with a smile that makes anyone going through the food line return a smile even if they are having a bad day. She comes in every day with a smile and a story about her grand kids or her children. She is motivated and motivates others. She will have her say if something is out of order and will work to make it right. She is a problem solver and is full of life.

Robert Gregory

Nominated by: Irma Gregory

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

Nominee's outstanding volunteer service: The nominee is Robert Gregory. He has been volunteering since the first wave of COVID. He goes above and beyond to enrich the lives of people who are less fortunate than him. He dedicated his efforts to serve a community of homeless people in downtown Antioch (the area around the Amtrak station). Every Thursday and sometimes on the weekends (or when it is needed or asked for by the homeless people) he brings food, toiletries, clothes, and other necessities to take care of the people in this area. Being a part of a church, he not only tries to take care of the physical needs of the homeless people in Antioch, but also provide them with spiritual healing and hope.

He demonstrates an exemplary commitment to serve the interests of homeless people by preparing nutritious food with the produce that he buys himself: meaty soups (the favorite among the "regulars"), pasta salads, baked potatoes with toppings, etc. He treats these people as his family. He worries that the food stays hot when needed or that these people have a variety in what they eat as they already struggle so much. When it gets hot, he brings light clothes bought at the Goodwill store in Brentwood, when it gets cold – he looks for jackets and sweaters for these people. To help them to cope with rain, he buys tarp covers for them.

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness: Robert and people with whom he serves usually feed about 20 homeless people in downtown Antioch (and people in need who just come to the tables where he serves) on every Thursday. He makes sure that the people there have decent food. Sometimes when he runs out of food that he prepared and someone approaches him and says that s/he is hungry he goes to the store or the nearest fast food place to buy meals. Every time he is there he asks what is needed (Band-Aids, ointments, baby wipes, shampoos, etc.) and delivers it next Thursday.

You might want to ask the "regulars" – John, Greg, Kim, Wendy, and many other homeless people about his outstanding efforts to keep these people fed and ready for the weather conditions, not to mention showing them that they are not alone in this struggle, that there are people who care about them. Many of the homeless people have dogs and cats as their companions – they treasure them more than a chance to have a free temporary housing – Robert takes care of them too by providing food and other things. These homeless people in the downtown Antioch value his work because he contributes to their physical and mental survival. He knows that nearly all of them are struggling with some kind of addiction: he

accepts it and tries to find resources to help them. Drugs give these homeless people a way to escape the harsh reality, Robert tries to make this reality better for them. He comes not to “solve all their problems”, but he comes to hear them and to help them.

RR Ministries

Contact: Sandro Trujillo

Nominated by: Marjori Lizarraga

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

Nominee's outstanding volunteer service: RR Ministries have been distributing food , clothes and programs for free to the unhoused community and families in Antioch. Literally rain or shine ! Their work has made an impact in so many ppl .

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness: Many of our unhoused community in the city of Antioch have been blessed and felt the love through organizations like RR Ministries.

St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Walnut Creek

Contact: Rustin Comer

Nominated by: Leslie Gleason

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

Nominee's outstanding volunteer service: The Trinity Center Crew of St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Walnut Creek has devoted over six years to ensuring that persons experiencing homelessness or living in poverty enjoy a delicious, healthy lunchtime meal. Each week, the St. Matt's volunteers have planned the lunch, bought groceries, prepared and served the meal, creating supportive relationships with our unhoused neighbors. Even when COVID curtailed their ability to be onsite, the Lunch Crew made arrangements to prepare the meal in their commercial kitchen and deliver it hot and ready-to-serve. Knowing that hunger doesn't take a holiday, they have provided Safeway gift cards for members on the Friday before each legal holiday, and during the winter holidays, provide generous gift cards accompanied by notes and cards of warm wishes to brighten the lives of those served at Trinity Center. Over the six year history of Trinity Center's winter Evening Program overnight shelter, St. Matthew volunteers have hosted shelter participants at their complex when the usual Armory location has been unavailable, welcoming them with meals, entertainment, and companionship. For their long-standing and meaningful support for individuals facing homelessness, we are proud to nominate The Trinity Center Crew of St. Matthew Church.

The difference that the Nominee's service makes to individuals facing homelessness: By providing for people's basic needs in the form of hot, delicious, healthy meals, prepared and served with compassion, this group of nominees demonstrate that the community cares about unhoused and vulnerable people. Every member who has enjoyed their meals, chatted over lunch with a St. Matt's volunteer, or enjoyed their holiday "shopping spree" compliments of the entire congregation knows what a difference their service makes. Knowing that we can count on St. Matthews volunteers in so many concrete ways is deeply valuable to the staff of Trinity Center, and they are always open to exploring new ways to help Trinity Center and our members enjoy a vibrant life and build a path forward.

Stan Fleury

Nominated by: Nicole Jones

Supervisory 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)

Nominee's outstanding volunteer service: Stan Fleury is our "Volunteer Extraordinaire." He came to our organization-Greater Richmond Interfaith Program (GRIP) as an IT consultant helping us get our computer and phone systems updated--a much needed revamping. However, since then, he has been with us performing maintenance tasks, completing work orders so we didn't have to hire other contractors, painted shelter rooms, replaced doors, locks, shelving, set up camera's for our facility, helped find resources for free laptops, being a liaison and assistance with contracts and grants. This "Volunteer Extraordinaire" has jumped in performing all these services donating both his time and his personal money.

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

Because we are a non-profit homeless shelter for families with children, all the services he provides us for free enables us to use our current funding on our program services we provide to the community. We value his work, and his assistance with anything we ask of him. He has helped make changes to some of our program processes and procedures to enable us to better serve our homeless consumers.

Stan Fleury is an all around good guy and he loves to give back to the community. We appreciate and thank him for all his hard work.

Vanessa Calloway

Nominated by: Michelle Milam

Supervisory 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)

Nominee's outstanding volunteer service: Vanessa Calloway and her project "Way to Love" has been volunteering in the Richmond community assisting the unhoused population with hot meals, clothing, and basic needs.

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

Vanessa is a deeply caring and committed person to the needs of the unhoused community in Richmond, CA. She has utilized her own personal resources, resources from the faith community and other volunteers to serve people in Richmond with hot meals, resources, basic needs, clothing and other items.

Richmond was hit hard by the pandemic, and aftermath like many cities. The city has a large population of unhoused folks that need support. Vanessa can be counted on each weekend with her team to go out and see the need and fill it. What is also inspiring is that in a time when many have concerns she turns that concern into action, or as Vanessa calls it "Way to Love".

Vanessa's inspiration and positivity is infectious. Our police officers have come off duty to help, as well as many community members. She has a special place in her heart for young people and has been able through her efforts to impact youth who fall through the cracks of the system.

There are many people who volunteer, but not many people who treat everyone as if they are the family. That is what people will tell you about Vanessa - she makes us feel like family. You would be hard pressed to find a more resourceful example of love in action.