

# L.A. Family Housing Volunteer Services Program

The Volunteer Services Program (VSP) at L.A. Family Housing (LAFH) is an integral part of the agency's commitment to transitioning families out of homelessness and poverty, and its advocacy efforts provide solutions to end homelessness and poverty in people's lives. The VSP includes the coordination of donated human resources as well as items donated from the community. The goals of the VSP include:

## **Enhance Resident Quality of Life**

The wide range of activities led by volunteers, and the accessibility of donated items, appreciably raises the quality of life for LAFH residents and supports their successful transition from homelessness to permanent housing. Activities include:

- After School Tutoring
- Journalism Club
- Science Lab
- SPLAT (Showing People Learning & Technology)
- Adopt-A-Building Holiday Celebrations
- Visual and Performance Arts Clubs - music, sewing, dancing, ceramics
- Go Green Youth Group
- Sports Club - swimming, badminton, football and baseball
- Girl Scout Chapter
- Field Trips - parks, museums, sports events, beaches and theatres
- Clothing Resource Room
- Hygiene Donations Center

## **Increase Community Awareness, Advocacy and Action**

The VSP takes direct service opportunities at the shelters to introduce and educate community members on the issues of poverty and homelessness. Through volunteer recruitment, LAFH raises awareness, which in turn becomes direct action and advocacy within the broader communities, including the businesses, faith, and educational institutions that participate. Our community volunteers advocate through the following venues:

- County-wide Homeless Count
- Community Board Meetings
- Pathways Home Initiative (United Way)
- Community Action Events (Big Sunday, Mitzvah Day, Christmas in Spring)
- SPLAT program model expansion
- LAFH Volunteer Blog
- National and corporate partnerships (Jewish Funds for Justice, Girl Scouts of America, Citibank, ING, UPS)

## **Develop Community Partnerships**

Activities within the VSP include individual efforts as well as whole groups. The VSP has more than 50 relationships with organizations willing to donate their time and talent, including but not limited to American Express, AT&T, Art-to-Bridge, Bridgeport School, Citibank, Create Now, Free Arts, Hollywood Heart, ING, Mondrian Hotel, Options for Youth, Shepard of the Hills Church, SPARK, UCLA's Young Democrats, United World College, UPS and William Morris Talent Agency. The VSP cultivates in-kind donation sources as well, including Target, OPI, Plummers Furniture, All Essential Hair Products, Warner Bros., Universal Studios, and Elenel Cuisine.

## **Expand Agency Resources**

Volunteers and donations serve to offset agency cash expenditures by supplementing the work of paid staff and averting the purchase of essential materials. The VSP utilizes the following resources annually:

- 500 community volunteers from local businesses, schools, and faith organizations
- 23,000 hours of service estimated at a value of \$460,000 (\$100,000 saved in kitchen staffing)
- 300 court-mandated volunteers through LAFH's partnership with the Volunteer Center of Los Angeles and the County Superior Courts
- In-Kind Donations in value of approximately \$900,000