

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Friends,

During the holiday season, at Covenant House California (CHC), we offer special thanks

for the support of people like you. You have made it possible for us to literally reach out and save the lives of thousands of homeless youth. And it all started when you asked a simple question: "How can I help?"

There are many creative ways to contribute. Individuals can reach out to their organizations and companies and invite them to become involved with CHC. Organizations can hold fundraisers or food and clothing drives.

This Thanksgiving, we are honored to partner with Jiffy Lube of Southern California. It is one example of how a corporation can find a unique and substantive way to touch the lives of our youth.

Every contribution makes a difference. Every gift saves a life. I want to thank you for your past support and hope that you will continue to ask the simple question: "How can I help?"

On behalf of the youth and staff at Covenant House California, I wish you and yours a happy and safe holiday season.

Sincere regards,

George R. Lozano
Executive Director, CHC

CHC CELEBRATES THE HOLIDAYS

Most people look forward to the holiday season with growing excitement and anticipation. Thoughts of fun with family and friends, while reflecting back on what we have to be thankful for, fill most of our lives. But for homeless youth, the holidays are a particularly difficult time, when they feel unwanted and unloved. With the support of donors and volunteers, Covenant House California does everything possible to make sure the holidays are fun and festive for these youth.

Each year, both the Los Angeles and Bay Area shelters host a Thanksgiving Celebration for the youth. Both events welcome friends of CHC and their guests. Everyone is treated to a traditional Thanksgiving dinner served by volunteers. Entertainment is provided by the CHC youth.

The Thanksgiving Celebrations have become such an important tradition for



the youth that former residents and their families often return to participate and visit with staff and friends. First time attendees are always impressed with the sense of community that exists at the dinners and the joyful atmosphere. These Thanksgiving Celebrations are not just holiday dinners, they are a chance for friends of CHC to get to know the youth

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JIFFY LUBE'S CAMPAIGN FOR CHC



Jiffy Lube's Southern California Regional Cooperative Association, the largest co-op in the Jiffy Lube

franchise system, has gotten into the spirit of the holidays with a fundraising effort for Covenant House California. Between November 1st and November 19th, Southern California

residents are encouraged to visit participating Jiffy Lube locations to purchase a "Thanksgiving meal" for only \$2.50. (Service is not required to participate.) Jiffy Lube will match customer donations up to the sum of \$10,000.

"Jiffy Lube of Southern California takes pride in giving back to the community, and we applaud Covenant House California for all it does to

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CHC CELEBRATES THE HOLIDAYS (CONT. FROM FRONT PAGE)

directly and learn of their dreams and aspirations.

For the Christmas season, volunteers hang Christmas decorations throughout the campuses. The Bay Area shelter also hosts a tree trimming party. On Christmas morning, the youth enjoy a caring and loving environment with a CHC brunch hosted by staff and volunteers, where the youth are given gift cards so that they can choose a special gift for themselves. On occasion, old Saint Nick himself will pay the youth a visit.

The success of these holiday events is determined by CHC supporters. The gift cards for the youth are provided by donations and the holiday events require assistance from volunteers who are willing to give back during the holidays. If you

are interested in contributing to CHC or would like to volunteer during the holiday season, please contact:

For Northern California:
510-379-1010, ext. 1006

For Southern California:
323-461-3131, ext. 250

or by e-mail at:
info@covenanthousecalifornia.org



HELP OUT DURING THE HOLIDAYS: VOLUNTEER!

Would you like to volunteer in some way at Covenant House California during the holidays or any other time? Help with a food drive? Be a mentor? Get involved at one of our on-site or other fundraising events?

Join the Covenant House California family. Our doors are always open to you, too!

For more information, please contact:

Hollywood:
Tanya Quaife,
Special Events and Volunteer
Coordinator
323-461-3131, ext. 250

Oakland:
Miguel de la Fuente,
Development Associate
510-379-1010, ext. 1006

THIS SEASON, GIVE A GIFT OF JOY TO A CHC YOUTH

The holidays are a difficult time for the youth that Covenant House California serves. Without a home or a family to spend the season with, they often feel forgotten, unwanted and abandoned.

You can change that feeling by donating a gift certificate to one or more of our youth. We rely heavily on the generosity of individuals and groups to make our youth's holiday wishes come true.

Cash donations to help purchase gifts are also welcome and all donations are 100% tax deductible.

For further information, please call:
Jody Turken,
Manager of Stewardship
and Donor Relations
323-461-3131, ext. 253

CHC SUPPORTER CINDY HOLBROOK

The importance of giving back to the community is what Cindy Holbrook has known since childhood.

She remembers as a child watching her father dress up as Santa Claus to pass out gifts to the sick and the elderly at hospitals during the holidays. Now, Cindy gives back in her own ways – first as a registered nurse and secondly, through her commitment to Covenant House California.

Cindy became involved with CHC after reading one of the quarterly newsletters.

She says she felt deeply compelled to get involved right away. "I realized from reading the newsletter that CHC served kids who were the ages of my daughters. That really hit home."

Cindy reached out to the Bay Area shelter to see what she could do. She

has now become a crucial part of the Christmas celebrations at the CHC Oakland campus. For the past three

years, she and her family have graciously donated a twelve-foot holiday tree to the shelter as part of their annual Christmas party.

Cindy says that contributing the tree each year is a very special part of the holidays for her and her family. "The holidays are all about celebrating peace, love and joy and to take that

into Covenant House California is absolutely one of the greatest gifts I could ever ask for!" she says.

CHC would like to thank Cindy Holbrook and her family for their dedication to CHC.



JAMES: BAY AREA RESIDENTIAL SERVICES COORDINATOR



James enjoys working with youth and families and has been doing so for more than twenty years. He says the reason he was drawn to Covenant House California was because of the way that CHC works with the youth directly.

“I’m impressed with the case management services. CHC has a continuum of care with one case manager working in each specialized area, such as education, job readiness and life skills.”

JIFFY LUBE’S CAMPAIGN FOR CHC (CONT. FROM FRONT PAGE)

transform the lives of at-risk homeless youth in our community,” said Rob Curry, President of Jiffy Lube’s Southern California Regional Cooperative Association. “Throughout the year, we enjoy supporting special events for these kids and the smiles we see make it all worthwhile.”

“It is thanks to the generosity of companies like Jiffy Lube that we are able to help abused and neglected youth who have nowhere to go and no one to turn

to,” said George Lozano, Executive Director of Covenant House California. “Our goal is to provide these kids with the tools and resources needed to get them on the right road to becoming self-sufficient and productive members

of our community.”

The money collected will fund a Thanksgiving feast for Covenant House California residents and other homeless youth on November 22 at its Los Angeles campus. Jiffy Lube managers and board members will attend the event to help serve food and support the cause. Remaining funds will go to Covenant House California to cover future meals for the thousands of hungry youth they serve throughout the year.



CHC thanks Jiffy Lube’s Southern California Regional Cooperative Association for their support and for helping bring joy to homeless and at-risk youth during the holiday season.

SAIDA: LOS ANGELES YOUTH

Saida came to Covenant House California three months ago. It wasn’t something she had planned on doing when she first came to California. She had been living in New York when she reconnected with a friend on Facebook who was living in Los Angeles. The friend invited Saida to come stay with her and Saida decided to take her up on the offer. But after arriving, things soon went awry. They didn’t get along well and soon Saida found herself in a situation without any family close and no one to turn to. She knew if she didn’t do something, she would soon be on the streets.

Based on a recommendation from her friend’s mother, Saida came to CHC. She says she didn’t know what to expect when she first arrived, but she was surprised at what she found. “I didn’t expect the place to be so nice,” she says.

After being provided with a bed, a

meal and a shower, Saida was assigned a case manager to assess her situation and help her move toward independent living. They soon began to work on a case plan for her, which involved setting obtainable goals for both the short term and long term. This included returning to school and employment.

The first issue that she and her case manager addressed – Saida hadn’t obtained her high school diploma. She is now studying to take the test to do so. She has even made plans to go to college in the near future and wants to study architecture.

Saida also has begun an internship with CHC to help her gain work experience for the future.



Saida is optimistic about her future and attributes her hopefulness to her time at CHC and working with her case manager. “I’d be on the streets if not for CHC,” she says, “and my case manager pushed me to try harder. She’s always encouraging me to do my best and it’s really helped me.”

CHC SUPPORTER ZENOBIA MILLS BREAUX

This past April, Zenobia Mills Breaux attended her Neighborhood Watch meeting at the Eastmont Mall in Oakland. At the meeting, Covenant House California's Street Outreach Team was there to speak. It was Zenobia's first time hearing about CHC and the homeless youth served by the organization. It affected her greatly. Having spent twenty years working in social welfare, she understood the type of harrowing experiences these youth face on a daily basis.

"I thought about the kids I worked with. I thought about my nephews and my own two children, who, but for the grace of God, could have been one of those kids," she says.

The meeting inspired Zenobia so much that she immediately made a commitment to become involved with CHC. "The kids touched me. It's hard to put in words," she says. "I felt a need inside to help. I feel CHC is truly

a beacon of light for the runaways, the lost kids. And I don't mean 'lost' like they can't find their way home, but



'lost' like they don't know what they're doing to their lives, they can't find their way back to themselves."

Zenobia began her commitment by

making a financial contribution, then donated furniture for the youth to use when they moved to stable housing. She also offered to volunteer and encouraged her friends to get involved as well. Zenobia has a philosophy about giving: "If you hold onto something that you're not using, you're blocking someone else's blessing and you're blocking your own blessing," she says.

Recently, Zenobia's mother passed away. She credits her mother for instilling in her strong values about giving back to others. "I have found that through my life, it's so important to pass it on and pay it forward. My mom used to say, 'To her who is given much, much is expected.' I've always had a job, a home, good friends, my health and family. I've been blessed abundantly. I want to be a blessing for someone else." The youth at Covenant House California thank her for being just that.

ROYCE: BAY AREA YOUTH



Things looked promising for Royce. After graduating from Rio Lindo Academy, a Christian boarding school in Healdsburg, CA, Royce enrolled at Pacific Union College in nearby Napa

Valley. But during his freshman year, Royce got involved with the wrong crowd and was soon kicked out of the college for violating school policies.

Suddenly, Royce's life plans were completely derailed, disappointing his parents, who had had high hopes for him. Royce found a job, but couldn't find a focus. He spent most of his time hanging out and accomplishing little. Struggling with the odd hours of his job and with little income, he was soon lost. Although he had friends, he was deeply unhappy. Royce knew he needed to get his life together, but he didn't know how to go about it. It was at that time that he received a call from his step-sister who told him about Covenant House California – it was just the type of program he was hoping to find.

Royce came to CHC in early 2011, with a determination to do his best in the program. CHC provided stability,

support and guidance for Royce. At the suggestion of the CHC Educational Manager, Royce attended a job fair where he discovered the Year Up program, which provides urban young adults with a unique combination of technical and professional skills, along with an educational stipend and a corporate internship.

Once he was admitted into the Year Up program, Royce received intensive training for five months. Now, Royce is working full time, providing internal tech support for Zynga, a multi-billion dollar online gaming company based in San Francisco.

Thanks to the support and direction from CHC, Royce has acquired the skills he can use for the future. Now Royce has high hopes that these skills will lead to independent living before his 21st birthday.

CHC INTERNSHIPS: JOB EXPERIENCE FOR THE YOUTH

One of the first steps to independent living is gaining employment. But many of the youth who come to Covenant House California have little or no job experience. After experiencing life on the streets, it can be difficult for them to adjust to the structured life and schedule required to hold down a regular job.

As part of the Employment Skills Program (ESP), CHC offers internships for the youth who lack job experience. The program gives them the opportunity to learn about the responsibilities of a job, as well as building their resume before they try to enter the workforce. Youth are then able to apply for jobs with new employment experience listed on their

resumes, as well as having a current reference to use.

Not only does ESP allow the youth to learn about the responsibilities required for gainful employment, they also receive a financial stipend. Currently, the program has a handful of on-site internships at CHC, which include working in the kitchen, working with the Outreach Program or as an assistant in the Employment Skills office. Each internship provides a different set of skills that the youth can utilize for future long-term employment.

DEVELOPMENT STAFF WELCOMES CHC INTERN JOHANNA



Recently, CHC youth Johanna started an internship in CHC's Development Department, working in Communications and Marketing. One of her first assignments was to write about her hopes for this internship.

Covenant House California offers many internships to the youth who stay here. I have been honored to be placed as a Marketing and Communications Intern. I have been learning about photography, writing, and printing. I have had the chance to be creative, while obtaining job experience and learning about the obligations involved with a position in this field.

This internship has also allowed me the opportunity to attend benefit functions for CHC. I get to help raise awareness for the organization by sharing my story and helping to make others aware of how important Covenant House California really is.

Because of the internship, I now feel I am better prepared to join the workforce and I will be able to add the experience I have obtained to my resume. I am very excited about all the new opportunities that will now be open to me, thanks to CHC and their internship program.

YOUTH ACHIEVEMENTS: YOUR GIFTS AT WORK

These are just a few of the achievements of CHC youth in the past few months that you have made possible through your support:

Altovese was hired at Denny's Diner as a busser and dishwasher and has been promoted to hostess, while working towards becoming a server.

Amy is working nights at Target, while attending a BankWorks vocational training program. She has already completed one year of college and plans to return to school in the spring of 2012.

Edgar graduated from the vocational training program Atlas Diesel Mechanic and has already found full-time work for the company Compass Container Group.

Ibrahim was accepted to Cal State University Dominguez Hills and has started classes. He is interested in furthering his education in financial accounting and healthcare.

Shayla was just hired at Anna's Linens for a supervisor position.

Breanne has been working as a Youth Advocate Fellow for West Coast Clinic, where she works in a full-time position to improve the Alameda Foster Care System.

Jeltje is enrolled at LACC and working at Fossil at Universal City Walk. She has found a way to balance both school and work and is still striving for more by looking for a second job. She is in her second year at LACC and is doing great.

Philip has been working at College of Alameda, doing a work-study program, while enrolled in an automotive program. He also received a custodial certification and forklift certification in August from Goodwill Industries Employment Program.

Seville has been working hard to obtain both his GED certificate and an internship with the prestigious Hudson jeans.

CHC congratulates these youths and others on their hard work and success!



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