



## County Faces Continuation of Sequester and Federal Cuts to Section 8 Program

This month we celebrate The Opportunity Center of the Midpeninsula, our successful public-private partnership that provides permanent housing and comprehensive services for homeless singles and families in downtown Palo Alto. The Opportunity Center model works, and we believe it should be duplicated in the South Bay.

At the same time we join public housing agencies around the nation in a desperate fight to keep low-income families housed despite drastic cuts in federal funding.

HACSC's Housing Choice Voucher (*Section 8*) program changes that went into effect this month averted a major crisis: dropping 1,000 Santa Clara County families from the Section 8 program. Our goal is to keep all of our 18,000 families housed over the long term.

When the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (*HUD*) cut our funding by an additional \$16 million in March of this year, our Board's first decision was not to cut any of our households from the Section 8 program. Instead it implemented a variety of program changes that spread the funding cut across all households, while having the least impact on the county's poorest households. The agency's reserves were used to continue providing rental assistance until these program changes took effect on Sept. 1. Our reserves are now almost depleted.

The agency strives to manage a federal rental subsidy program subject to federal funding fluctuations driven by political agendas and congressional gridlock. We don't want families worrying every month about whether a check will arrive to keep them in their homes. At the same time, families are struggling with other parts of their safety net, as rental subsidy reductions are not the only program affected by sequestration.

We don't have much of a financial cushion – but as long as no additional funds are cut, our Section 8 program changes should eventually provide a little more than one month's rental costs as cushion (*\$25 million for 18,000 families*). If year two of 10 years of federal sequestration cuts arrives and an additional 5% is cut from HACSC's budget, the program changes we made now will allow us to continue paying rent for all 18,000 families. However, the agency's ability to build back the cushion will be compromised. As we have repeatedly said since March, the harsh reality is that Congress has chosen to help fewer struggling families.

We are carefully watching the Washington, D.C., budget gridlock. While a community-wide effort is engaged to mitigate the federal sequester's impact on our county's poorest families, the wave must sweep the country. We again urge you to contact California's congressional delegation with your concerns.

Now more than ever our community spirit is challenged to come together to help affected households. HACSC is working with community partners to bring information and resources to our Section 8 households. *We are grateful for your support!*

Alex Sanchez, *Executive Director*

## HACSC Wins Three NAHRO 2013 Awards of Merit

HACSC earned three 2013 Awards of Merit from The National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO). HACSC was honored for the Julian Gardens nine-unit apartment complex modernization project in San José (*also nominated for a NAHRO Award of Excellence*), Sunset Gardens Apartments renovation and expansion in Gilroy, and the agency's public-private "Public Housing Disposition and Portfolio Refinance" that successfully preserved 335 aging units. Financed through credit enhanced tax-exempt bonds and 4% tax credits, HACSC retained ownership of the land and leased the improvements to the tax credit limited partnership. To see the full list of 2013 NAHRO Awards of Merit recipients, go to:

[www.nahro.org/agency-awards](http://www.nahro.org/agency-awards)



*Award-winning Julian Gardens Apartments*



## Opportunity Center Can Be Model for Region

HACSC and the Community Working Group recently showcased The Opportunity Center of the Midpeninsula as a model for permanently housing homeless people. Since opening in downtown Palo Alto in 2006, the center has provided 193 homeless households with homes of their own and assisted many more individuals and families in finding their ways back to productive, self-sufficient lives. About 20% of the center’s tenants have lived there for more than 6 years. Many residents work, and all pay rent (*rental assistance is available for those who qualify*). Current households have averaged income increases of 20% while residing at the center.



*Five-year resident Mae shares how The Opportunity Center helped turn her life around after being homeless on and off for 30 years. Now employed as a dishwasher at nearby Stanford University, Mae and her roommate combined their incomes so that they could afford an apartment at the center, without enrolling in the center’s rental assistance program.*

Luis Carranza/LC Photography

The “Housing First” facility provides 88 units of permanent housing plus comprehensive services and intensive case management to homeless singles and families, without placing requirements on current employment. Services are provided by numerous nonprofits with InnVision Shelter Network providing the overall management and coordination. Charities Housing serves as the center’s property management. Specifically tailored to serve the hardest to house, The Opportunity Center demonstrates what can be done when a community and local governments work in partnership to solve a local problem.

*Opportunity Center public-private partners with guest of honor Santa Clara County Supervisor Joe Simitian celebrate its success on August 20, 2013.*  
Luis Carranza/LC Photography



To read the article visit:

[www.mercurynews.com/breaking-news/ci\\_23911620/palo-altos-opportunity-center-provides-housing-silicon-valley](http://www.mercurynews.com/breaking-news/ci_23911620/palo-altos-opportunity-center-provides-housing-silicon-valley)

## Sangalang Named Director of Housing Programs

HACSC has named Aleli Sangalang Director of Housing Programs. She is responsible for the administration and compliance of the Section 8 program and the Moving to Work plan. Previously Assistant Director of Housing Programs at HACSC, Sangalang brings more than 33 years of experience in low-cost and affordable housing programs and policy to her position. She joined HACSC in 1996 as a housing programs specialist and has held various other positions including analyst, supervisor and manager. Prior to HACSC, Sangalang was Manager of the Joint Venture Projects Department at the National Housing Authority, a Philippine government corporation providing low-cost and affordable housing to low and middle-income families. She earned a bachelor’s degree in Economics from Lyceum of the Philippines University in Manila and a Master of Management in Public Administration from the University of Phoenix. Sangalang is a licensed California real estate agent. She also serves on the Board of Harvest International Christian Church where she is a minister.



HACSC is the largest provider of affordable housing assistance in Santa Clara County, helping make rental housing safe and affordable for low-income families through Section 8 voucher programs and below-market rental properties. Designated a Moving to Work agency, HACSC assists approximately 18,000 households.

Housing Authority of the County of Santa Clara • 505 West Julian Street, San José, California, 95110 • [www.hacsc.org](http://www.hacsc.org)