

With dignity and respect, powered by volunteers, MEND's mission is to break the bonds of poverty by providing basic human needs and a pathway to self-reliance.



FALL | 2016

matters

mendpoverty.org



Thalia Nevarez was very concerned about her daughter's recent weight gain of 25 lbs. and so was the pediatrician. She had to take action and, luckily, found MEND through UCLA's Early Head Start program. "I thought MEND was just a foodbank," she says. She now knows that MEND offers so much more.

Thalia lives in Sylmar with her two children—a nine-year-old daughter and a one-and-a-half-year-old son.

"This was the right time for me to learn about MEND's Grow Together Project," says Thalia. The classes taught her what she needed to know about growing and maintaining a garden.

"They gave me the tools and education to do it myself," Thalia says. The program is more than learning about

growing plants. Adam Brooks, the Grow Together AmeriCorps VISTA, is taking MEND's Grow Together Project another step further. Students, including Thalia, will be learning how to sell their excess produce to local restaurants in a new initiative now known as, *La Colectiva*.

The garden has eased Thalia's financial burden of buying expensive vegetables at the grocery store. Her daughter has become more active by helping with the garden and undertakes garden projects by herself. She has even noticed her daughter's eating habits improve.

Thalia expresses her gratitude to MEND exclaiming, "this program grew a seed within myself and my heart and now I have a great backyard!"

THE MEND WISH LIST

Please help us meet critical needs with your time, contributions and services:

Volunteers Needed:

Resume Editors: 3 hours per week

Mock Interviewers: 2 hours per week, 2 weeks per month

Employment opportunity researchers: 5 hours per month

Administrative Assistant: 10 hours per week

Home Visitor: 4hrs/wk Tues-Saturday

ESL Teachers: 1 x week Tues-Thurs 9

Computer Lab Instructors: 3hrs/wk Tues-Thurs

Data Entry: 6hrs/wk Tues-Fri

Kinder Care Attendant: Saturday 9-1

Clothing Donation Receiver: Flex Hours Tues-Friday 12- 5 PM and Saturday 9-12

Tutors: 2hrs/wk Tues-Thursday 3-6PM

Youth yoga instructor: 1 hour a week

Dental Specialists: 3+hrs/month

Optometrist: 3hrs/month Sat

Physicians & Nurse Practitioners:

3hrs/wk or once a month

Registered Dietitians: 3+hrs/month

Drivers: Flexible Hours

Kitchen Assistant: Flexible Hours

Wish List Items:

New Toys/Gifts for ages 8-14,
New Blankets (Full, Queen or King)

Desktops/Laptops

Swivel Computer chairs

Dictionaries

Timers, Wall Clocks

Bulletin Boards/Dry Erase Boards

NEW Computers for Dental Software

School Supplies

Pedometers

Disposable & other Dental Materials

Shoes

Double Strollers

Slow cookers, blenders, microwaves

Folding Shopping carts

Wheelchairs & walkers with seats

Adult Bicycles

Pallet Jacks

Travel Size Personal Hygiene Products

Food Donations needed:

Soup, Tuna, Peanut Butter, Cereal, Granola/ Protein Bars

Oral Hygiene products needed:

Toothbrushes, Toothpaste, Mouth Rinse

Upcoming Events

Santa's Toy and Food
Workshop Weekend 2
November 19

Santa's Toy and Food
Workshop Weekend 3
December 3

Santa's Fly-In Event
December 12



Farewell, MEND friends!

After 29 years, I resigned as MEND CEO in early September, and am now supporting MEND in a consulting capacity. I am so grateful for the privilege of serving with so many wonderful volunteers, board members, and employees through the years, and together fulfilling the important mission of MEND for our clients.

The first day in 1987 when I walked into our Van Nuys building – now our Education and Training Center -- it was in total disrepair. But I was very impressed that the board had already raised enough money to completely renovate the facility. Little did I realize then that that remodel would be just one of several capital projects: the 1994 Northridge earthquake retrofit; the 1996 expansion that doubled the size of the Van Nuys building; the construction of our second facility on San Fernando Road, which opened in 2007; and the 2015 Van Nuys building remodel.

Each capital project allowed MEND to expand and enhance services for our low-income recipients. The San Fernando Road Center was completed just prior to the Great Recession, and some programs experienced a 400% increase in clients

served in the following two years. During that period, we also focused on adding collaborations with universities, hospitals, and other nonprofits to help meet the growing need for service – a total of 350 partnerships are in progress today.

New programs have been added through the years: the 1990s saw the addition of dental and medical clinics, the computer lab, and work experience in our various programs. In the 2000s, we started showers and other services for homeless individuals; the eye care clinic, and diabetes education and treatment programs. More recently, we've initiated home garden training; oral hygiene education and dental appliances; customized job training; case management; nutrition education; adult language learning workshops; expanded youth services, and more.

A highlight of my MEND tenure was when we received the Governor's award for 2012 California Nonprofit of the Year, and when MEND was profiled in the 2012 leadership book *Forces for Good: Six Practices of High Impact Nonprofits*.

When I started, MEND had 100 volunteers and served about 2000 clients

per month. By 2015, that number had grown to 5000 volunteers assisting an average of 37,000 clients monthly, supported by 34 employees

Serving with MEND so long has given me the opportunity to meet hard-working, successful adults whose impoverished families were assisted by MEND when they were young. I've seen MEND patients whose health has improved dramatically, after school kids whose grades have gone up, immigrants proudly using new English and computer skills. I've seen families who were so grateful for generous boxes of healthy food, lovely clothing, and an abundance of Christmas gifts; and homeless individuals thankful for hot showers.

I will miss so many of you who have become friends as well as colleagues and donors. I encourage you to continue to support the vital work that MEND is doing for our low-income neighbors in need.

My best wishes to MEND and its leadership for much continued success!



MENDING Poverty through a Job Fair

On Wednesday September 28th, MEND hosted its very first job fair. The event, which took place at MEND's Education and Training Center, hosted 13 employers from a diverse pool of industries including: retail, customer service, shipping and receiving, culinary arts, medical, education and child care. MEND's Job Center also partnered with two local worksource centers that represented over half a dozen employment opportunities. Over 90 job applicants attended the job fair; many of them from the surrounding community.

"It was an amazing job fair! There was a great and diverse applicant pool and many very qualified applicants too," said Sandy Michael Lao, Senior Recruiter from Dynamic Nursing Services.



MEND'S Christmas Program

Though the upcoming holiday season is a time for merriment, for many of our clients, it is a harsh reminder of their difficulty to provide food and gifts for their loved ones. To help spread Christmas cheer, this December, MEND will serve approximately 1300 families living in the northeast San Fernando Valley through its Christmas Basket Program. Families will walk away with a food box for Christmas dinner, blankets, clothes, toys, gifts and other items to help make the holidays extra merry.

At MEND, the holiday season begins in October where over 200 volunteers participate in our Super Saturday Home Visiting day. Volunteers visit the homes of registered families in order to assess their needs for the Christmas baskets.

For families who are in dire need of help, they are referred to our Adoption Program where individuals or organizations provide other items not included in the baskets.

Many individuals and organizations will participate in toy, food and blanket drives for our clients. This year, MEND is in need of new and unwrapped toys for children aged 8 – 14. Gift ideas include skateboards, Lego toys, Star Wars toys, small electronic items, jewelry, art supplies and sport equipment. The Christmas Program Committee is also enlisting the help of Amazon Smile to drive toy donations. Simply designate MEND as the recipient of items purchased and all proceeds go back to the organization.

Special thanks to **Anthem Blue Cross** and **Boeing** for the financial contribution to the 2016 Christmas Basket Program.

For more information on how you, your family, business or organization can get involved, please visit our website at www.mendpoverty.org.



Won't you please give serious thought to ways in which you and your family can share your time, talents, and resources with MEND? If you would like to become involved, please fill out this coupon and mail it to:

MEND — Meet Each Need With Dignity
10641 N. San Fernando Rd.
Pacoima, CA 91331

or call us at MEND: 818.896.0246

FALL 2016 MEND Newsletter

Please return the completed form with your donation. Tell us how you heard about MEND

I wish to make a donation of \$ _____ (all charitable donations are tax deductible)

My check is enclosed

For credit card donations, please visit MEND's secure website, www.mendpoverty.org
 Now accepting American Express, Discover, VISA, Mastercard and Paypal

I would like to volunteer my services to a MEND program or committee. What would you like to do?

I would like to help "The Christmas Program" by (please specify below):

I would like to put MEND in my will

Please note my 'Change of address'

Please remove me from your mailing list

Name _____

Phone _____

Street _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Email _____

Chairperson Corner



As I begin my tenure as Governing Board Chair, I must congratulate MEND staff and volunteers for all they have accomplished during the most recent strategic plan: exceeding our goal to help 1000 people become interview- and job-ready; demonstrating through data systems the effectiveness of our programs in breaking the bonds of poverty; increasing volunteer-centered operations; developing our Boards to provide access to financial and other needed resources; and making MEND a household name.

These accomplishments would not be possible without Marianne Haver Hill, who stepped down as MEND President and CEO in September. For 29 years, she has been a tireless advocate for the San Fernando Valley's neediest communities. Under Marianne's leadership, MEND grew into one of the most comprehensive and effective nonprofit agencies in Los Angeles County, one recognized statewide and nationally for its effective use of volunteers. In fact, Los Angeles County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl honored Marianne's service to our community at the October 25th meeting of the Board of Supervisors. Our congratulations to Marianne for this richly deserved accolade!

Marianne deserves enormous thanks for building MEND to be the 'voice' of the underserved in our community. Her legacy will be the programs she envisioned and developed and the robust volunteer base under which those programs have thrived. It is now up to us to take these accomplishments as inspiration as we continue to do the hard work of combatting profound and persistent poverty. Moving forward, I invite all of you to consider how you can take up this mantle—both as volunteer and supporter.

Jocelyn Guihama
GOVERNING BOARD CHAIR

DONOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank You to all MEND donors, including foundations, businesses, and other groups that have contributed since our last issue. Please visit mendpoverty.org for a more detailed list.

MAJOR DONORS

Blue Shield of California
California Community Foundation
Disney Worldwide Services
Kaiser Permanente
Queenscare
St. Paul the Apostle Catholic Church
The Ahmanson Foundation
The Albertsons Companies Foundation
and The Vons Foundation

Thanks to our Individual Donors as well!

If I can show you a simple way to redirect your taxes to benefit...

- You
- Your family
- And MEND's deserving families working to better their lives

Would you give me 20 minutes of your time to discuss a gift to MEND in your will?

Please contact **Katie Patrykus** at (818) 686-7362 or give@MENDpoverty.org or visit MENDpoverty.org/legacy for more information.

Thank you!

MEND
Legacy Society



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