OUR MISSION: 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.
Douglas, a skilled roofer, is currently unemployed and homeless, and has to sleep in his car. He comes to MEND regularly for food, clothing and hot showers as he continues to look for work.

"Help" is, of course, the very core of MEND's philosophy. This philosophy rests on the principles that every person has innate human dignity and deserves the right to be treated with respect and the right to what is needed for a fully human life. It is often the most simple thing that can make a person feel human ...something as simple as a hot shower.

The MEND shower program began operating in early 2008, opening only one day a week for four hours. However, because of the huge demand showers are now available two days a week for six hours each day. Some days up to 40 people turn up for a shower. They are given toiletries, a towel, clean clothes, and a meal ticket for a generous hot lunch served at the MEND facility.

"About 30% of the clients who use the MEND Shower Program have jobs, but no places to live," notes Aaron Flores, volunteer coordinator for this service. “Some have children who are staying in shelters or with a divorced spouse and these clients want to clean up before seeing their kids on the weekends.”

Douglas says he showers at MEND, gets a clean change of clothes, a warm meal, and a bag of groceries. "If it wasn’t for MEND, I would be dirty, my clothes would be filthy, I would be using public restrooms to wash …and I would be looking in the trash for food.”

Douglas is 36 and has been homeless for 18 months. A skilled roofer, he says the economy has dealt a cruel blow to his trade. He tries to pick up odd jobs and has been sleeping in his car for over a year.

In-Kind Food $3,140,102 43.1%
In-Kind Clothing $1,023,624 14.0%
Capital Campaign $259,412 3.6%
Medical / Dental Supplies $35,391 0.5%
Individuals $294,529 4.0%
Business $325,314 4.5%
Foundations $850,027 11.7%
Fundraising $299,162 4.1%
Other Income $211,017 3.0%
In-Kind Professional Services $844,691 11.6%

Capital Campaign Income: $259,412 Expenses: $143,426
Total Expenses: $7,275,287
( Including Depreciation: $297,918)
Total Income: 7,293,269

HELP

The leadership of MEND sought to be strategic and proactive in its fundraising efforts by pursuing a couple of capacity-building grants that funded a major direct mail campaign to expand our donor base and that provided the salary for a Donor Manager to support the work of our volunteer fundraising committees.
Joyce De Leon is 23 years old and is studying dentistry at Loma Linda University. She says it was her volunteer work at MEND as a teenager that directly influenced her choice of career.

Joyce volunteered throughout high school, translating at MEND’s dental clinic for people who didn’t speak English. She says in many cases people were scared and in pain, but once the language barrier was down, they were put at ease. She says once she would translate the dental procedure to be done for the patient, it made a world of difference.

“My experience at MEND has had direct impact on my decision to study dentistry and has inspired me to combine non-profit work with private practice. “It also helped me realize that all health is holistic health. People came to MEND in pain or discomfort and when that was taken care of and they received good care and advice, then they could continue with their lives.”

Joyce believes there are not enough Hispanics in dentistry that can provide services to minorities and people in need, and says it is a gap she can’t wait to fill.

Despite her full schedule at Loma Linda’s School of Dentistry, Joyce continues to volunteer at MEND whenever she is home from college.
Dr. Abraham Yazdi knows a lot about giving people hope. As an orthopedic surgeon, he gave people the critical care they needed and helped prepare them for recovery and the challenges ahead.

Abraham is retired now, but is still committed to assisting people in ways that can impact their lives. He donates time to MEND's computer program and helps people gain valuable computer skills. Something as simple as sending an email, accessing a website, or formatting a letter can, he says, transform people’s lives and offer them hope.

He cites the case of an un-employed man who was given a non-functioning computer and began attending MEND’s computer classes.

“People have realized that in order to function in today’s society, they need to use a computer. But many are paralyzed with fear. Once we show them that it’s just a keyboard and numbers …and, most importantly, that it’s something they can learn …they are filled with hope.”

“MEND helps people gain those skills, whether it’s improving their English or learning to use the computer. Once they go beyond those barriers, they can move on.”

Many, he adds, have a complete mental block about computers and are convinced they cannot possibly learn, but after a few sessions in the MEND Computer Lab, they realize their fears were unfounded.

Abraham says what limits people is really the lack of skills.

“Once we show them that it’s just a keyboard and numbers …and, most importantly, that it’s something they can learn …they are filled with hope.”

“It is with that Hope that MEND served 302 students in our Computer Lab in 2009 — an increase of 75% over the previous year! Serving both children and adults the computer lab at MEND is giving HOPE!”

RECESSION’S IMPACT ON MEND FOOD BANK

The impact of the economic recession in 2009 was demonstrated most vividly in MEND’s Emergency Foodbank. At the beginning of the year, we had staffing changes which resulted in the need to re-build relationships with food donors as well as with smaller charities for whom MEND has historically provided excess food. Fortunately, as requests for food dramatically increased, so did the number of donations and the volunteers we recruited. All thanks to the hard work of our staff and team of volunteers!
LETTER FROM THE LEADERSHIP OF MEND

MEND was on the front line of response during 2009 to thousands of Northeast Valley residents who were victims of the deepest economic recession since the Great Depression. Each business day, we opened our doors to long lines of people, many of whom were burdened by financial worries, but were also anxious about long-term unemployment, health issues, and more. Volunteers and staff reached out by giving dignity to these recipients in a variety of ways:

MENDING LIVES WITH HELP: a warm shower, a hot meal, and a change of clothing for the homeless; food boxes overflowing with fresh produce and other items for healthy eating; gently used clothing in an attractively arranged distribution “store” -- but with no price tags!

MENDING LIVES WITH HEALING: many added days of dental services, thanks to an influx of professional dental volunteers; case management in our medical clinic to help patients navigate the “healthcare maze” when they were referred elsewhere for specialty care; nutrition and dental hygiene education offered to food and clothing recipients in MEND’s lobby.

MENDING LIVES WITH HOPE: On-the-job training in every MEND department for scores of new volunteers who had become unemployed but decided to put their time off to good use; added adult computer classes; invited other agencies to come during MEND service hours to offer information about and registration for their services.

MEND employees were proactive in recruiting new volunteers, and as a result, the number of volunteer hours given in 2009 grew by 30% to 155,069 – the equivalent of 75 paid employees! We also met the challenge of increased applications by actively soliciting targeted new sources for food and clothing contributions as well as financial donations.

We are grateful to the many individuals and organizations who supported MEND through the giving of “time, talent, and treasure” to make our work possible. Together, we are “mending poverty” for our neighbors in need!

Jenny Gutierrez
Chief Operating Officer

Ronald Villafana
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Marianne Haver Hill
President and CEO

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MEND Staff (First row from left) Maria Salmeron, Client Services Mgr; Deborah Navarro, Medical As’t; Jenny Gutierrez, COO; Veronica Soto, Clothing Mgr; Amelida Garcia, Food Packing Mgr; Maggie Torres, Program Dir; Rita Jauregui, Medical Case Mgr; Emily Jae, Development Mgr; Denise Benitez, Dental Mgr; Lilia Soller, Education & Training Director

(Second row from left) Guadalupe Martin, Volunteer Dir; Erick Lopez, Executive As’t; Mary Watanabe, Computer Lab Coor; Luke Ippoliti, Food Asst. Dir; Claudia Cubillo, Edu. & Trng. As’t; Richard Weinroth, Foodbank Dir; Marianne Haver Hill, CEO; Kenny Doyle, Maintenance; Sonia Centeno, Clothing As’t. Mgr; Victor Estrada, Medical Mgr. Not pictured: Scott Mikels, Sr. Accountant; Estela Santana, Receptionist.
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