

Celebrating our diverse faith and spiritual traditions, the San Francisco Interfaith Council brings people together to build understanding and serve our community.

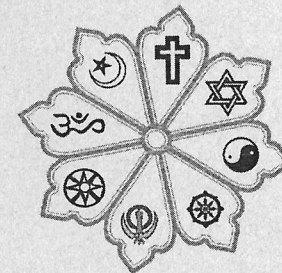
*P.O. Box 29055
San Francisco CA 94129
office@sfinterfaith.org*

2007 Models of Hope Awards

San Francisco Interfaith Council

November 20, 2007

Organizations Overcoming Violence



Honoring congregation and community initiatives throughout our City's neighborhoods that are models of inspiration and hope in their quest to end violence of all kinds.

2007 Models of Hope

ACORN O.M.I.

Director: John Eller

ACORN O.M.I. is part of the nation's largest community organization of low- and moderate-income families, working together for social justice and stronger communities. Among their concerns are affordable housing and access to health care for all. In San Francisco, ACORN organizes neighbors in the O.M.I., a low income, violence plagued community. ACORN keeps police on the beat and accountable. ACORN advocates for community programs for seniors and children.

Athletic Scholar Advancement Program (A.S.A.P.)

Director: Scott Kennedy

Initiated following a fatal shooting of two Mission HS students, ASAP has tripled the number of student athletes and tripled the number of Mission students taking Advanced Placement college exams. The Athletic Scholar Advancement Program creates awareness that college is the next possible step for Mission High School Athletes. ASAP provides residential, summer experiences, on college campuses with year around assistance through tutoring, mentoring and assistance with the entire college application process.

Brothers for Change

Director: Daniel Landrey and Erris Eggerly

Brothers for Change engages young people in the Western Addition in community-based efforts to begin activities and gain attitudes that will reduce and eliminate violence in their community. One of their focus areas is to help young men learn how to be a supportive male presence to women friends who have been victims of sexual violence. Young men learn the importance of support for a survivor's recovery and how they can play a role in the healing process and be prepared to respond with care and understanding, as a brother for change

Comunidad San Dimas

Director: Julio Escobar

Comunidad San Dimas (CSD) is a community of Catholics and Protestants who reach out and embrace young Latinos caught up in the world of gangs and drugs. It is an alternative family to the gang, where the love of Christ can be tangibly experienced, and hope re-kindled. Started in 1992 as a response to the tragic killing of two young Latinos near St. Peter's Parish in the Mission District, today volunteers from many churches are trained and mobilized to serve in juvenile institutions, in the courts, on the streets, and in transitional homes. Comunidad San Dimas brings the message of the presence of Christ to Hispanic youth who are incarcerated in juvenile detention centers throughout the Bay Area. They ensure that every youth in detention has access to religious services at least once a week. Julio Escobar has trained volunteers affiliated with the Archdiocese of San Francisco and interfaith churches regarding drug identification, history of gangs, gang reconciliation and long-term rehabilitation. Former gang members now form part of the leadership of CSD ministries, offering much needed role models. Their lives, faith, families, jobs, and even homes they have purchased, offer struggling youth tangible hope for a bright future.

Mo'Magic

Director: Sheryl Davis

Mo'Magic is a consortium of CBOs that provide services to adolescents in the Western Addition. It was formed a year ago to respond to the youth violence in the Western Addition to create a concerned community response. Fifty CBOs participate in Mo'Magic in order to coordinate their services, support community programs and inform and be informed. City Hall and SFPD are integral partners. In the first year Mo'Magic has sponsored dances, health fairs, job fairs, scholarship recognition, career training, arts and cultural programming, backpack giveaways and holiday parties.

Quesada Garden Initiative

Director: Jeffrey Betcher

The Quesada Garden Initiative is a grassroots community initiative that is improving the daily lives of residents of the Bay View. Six years ago, a few neighbors gathered together to transform the violence-ridden, trash-strewn sidewalks and "Concrete jungle" median in the 1700 block of Quesada Avenue. By working together to transform the median, which had been a dumping ground, into a flourishing garden, neighborhood change has included driving out of drug dealers and loiterers and creating a sense of community among neighbors. The Quesada Gardens Initiative has secured a Community Challenge Grant through the Mayor's Office to leverage other physical assets on the block that are as rich with potential as the median strip was before community leaders turned it into a beautiful garden. QGI has engaged mural artists, allied arts organizations, and residents to create a deep community-building process that will culminate in a major painted mural on a 1,000 square foot wall, and colorful tile art decorating staircases associated with the mural site and the garden tile art created by Bayview children

SafeHouse

Director: Rev. Glenda Hope

One of 4 residential programs in the USA devoted to supporting homeless women escaping prostitution. The comprehensive program includes substance abuse recovery, individual and group counseling, money management training, nutrition counseling, physical fitness training, vocation and education advancement, computer skills, individual case management and more. The program provides residency with 24 hour staffing and comprehensive counseling, health, and educational programs. A woman may stay up to 2 years. All residents have suffered severe trauma and almost all have suffered long-term incest and other child abuse. The many graduates are now living into their full power, dignity and beauty.

Shalom Bayit

Director: Naomi Tucker

Shalom Bayit is dedicated to the empowerment of battered women and their children, and challenges the many forms of abuse through peer support, counseling, advocacy, and education to battered women. Shalom Bayit, which means in Hebrew "peace in the home", works throughout San Francisco and the Bay Area to provide community education, prevention, and technical assistance to community organizations and rabbis who struggle to create an inclusive and safe environment within the Jewish community.

Zen Center SRO Hotels Meditation Program

Director: Jana Drakka

The purpose of San Francisco Zen Center is to make accessible and embody the wisdom and compassion of the Buddha. The San Francisco Zen Center is one of the largest Buddhist sanghas outside Asia. It's meditation program for residents of SRO hotels works with an underserved population and provides skills that promote self-reflection. The program teaches basic meditation skills and allows for quiet time. The program provides space outside of the client's hotel rooms where they can safely discuss their issues and contribute to creating community. There are currently 5 sites in San Francisco.

Special Recognition – Public Programs

Department of Public Health Crisis Response Team

Director: Charles Morimoto

The support that is offered through the crisis response team is critical in order for healing to occur in the community. Due to the personal experience that the leaders of this effort, Lynn Westry and Yul Dorn, bring to the program they are able to build credible relationships, connect families to churches and pastors who can support them in their time of need.

Project Homeless Connect

Director: Judith Klain

The mission of **Project Homeless Connect** is to rally the city to support and create lasting solutions for homeless San Franciscans. Project Homeless Connect (PHC) is a national best practice model that originated in San Francisco under Mayor Gavin Newsom in October 2004. PHC is now implemented in 106 cities across the United States as well as Canada, Puerto Rico and Australia. Every other month over 1000 community volunteers partner with city government, non-profits and the private sector to provide a one-stop shop of health and human services for homeless San Franciscans. Services include medical, mental health, substance abuse, housing, dental, benefits, legal, free eyeglasses, California ID, food, clothing, wheelchair repair and more. The goal of PHC is to provide easy access to services that support the transition of City's homeless off the streets and into housing. As of February 2007, 18,486 volunteers have provided services to 18,217 homeless San Franciscans. Project Homeless Connect addresses the needs of our homeless population by creating a lasting solution to homelessness.

Project SAFE

Director: Cindy Brandon

What does SAFE do? San Francisco SAFE, Inc is committed to the belief that everyone who lives, works, and visits San Francisco has the right to be safe. Their work prevents crime and violence and improves quality of life in SF by bringing together communities and resources, SAFE organizes neighborhood watch groups, conducts safety presentations for all age groups, advises security strategies for businesses