

## Family



## MATTERS...

SUMMER 1999

Communities Working Together to End Homelessness

Transitional Housing Facility  
Taking Shape

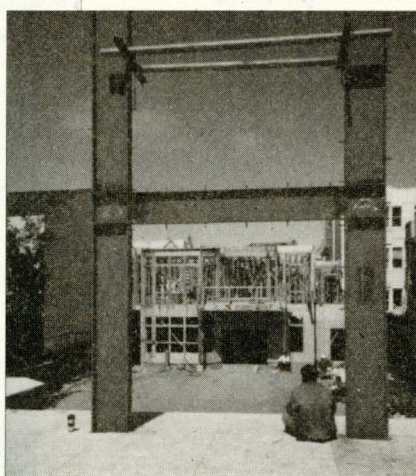
ANYONE WHO TRAVELS along the Panhandle of Golden Gate Park on Fell Street has witnessed the progress of construction of our new transitional housing program for homeless families. The vacant lot has been transformed over the past six months into a nearly completed exterior framing of two four-story buildings. In the coming months, workers from Roberts Obayashi Construction and other subcontractors will move inside and turn the structure of concrete, beams and two-by-fours into stylish living units, offices and conference and community rooms.

Builders faced only one significant delay in construction, when an aging retaining wall collapsed during the first weeks of the project and needed to be replaced. Fortunately, the winter rains were not as severe as the previous year and only a few days were lost due to inclement weather. We are happy to report that expenses for new facility have stayed within budget—never a certainty in the volatile world of rising costs of materials and labor. Thanks to the detailed planning of Roberts Obayashi and expert consultation of Mercy Charities Housing, few surprises have emerged to affect the construction schedule or total cost of the building.

When completed, the facility will feature twenty apartment units that families will occupy for up to 18 months while they receive case management, job development assistance and counseling to help them secure the tools and confidence to achieve and sustain self-sufficiency. A licensed childcare facility will operate on the first floor and an after-school program will be conducted on

CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE

THE FRAMEWORK FOR  
THE HAYES STREET  
BUILDING, AND A VIEW  
OF THE COURTYARD.

The Housing Program,  
A Continuum of Care

San Francisco has one of the tightest housing markets in the nation, with a housing vacancy rate of less than 1%. In addition to a nearly full housing market, homeless families have difficulties securing housing due to basic move-in costs, which can average over \$5,000 for a two bedroom apartment.

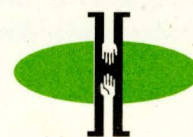
Hamilton Family Center's **Housing Program** was developed in 1996 to offer continued assistance to families as they make the difficult transition from shelter to independent living. The program provides case management, support services, financial resources, peer counseling and job development assistance to help parents departing the shelter. Our ultimate goal is to help families secure and maintain permanent housing in the Bay Area and to ensure they avoid the same pitfalls that led them to become homeless in the first place. More families than expected have taken part in the program, proving the need is even greater than anticipated. **This year alone, 15 families from Hamilton have secured permanent housing.**

The Housing Program is currently open to residents of San Francisco shelters and is enrolling one family per shelter per month. Shelters involved in the Program include Hamilton Family Center St. Joseph's Village, Compass, and Raphael House.

For more information or to find out how you can support this valuable program, contact Paige Sayle, Housing Coordinator, at (415) 665-4522.



PAIGE SAYLE, LEFT, FACILITATES  
A HOUSING WORKSHOP  
FOR HFC RESIDENTS.



*"This project  
has been a  
dream of the  
Board and  
staff for many  
years..."*



## Executive Director's Message

**W**e are facing our biggest challenge since we first opened our doors to homeless families in 1985. Construction of Hamilton Family Center's new transitional housing facility is nearing completion and will enable us to double our capacity to help families achieve self-sufficiency. We look forward to opening this new facility in the fall, but know much work lies ahead before we reach our goal.

The first six months of this year have included many exciting achievements at Hamilton. Our new Housing Program has been a hotbed of activity since it opened in November 1998. Thanks to a lot of hard work by case managers and our Housing Program Coordinator, we have helped more families than ever to secure stable housing. In the month of April alone, our staff helped seven families find and move into apartments. This addition of services has made a tremendous positive impact on families' success at overcoming obstacles to self-sufficiency.

For the second consecutive year, Hamilton expanded its capacity during the wet winter months to accommodate additional homeless families. Twelve extra beds were available each night through May.

Mother's Day brought royal treatment to the mothers at Hamilton for the fifth year in a row. Mothers were pampered with makeovers, treated to gift bags, and dined on a gourmet lunch at Harry Denton's Restaurant. Harry enjoys this event as much as the mothers, and has promised to continue his annual affair to honor this very special group of women.

Hamilton was the fortunate beneficiary of two successful fundraising events. The Chinese New Year Treasure Hunt lured nearly 1,000 amateur sleuths to the streets of Chinatown on February 27, and raised nearly \$13,000. In May, the Gift Foundation held their annual "Spring Soiree," a formal evening of music, refreshments, silent auction and fun at the Merchant's Exchange Building. \$15,000 was raised from this event to benefit our Children's Program.

As you know, our services would not be possible without the generous participation of friends in the community. Our thanks go out to all who support HFC through financial and in-kind contributions, or by volunteering with the children and families. Please keep the families in mind through the summer months and plan to celebrate with us as we assume the challenge of helping more families escape homelessness and poverty and build better lives for themselves.

Sincerely,

Salvador Menjivar  
Executive Director

## Volunteer Spotlight

**O**N ANY GIVEN AFTERNOON, Clair Hieber can be found in the Hamilton Family Center amidst a group of eager children, either tutoring, reading stories, leading an arts & crafts group, or playing in the gym. Is she a staff member? No. Clair is one of the many wonderful volunteers in Hamilton's Children's Program.

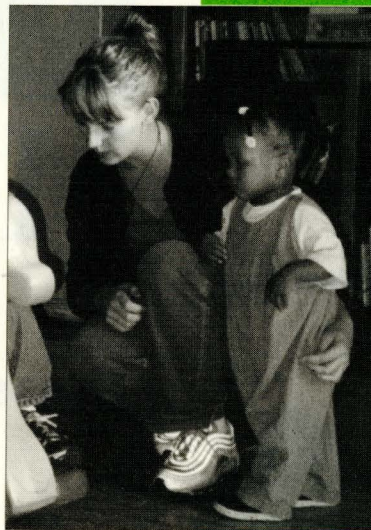
"I love that the kids are excited to see me everyday," beams Clair. "It motivates me to see the children so happy I'm there to help with their homework or just to play." Clair found Hamilton when one of her college courses required that she perform community service. "A friend suggested that I might enjoy working with the kids, so I called the Children's Program Coordinator for some information."

Although her college course only required 3 to 4 volunteer hours a week, Clair found herself spending more and more of her spare time at the shelter. She was soon volunteering on a daily basis. Even her Saturdays were dedicated to chaperoning field trips for the kids. When asked what her inspiration is, Clair states, "Volunteering is not a totally selfless act. I feel a sense of gratification when I spark a child's imagination. When a child is excited to participate in an activity I coordinate, I feel I've accomplished a great task."

Clair is one of a number of individuals and community groups that donate nearly 5,000 hours to HFC children and families each year. "The kids come to expect certain people on certain days, and they look forward to seeing them," observes Clair. "Volunteers who come regularly help give the children some consistency in their lives."

Working with homeless youth in the shelter has taught Clair, "to cherish what having a sense of 'home' feels like. All kids deserve to feel the comfort and safety of having their own home."

Clair recently completed her course at SFSU and graduated in May. She plans to attend graduate school, to pursue her Master's Degree in either social work or special education. We thank Clair and all of our outstanding volunteers who help brighten and enrich the lives of children and families at Hamilton. If you would like more information on volunteer opportunities at HFC, please call David Kim, our Children's Program and Volunteer Coordinator, at (415)289-2200, ext. 203. ■



**FAMILY MATTERS** is a publication of Hamilton Family Center and is co-sponsored by Miller Freeman, Inc. and Business Services Network. Hamilton Family Center is a community-based, social service agency dedicated to meeting the needs of San Francisco's homeless families.

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## Mayor Brown Joins Harry Denton to Honor Mothers

**I**N A TIME WHEN FAMILIES, particularly women and children, constitute the fastest growing and most visible part of the homeless population, celebrations like Mother's Day offer a day of respite from the hardships of which their lives consist.

For the 5th consecutive year, homeless mothers living at Hamilton Family Center received the Mother's Day of a lifetime. On Sunday, May 9th, 25 young mothers, (all current or former residents of Hamilton Family Center) were treated to a day of pampering, makeovers, and a gourmet lunch at Harry Denton's in honor of their tireless, and often thankless duties as mothers.

The day began when hair stylists and makeup artists from Koko's Represents set up a temporary salon at the shelter and treated the women to makeovers and new hairdos. "The mothers are really proud to have their kids see them looking good," says Dorothy Kawesch, an HFC board member who helped coordinate the event. "Their kids look at them with pride in their eyes. These women have their need for dignity, just like everyone else."

The women were then chauffeured by Supershuttle to Harry Denton's for a special brunch. A surprise guest, Mayor Willie Brown, was there to honor each mother with a personal welcome. To top off the day, the women were given gift bags filled with items donated by Birkenstock, Body Shop and The Gap and See's Candy.

While they celebrated, their children were cared for at the shelter by staff and volunteers. "The bottom line is, this is a day of pampering," says Ms. Kawesch. "It really is an identifying day for them. They don't have the house, the home, the domesticity that is usually associated with being a mom. But this day is one when they get to affirm a reality: 'I am a mother.'" ■



**KOKO'S REPRESENTS MAKEUP ARTIST APPLIES THE "FINISHING TOUCHES" ON MOTHER'S DAY.**

## DONATION OPTIONS

**T**he work of Hamilton Family Center is truly a community effort. Your donation can support homeless families as they rebuild their lives and strengthen their futures.

**CASH**—Send your check in the enclosed envelope; it's that easy!

**CREDIT CARDS**—Complete the attached reply envelope with your credit card information and your gift will be conveniently billed to your credit card account.

**STOCKS**—Stocks transferred to HFC are tax-deductible based on the value of the stocks at time of transfer.

**WILLS AND BEQUESTS**—Give a lasting gift by making a provision in your will to benefit Hamilton Family Center.

## In Kind Gifts

**YOUR DONATIONS** of used clothing, furniture, and household items help Hamilton. Bring them directly to Hamilton or to the **COMMUNITY THRIFT STORE**, located at 625 Valencia Street, and tell them to direct the proceeds to Hamilton. We earned over \$7,000 from Community Thrift sales last year! For more information, contact us at (415) 665-2345.

**COLE HARDWARE** gives HFC 10% of your purchases every day of the year! Earn money for Hamilton while shopping for all of your hardware needs at Cole Hardware stores. The more you spend, the more they'll give. Just tell the cashier to post the sale to Hamilton Family Center (\*1526). Cole Hardware locations:

- 956 Cole St. (at Parnassus) 753-2653
- 70 Fourth St. (Market & Mission) 777-4400.
- 3312 Mission St. 647-8700



## Chinese New Year's Treasure Hunt Benefits Hamilton Family Center



**O**n Saturday, February 27th, over 1,000 fun-loving, clue-seeking adventurers gathered at the Ferry Plaza in downtown San Francisco to participate in **Jayson Wechter's Chinese New Year's Treasure Hunt**. A \$15 registration fee, (along with flashlights, comfortable shoes and a zest for exploration) was all participants needed to take part in what the S.F. Examiner described as, "One of the 96 reasons to love San Francisco." Each year proceeds from the event benefit a different non-profit agency; this year, Hamilton Family Center was the lucky recipient of nearly \$13,000.

The Treasure Hunt, possibly the largest treasure hunt in the United States, provided a 4 hour intellectual and aerobic workout for participants, who sought out obscure landmarks, forgotten architectural delights and secret views and vestiges of San Francisco's colorful past (and present). Using the Chinese New Year's Parade as a backdrop, the hunt sent amateur sleuths through obscure alleys and hidden lanes in Chinatown, the Financial District and North Beach, solving a series of puzzles created by real-life private eye Jayson Wechter.

After hunting for the answers to some seriously riddled brain-teasers, winning teams from the beginners, regular and masters divisions were handsomely rewarded with champagne, cake, and, most importantly, "the right to gloat." For more information on Jayson Wechter's Chinese New Year's Treasure Hunt, visit [www.well.com/~jayson/](http://www.well.com/~jayson/), or call 564-9400. Our thanks go out to Jayson and everyone who contributed to the success of the event which will provide a big boost to our emergency shelter services for homeless families.



# TRANSITIONAL HOUSING CONT. FROM PAGE 1

site. Support service and administrative offices will also be located on site.

Over \$5.8 million of the nearly \$6.5 million total cost has been secured. Partners in this venture include the City of San Francisco, Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and a host of private foundations, corporations, and individual friends. The Board of Directors of Hamilton has contributed over \$135,000 towards the project. Major private supporters include the BankAmerica Foundation, Cowell Foundation, Herbst Foundation, Koret Foundation, Charles and Helen Schwab Family Foundation, Federal Home Loan Bank and First Republic Bank.

"This project has been a dream of the Board and staff for many years," says Salvador Menjivar, Executive Director of HFC. "Thanks to their commitment and perseverance, homeless families will be offered the time and resources to make lasting changes in their lives that will ensure their success in the community." Watch for news of a ribbon-cutting ceremony this fall as we celebrate the end of construction, and the beginning of a path to success for families in need for years to come. ■



**VOLUNTEERS FROM THE GIFT FOUNDATION  
SERVE UP SOME FUN AT DINNER!**

## Thanks to the newest STARS at HFC; The GIFT Foundation

Our most sincere thanks to the GIFT Foundation, a group of young professionals that chose Hamilton Family Center as the beneficiary of their annual fundraiser, The Spring Soiree. This year's event, held at the Merchant's Exchange Building, brought in \$15,000 for HFC homeless support programs. Our heartfelt thanks go out to the following individuals and companies that made the event possible: Janet and Clint Reilly, A Bed of Roses Florist, Anchor Steam Brewery, Burton Snowboards, Chalone Vineyards, DJ Pat Townsely from Evolverment.com, Eos Restaurant, Icon, Joseph Phelps Vineyards, Mercedes—Hair of the Dog Cantina, Raymond Cellars, Richard Petty Driving School, Pinnacle Health & Fitness, The GAP, Nantucket Nectars, Palomino Bistro, Rincon Chiropractic, Embassy Vacation Resort, Lagunitas Fine Ales, citysearch7.com, Gordon Biersch, Clos LaChance, Glen Ellen, Pyramid Alehouse, Twenty Tank Brewery, Richard Schmidt School of Surfing, Long Life Yoga Shala, and Gorilla Sports.

If you'd like more information on sponsoring a special event and other fundraising opportunities, please call the Development Office at (415) 665-2345.

### Back to School Wish List

It's summer now, but before you know it, the kids will be getting ready for another school year. The following items are always helpful in preparing Hamilton kids to go back to school in style! (New items only, please!)

- |                          |                                       |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Backpacks (for all ages) | Art supplies (crayons, markers, etc.) |
| Notebooks                | Bus passes                            |
| Paper                    | Gift certificates for:                |
| Pens/ pencils            | Clothing, Socks and Shoes             |

## **H** HAMILTON FAMILY CENTER

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**INSIDE: MAYOR WILLIE BROWN VISITS FOR MOTHER'S DAY!**

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