



# Mental Health Association

OF SAN MATEO COUNTY

*Empowering People to Create Their Best Life*

## SAFE AT HOME

MHA partners with the Housing Authority of the County of San Mateo County to help chronically homeless individuals secure and maintain housing in the community. The Safe At Home program secures housing subsidies for individuals. MHA steps in to provide intensive support services. There are currently 91 people served by the program throughout San Mateo County.

Richie was referred to Spring Street Shelter in 2018 where he remained for 3 months, getting healthier and improving his network of support. He received a housing subsidy through Safe At Home, moving into his first apartment in January, 2019. Shelter Manager Georgia Peterson recently sat down with Richie to discuss the changes in his life.

*“Moving into housing was such a new and novel experience for me it’s hard to put into words how wonderful it is, after being out in the bushes for so long. Off and on for twenty years but chronically for the last 7 years. This is going to be my platform to get some positive action going in my life.*

*In the last 3–5 years I was still doing some drinking. I went through a program and got into Spring Street where I got some excellent help. At Spring Street the staff helped with all kinds of support. Just to have*



Richie and Bob

*Georgia have my back and get me into housing has been so positive. In five years I see myself gainfully employed and healthy. I’m really optimistic about my future now.”*

Bob, an MHA employee, has known Richie for most of the twenty years he was homeless and he admits to tearing up when he found out Richie was getting housing. “He’s been through so much and to see this transformation and know there is a happy ending, well, it’s really heartwarming.”

## WAVERLY PLACE APARTMENTS UPDATE

The goal at MHA is to provide permanent, supportive housing for our clients. Our latest development, the Waverly Place Apartments, open in May of 2018. By June all fifteen units were occupied. The move from homelessness to housing can be a difficult one. MHA staff work closely with residents as they make this transition. One client, John, has been a resident of San Mateo County all his life. He grew up with his grandfather, abalone fishing and hanging out at Moss Beach. When John’s grandfather died, he found himself with no home and no other family at 25. John began a nine year journey of homelessness. A life that he “never saw ending.” Now, at the age of 34, he has been accepted into permanent housing at MHA’s Waverly Place Apartments.

When the day came to sign his lease, John



was nowhere to be found. When asked why he disappeared knowing he had housing he explained he didn’t believe it was real. Even after he signed his lease he still had difficulty adjusting to living indoors and would often go back to his encampment to visit his friends and sleep outside until he realized, “I can’t do this anymore.” He reports that on more than one

occasion he was mugged and lost everything, including the glasses nobody knew he needed.

One of the first tasks for his team was securing him a prescription and glasses. Being able to see clearly, after three years without glasses, has helped stabilize him tremendously.

John’s life has truly changed. He enjoys social activities and community events offered at Waverly Place, as well as the support from staff and the additional resources available. He expressed that housing “took the worries away” and gave him “peace of mind” now that he doesn’t have to think about where he’s going to sleep for the night, take a shower, or if he’s going to be hassled by the police. John calls his selection for housing at Waverly Place “a life saver.”

**SOLMATEO**

Shining Light on Mental Health  
Formerly Community Service League (CSL)

39<sup>TH</sup>

Signature



**KITCHEN TOUR**

Friday, May 17 • 10 AM - 3 PM

PROUDLY BENEFITING



**STAR VISTA**

Crisis Intervention and  
Suicide Prevention Center



**MHA**

Mental Health Association  
of San Mateo County

- Self-Guided Tour of SIX Beautiful Homes in Burlingame and Hillsborough
- Treats to Sample
- Gifts for Sale
- Tickets may be purchased online at [www.solmateo.org](http://www.solmateo.org) or on Tour day at each home

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**Mental Health Association of San Mateo County Presents:**  
**Navigating the Mental Health System**

A day-long symposium to help human service providers, mental health practitioners, mental health consumers and families better understand and access mental health services in our community.

**TOPICS WILL INCLUDE:**

- Mental Health Access 101
- Mental Health and Housing
- What to Do in a Crisis
- Advances in Mental Health Treatment



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**Friday, May 24, 2019 • 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM**

**The Sobrato Center for Nonprofits • 350 Twin Dolphin Drive, Redwood Shores**

6 CEU/CME credits available for LCSW, LMFT, LPCC, CCAPP, PsyD/Licensed Psychologist, RN, MD, PhD



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