

D.A. grants over \$20,000 to programs in central city

Neighborhood Court fines fuel the awards

BY JONATHAN NEWMAN

FIVE OF THE 11 NONPROFITS awarded Neighborhood Justice Fund grants last month by District Attorney George Gascón will address needs in the Tenderloin, and a sixth will use the money for recreational activities for SoMa kids.

Using proceeds from the fines collected in 2012 in the D.A.'s Neighborhood Courts, which now operate in all 10 police districts, Gascón distributed grants totaling \$37,800 citywide. At his invitation, nonprofits submitted proposals last year on the themes of public safety and neighborhood livability, and Gascón and his staff selected the winners.

Each nonprofit got \$3,500, except Vietnamese Youth Development Center which got \$2,800 — the amount it asked for. The others were: Self Help for the Elderly, Livable City, SF LGBT Aging Policy Task Force, Asociacion Mayab and United Playaz.

"We want to improve the look of our block, so we are replacing our old security gate and \$2,800 is what it will cost," said the Vietnamese Center's executive director, Judy Young. The gate has been broken since 2008. She hopes to have the new metal gate in place at 166 Eddy St. by late May, just before summer youth programs start.

Self Help for the Elderly will use the money to spread the word among older Asians about a scam of near-epidemic proportions in the Bay Area with more than 150 cases in the past year, but only 10 arrests so far in the gang operation.

It works like this: Asian seniors, mainly women, are stopped on the street by a group of three or four people who say in Chinese that they see a "black karma" hovering about them and their family and fortune will suffer unless a monk or

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PHOTO BY JONATHAN NEWMAN

This iron security gate at Vietnamese Youth Development Center, broken for five years, will be replaced using \$2,800 from the D.A.'s Neighborhood Courts fines.

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'I USUALLY EAT OUT'



PHOTO BY MARK DONEZA

Franklin Croney, a resident of The Rose, changed his eating habits, dropping from 521 pounds that put him in a wheelchair to 387 pounds. He uses a microwave to prepare meals in his room.

Cooking in SROs

Limited options for whipping up healthy meals

BY ERIC LOUIE

FOR THE MOST PART, 74-year-old Purita Canada gets her daily meals from the Chinese restaurants around Sixth Street. The retired schoolteacher from the Philippines lives alone at The Rose, never learned much about cooking and likes seeing others when she goes out.

She does, however, appreciate the limited facilities at the South of Market residential hotel where she has lived almost a decade. She has a rice cooker and microwave in her room, and a communal kitchen on the hotel's bottom floor that enables her to have hot soup before heading to Mass in the mornings.

"It's very, very cold," Canada said, still bundled up with a blanket on a weekday afternoon after a class intended to help more SRO residents cook for themselves, emphasizing healthful fare. Such classes have become a trend.

For most residents of Tenderloin and SoMa SROs, options for a home-cooked meal are limited. In their room, they might have a microwave, sometimes provided as part of the amenities. They might also have a rice maker or crockpot. Hot plates, toaster ovens and electrical skills are generally prohibited, though many residents break the rules. Some

renovated SROs have a full range in the community kitchen residents all share.

A few SROs have a mini-kitchen in each room. Mercy Housing's Arlington Hotel, in its recent major renovation that reduced it from 173 to 154 units, put kitchenettes and bathrooms in every one. John Elberling, CEO of TODCO, a prominent nonprofit South of Market developer, said TODCO put two-burner stovetops and sinks in each room as part of their recently completed Isabel Hotel renovation. TODCO similarly equipped Bayanihan House when it reopened it in 1999.

But microwaving is probably the most popular way to prepare meals in SROs. Elberling notes that many residents live alone and find it easier to make other arrangements than use the communal amenities. "Some do and some don't."

In a report advocacy groups presented to the Department of Aging and Adult Services and the Board of Supervisors' Single Room Occupancy Taskforce last summer, only a third of the SRO residents who responded to the survey said they had access to a kitchen. A fraction said they had limited access, but more than half said they had none at all. As a result, 1 in 5 of the 151 respondents said, they often skipped a meal.

Josh Vining, an organizer with the Mission SRO Collaborative who worked on the survey with the Tenderloin and Chinatown SRO Collaboratives, believes the numbers would be more woeful if they'd been able to poll more residents of hotels that do not get public funding — which are less likely to have a kitchen than the nonprofit SROs. Only a third of respondents in the "Seniors and

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Boeddeker design snafu — a wedgie

BY TOM CARTER

A GLITCH in the blueprint for Boeddeker Park's \$6 million makeover that planners thought they had found a solution for has created another problem spotted in the nick of time by street-savvy park activists. Now the planners are back to the drawing board.

The first problem surfaced at a Friends of Boeddeker Park meeting in March when Project Manager Alejandra Chiesa from Trust for Public Land, the nonprofit that spearheaded the park redo, was explaining a structural change. She sketched a section of the park's northern part, showing a swing gate for the service entrance on Ellis Street, which also is the emergency exit from the park.

But, according to building code rules, the gate cannot swing outward and block the sidewalk, a restriction park designers apparently were unaware of. Their planned alteration that Chiesa drew showed a 60-foot-long section of the 7-foot-high north fence angled inward, ending at a gate that would open out to the west side, she said, not north onto the sidewalk, as originally drawn. This left open, next to the sidewalk, a long triangular space that widened as it led to the gate.

Trevor Long, one of the seven people at the Friends meeting, immediately saw trouble.

Long and his wife, Janet, have worked 2½ years at Youth With a Mission, a service program adjacent to the park on Ellis and across from Glide Memorial Methodist Church where hundreds of poor folks line up for its soup kitchen and services. The Longs are familiar with the habits of people living on the street and the mounds of trash that accumulate.

Trevor Long said the open wedge would soon become a hangout and crash site for overnights. Others, including Friends Chair Betty Traynor, quickly agreed.

"They would just throw trash over the fence there," said Janet Long. "And food, too. There would be a terrible smell. It would have to be cleaned every day."



PHOTO BY TOM CARTER

Boeddeker Park's renovation at the northern side, as seen from Presentation Senior Community next door, includes a jog in the fencing away from the sidewalk, creating a wedge that some say will be problematic. A solution is being sought.

"I am glad you brought up this problem," Chiesa said. "I agree we need a solution."

Several options were mentioned but quickly discarded. Some sort of moveable wall or gate, maybe with decorative metal flowers, could close off the wedge, artist Amy Blackstone suggested. Blackstone designed the decorative bulletin board outside the main gate, which is still standing, and has a contract to do more work for the new park.

Chiesa said she would take the problem back to her office and hoped to have a solution to report at the April

18 Friends meeting. When the northern section is finished, workers will begin laying the foundation for the new clubhouse, she said.

Blackstone showed colorful sketches of her project, which is to be four 6-by-6-foot see-through panels that will go on the fencing round at the Eddy-Jones street corner. The panels will be green metal stalks with metal flowers of varying sizes and colors, "galvanized, which will stop the rust."

The bulletin board, posted with park updates, will remain up for several more months. The park makeover is to be complete by April 2014. ■

THE NEIGHBORHOOD A new community Website, Epicenter-SF.org, premiered March 27 to publicize arts, culture, community events, dining, shopping and nightlife within the boundaries of the Central Market, Civic Center and North of Market/Tenderloin CBDs bounded by Fifth Street and Mason Street on the east, from Mason to Polk and Turk from Polk to Gough on the north, along Gough and South Van Ness to Minna on the west and Minna back to Sixth plus Folsom from Sixth to Fifth on the south.

The CBDs, the Office of Economic and Workforce Development and the Arts Commission are collaborating on the Internet project. The site includes a business directory for local merchants to trumpet their goods and services. To calendar your neighborhood event or announce your mid-Market business, go to Epicenter-SF.org.

CALIFORNIA RESIDENTS

Anyone who gets SSI, food stamps, Medicaid and other public assistance or earns less than \$15,000 a year can get a cell phone and free service under the federal Lifeline Assistance program that helps homeless and others connect with family, friends, shelters, housing and potential employers.

To enroll, call Assurance Wireless at (800) 395-2171 or go to assurance-wireless.com, fill out the paperwork and wait about 10 days for a cell phone good for 250 voice minutes and 250 text messages monthly. Six weeks later or so, the state will forward an application to establish eligibility and, if those papers are in order, the free service continues. California will review eligibility once a year. Funds for the program are generated from a portion of the universal service fee current phone users pay for monthly service, about 2% of the bill. ■

D.A. awards \$20,000-plus in grants for central city services

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master blesses their worldly goods. The senior is persuaded to place her jewelry and money in a bag and bring it to the scammers, who will arrange for the blessing. Presto, a switch is made and

the targeted senior returns home with a bag of worthless scrap paper — jewelry and money gone for good.

Anni Chung, Self Help executive director, estimates elders in San Francisco have lost more than \$250,000 to the scammers. Self Help will use its \$3,500

to organize viewings of an SFPD video describing in Cantonese the crooks' technique and methods and to distribute among the elderly a distinctive blue cloth bag for them to carry. The bag is boldly printed in English and Cantonese — Beware of Street Scams.

Livable City will use its grant to create a new program — Play Streets for All — a spinoff from the 5-year-old Sunday Streets. Where Sunday Streets requires closing 2 to 5 miles to traffic and temporarily rerouting public transit, Play Streets will use only a block or two of car-free open streets, without disrupting Muni, to stage recreational activities aimed at kids and families.

Four neighborhoods will pilot Play Streets this year, the Tenderloin on Aug. 18.

The SF LGBT Aging Policy Task Force, created by the Board of Supervisors last year, will use the grant to conduct focus groups to test the validity of certain assumptions about LGBT seniors, especially those who came of age in the 1950s and '60s. Bill Ambrunn, chair of the task force, said they place less trust in law enforcement, are more reluctant to report themselves as victims of elder abuse and curtail their daily activities from fear of attack.

Ambrunn said that when the information is tabulated, the task force will make policy recommendations to the board. A focus group for transgender seniors living in Tenderloin SROs is

planned for midsummer.

Asociacion Mayab, which provides social services and emergency support to the Mayan community, estimates that 15,000 people from Mexico's southeastern provinces, Yucatan and Quintana Roo, now call San Francisco home and a third live in the Tenderloin. Most speak only Mayan, and many are undocumented and culturally isolated, said Alberto Perez, Asociacion Mayab director of programs.

"They can be targets for the bad guys," he said. "We'll use the money for outreach and to build a bridge between Mayan speakers and the Police Department. Our community needs to know it is okay to report the crimes against them. We'll try to get a dialogue going with the Police Department." Perez hopes the first community meeting with the SFPD can occur in early June.

United Playaz will put the grant toward its after-school and summer sports programs for SoMa kids ages 7-13 — basketball, flag football, baseball and soccer — all designed to teach the young how to work with their peers and resolve conflicts peacefully. A winning attitude helps as well. Last month the UP girls and boys basketball teams each took first place in the Rec and Park Tournament.

Each nonprofit got half of its Neighborhood Justice Fund grant last month. They'll get the rest on completion of their project. ■

CENTRAL CITY



NEWS IS A COMMUNITY SERVICE
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'We sat watching the city burn'

Noted doctor was 9, living in Tenderloin, when quake hit

Dr. Kazue Togasaki lived an amazingly rich life, stretching from her childhood experience of the 1906 earthquake and fire to her long professional career as an obstetrician. She was one of the first two Japanese American women to get a medical degree in the United States. She delivered babies and had other medical responsibilities at Tanforan assembly center and Tule Lake, Poston, Manzanar and Topaz relocation camps where she was held during World War II. The biographical dictionary Notable American Women says that Dr. Togasaki, who had an active practice in San Francisco until she retired at 75, delivered more than 10,000 babies in her long career. One of nine siblings, she and her five sisters all became nurses or doctors and none married. Dr. Togasaki was 81 when Study Center's Oral History Project staffer Lenny Limjoco interviewed and photographed her in 1978 as a notable resident of the Fillmore/Japantown neighborhood, though she had lived in the Mission, SoMa and Tenderloin as a child. She died in 1992.

— Marjorie Beggs

You lived at Geary and Mason when the 1906 quake hit. What happened to you and your family?

I was 9 years old and was going to school at Clement Grammar on Jones and Geary. [The quake and fire destroyed the school.] I remember waking up that day — our bedroom was next to the kitchen — and the chimney had fallen in, and the kitchen was filled with soot. I remember we got dressed and walked from our house to 14th and Church where there was a hill, and that afternoon and for two days in the daytime we sat, watching the city burn. We were staying with my uncle on Dolores where it comes into Market Street. He had a carnation nursery near Church and Market. When the fires started, my younger brother, who was about 6 years old, would go stand at the window, see the whole city burning, and then scream. We tried to keep him back from the window, you know, but it just fascinated him — he kept going to the window and screaming.

What was your early family life like?

I was born in 1897 and my family lived in the Inner Mission, I think on 10th Street. When I was 3 years old, we went back to Japan, then came back to San Francisco, and a year later, my second brother was born. For a while we lived on Stevenson Street between Sixth and Fifth, then moved to Geary and Mason, a block from the St. Francis Hotel. My parents had a little store at 405 Geary that sold Japanese tea and rice and chinaware.

They opened it to make a living. By the early '40s, the store was one of the biggest Japanese wholesalers in the city.

My father had come to San Francisco in 1886 to study American law, right after he graduated from law school in Japan, but he couldn't find work here so he went back to Japan. No work there, so he came back here again, and that's when he met my mother, who was a student. Later, they went back to Japan and got married, but still there

Neighborhood ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

"At that time, there was nothing for a Japanese girl to do, except maybe be a salesgirl, and my father wouldn't let me do that..."

Dr. Kazue Togasaki

was no work so they came back here. My mother was the daughter of a merchant so she knew how to buy and sell, but my father, a lawyer, not a businessman, thought it was wrong to make a profit selling. So she taught him.

After the earthquake, we lived at Post and Buchanan and I went to school at Hearst Grammar, and then, a year later, the Gentlemen's Agreement came in. [An informal U.S.-Japan agreement, it restricted Japanese immigration and reinforced a 1906 S.F. Board of Education rule that required Japanese students to attend a segregated school.] My brothers and I and one other girl were the only Japanese at Hearst, and we were told we couldn't stay and had to go to the Japanese school, over on Sutter between Buchanan and Laguna. I think we were out of school entirely for a semester, but in that time, the Japanese government intervened and made such a fuss, we all had to go back to Hearst again.

For high school I went to Lowell — it was on Hayes and Masonic then — and after that to U.C. Berkeley for two semesters. Then I went to Stanford University and graduated with a bachelor's degree in zoology in 1920.

Did you go to work after that?

At that time, there was nothing for a Japanese girl to do, except maybe be a salesgirl, and my father wouldn't let me do that, so I got a job as a maid working in a family for about a year — it was crazy and it was no fun, so I went into nursing, a two-year program at Children's Hospital that I completed at the top of the class. They had accepted me in the program, but I still couldn't work here — the climate in San Francisco was that they just "didn't use" Japanese nurses; the staff wouldn't have it. Then I went to work as a secretary for the YMCA International Institute. They wanted me to also do fundraising, but my father said, "No daughter of mine is going to be a beggar." So I lost that job. Next, I took one year in public health nursing at U.C., and I might have gotten a job in Stockton, which had a big Japanese population, but I decided I was getting sick and tired of breaking my back to work and then having the job go to the white nurse. It just wasn't worth it.



PHOTO COURTESY SAN FRANCISCO HISTORY CENTER, S.F. PUBLIC LIBRARY

The intersection of Geary and Mason, which was mostly destroyed, where Dr. Togasaki and her family lived at the time of the '06 quake and fire. At right are the ruins of the Native Sons of the Golden West building, the First Congregational Church and the Fairmont Hotel at the top of Mason Street.



PHOTO BY LENNY LIMJOCO

Dr. Togasaki "[Children's Hospital] had accepted me in the nursing program, but I still couldn't work here — the climate in San Francisco was that they just 'didn't use' Japanese nurses."

In 1929, I went back East to Women's Medical College in Philadelphia and became a doctor, a general practitioner, graduating in '33. I did my internship back here at Children's Hospital, then had a practice with a Caucasian doctor in an office downtown, on Sutter and Powell, until the early '40s. I bought this house at Buchanan and Post, the center of the Japanese community, in 1938.

What happened during World War II? Were you still a general practitioner?

Yes, I was, and an obstetrician. Because I was one of the older Nisei sent to the Tanforan assembly center, I was asked to help open up the medical services there. [Tanforan was one of 18 first stops for detainees on the West Coast and Arizona. From there, they were sent to relocation centers.] The relocation was war hysteria. They just told us, on such and such a day be ready to leave. They had big buses and you were allowed to take two suitcases, whatever you could carry.

I just remember being busy all the time at Tanforan. I stayed there a month, responsible for setting up the hospital,

trying to get everything organized. I had the head nurse and the instructor of nurses at Stanford University Hospital and a doctor, all Japanese, working with me at Tanforan. They learned a lot from me because I was the top dog — 10 or 15 years older than them with real work experience. In that month, I delivered 50 babies in the camp. Sometimes I stood behind the doctor and taught him how to deliver. I thought it was my duty. In other camps, I know they'd send the pregnant women out to the nearest county hospital to deliver, but I never thought about sending them out from Tanforan.

From Tanforan I was sent to the Stockton assembly center, then to the Tule Lake, Poston, Manzanar and Topaz relocation centers. I stayed at Topaz [in Utah] and got out, I think, late fall of 1943, something like that.

What happened to your house when you were in the camps?

I had a friend who was supposed to take care of it, but she was dumb as a doornail and she rented it to a bunch of ... well, everything was stolen. By the

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SRO-cooking classes latest trend

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Adults with Disabilities in SROs: Survey and Recommendations” lived in proprietary hotels.

“The majority of them do not have any,” said Vining. He also said it varies by neighborhood, with communal kitchens less likely in the Mission and Tenderloin SROs than Chinatown.

Clarisa Ferguson, 36, knows what it’s like to not have a kitchen. An admitted late-night snacker, she has lived in numerous private hotels since becoming intermitently homeless in 2004.

“It’s hell,” said Ferguson. She is on disability and going to school. “You can’t eat your regular food like you want to.”

Now living at The Rose, she likes using the community kitchen a lot, even if it means going in late at night to work around others’ schedules.

“I’ll come in when no one else is here,” she said.

Many others, though in need, are not as accommodating. Ironically, Sumiyata Monoarfa, who makes a large monthly meal for her fellow residents at the Dalt (see August 2012 Central City Extra), doesn’t use the community kitchen much. The stove has only four burners, and the kitchen is often crowded, she said.

“For my regular meals I usually eat out,” said Monoarfa, a former self-employed paralegal and tax expert who is disabled. She takes medications for cholesterol, high blood pressure and other issues, which means she needs to eat on a regular schedule.

Monoarfa said she is allowed to use the kitchen after its midnight closing time to make the group meals, which take several days to prepare. She said many Tenderloin SROs don’t have their own kitchen, and often companions of Dalt residents will drop by so they can eat together. She tries not to take over the kitchen for her events.

Adrienne Markworth, executive director of the nonprofit Leah’s Pantry, said communal kitchens are common, but not used much. Cooking is personal, and residents may not be used to the different spices, smells and methods of others in the shared space, she said. There is also the need to store the food and cooking equipment. Some kitchens are equipped, but securing personal items so they don’t get stolen might



Adrienne Markworth, executive director of Leah’s Pantry, leads the initial cooking class in the community kitchen at the Rose Hotel.

require carrying them back and forth.

“We find they’re not used a lot,” she said.

That might just be because of scheduling. Hatty Lee, a community organizer with TNDC, which has community kitchens in almost all of its 31 buildings, said that most residents cook in their own rooms, probably because the kitchens are in use.

Leah’s Pantry offers SRO residents nutrition workshops using rice makers, crockpots and microwaves for the limited cooking allowed. Recipes often are for soups or stews, using items from the San Francisco Food Bank and other food distributions for the needy. The

recipes also are designed to reduce effort, for instance, suggesting cooking a chicken whole, making it easier to break apart for storing leftovers. Such efficiencies are especially important for the elderly or others with mobility issues.

After a pilot program last fall, Leah’s Pantry plans to give out 200 kitchen kits this year including cutting boards and utensils funded through the city Human Services Agency. Currently, Leah’s Pantry is working with TNDC’s Curran House, Compass Family Service’s Clara House and Mercy Housing’s Rose.

“The benefit is increased fruits and vegetables,” said Markworth.

Emily Dore, senior program coordinator at Leah’s Pantry, recently led the first of six weekly classes at The Rose in the hotel’s communal kitchen. Participants tasted a variety of citrus and had discussions that included their health goals, such as breaking habits like deep-fried takeout and late-night snacking.

She then brought out packs of instant noodles — the staple of cheap eats — that were given away by the Food Bank that day. She showed the residents how to add cabbage, celery, onions, mushrooms and green bell peppers. Another tip was to cut the seasoning packet, which contains a lot of salt,

Preparing a meal in SRO room

Resident of Rose Hotel makes do despite many cooking and culinary challenges

FRANKLIN CRONEY works with chef-like precision: Three minutes to heat the potatoes au gratin and 13 minutes for each side of the two pork chops, before combining them for uniform temperature.

Croney is in his carpeted living room at the Rose Hotel overlooking Sixth Street. It’s also his bedroom and ersatz kitchen. Croney is cooking on a NuWave infrared oven, a plug-in device that sits on a television stand by the window, a few feet from his bed. He also has a microwave — which is where he keeps his dishes — that sits on milk crates next to a sink and mirror.

His TV is on a storage tower where he keeps canned goods. He eats sitting on a chair in the middle of the room; next to it is a chair for guests. A full-size

“There’s no other way to cook in this place.”

— Franklin Croney

refrigerator, a \$30 purchase from a resident getting evicted, is in a corner.

As a corner room, Croney’s is larger than most SRO units, an accommodation for his disability. It also has a bathroom. For Croney, who in three years has dropped from 521 pounds to 387 pounds, the amenities are a godsend, the difference between life and death.

“There’s no other way to cook in this place,” said Croney, 58, touting his

NuWave, also used to boil eggs and make vegetables. “That’s my pride and joy.”

For many residents of SROs, their options for making meals at home are extremely limited. The Rose has a community kitchen, but, Croney said, its four-burner stove fills up fast with others making meals at the 76-unit hotel on Sixth Street. He had used an electric skillet in his room before buying the NuWave oven and grill, but was caught by management and told not to use it. The skillet was too greasy a way to cook anyway, he said.

Croney’s meal this day was a special treat, from mail order Omaha Steaks. He usually doesn’t eat so extravagantly — his meats mostly come from the corner market — but once every few months he’ll splurge.



The potatoes come out of their package frozen and Croney heats them in the microwave. The pork chops, also frozen, get a mix of cinnamon, garlic powder and other herbs that help with blood pressure and replace salt. A flick of the switch and the infrared oven is on, swirling the toppings around the cooking container. Before long, drippings are running into a pan inside.

When both sides of the pork chops are cooked, Croney puts the potatoes in. The oven can keep them warm. From the hallway there’s the smell of the spices he uses, something Croney said has made him popular and inspired others to make their own meals.

... toward healthful eating habits



PHOTOS BY MARK DONEZA

...el to help SRO residents make healthier choices about their eating habits. Rose resident Franklin Croney is on her left. A salad plate is prepared for each participant.

to make it healthier.

"We're thinking, 'Of course, people are going to eat it,'" Dore said of the packaged noodles. "We don't want it to go to waste."

Attendance at the Pantry's initial class in January at the 76-unit Rose was sparse, about a handful. Others passed through the room to pick up sweet potatoes and other items the Food Bank dropped off earlier that day. Those there were eager to participate.

One was Franklin Croney, 58, a former money management case manager who weighed 450 pounds when he became homeless in 2007. He moved into The Rose several months later,

but couldn't shake the depression that caused him to gain weight until he needed a wheelchair to get around. A few years ago, through the help of others, he decided to lose the weight. He's lost more than 130 pounds, and is no longer in a wheelchair.

Croney doesn't use The Rose's kitchen; he says it's not convenient. He is very proud of the infrared oven he bought after the hotel caught him with a skillet he wasn't supposed to have. He said the skillet was a greasy way to cook anyway. Croney said preparing his own food cheaply is important for him to continue losing weight.

"I don't have to worry about going

to the store for fast food anymore."

Amy Orlandi, nutrition education program coordinator at the Food Bank, which started its own classes last summer, geared toward SRO limitations and sometimes using unfamiliar fresh vegetables from its giveaways, said it's hard to say how popular the classes are. A handful to a dozen show up, depending on whether the SROs promote the classes. Some residents were professional chefs, others don't boil water. But it's important they have a choice on what they eat and how it's prepared, she said.

"People come from all backgrounds. It just gives people more options." ■

**Nonprofits'
policies on
cooking in
SROs.**
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While waiting for his meal, neighbors dropped by to check on him, with management also calling. Croney said a resident broke the elevator, and he had not left his room for three days. He has trouble with the stairs. They wanted to know if he needed help getting the potatoes and onions donated as part of their Wednesday drop-offs, or the cooked food that sometimes comes by. One friend brought a container with fish on purple cabbage and yellow and orange lentils.

"You can actually eat like this on Sixth Street," Croney said. Mimicking a large bone to his mouth, he said: "I do my King Henry the Eighth at night." ■

— ERIC LOUIE

Franklin Croney, a resident of Mercy Housing's Rose Hotel, prepares meals in his room, trying to cook as healthily as possible under the circumstances so that he can continue to shed pounds. He has a refrigerator, a luxury that not all SRO residents have in their rooms. He brings out the pork chops and puts them on the grill of his electric oven, 13 minutes per side. The potatoes are frozen, and he'll put them in the microwave that sits on milk crates for three minutes, then keep them warm in the oven. Finally, he's ready to eat and sits on a chair in the middle of his room.

PHOTOS BY MARK DONEZA

Cooking options in SROs vary by hotel

All ban hot plates, allow microwaves; most of the renovated hotels have community kitchens

BY MARJORIE BEGGS AND ERIC LOUIE

BY DEFINITION, SRO rooms don't have kitchens, and if the hotel is old or not owned or managed by a nonprofit, its residents are unlikely to have access to a communal kitchen.

Nonprofits have made the most headway in trying to help people eat more healthily, independently and inexpensively. But variations from hotel to hotel are common, even within those owned by the same nonprofit.

Hot plates and electric skillets are universally banned in rooms because of the potential for fires. Microwaves, crockpots and refrigerators usually get a thumbs-up.

Mindy Talmadge, city Fire Department spokeswoman, said there is nothing specifically saying SRO residents can't cook in their rooms. But since the rooms are generally designated for sleeping, and don't have other requirements like sprinklers, there are restrictions on ignition sources that limit food preparation in the rooms.

Jacquie Hoffman, Mercy Housing's regional vice president of property operations, says some of Mercy's rooms come with small appliances. For those that don't, staff help residents get them.

"I think we do realize good nutrition is tied to other things," she said. "It's one of the things we want to do to support people."

Community kitchens, like those at Mercy's Rose and Dudley hotels, are a popular addition when SRO hotels are renovated. Residents bring their own food and cookware, and sometimes there are community meals. The Rose and Dudley kitchens both close for the night, and each has its own scheduling policies.

There may be community kitchens in the new and renovated SROs, but those are a minority of the 500 SROs in the city. A survey conducted last year by the SRO Collaborative about seniors with disabilities living in SROs found that only a third of the 151 respondents had full access to a kitchen.



An SRO Collaborative survey found that only a third of SRO residents have access to community kitchens. But conditions can discourage use.

When they do, there can be downsides, Hoffman says. Sometimes they get overcrowded, and some residents don't treat others' personal property with respect. "And then people get upset," she said.

Almost all of TNDC's 31 buildings have community kitchens, says Hatty Lee, community organizer. The kitchens are open 24/7 in some SROs, but most have 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. or midnight hours. The deciding factors include what staff are available to supervise and noise.

"You probably don't want people cooking up a storm at 2 a.m.," Lee said.

Doug Gary, co-director of DISH, property manager of six SROs, says all its 450 supportive housing units have microwaves and mini-refrigerators.

"But we're in old buildings with structural limitations, so putting in community kitchens isn't an option now," Gary said. "It would be costly, of course, but it would also take units offline."

He believes that most nonprofit developers and service providers are

doing what they can, given their constraints, to meet their residents' food needs. "But, sadly, what is largely available now is inadequate," he says. And in inner-city SROs, the problem "is at the core of food justice for the poor."

As a model of progress, Gary points to the just-opened Kelly Cullen Community, whose 172 studio apartments in the beautifully renovated old YMCA come complete with a kitchenette — a full-size refrigerator, two-burner stove top, microwave and sink. Every resident also can use the well-equipped 5th-floor community kitchen.

That's one answer to the problem, he says, "doing incredible rehab. The other is finding a mix of private-public money to rehab parts of buildings. I think there's room for the philanthropic community to contribute to this effort."

Among Tenderloin Housing Clinic's 16 SRO hotels, all master leased with funding from the Human Services Agency, six have communal kitchens. Almost all of its other hotels have at least microwaves for tenants to use, and some also have stovetops or stove/oven combos, says Krista Gaeta, THC deputy director.

THC's room policies are familiar: Small refrigerators, microwaves and other cooking equipment with no open flames are allowed. No hot plates.

"We do unit inspections with the pest control service every month, which allows us to monitor the situation to some degree," Gaeta wrote in an email. "That said, hot plates and other unsafe cooking equipment have gone undetected. Luckily, we've only had a few fires or other incidents involving cooking equipment over the years."

What keeps nonprofit owners and managers from doing more for their residents is complicated, Gaeta said in her email. "The electrical systems in the old SRO buildings are not always equipped to deal with modern needs (microwaves, fridges, TVs and lights



PHOTOS BY MARJORIE BEGGS

All 172 units in TNDC's new Kelly Cullen Community have kitchenettes, including plenty of storage for food and cooking utensils.

at the same time). It's an issue we are looking into, but it's very costly. We do our best to provide community kitchens when space and budget permit."

Meantime, they try to innovate: "We hold a weekly food pantry at most of our sites with food from the S.F. Food Bank," she wrote. "One site has a '2 buck chuck' contest every week following the pantry. Each tenant can use whatever they got from the pantry and then supplement with no more than \$2 of other ingredients. There have been some great, creative meals to come out of this."

The city has begun to weigh in on the issue of how SRO residents feed themselves.

Paula Jones, director of food systems for the Health Department and chair of the Board of Supervisors' Food Security Task Force, said that in January, the task force put nutrition in SROs on the front burner for future examination. "A lot of people are on the same page at this point."

Last summer, ImproveSF, a city initiative that solicits ideas to address specific issues, got more than 100 suggestions about how to improve nutrition for low-income SRO residents — from cookbooks and food carts to apps that help collect unused food. ■

OBITUARIES

JESSE 'DEXTER' SLOBIN A user of crystal — but nice

More tears were shed than words spoken by the dozen friends and acquaintances of Jesse "Dexter" Slobin gathered in the community room of the Coronado Hotel for his memorial March 14, one day before he would have turned 45.

All who voiced their thoughts and memories of Mr. Slobin, who was known as Dexter, shared an appreciation of his warmth and decency.

Rev. Glenda Hope, who presided, read from one of the two cards on a table also holding a candle and Mr. Slobin's photograph. "In the years that I have known you, you shared kindness and strength and put faith back in my heart," it read.

Terriann said he was "a very wonderful person. Like a lot of people, he had problems, but he had a kind heart."

"He was real nice," another woman said, tearfully recalling traveling to Lake County with him to bury her son. Afterward, they visited a lake where Mr. Slobin had been startled by the sound of a bullfrog. "I thought it was cute that he didn't know what a bullfrog was," she said.

Out on Ellis Street, Craig, a Coronado neighbor, called Mr. Slobin, "the nicest person I've ever met. He was just reckless in his behavior. He self-sacri-



ficed himself. He was always there for others, always. I've never met someone that outgoing and friendly."

Craig, who hinted that he and Mr. Slobin shared a certain kind of drug problem, also attested to his unflinching honesty.

This, despite what Craig called Mr. Slobin's "terrible life."

He "had no chance at all," Craig said, explaining that he's heard that Mr. Slobin was raised in an orphanage and lived on the street for years.

Clarence Johnson Jr., his caseworker of more than five years, said Mr. Slobin had told him he had a sister, but wouldn't provide particulars. "I'm his emergency contact," Johnson said.

Ricky, Terriann's husband — they held hands during the memorial — said Mr. Slobin had "spent most of his life on the streets. Methamphetamine was his

religion, and so is mine," Ricky said. "He became comfortable that he would use the rest of his life."

But Mr. Slobin wanted to be a DJ — he preferred "house" beats and industrial beats — Ricky said, and also had hopes of getting a permit to sell on the street poster-size prints of his digital media artwork that he would spend hours working on in his hotel room.

"He was on that computer all the time," said Dave, who called Mr. Slobin his best friend and Ricky backed him up.

"I'll sure miss him," he continued, while searching his pockets for a coin he'd found that he said somehow portended that he would soon follow Mr. Slobin's fate. "I know we're going to the same place." He couldn't find the coin.

"There's a lot of us who are next," Ricky said.

Mr. Slobin had hung out on the corner of Church and Market streets for "over 20 years" Ricky said. "He was homeless for so many years. At least he didn't die homeless. We spoke two days before he died. He was grateful to have a roof over his head."

Ricky said that Mr. Slobin, who lived on the 4th floor, collapsed and was "screaming for help" in the hall on the night of March 5. He couldn't breathe. Eventually, paramedics came and were able to revive him and take him to the hospital. He died there the next day, Ricky said.

Johnson recalled: "For three or four weeks I was telling him, 'Your color has

done changed,' but he was more interested in hanging (out). I wish he would have listened to the doctor and took care of his health."

Mr. Slobin took some advice, but not to the point of checking in to S.F. General, Johnson said.

"He was afraid they would keep him," Judy, a former manager of the Coronado, chimed in.

Johnson said that Mr. Slobin was prone to outbursts when in pain. "When his body wasn't right, he would voice it," Johnson said. "He would get boisterous" and have to be told to quiet down.

"He had some kind of internal digestive disorder," Ricky said.

"He got introduced to the crystal, and that's when everything went bad," Johnson said.

Johnson understood that at some point Mr. Slobin had worked in nearby SROs, perhaps as a desk clerk or security. He'd been on General Assistance at the time he became a client of CATS, when he was taken in seven years ago by the SFHOT team. He eventually got SSI and his room at the Coronado, and when his health issues emerged, Johnson said, a room with a bathroom.

"Payday was a bad thing for him," Johnson said. "He'd say, 'I'm going to be up for a couple of days, so don't bother me.' ... I think it's a bad day for a lot of people." ■

— MARK HEDIN

Dr. Togasaki remembers

▶ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

time I got back a year or two after the war, there wasn't much left, all my good things were gone. And I think that happened to most of the Japanese. I did get my house back, but it was one grand mess, so I just started over again. I set up practice here in this neighborhood, and everybody was happy to see a Japanese woman doctor. In all the years before I retired, there was only one other Japanese woman doctor in this area, but she got married after a year and left.

What about the neighborhood now and the Japan Center [built in 1968]? Do you like it?

I don't like it. So many of the Victorians were torn down for it. I think it's a steal because the area should have re-

mained for the average Japanese family. They had to move out — scattered out to the Sunset — and their businesses closed. They lost every way. The builders destroyed the neighborhood. Maybe as time goes on things will change and people will be able to come back, shop in a Japanese store, the way it was before.

Me, I'm perfectly happy to stay here. I grew up on Post and Buchanan. What was there is all gone now, but, you see, it's still near where I grew up.

This is another in a series of photos and excerpts, edited by Marjorie Beggs, from the Neighborhood Oral History Project interviews that the Study Center conducted in 1977-78 under a CETA contract. ■



PHOTO BY CLEM ALBERS, COURTESY OF THE BANCROFT LIBRARY, U.C. BERKELEY

Dr. Kazue Togasaki, one of the first two Japanese American women to get a medical degree, was an obstetrician but is seen here vaccinating newcomers at the Manzanar relocation center, April 1942.

Public defender affirms city stance: No forced treatment

BY MARK HEDIN

Forced treatment is a big issue in San Francisco, where chronic inebriates and mentally ill people run up disproportionate costs at S.F. General and continually require interventions by the criminal justice system.

At his annual Justice Summit, held this year March 19 at the Main Library's Koret Auditorium, Public Defender Jeff Adachi hosted a panel discussion, "Forced Treatment and Constitutional Rights: Can They Coexist?"

Several panelists referred to Laura's Law, the state's 2002 response to a triple slaying by a Grass Valley mental health client. It provides for committing people to treatment programs, even against their will.

But, as panelist Eduardo Vega, executive director of the Mental Health Association of San Francisco, pointed out, that law, AB 1421, has been implemented in only Nevada County, where it's been applied to just four individuals.

Another panelist, Kara Ka Wah Chien, managing attorney in the public defender's office, told The Extra that San Francisco is unlikely to follow Nevada County's example, although city officials dating back to Mayor Newsom in 2003 have advocated doing so.

"For San Francisco, the way I see it, is that there is a tendency to look for something different from Laura's Law to make it more effective. Laura's Law is very controversial in a way.

"Patients' rights advocates have problems with it," she said, "and if not patients' rights, the people who work with it.

"It's not like 5150," she pointed out, where a professional or an officer makes a determination that a person is unsafe to him or herself or others. Un-

der Laura's Law, she said, "If I'm a landlord and I don't like my tenant, I can call someone to get this person assessed."

There are currently some systems in place under which people, willing or not, can be managed. LPS (Lanterman-Petris-Short Act) conservatorships begin with a 72-hour hold for initial, professional observation, which can be followed by a 14-day extended treatment regimen and then a 30-day temporary conservatorship if the individual is found to be a danger to others or him or herself.

Police Chief Greg Suhr complained from the stage that such conservatorships "take an act of God" to get, but Chien disagreed, pointing out that there are approximately 800 people in San Francisco already in that pipeline.

In addition, San Francisco's Department of Public Health two years ago began a voluntary program, the Community Independence Pilot Project, whereby clients who might otherwise become LPS-designated wards of the state are assigned a caseworker who makes decisions on the patients' treatment and can administer medications. Though only nine people are currently in the program, Chien said, it has yielded a 65% reduction in costs for those individuals.

A city evaluation of the program found that the costs of stabilizing the first six individuals in the program for the first 12 months of their participation was a bit more than \$250,000. In the prior 12 months, the city had spent more than \$700,000 providing them with acute care.

"The reason it does well is because it's voluntary," Chien said.

Panelist Deni McLagan of San Diego described that city's "serial inebriate" program, of which she is associate di-

rector, which treats people who have accumulated five "drunk in public" citations. She said that arrests and health care costs have dropped and that 30% of the clients complete the entire program, and 70% complete at least a month's worth of treatment.

Suhr complained that San Francisco no longer authorizes 90-day holds. "It's no fun arresting a drunk," he said, "but my outcomes show that they benefit from it. We have to do something to get the person to stop putting the poison in their system.

"We don't do it, and we should. It's the kind thing to do," he said.

Adachi is exploring the San Diego program, which tackles addiction, a need distinct from that which mental health professionals serve, Chien said.

Something does need to be done, Fancher Larson, senior advocate at S.F. Mental Health Clients' Rights Advo-

cates, told The Extra, while pointing out that Laura's Law "calls for a lot of services to be made available that we don't have."

"The thing with the system," she said, is "once they have the capacity to do something like that, they overdo it. They can pick 'em up for not taking their meds and institutionalize them and take away their freedom. People have a right to due process."

When treatment works, Chien said, "it works because of the person accepting that they need some kind of help.

"As a public defender working with the populations who are in the system," she said, "there are three things that work: Therapy, medication and support groups for social skills, rehabilitation and peer support, and good case management. If you force someone, it only works during the time you force them." ■



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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

SPECIAL EVENTS

Central City Democrats meeting and 7th anniversary celebration, Apr. 29, 6 p.m., 201 Turk St. Community Room. Award ceremony, guest speakers, board elections, door prizes, light refreshments. Co-sponsored by North of Market Business Assn. and Tip Top Market. Info: 339-8683.

ART EVENTS

Cypress String Quartet, Apr. 7, 2-3:30, Main Library, Koret Auditorium. Call & Response Poetry and the music of Dvorak, Schubert and Jennifer Higdon. Info: sfpl.org/index.php?pg=1013297801.

Book talk by Dr. Robert Lustig, Apr. 9, 6-7:30 p.m., Main Library, Koret Auditorium. Dr. Lustig, professor of Clinical Pediatrics at UCSF and director of the UCSF Weight Assessment for Teen and Child Health, will discuss his new book, *Fat Chance: Beating the Odds Against Sugar, Processed Food, Obesity and Disease*, followed by a book sale and signing. Info: sfpl.org/index.php?pg=1012862501.

The Fillmore, film and discussion, Apr. 11, 5:30-7:30, Main Library, Koret Auditorium. The 2001 PBS documentary chronicles key chapters in the neighborhood's history, starting with the earthquake and fire of 1906. A discussion with filmmaker Peter Stein follows the film. Info: sfpl.org/index.php?pg=1010113901.

Death in the Tenderloin library presentation, Apr. 13, 3-4:30 p.m., Park Branch Library, 1833 Page St. Central City Extra reporters Tom Carter and Marjorie Beggs talk about the content and making of the book, which will be on sale at the event. Info: 626-1650.

Poetry Projection Project: A WritersCorps screening (2-3 p.m.) and reception (3-4 p.m.), Apr. 13, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, 750 Folsom. Free festival of short videos, 5 minutes or less, based on youth writing, produced by professional and emerging filmmakers of all ages. WritersCorps, a joint project of the S.F. Arts Commission and S.F. Public Library, places professional writers in community settings to teach creative writing to youth. Info: Alexandra Wilder,

WritersCorps, 252-2546 alexandra.wilder@sfgov.org.

A Fierce Green Fire, The Battle for a Living Planet, Apr. 24, 5:15-7:45 p.m., Main Library, Koret Auditorium. The 2012 prize-winning documentary, directed and written by Mark Kitchell, and narrated by Robert Redford, Meryl Streep, Ashley Judd, Van Jones and Isabel Allende, explores the environmental movement. Info: sfpl.org/index.php?pg=1010600401.

COMMUNITY: REGULAR SCHEDULE HOUSING

Tenant Associations Coalition of San Francisco, 1st Wednesday of each month, noon, 201 Turk St., Community Room. Contact Michael Nulty, 339-8327. Resident unity, leadership training.

HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH

CBHS Consumer Council, 3rd Monday of month, 5-7 p.m., 1380 Howard St., room 537, 255-3695. Consumer advisers from self-help groups and mental health consumer advocates. Public welcome.

Healthcare Action Team, 2nd Wednesday of month, 1010 Mission St., Bayanihan Community Center, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Focus on increasing supportive home services, expanded eligibility for home care, improved discharge planning. Light lunch. Call James Chionsini, 703-0188 x304.

Mental Health Board, 2nd Wednesday of the month, 6:30-8:30 p.m., City Hall, room 278. CBHS advisory committee, open to the public. Call: 255-3474.

SAFETY

SoMa Police Community Relations Forum, 4th Monday of each month, 6-7:30 p.m. Location varies. To receive monthly email info: 538-8100 x202.

Tenderloin Police Station Community Meeting, last Tuesday of month, 6 p.m., police station Community Room, 301 Eddy St. Call Susa Black, 345-7300. Neighborhood safety.



A participant in the WritersCorps Project Apr. 13 at YBC.

Gene Friend Recreation Center Advisory Board, 3rd Thursday of month, 5 p.m. Works to protect SoMa resources for all residents. Gene Friend Rec Center, 270 Sixth St. Info: Tim Figueras, 554-9532.

North of Market/Tenderloin Community Benefit District. Full board meets 3rd Monday at 4 p.m.. Call 292-4812 for location or check nom-tlcbd.org.

SoMa Community Stabilization Fund Advisory Committee, 3rd Thursday of month, 5:30 p.m., 1 South Van Ness, 2nd floor. Info: Claudine del Rosario, 701-5580.

Tenderloin Futures Collaborative, 3rd Wednesday of the month, 11 a.m.-noon, Tenderloin Police Community Room, 301 Eddy. Presentations on issues of interest to neighborhood residents, nonprofits and businesses. Info: 928-6209.

Tenderloin Neighborhood Association, 2nd Friday of month, 842 Geary St., 5 p.m. Nonprofit focuses on health and wellness activities to promote neighborly interactions. Info: tenderloinneighborhood@yahoo.com.

SENIORS AND DISABLED

Mayor's Disability Council, 3rd Friday of month, 1-3 p.m., City Hall, room 400. Call: 554-6789. Open to the public.

Senior Action Network, general meeting, 2nd Thursday of month, 9 a.m.-noon, Universal Unitarian Church, 1187 Franklin St. Monthly programs, 965 Mission St. #700: Senior Housing Action Committee, 3rd Wednesday, 1:30 p.m. Call for health program and Senior University: 546-1333 and www.sfsan.org.

DISTRICT 6 SUPERVISOR

Jane Kim, chair of Rules Committee, member of Budget & Finance Committee and chair of Transbay Joint Forces Authority.

Legislative aides: April Veneracion, Sunny Angulo and Matthias Mormino.

Jane Kim@sfgov.org 554-7970

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT

Alliance for a Better District 6, 2nd Tuesday of each month, 6 p.m., 230 Eddy St. Contact Michael Nulty, 820-1560 or sf_district6@yahoo.com, a districtwide improvement association.

Central Market Community Benefit District, board meets 2nd Tuesday of month, Hotel Whitcomb, 1231 Market St., 3 p.m. Info: 882-3088, http://central-market.org.

Friends of Boeddeker Park, 3rd Thursday this month, 3:30 p.m., Police Station Community Room, 301 Eddy St. Plan park events, activities and improvements. Contact Betty Traynor, 931-1126.



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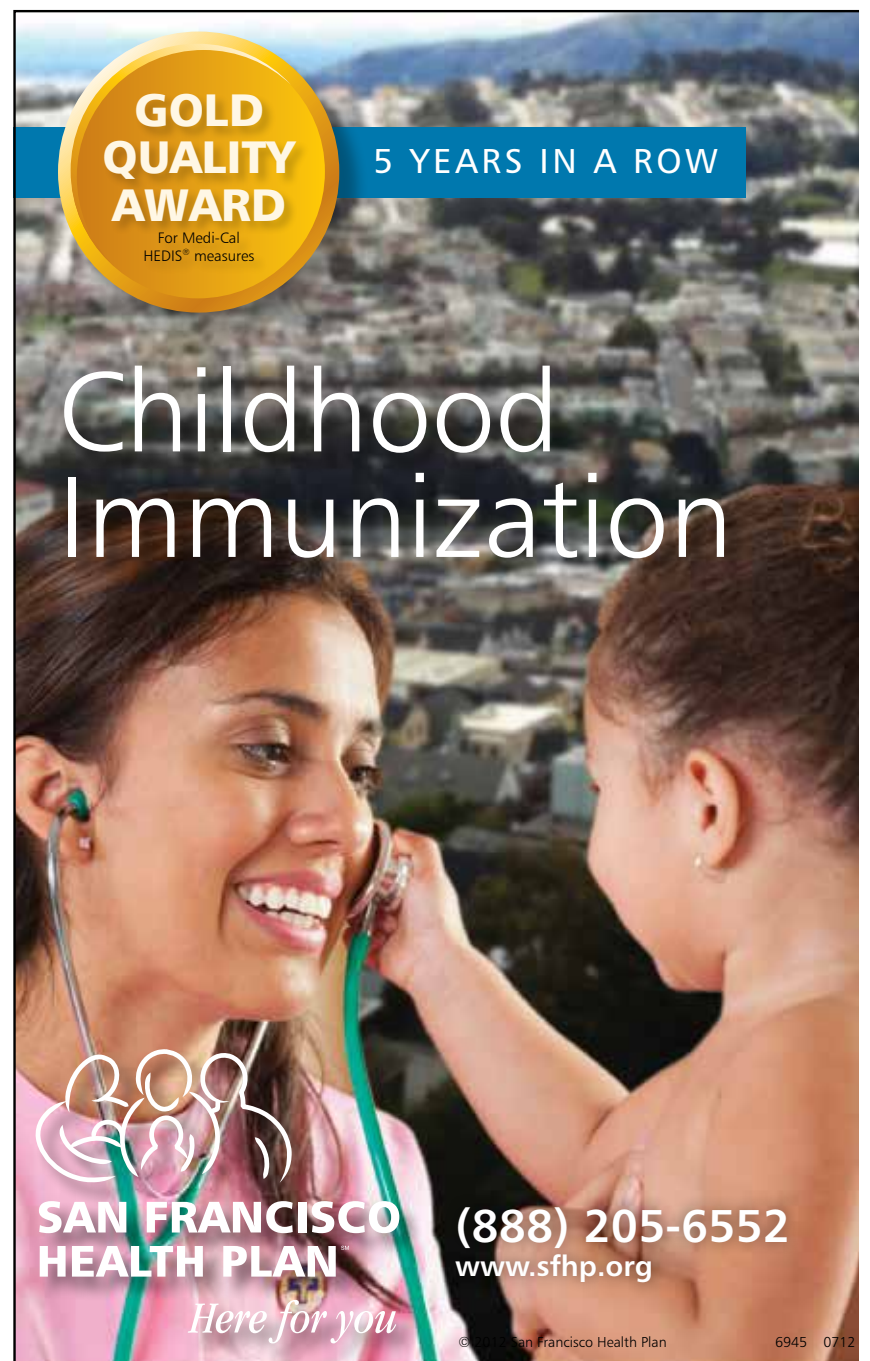


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Bayanihan House (Non-Assisted Units) Located at 88 – 6th Street & Mission OPEN WAITING LIST	SRO – 1 Person, Couple Shared Bath Single 10 1/2 x 12 – Double 12x12 In the unit there is a sink, microwave, refrigerator, 2-burner stove, closet, single bed, community kitchen, 24-hour staff & surveillance, laundry facility	1 person \$30,275/a year Couple \$34,580/a year Minimum income of \$866.40/month	Starting 1-2013 Move in Deposit \$545.00 Rent \$545.00 Utilities included

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