



HOPE FINDS A WAY

**For 40
years, Hope
Cooperative
has served
Sacramento
County**

*Now in Yolo
County, too!*



Michelle Brown, Hope Treasures



Latesha Pierce, Possibilities

HEALTHIER, happier, safer

Hope Cooperative makes life better for **those most in need**

BY **DEBBIE ARRINGTON**

For 40 years, Hope Cooperative has served the mental health needs (and much more) for Sacramento's most vulnerable residents – people facing homelessness.

"We have been doing this work longer than anyone else and we are good at it!" says Erin Johansen, Hope Cooperative's Chief Executive Officer.

Starting with a straightforward mission, Hope Cooperative (also known as TLCS) evolved out of pure need – mental health services where none were available. People on the streets needed housing, food, clothing and medications, too. It's been four decades since Hope Cooperative's beginnings and those huge needs still exist. Meanwhile, Hope Cooperative has grown substantially to provide those services.

"There have been giant changes," says Johansen, who has served as CEO for five years. "When I started, we had 85 employees and a \$6 million (annual) budget. Now, we have 220 employees and a \$22 million budget. That growth was achieved strategically by us but also shows the huge space we operate in. We became known in that space."

Through its many programs, Hope Cooperative makes a substantial impact on local efforts to help people experiencing homelessness or mental health crises, serving more than 8,000 clients annually. Many clients started out homeless, but are now living in their "forever" homes. Hope's programs have helped thousands of Sacramentans be happier, healthier and safer.

"People experiencing homelessness are our people," Johansen says. "Homelessness, crisis intervention, behavioral health, affordable housing; that's our focus."

After so many years serving only Sacramento County, Hope Cooperative recently expanded its behavioral health services to Yolo County. Hope Cooperative is also partnering with the City of Sacramento Department of Community Response doing homeless outreach.

"The 'secret sauce' for our organization is our staff – people who interact with people in need on the front line," Johansen says.

As the cost of housing continues to skyrocket, so does the need for affordable places to live. That's increasingly become a priority for Hope Cooperative, providing wrap-around services along with roofs over people's heads.

Besides its extensive behavioral health programs, Hope Cooperative housing projects provide homes to hundreds of individuals and families. All housing clients are referred by the County or Continuum of Care. Hope Cooperative owns and operates seven housing projects. It's also in the process of creating two more projects via community partnerships with Jamboree Housing and Excelerate Housing Group.



"What sets us apart is that we're one of the most collaborative organizations in the region," Johansen says. "We'll partner with anyone who will help us get where we need to go."

Each project represents another step towards providing homes to those most in need.

"We witness miracles everyday," Johansen says.

"People experiencing homelessness are our people. Homelessness, crisis intervention, behavioral health, affordable housing; that's our focus."

Erin Johansen
Chief Executive Officer, Hope Cooperative

By the Numbers

In the fiscal year 2020-21, Hope Cooperative served more than 10,000 clients. Here's a snapshot of clients per program:

Regional Support Team	2,765
New Direction Full Service Partnership	364
TCORE	1,052
Clubhouse	240
Crisis Respite Center	1,808
Residential Program	161
Co-Occurring Substance Use Treatment	117
City of Sacramento Homeless Outreach (Dec. 2020-June 2021)	1,756
FSRP Intensive Case Management	182
Yolo Full Service Partnership (June 2021)	25

TOTAL 8,470

220

staff members are employed by Hope Cooperative

60%

identify with having lived a mental health experience

Hope Cooperative has helped

69 clients get jobs

since February 2021 through its employment programs

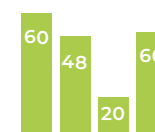
Housing at a Glance

Hope Cooperative provides housing for those who need it most – plus more housing is on its way.

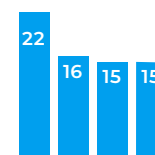
TOTAL UNITS AT EACH HOUSING FACILITY*



Family Units (1, 2, 3 bedrooms)
18 – Folsom Oaks
47 – Sunrise (future property)



Studios (up to 2 people)
60 – La Mancha
48 – Palmer
20 – Bidwell
66 – Northview (future property)



Single Adult
22 – Bell Street
16 – 9th Street
15 – Possibilities
15 – River City Residence Club (RCRC)

180 units

Private Landlord Properties

*Occupancy as of December 2021: 98%

More Mental Health Options

TCORE is Hope Cooperative's moderate-intensity outpatient clinic that is unique in the Sacramento region.

TCORE SERVES 700 FOLKS WHO MAY HAVE:

- criminal justice involvement
- recent hospitalizations
- frequent use of crisis intervention or emergency room services
- difficulty making or keeping outpatient appointments

TCORE PROVIDES:

- doctors, nurses, therapists and caseworkers
- employment specialists
- benefit specialists
- housing specialists
- mental health teams that go out in the community to meet with clients
- peer support

TCORE PARTNERS WITH A NUMBER OF MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS IN THE COMMUNITY, INCLUDING:

- Sacramento County Mental Health Court
- Mental Health Urgent Care
- Community Support Team
- Mental Health Treatment Court
- Mental Health Diversion
- Sacramento Police Department Impact Team
- Crisis Residential
- Respite Center

"We don't always have success, but when we do it's pretty amazing," says Trina Hatler, TCORE program director. "We had a client who was having 25 to 30 E.R. or crisis contacts a month. Now, he's gone one year with no contacts and is a part-time employee at TCORE."

A referral is required for TCORE. Referrals are managed by the Sacramento County Access Team at 916-875-1055.

These programs are funded in part by Sacramento County Division of Behavioral Health Services with funding from Proposition 63, Mental Health Services Act (MHSA).



FULL Service

Learn how one program does more than identify housing—but instead helps people **change their lives permanently**

BY THEA MARIE ROOD

In many ways, the New Direction program, which began in 2008 and serves chronically homeless adults with severe mental health challenges, epitomizes Hope Cooperative's work.

"Our mission is to reduce homelessness, reduce incarceration and reduce hospitalizations," explains Robert Johnston, New Direction's Program Manager. "And if we get a roof over their head, then they're not homeless, they're not in jail and they're not in the hospital."

In fact, New Direction uses a 'housing first' philosophy that gets people off the streets and into a safe room or apartment, many of which come through private landlords. "Maintaining relationships with these landlords is key," says Johnston. New Direction also works with developers, including one in Folsom who recently remodeled an old motel on East Bidwell Street into 24 studio apartments using state Project Homekey funds. These studios were fully furnished with a grant from Bank of America. Hope Cooperative also partners on developments like one in Citrus Heights, where a new property will be available soon using No Place Like Home funding.

Equally important is the staff's expertise at helping people apply for housing assistance such as immediate hotel, room and board or housing vouchers. This assistance requires complicated paperwork that is often overwhelming for anyone to do on their own.

But along with housing comes New Direction's warm and persistent care, provided by the program's 20 case managers and four therapists. Each of the 340 clients see their assigned caseworker or therapist at least once a week.

Johnston gives the analogy of self-service gas stations compared to the full-service of yesteryear, where tires and oil levels were checked. "Our first priority is getting a roof over their head, our second is getting them to some doctor appointments, and then we start looking under the hood," he says.

Caseworkers immediately set up medical, dental and vision appointments for routine health care, as well as psychiatric medication management. They also identify income sources, including social security, general assistance or employment. Therapists, meanwhile, begin treating the co-occurring

disorders, most commonly post-traumatic stress disorder and drug and alcohol addictions. Hope Cooperative operates outpatient drug and alcohol treatment in house, too. Life skills, which can be as simple and as unfamiliar as shopping at a grocery store, are also taught and practiced with staff.

"And we don't just see people in our office," says Jacqueline Jimenez, LCSW, the program's Clinical Director. "We also go to people's homes or meet with them on the street." By building trust over time, even people initially resistant to services will often change their minds.

"We strongly have the attitude of 'whatever it takes,'" she says, adding she has the privilege to watch people's lives turn around. "We've seen some clients go from being terrified of leaving their homes and now they're out in the community; people who couldn't work and now have jobs."

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Jacqueline Jimenez, Clinical Director
New Direction, Hope Cooperative



New Direction Clinical Director Jacqueline Jimenez and Program Manager Robert Johnston work closely with clients to meet their needs.
PHOTO COURTESY OF HOPE COOPERATIVE

A Different APPROACH

Homeless outreach provides support instead of enforcement

BY ANNE STOKES

Homelessness can be complicated and there are no quick and easy solutions to getting someone back on their feet. More often than not, law enforcement officers are the ones responding to homelessness-related emergency calls; while enforcement measures may address immediate issues, they don't address underlying causes.

And the consequences — fines, incarcerations and criminal records — create additional barriers to securing housing. But in collaboration with the City of Sacramento's Department of Community Response (DCR), Hope Cooperative offers a different approach.

"What we're trying to do is eliminate — or at least cut back on — law enforcement responding to homeless calls because ... sometimes a uniform is a barrier," says Arnold Hart, Homeless Outreach Program Manager for

Hope Cooperative. "We talk to them, we say, 'Are you interested in getting into a motel and getting off the street?' ... The ones who want to get off the streets, the ones who say, 'Yeah, I'm struggling with my mental health, with depression,' or 'I'm using every day, I'd really like to get help for that,' we connect them with those services."

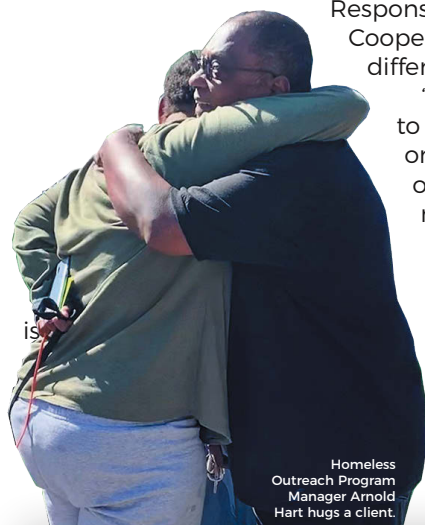
In 2020, DCR was established by the Sacramento City Council as an alternative response to issues such as homelessness, mental health and substance use disorders. Hope Cooperative outreach workers respond in tandem with city DCR staff to 3-1-1 calls for assistance, connecting clients with motel vouchers and referring them to other agencies and organizations for further supports. This housing-first model provides emergency shelter while connecting clients with physical and mental health care, assistance with navigating social service benefits systems, permanent housing and more.

"Hope Cooperative has been a key collaborative partner in the way we are responding to the needs of people experiencing homelessness," says Bridgette Dean, DCR Director. "Community-based organizations are essential to our success as a city. Hope Cooperative has been a great partner, providing outreach specialists that respond to calls for service with DCR staff, case management teams in our motel voucher program and mental health

clinicians to support individuals in crisis."

Hart agrees that the partnership between Hope Cooperative and the city has been a good fit.

"We're there to support what they're doing and, at the same time, they're there to support us as well," he says. "We enjoy working with the city staff, we've got a great working relationship with them, we communicate well with them and we get along great. It's a great collaboration."



Homeless Outreach Program Manager Arnold Hart hugs a client.

"What we're trying to do is eliminate — or at least cut back on — law enforcement responding to homeless calls because ... sometimes a uniform is a barrier."

Arnold Hart
Homeless Outreach Program Manager, Hope Cooperative

Help in Yolo County

With its recent expansion, Hope Cooperative now offers wraparound services to clients in Yolo County.

"We serve clients who are referred through Yolo County's Access Team who have experienced long-term severe mental health that is impacting their daily functioning: It's keeping them from the work force, it's keeping them from having stable housing, potentially in and out of psychiatric hospitals, jails, things like that," says Hope ACT Program Director Alexander Sopp. "We meet our clients where they are. ... It's really nice to be able to provide those services where they're needed."

One of its programs is the Cool Beans coffee cart, located inside the Yolo County Health and Human Services Agency Bauer building in Woodland. Cool Beans offers food, drinks plus basic work experience for Hope Cooperative clients. That hands-on experience helps prepare them for future jobs.

"Throughout all of our programs, we're here promoting independence and autonomy. We want our clients to be self-sufficient, we want them to graduate from our services and not need our support anymore," Sopp says. "Being able to see somebody who's been unable to work, and suddenly they're like, 'I've got my own place, I'm starting to work. I've got an actual job now that's not through you guys. I'm actually doing this and I don't think I need you anymore.' That realization is fantastic and that's what we hope for."

AVAILABLE SERVICES AND SUPPORTS INCLUDE:

- Case management
- 24/7 on-call support
- Connections to medical care
- Medication management and psychiatric services
- Connections to and help navigating social services and benefits
- Employment assistance
- Supportive and independent housing

For a referral to Hope ACT, contact Yolo County Mental Health Services at 1-833-744-HHSA (4472) or through the mental health crisis and access line at 1-888-965-6647.

These services are funded by Yolo County Health and Human Services Agency with funding from Proposition 63, Mental Health Services Act (MHSA).



Alexander Sopp, Program Director for Hope ACT, shows off the Cool Beans coffee stand, located on the first floor of the Yolo County Bauer Building. The cart offers coffee, lunch and new beginnings for clients.
PHOTO BY ANNE STOKES

A Place to BELONG

The Clubhouse program gives clients the chance to **have fun, make friends and pursue employment opportunities**

BY ANNE STOKES

For Michelle Brown, managing her mental health has been a life-long struggle. But at Hope Cooperative's Clubhouse program, she found the support she needed to thrive.

"I was violent, trying to hurt myself, trying to kill myself, running the streets, not listening to anybody, doing what I wanted to do," she says. "The Clubhouse made me comfortable because it was a safe place to go and there were certain people I trusted to talk to. ... It helped me grow and it helped me become the person that I want to be now. ... The Clubhouse taught me that I can be a better person."

The Clubhouse program is run by clients who volunteer for daily tasks such as cleaning, serving meals, or running group activities. These tasks provide critical opportunities to socialize and get basic hands-on life and job skills. But as its name implies, the Clubhouse is first and foremost a place to hang out and make friends, something that can be difficult for those struggling with their mental health.

"These are folks who have been isolating in their homes, who maybe ... don't get out and socialize much. Or when they have been out and about in public, what I hear a lot is a lot of their behaviors aren't very well accepted and they are bullied, even as adults," says Lisa Ernst, Clubhouse Program

Manager. "Everybody comes here to have a sense of connection and a sense of self worth. It's a safe, comfortable place to be, where you can talk about anything, you can 100% be yourself. Kindness is the bottom line here."

Not only has Brown benefited from the program, she's been able to help others. One of her favorite experiences at the Clubhouse has been serving as a mentor for other clients.

"It's like being a peer support person," Brown explains. "The mentors understand because we've been through it and most of the clients know that. They know that we've been through some of the (same) things they've been through, so they're more willing to talk."

Through the Clubhouse, Brown says she's achieved something she thought she'd never be able to do: Get a job. She currently manages Hope Treasures online thrift store, started with a supportive employment grant from Wells Fargo.

"It's my first job ever. I've never had a job in my life because I wasn't stable enough," she says. "When I got this job, my self esteem went through the roof because I was like, 'I have a job now, I have responsibilities,' and the Clubhouse made that happen. And I made that happen because I did the work."



Michelle Brown, Clubhouse client and mentor, has not only thrived in the program, but has also been able to help others thrive as well.

PHOTO BY ANNE STOKES

"The Clubhouse taught me that I can be a better person."

Michelle Brown
Clubhouse client and mentor



Employment Specialist Rachel Madrigal, left, and Clubhouse Program Manager Lisa Ernst help clients work on their job-readiness skills. PHOTO COURTESY OF HOPE COOPERATIVE

Ready to work

At Hope Cooperative's Clubhouse program, clients can work on their job-readiness skills through daily activities (known as units), which help them develop soft skills that can benefit them in the workforce.

"They're following directions, working cooperatively, learning how to resolve conflict, customer service," says Lisa Ernst, Clubhouse Program Manager. "That's kind of the goal: To get people prepped and ready to go so when they hit the door here, they have those very basic skills and all of their basic needs have been met. Then from here, they just keep going."

Clients can also find employment assistance at the on-site employment center, where they can get help with:

- Connections with employers
- Resume assistance
- Interview preparation
- Work clothes
- ServSafe certifications for work in the food service industry.



Building UP

Learn how people are supported in residential communities—and why that is **critical for their overall success**

BY **THEA MARIE ROOD**

In the 20 years Linda Bratcher has worked for Hope Cooperative, she has overseen all of its residential programs and even helped plan them. That includes the newest development, Sunrise Pointe in Citrus Heights, in partnership with Jamboree Housing Corporation.

"It's under construction right now," says Bratcher, who drives by it on her way to work every day and can see the progress. "It's so exciting. We'll be the support staff for that site and its 47 apartments. We're developing an after-school program with San Juan Unified. There'll also be a teaching kitchen and room for activities."

But more importantly, what makes Hope Cooperative unique—its wraparound services—will also be provided on site. And with an estimated 600 families in Citrus Heights experiencing homelessness, Sunrise Pointe can't open soon enough.

As far back as 1981 when Hope was founded, staff realized people don't end up on the streets because of one event. Instead, it is a slow downward spiral, most commonly because of serious mental health challenges and drug and alcohol addiction. Over time, people lose relationships with friends, family and employers—and eventually their income, their support systems and their homes. Recovering from this spiral requires the unraveling of many knots—and takes more than just providing them with a roof over their heads.

"The beauty of our agency is we go way further in helping people be successful," says Bratcher. "They can't maintain housing without having staff able to walk beside them and not give up on them,

even when they make a mistake. 'You messed up, how are we going to fix this? But we're still walking beside you.' Most of our clients have been stigmatized by society, away from their families, and haven't had a person who's stuck with them."

In fact, Hope residents—whether they are in interim housing at Palmer or in one of the seven and counting permanent housing sites—have a caseworker onsite and access to a team that may include doctors, nurses, therapists and other specialists, particularly if they are behavioral health clients. These professionals offer mental health treatment, drug and alcohol rehab, living skills, financial counseling and employment assistance. All this is available while their clients settle into a supportive living community in beautiful settings, which range from historic Victorians in downtown Sacramento to apartments set back in an old oak forest in Folsom.

"Our goal is to help them learn to do this themselves—not enabling and breaking them down, but teaching and building them up," she says.

There are Hope Cooperative housing options for individuals, families and youth. To learn more, please visit <https://hopecoop.org/housing-programs>.

"Most of our clients have been stigmatized by society, away from their families, and haven't had a person who's stuck with them."

Linda Bratcher, Program Manager
Permanent Supportive Housing, Hope Cooperative



Program Manager Linda Bratcher shows off some of Hope Cooperative's residential housing. PHOTO BY ANNE STOKES

People make the difference

Marlyn Sepulveda joined Hope Cooperative's team while she was still in college. Now, 20 years later, she serves as the agency's Chief Operating Officer.

"We were pretty small when I started," she recalls. "Then, we grew and grew and grew."

One thing didn't change, Sepulveda adds. "What's really important — and why I stay with the agency — is that my core values really align with this agency: Empathy, honesty, transparency, solution focused, out of the box ideas at all levels of our organization. That's what takes us to the next level."

"The culture of our organization; for me, it's been an amazing experience to be part of this team," Sepulveda adds. "We have awesome programs, but we would not be anything without our staff. They're the most dedicated, loyal, hard-working staff I've ever seen."

Staff members also help steer Hope Cooperative's focus, she says. "Everything we've done came from our staff, telling us what the needs are and the barriers they're hitting. ... Our staff are the ones who make real change in people's lives every day."

Marlyn Sepulveda serves as Hope Cooperative's Chief Operating Officer. PHOTO COURTESY OF MARLYN SEPULVEDA



ENDLESS Possibilities

Program supports youth on the **road to adulthood**

BY ANNE STOKES

Even under the best of circumstances, growing up is hard. For youth with little or no support, such as those in foster care, the journey from childhood to adulthood can be a steep learning curve, the outcomes of which can be severe.

In 2019, the Sacramento County annual homeless point-in-time count found 415 transitional age youth (TAY) experiencing homelessness, representing 8% of the total count. A majority — 59% — were sleeping outside and 34% of those living unsheltered had been in the foster care system. Homeless TAY, or those between the ages of 18 and 25, face increased risks of victimization, exploitation, incarceration and substance abuse.

Hope Cooperative's Possibilities program is there to help Sacramento's homeless youth get on their feet. The two-year program provides wraparound services beginning with getting them housed. Clients start in transitional housing, learning independent living skills, then graduate into rapid rehousing, during which time Possibilities pays a portion of their rent.

"We provide a lot of independent living skills where we facilitate groups; it could be a job readiness group, coping skills group, life skills group, cooking groups, budgeting groups," says Latesha Pierce, Program Manager. "We show them how to find a roommate, how to do laundry, how to do a chore list, how to go grocery shopping on a budget."

Throughout their time as clients, Possibilities also connects them with job assistance, provides access to health care and mental health services, addiction treatment, assists with navigating social service systems and more. To provide its wraparound services, the program collaborates with other

"We can build those skills now and we can support them so they're prepared to go out into the world."

Latesha Pierce
Program Manager, Possibilities

for themselves in the hopes of breaking the cycle of homelessness before it begins. Long-term effects of homelessness on youth include difficulty finishing their education and finding and maintaining employment.

"We can build those skills now and we can support them so they're prepared to go out into the world, so they know what they're dealing with ahead of time and to prepare them for what's expected of them going forward," says Pierce. "A lot of them may not have that guidance, due to whatever their family dynamics were. ... We feel it's important to get in there and try to support and guide them in that direction."

organizations including Wind Youth Services, the Greater Sacramento Urban League, Capital Star, Youth Health Network and Pride Industries.

Beginning in 2018, Possibilities supports young adults in building a solid foundation

Possibilities Program Manager Latesha Pierce helps young adults at risk for homelessness transition into successful adults.
PHOTO BY ANNE STOKES



How to help

Hope Cooperative works hard to assist people in your community. Its programs could use your help.

- Financial donations are always welcome and can be used to meet a variety of needs.
- Donated items such as food, kitchenware, linens and other new home goods can help get clients set up in their new homes.
- Have a skill you can share? Volunteer as a mentor!

For more information on how to donate or volunteer, visit hopecoop.org/how-to-help, email info@hopecoop.org or call 916-441-0123 ext. 1022.



RESILIENCE. CONNECTION. TRANSFORMATION.

That's Hope Cooperative

For 40 years, Hope Cooperative has been providing mental health and supportive housing services for people with mental health challenges in Sacramento County. Those services are now available in Yolo County, too.

THAT INCLUDES:

- Intensive case management
- Supportive housing
- Life skills education
- Psychiatric services
- Therapy
- Residential support services
- Co-occurring substance use treatment
- Opportunities for social connectedness and meaningful activities
- Crisis intervention

Hope Cooperative provides services to more than 8,000 people in our community each year. Many of our clients are experiencing homelessness when they begin their Hope Cooperative journey and are now successfully living in a “forever” home.

Hope Cooperative's 220 dedicated and compassionate staff members are committed to culturally sensitive services that support clients on their path to self-sufficiency.

“IT SAVED MY LIFE”

Janet Blasingame learned about Hope Cooperative (also known as TLCS) when she picked up a pamphlet at an anti-bullying event at American River College.

“In 2014, I was in a domestic violence relationship that was destined to end in death,” she recalls. “On the most violent night of my life, I remembered the pamphlet said they would send a taxi to collect people and take them to a respite center for 23 hours, so I made the call. Despite my abuser repeatedly calling and texting me all night, being at the respite center and speaking with the counselors gave me an opportunity to remember I had worth, consider the consequences of staying with my abuser, and resolve to find a way to end the relationship.

“Within 20 minutes of my return home, he was strangling me,” she adds. “Knowing there was outside support, I gathered my courage and my tiny Chihuahua, ran to my bedroom and locked the door, and called the police — something I had not done during the entire duration of my time with my abuser. I never spoke to him again. Finding that pamphlet didn't just change my life, it saved my life.”

Blasingame went on to college and will receive degrees in Chemical Dependency and Human Services at the end of this semester. During her studies, she served as an intern and worked at Hope Cooperative's Co-Occurring Disorders Treatment Program (COTP).

“I appreciate I was given the opportunity to give back, as I would not have had the courage to leave my abuser and would never have earned my degrees without (Hope Cooperative),” she says. “Working at COTP was a great opportunity. I learned a lot that will contribute to my future in the helping field.”

YOU CAN HELP, TOO!

Hope Cooperative welcomes donations and volunteers. Visit hopecoop.org/how-to-help, email info@hopecoop.org or call 916-441-0123 ext. 1022.



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