

BECOME A MEND HERO!

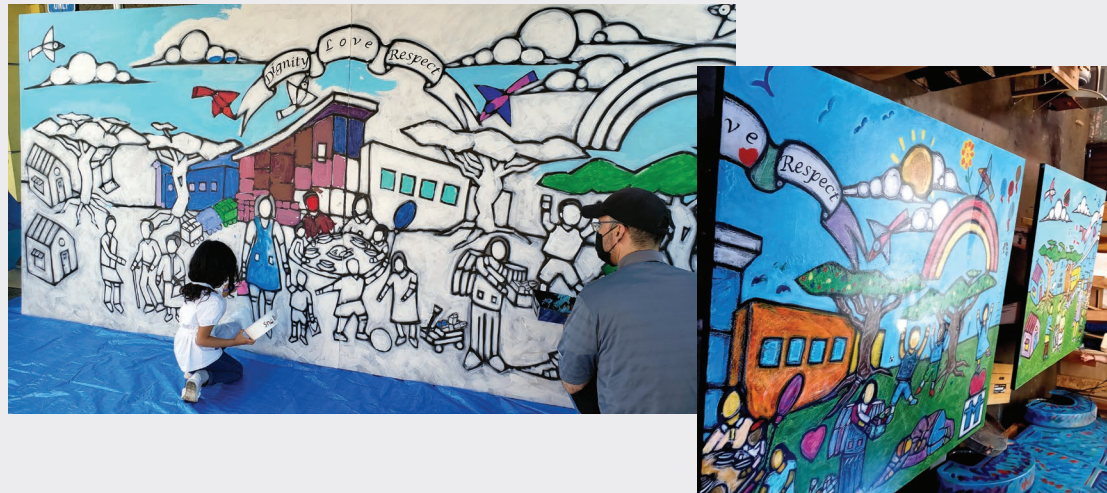
WE'RE IN SEARCH of monthly Heroes! Becoming a MEND HERO means you will be joining other committed supporters who want to help make a difference. **Every month.** You can sign up today at our website, MendPoverty.Org/Donate



Or call Scott Mikels at, (818) 686-7353 to provide a few details on the credit card or bank account you want charged, and to authorize your gift. Your generous support will go a long way in our community. Thank you for your heart.

TO CELEBRATE MEND'S 50 YEARS in the community, local Chicano artist, David Flury, has created a beautiful mural that represents MEND and the community we serve. A few months ago, we invited families with children to come to MEND and add their special touch to the canvas. The mural will be installed in the foyer area of MEND's Pacoima location. You are welcome to drop in and see the finished piece when public health restrictions are lifted and we're free to host people in the building. Email Chanya@MendPoverty.Org for an update.

50TH ANNIVERSARY MURAL!



GIVING TUESDAY IS NOVEMBER 30, 2021

GIVING TUESDAY

A WONDERFUL COUPLE (and friends of MEND) have pledged \$35,000 as a matching gift fund for Giving Tuesday. We hope to increase the matching fund to \$70,000 so that we can double donations on November 30, 2021. To contribute to the fund before November 30th, contact Chanya at Chanya@MendPoverty.Org

PARTNERS FOR THE FUTURE

A WELL-PLANNED GIFT sustains your generosity after your lifetime, and makes a powerful statement about the legacy you wish to leave.

If you have already included MEND – Meet Each Need with Dignity in your will, thank you. Your gift, when the time comes, hopefully far into the future, will continue MEND's life transforming services in this community.

Please contact Chanya Blumenkrantz, Chief Development Officer, at (818) 686-7320 if you have questions or would like to receive additional information to help in your decision. You can find legacy information and sample documents at: <https://MendPoverty.Org/legacy-society>

In the end, if the question is how you want to be remembered, then there's no better way than in the impact your legacy will make in the lives of people in need.

Grateful for your support.



MEND matters



With dignity and respect, MEND's mission is to meet the immediate needs of individuals and families and increase their access to opportunities that strengthen their capacity to thrive.

mendpoverty.org
FALL | 2021



"Poverty is a very complicated issue, but feeding a hungry child isn't."
Jeff Bridges

GROWING UP IN RURAL WESTERN NEW YORK, my family was poor. Not destitute by



any means, but the kind of poor probably many will be familiar with. We ate eggs only on special occasions, and the gifts my brother and I opened under the tree were often socks and underwear. My dad was a laborer, and during long labor strikes, we relied on "government food" to make ends meet. It was not always dignified or healthy, but it quieted the hunger. When I finished my undergrad studies and moved to LA, that humble upbringing came in handy. I was determined to make it on my own, but too many days became survival. I remember, not so fondly, eating spaghetti with garlic powder and pepper, or crackers with peanut butter and jelly for dinner. Those days are behind me now, but I will never forget the memory of how they made me feel, and how precious the support of caring people was through the hardest times.

What does poverty look like today for the people that MEND serves? We asked them, and here's what they shared:

"Without MEND I would go hungry."

"I wouldn't know what to do without MEND."

"I sleep where people can see me... under a streetlight or outside an open store, so I'm not robbed or attacked."

"I stress all night, worried for my children."

"If I don't buy my bus pass, I can't get to work. If I can't get to work, I could lose my job. If I lose my job, my kids will go hungry."

"The holidays are the hardest... last Christmas my youngest told me that she wished we could eat a turkey... How would I afford a turkey? Imagine my joy when MEND gave me a chicken! It was a nice Christmas."

You made that chicken and so much more possible for this family and others who struggle.

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A HOLIDAY WISHLIST

This holiday season, we have an audacious request. Will you help us gift 800 board games to poor families? We have pared back our holiday programs due to the pandemic but still want to share the joy of the season with those who are struggling. Family holiday distribution will happen on December 17 & 18.

Mail directly from your favorite online retailer or drop off new family board games (any age) at: 10641 San Fernando Road, Pacoima, CA 91331



SERVING WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT

YOUR SUPPORT AND CARE touches everyone who comes to MEND. The help you give rescues children like Benita and brings meaning and purpose to volunteers like Margie and Art. You are a light in a difficult world, thank you.



Benita

If it wasn't for MEND being there for us, I don't even know what we would have done as kids. I still smile so brightly just thinking about the joy you [MEND] sparked," says Benita. She adds: "MEND was a blessing to our

family, to a lot of families. We depended on them to survive." Today, Benita is doing well and so are her siblings. She has also become a faithful supporter. On behalf of all the children who grow up coming to MEND for food, holiday toys, back-to-school events or other help; thank you for bringing joy and hope into their lives.



Margie

Losing her job thirteen years ago was a low point in Margie's life. It shattered her self-confidence and left her struggling. What to do next? She examined her priorities and concluded that coming to MEND could help her fill the now

empty days that were once taken up working. She'd known of MEND for a while and its work in the community. It was an easy choice. Ready for anything, Margie signed up with the volunteer department to help. It was the right decision and she kept coming back. Over the years, she has dedicated many thousands of hours helping wherever she was needed – in the food bank, preparing and distributing food boxes, typing up forms for volunteers, and even helping at MEND's Holiday winter wonderland. Margie has regained her confidence– it's obvious in her radiant and welcoming smile and in the work that she does. She shares: "I will never forget how MEND helped me through my own challenges. When I was feeling at my lowest, MEND helped me regain my self-esteem." Margie is only one of hundreds of generous people who volunteer at MEND. We are grateful for each one.

Art

Art is one of the most persistent people you would ever meet. He has a big heart and a generous spirit. While many MEND volunteers understandably stopped coming to help in 2020 due to a raging pandemic, Art kept calling; "Do you have work for me? Can I come and help tomorrow?" So, as soon as it was safe to, we said YES. The first assignment he came back to was traffic control, ensuring that the long line of cars coming to the food bank remained orderly. Art is not new to MEND. For ten years he has helped where he can, talking to kids about donating to the food bank, raising funds to support MEND's wellness programs, and working at the food bank's warehouse. Art signed up as a volunteer a decade ago after attending a back-to-school event. "It was a day of happy faces that I never forgot... I knew then that was what I wanted to do when I retired. I saw how MEND helped the people of Pacoima and surrounding communities," Art says. We are so lucky to have Art's faithful support – it has had a positive impact on the lives of many.



Sandy

"Our trailer was in the second row, over where the parking spaces are now," Sandy says. "We had nothing. MEND gave us the beds and mattresses we slept on, the tables and chairs we sat at, the food we ate."

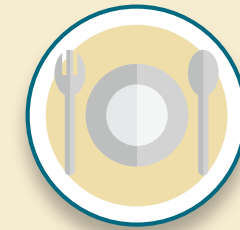
She brought out an old snapshot of herself as a 6-year-old opening Christmas presents with her brothers and sisters. "MEND gave us those presents, too!" she said with joy. She adds: "But the greatest gift they gave us was the idea we could succeed, and that people cared," she said. That's you. We are grateful.



A MONTH IN THE LIFE OF YOUR GIFT

In an average month's span at MEND, your kind donation joins with that of other wonderful supporters to provide mercies big and small for Los Angeles' most vulnerable.

Meals for Hungry Neighbors



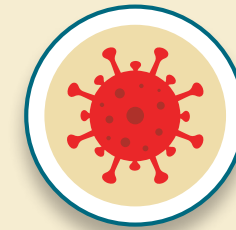
Your gifts are feeding 19,500 hungry people in Los Angeles every month.

Hope for Struggling Families



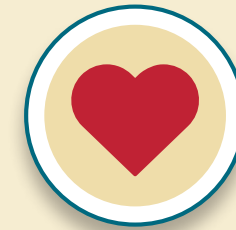
Up to 50 vulnerable families receive help with challenges that are holding them back – financial assistance, employment and housing resources, and employment referrals.

COVID-19 Crisis Interventions



On average, our frontline staff complete 13,475 encounters with the community offering help with vaccine appointments, mental health resources, distributing PPE & sharing the latest information on COVID.

Support for those Living on the Streets



Thanks to your help, we continue to complete 45 encounters monthly for those who are homeless offering them a customized bag of food, support, and kind words of encouragement.

Help for People Seeking Wellness



Your wonderful support enables us to help low-income individuals willing to improve their health and manage a chronic condition by lowering their BMI, blood pressure, exercising and eating better.

OUR PROMISE TO YOU

You could have given your gifts to any agency in Los Angeles, but you chose MEND to help ease the struggles of people in our community. You can have full confidence that here at MEND we consistently hold ourselves to the highest standards of nonprofit governance.

- 4 Stars on Charity Navigator, the highest a nonprofit can achieve
- 2021 Top-Rated Nonprofit by GreatNonprofits.Org
- Voted 2021 Best Charity in the San Fernando Valley/Ventura area, LA Times
- Voted 2021 Daily News Readers Choice, Nonprofit Organization
- Finances audited by an independent auditor and made available to the public upon request & online (www.MendPoverty.Org)
- Ethical Fundraising & Accountability to Donors.

At MEND, you can call Chanya Blumenkrantz at, (818) 686-7320 should you have questions. You can also find copies of our audited financials, IRS Form 990, and Donor Privacy Policy at MendPoverty.Org/Financial-and-Legal-Documents.

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Extreme poverty is difficult to witness. For hundreds of thousands of indigent individuals, seniors, and families living in despair just out of sight in Los Angeles neighborhoods, every day is survival... They struggle with not having enough to meet their daily physical, social, and emotional needs. They have constant worry about making harsh trade-offs and compromises about where to direct meager resources. They live one day at a time, fearful of the future. Just one unanticipated crisis – a parent sickened by COVID, an accident, a relapse to addiction – and the family could slip into more desperation.

For those who live on the streets, life can be heartbreaking. They are the forgotten man and woman... **and sometimes, they are families with children.**

And here's where you're making a difference.

Your support equips our frontline staff with the resources they need to intervene and help families facing what may appear to be insurmountable obstacles, hold on to hope. Grounded in the promise of MEND's mission and strategic plan, our teams help those that we

serve gain access to the right tools, resources, and guidance. **We believe that with help, people can overcome their circumstances, and thrive.** We have started small, with just a few families, but with your help we can make a lasting change in the lives of so many more in our community.

We imagine a future where vulnerable families have sufficient resources, homeless people are sheltered, and people are able to develop the social capital they need to support their success. **A future where MEND's services are no longer needed.** We know that you share that same dream. And as we explore these new possibilities together, we remain committed to the vision set forth by our founders 50 years ago... that still motivates us today: that no one's cries shall go unheard. Thank you for coming alongside us on this half-century journey– and in so doing, truly **making a difference.**

Janet Marinaccio
President & CEO