

## UNIQUE COLLABORATION GIVES RISE TO HOPE VILLAGE HOUSING



*Pictured at the Hope Village grand opening, in front of one of six tiny houses, are (left to right): Hannah Booth (CHAT Volunteer Coordinator); Nicole Drummond (CHAT Executive Director); Amber Benedict (CHAT Social Services Director); Brandon Slater (Project Builder, Slater & Son Construction); and Bob Trausch (CHAT Co-Founder).*

Collaboration has been key to CHAT's latest project, a tiny house village in the Chapman neighborhood that now houses six residents, each in their own home.

Hope Village, which opened in June, is made possible by well-known local construction company Slater & Son, five churches (Grace Community Church, Life Church, Firm Family Church, Neighborhood Church, Bidwell Presbyterian Church), and six non-profits/organizations (Catalyst Domestic Violence Services, The Jesus Center, Nation's Finest, True North Housing Alliance, Genesis Pallet Shelter, and the Veteran's Administration), in addition to CHAT.

Additional generous assistance has been provided by long-time local business Square Deal Mattress Factory, which donated approximately \$8,000-worth of beds and box springs.

At Hope Village's grand opening on June 8, CHAT Executive Director Nicole Drummond said, "This is a perfect example of what Chico can accomplish when we collaborate and work together in partnership."

The village was built by Slater & Son, a family-owned general contracting company founded in 1948. It was the brainchild of Brandon Slater, who had become increasingly concerned about what he describes as "an exponentially growing gap between subsidized housing and market rate housing caused by near-zero vacancies and low housing supply."

Slater adds, "The partnerships that we have created through this project is my favorite part of Hope Village."



*Volunteers Leif Drummond (left) and Victor Estrada move furniture into the Hope Village houses.*

*(Continued on page 6)*

## COLLABORATION ACCOMPLISHES HOUSING SOLUTIONS

**By Nicole Drummond**  
**CHAT Executive Director**

I am so inspired by how our community has come together to support those most vulnerable. From the unseen small acts of kindness to the amazing partnerships between private business, individual donors, faith-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies. It brings me hope to see how solutions are possible when every one partners and collaborates.

CHAT is all about collaboration and creating solutions. Our guiding value is that housing is a human right. When people have their basic needs met all things are possible. We have invested deeply in all our community partnerships to support as many solutions as possible to move individuals inside and support their ability to stabilize and be the best version of themselves.

In this newsletter you will read about updates for Everhart Village, which is an emergency shelter project partnership between Butte County Behavioral Health & CHAT. This innovative project has been funded by private donations, business partnerships, and thousands of hours of volunteer labor. The site is beautiful, and CHAT is very excited to move our most vulnerable community members – people with mental illness living on the street – inside very soon.

Our two six-bedroom houses that were purchased through a state grant are currently being renovated and will soon be home to 12 unhoused individuals on Social Security. We have recently purchased three condominiums that are housing

families. CHAT is also in the process of purchasing a manufactured home that will be placed on a large lot CHAT owns. The lot is zoned for the home and it will house a family or three more individuals.

We can only do this work in collaboration with our community partners. Working to connect all our resources, private and public, we really can move toward the vision of everyone having a home they can truly afford. Tell your friends, your neighbors, and your companies that supporting CHAT is making a difference in our community. Volunteer, donate, and learn more about how to be a part of the solution.

Until next time, keep doing good work.

Sincerely,  
Nicole Drummond



*CHAT Executive Director Nicole Drummond (foreground, sunglasses) is shown with CHAT staff members (left to right): Caitlyn Patterson (Everhart Village Program Manager); Amber Benedict (Social Services Director); Leslie Johnson (Board President); Sarah Graham (Director of Finance & Development); and Hannah Booth (Volunteer Coordinator).*



## CHAT MOVES INTO NEW OFFICE

At the end of May, CHAT moved into a new office space. According to Office Manager Amanda Starkey, this move has already made a world of difference to CHAT's work, starting with when visitors walk through the front door.

"We now have space for a nice front entry area where I can welcome guests to our office. I also love that I have been able to use our lobby to provide something fun for visitors to enjoy," she says.

As for the rest of the office building, Amanda adds, "In our previous office, we were bursting at the seams. There's something about having enough space to really be able to think, work with each other, and be creative. CHAT is, to its very core, creative."

CHAT has already taken advantage of a large community room in the center of the building, attached to a full kitchen. Amanda notes that the entire staff can fit in this space, something that was not possible previously.

In just over two months, the community room has been used for a family fun day for residents, a volunteer appreciation event, resident trainings, a Board of Directors strategic planning session, and numerous meetings. A separate conference room provides additional flexibility in scheduling meetings, as well as interviews of potential CHAT residents.

The building, at 125 Mission Ranch Boulevard, previously served as the offices of the local Mechoopda Tribe. When the Mechoopda moved their headquarters to Miriam Park, they rented the building to CHAT.



*CHAT's new office space features a community room for resident and staff trainings, meetings, and other events.*



*Office Manager Amanda Starkey enjoys greeting visitors to CHAT's new office.*

## CHAT VOLUNTEER IS "A SHINING STAR"

**By Hannah Booth**  
**CHAT Volunteer Coordinator**

In the vibrant world of Chico Housing Action Team, one shining star has been illuminating our mission with boundless passion and unwavering dedication. Meet Linda Walser, a cherished member of our CHAT Team, who has been spreading love and support as a House Volunteer.

With a natural flair for all things handy, Linda has not only lent her skills to the construction of sleeping cabins at Everhart Village but also taken a hands-on approach to her volunteer activities. Whether it's providing essential supplies or forging meaningful connections with our unhoused community through direct outreach work, Linda's heartwarming efforts create ripples of positivity wherever she goes.

When asked about her journey with CHAT, Linda fondly recalls the altruistic souls who jump-started our organization in 2013, igniting the flame of hope within our community. The indomitable spirit of our amazing volunteers, their energy, and unwavering commitment continue to inspire her profoundly.

To overcome homelessness, Linda says, "It takes a village, supported by outreach volunteerism, backed by a community that is learned and proactive, as part of the process in sheltering our homeless Chicoans."

*(Continued on page 6)*

## **More Volunteers Sought for Final Steps**

### **SLEEPING CABINS, COMMUNITY BUILDING MOVED TO EVERHART VILLAGE SITE**

**By Caitlyn Patterson, Everhart Village Program Manager, & Nancy Park, Housing Action Editor**

The month of July saw rapid progress – and increasing excitement – for CHAT’s Everhart Village project.

We officially have all 20 sleeping cabins moved on site! The 72-foot community building has been placed - that building includes showers, laundry facilities, and more. A storage shed is also at the site. The only structure that has not been placed yet is our security trailer, which will happen very soon.

Everhart Village is a collaboration between CHAT and Butte County Behavioral Health. It will be home to currently unhoused people with mental illness. A Behavioral Health street outreach team will identify candidates for this program. Behavioral Health will provide treatment to village resi-

dents, while CHAT will maintain the village, provide security, and create various community activities and social services support.

The interiors of the cabins are quickly moving along, as we have numerous individuals and groups who have offered their support to help us finish this long awaited project. On July 22, we hosted a Volunteer Kick-Off event at the site, where we were able to gather new and familiar volunteers, show our appreciation, get them oriented to the projects that need to be done, and give them a tour of the village. We had a great turn out and as always are so grateful for the ongoing support from the community. Businesses and organizations supporting this “Everhart Build” effort include the Sunrise and Noon Rotary clubs, Sierra Nevada Brewery, and the Chico Builders Association.

Some cabins are already completed, or close to complete, thanks to the generosity of Santos Construction, which allowed us to place the first cabins in their

(Continued on page 5)



*Workers place two of the 20 sleeping cabins at the Everhart Village site. The 72-foot modular community building is in the background.*



## EVERHART VILLAGE

*(Continued from page 4)*

construction yard while infrastructure construction took place at the Everhart site, and the efforts of many volunteers.

But more work, now at the village site, needs to be done on the more recently-delivered cabins. Work includes installing electricity and toilets, adding insulation, hanging drywall, painting, and more. All cabins will have heat and air conditioning.

Moving forward, there will be at least two volunteer build days per week until the village is ready to open. Please check out our website / social media or reach out to our Volunteer Coordinator, Hannah Booth, for more information at [hannah@chicohousingactionteam.net](mailto:hannah@chicohousingactionteam.net)

In addition to showing appreciation to our incredible volunteers, CHAT would like to express our deep gratitude for numerous donors who have contributed funds and building materials to the project. Individuals, religious communities, and service clubs have combined to sponsor all 20 cabins.

Later this year, when the village is complete, and before residents move in, we will invite everyone to a grand opening. That will be a very special day, as our dream for Everhart Village will become a reality.

As always, thank you for supporting and following our progress as we enter the home stretch for Everhart Village.

**Keep up to date with all things CHAT! To receive email news updates from us, please send your ad-**



*Despite a very hot morning, an eager group of volunteers showed up for the kick-off work day to begin the final steps to completing the Everhart Village cabins.*

## SAVE THE DATE, GET YOUR TICKETS FOR CHAT'S 10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY PARTY!

It's time to celebrate! CHAT is 10 years old this winter and we're planning a party!

Be sure to circle **Saturday, November 4, 2023** on your calendar. Better yet, you can purchase tickets now for a great evening at California Park Pavilion, either through the CHAT website, <https://www.chicohousingactionteam.net/>, or by clicking the QR code below.

The celebration is set for 5 pm-10 pm at the Lakeside Pavilion at California Park. This formal event will include a catered dinner, music by the Jeff Pershing Band, a 50/50 raffle, and more. Tickets are \$100 per person, or \$1,000 for a table of eight (which includes two bottles of wine). Sponsorships are available by businesses and individuals – if you're interested in helping sponsor the event, please contact [development@chicohousingactionteam.net](mailto:development@chicohousingactionteam.net).

**For details, or to register and purchase tickets to CHAT's 10th Anniversary party, click on the code to the right.**



## HOPE VILLAGE OPENS

*(Continued from page 1)*

Slater & Son owns the property, while CHAT holds the master lease and provides property management, and support services, including food and case management. Residents have been selected from the six partnering local non-profits and agencies, housing one resident referred by each organization. Residents will receive financial and social support from the local churches. Slater & Son is generously leasing these units to CHAT at a rate that allows them to be affordable for people with very low incomes.

Each house is essentially a self-contained studio apartment, which includes a kitchen area, washer/dryer, and bathroom.

CHAT's furniture warehouse team, organized by volunteers Vic and Pat Estrada, worked hard to fully furnish each unit, turning the houses into comfortable homes and making it possible for residents to move in by the end of June.

## CHAT VOLUNTEER

*(Continued from page 3)*

When she is not busy volunteering to support cross-cultural arenas and disfranchised people, Linda likes to spend time outdoors. She is an avid biker, hiker, camper, and pickleball player.

Linda is in the education field, working with middle school youth on social and emotional behaviors. She has four years of experience working with at-risk youth, with many successfully graduating from high school into vocational programs and into secure housing.

Thank you, Linda, for being the guiding light that ignites hope in the hearts of the less fortunate. Your love and kindness resonate deeply with us all, and we are incredibly grateful for your presence in our CHAT family.

---

## FAMILIES ACHIEVE PERMANENT HOUSING

CHAT's HUSH (Hand-Up Supportive Housing) program to assist unhoused families is still going strong after four years. Sharice Atkins serves as the case manager for several families. Sharice has continued to guide families from homelessness to CHAT housing to permanent housing.

Sharice – and before her, case manager Amanda Gaylord – has seen a number of success stories over time. “Success” means getting families off the streets and out of shelters, and then bringing them into CHAT and surrounding them with supportive services. Finally, families have successfully moved from CHAT housing into permanent housing.

One such success story is Jasmine. When Jasmine lost her job, she and her daughter had no place to go. They ended up living in a friend's car. When she got connected to CHAT, her life began to change. CHAT provided temporary housing for the mother and daughter, supportive services to the family, and helped them find an apartment to move into on their own.

Jasmine says, “Before CHAT, I ended up with a lot of dead ends on looking for housing, food, resources. With the HUSH program you have your worker [Sharice], you have access to resources. Having that extra support, whether it be weekly meetings with Sharice or check-in calls, is very helpful for someone like me.”

In addition to Sharice's support, Jasmine said CHAT's food program made a big difference. (Residents receive boxes of food every two



*Former HUSH program resident  
Jasmine now lives in permanent  
housing with her daughter.*

weeks.) “I appreciated the food donations – things like fruits and vegetables, eggs, salads, it all adds up. It really helped.”

After less than a year with CHAT, Jasmine and her daughter are now in permanent housing. Asked how she feels about that development, Jasmine says, “We are more comfortable now. And we are happy!”

## PLANNED GIVING – A LEGACY TO CONTINUE CHAT’S WORK

To help ensure that unhoused individuals and families will continue to be helped in the future, CHAT now has a Planned Giving program.

What is Planned Giving? It’s a donation that is set up now to be donated at a future date. Planned giving donations are usually arranged for distribution after a donor has passed away. They also are referred to as legacy giving.

While legacy gifts are often made as a bequest in a donor’s will, they can take other forms as well. This includes gifts of life insurance, charitable annuities, charitable remainder trusts, real estate, retirement accounts, and gifts of stocks or securities.

There are many reasons why donors use planned giving to support their favorite non-profit organizations. It gives them a way to leave a large gift that they would not be able to make during their lifetimes. As donors plan their estates, bequests give them an opportunity to leave a lasting legacy. It’s also something donors can do that won’t affect their current available income. Many donors would like to give more but may not have the disposable income to do so.

The donor, not CHAT, decides what form a planned gift will take, with assistance from their financial advisor. However, Sarah Graham, CHAT’s Financial and Development Director, will be happy to answer basic questions and point donors in the right direction to get started. If you have any questions about planned giving, please contact Sarah at [development@chicohousingactionteam.net](mailto:development@chicohousingactionteam.net), or at 530-399-3959.

### CHAT BOARD ADOPTS VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS

At its July 2023 meeting, the CHAT Board of Directors approved a strategic plan. This includes the vision and mission statements below:

#### VISION

The vision of Chico Housing Action Team is a community where everyone has access to safe, suitable housing they can afford.

#### MISSION

Our mission is to provide affordable housing for people who lack housing and to provide supportive services to enable residents to maintain long term housing stability.

## YOU PROVIDE HOMES TO UNHOUSED PEOPLE

It’s not entirely true that CHAT staff house more than 200 people and are responsible for the long-awaited opening of Everhart Village this year. It is YOU who really makes this happen. You, the loyal supporter who gives of your volunteer time, money, and moral support, that has kept CHAT going for almost 10 years.

To give to CHAT by debit or credit card, please go to [www.chicohousingactionteam.net/](http://www.chicohousingactionteam.net/), and click on the “Donate” button at the top of each page. Or just use your phone to click on the QR code on this page. You will have the option to give a one-time donation or to set up monthly giving, with the amount of your choosing taken out of your credit or debit account on the same day each month. If you prefer to give by check or money order, please mail it to us at PO Box 4868, Chico, CA 95927.

Please consider becoming a monthly donor to CHAT. Supporters who give monthly provide CHAT with a reliable source of income. Their generous support has become an important part of our fiscal health and our ability to continue our work.

We also accept in-kind donations of new or nearly new furniture and household items. If you have something to donate, please send a photo and description to [furniture@chicohousingactionteam.net](mailto:furniture@chicohousingactionteam.net). Our furniture warehouse volunteers will check to see if it is an item we can use and if we have storage space.

Unlike the early days, CHAT now has paid staff. But we still need and appreciate the many volunteers to keep our services running smoothly. We schedule volunteer trainings on a regular basis. To learn more about volunteer opportunities, go to <https://www.chicohousingactionteam.net/volunteer>.

**You can access our donation page by  
using the QR Code below:**



## WHO WE ARE

**Chico Housing Action Team (CHAT)** is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization, 530-399-3965, PO Box 4868, Chico CA, 95927, [info@chicohousingactionteam.net](mailto:info@chicohousingactionteam.net)

**Facebook Page:** <https://www.facebook.com/chicohousingactionteam/>

**Website:** [www.chicohousingactionteam.net/](http://www.chicohousingactionteam.net/)

**Instagram:** [https://www.instagram.com/chico\\_housing\\_action\\_team/](https://www.instagram.com/chico_housing_action_team/)

**Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/ChicoHousAction>

**YouTube:** [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCd\\_dDVqD5w2mwRfjHZub3dQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCd_dDVqD5w2mwRfjHZub3dQ)

### CHAT Staff

#### Administration Team

Nicole Drummond (Executive Director), Jennifer Haffner (Associate Director), Hannah Booth (Volunteer Coordinator), Caitlin Davis-Rivers (Grants Manager), Matt Ferren (Accountant), Yesenia Gallegos (Data Coordinator), Sarah Graham (Director of Finance & Development), Jamie Lynch (Lead Accountant), Theresa O'Connor (Communications Manager), Kishaunte Platts (Housing Management Supervisor), Amanda Starkey (Office Administration)

#### Resident Support Team

Amber Benedict (Social Services Director), Adrienne Williams (Social Services Supervisor). [Housing Support Coordinators](#): Sharice Atkins (HUSH Program); Pedro Esparza

(Housing for All), Tasha Forks (Housing for All), Jessica Gianola (CHAMP), Bryan Hester (Housing for All), Jess Hiller (Sunflower Program), Sawyere Lamontagne (Housing for All), Renee Richard (Harmony at Home/Roadrunner Programs), Angel Taylor (Redwood Program)

#### Everhart Village

Doug Calbreath (Volunteer Electrician), Ken Dickson (Volunteer Construction Coordinator), Gary Lee (Construction Manager), Janice Lee (Volunteer Plan Designer), Caitlyn Patterson (Program Manager), Bob Trausch, Charles Withuhn

#### Maintenance Team

Jerimiah Bellah (Maintenance / Construction Lead); Arrow Jordan (Maintenance / Construction Worker), Mason Benedict (Warehouse Support Staff)

#### Contracted Videographers

Stacey Wear & Gerard Ungerman, AKA Respectful Revolution

#### CHAT Board of Directors:

Ron Aker, Leslie Johnson (President), Joaquin Jordan, Linda MacMichael (Secretary), Sheldon Praiser, Julie Quinn (Treasurer), Janet Rechtman, Bob Trausch (Vice President), Kathy Weeks (Food Program Coordinator), Charles Withuhn (Tiny Homes Project Coordinator), Elizabeth Young

#### CHAT Advisory Council

Angela Risdon (Chair), Janet Brown, Bill Kehoe, Marica Koehn, Linda Luck, Alan Mittman, Ann Schwab, Don Taylor

**"Housing Action" Editor** – Nancy Park

---

## CHICO HOUSING ACTION TEAM

PO BOX 4868

CHICO, CA 95927