



Raphael House

MOVING FAMILIES FROM CRISIS TO COMMUNITY

1065 SUTTER STREET • SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94109 • WWW.RAPHAELHOUSE.ORG

The Campaign to BUY OUR HOME

With a little help from its friends, Raphael House hopes to celebrate 30 years of service to the homeless in a home of its own. The center is buying and retrofitting the two buildings at 1065 Sutter Street that house its programs. Keeping pace with the hammering and sawing is a \$3 million capital campaign to buy the property and pay the construction bills.

Raphael House, which started working with homeless families in 1971, has operated on Sutter Street since 1977, in two buildings owned by its founding Order. Three years ago, anxiety swept through the center when staffers heard that the Order wanted to sell the buildings. Said executive director Fr. David Lowell: "For the first time in our history, we at Raphael House faced the frightening question so familiar to our families: Where would we go if the sale of the property caused us to lose our home?"

After lengthy negotiations, the Order offered to sell the buildings to Raphael House, at what for San Francisco is a very reasonable price: \$2 million. If the center could



raise \$2 million, plus another million dollars to make the buildings earthquake-safe, it would have a home of its own.

Headed by John Hinman, the Raphael House board approved a \$3 million capi-

tal campaign to buy and retrofit the buildings. Last December, the Order accepted a 50 percent down payment and agreed to carry the \$1 million balance at 7 percent interest. Raphael House's goal is to celebrate Thanksgiving by paying it off. "Seven percent is a reasonable interest rate," said Fr. Lowell, "but the debt creates a dangerous burden on our lean operating budget."

As they always have, friends of Raphael House rose to the challenge. Art Gensler, whose company did the retrofit design work, agreed to be the campaign's honorary chair. Larry and Joyce Stupski, whose fund supports education and youth, agreed to serve as leadership committee chairs — and promptly led off with a generous \$250,000 gift. Others are pitching in with large and small donations, as Raphael House works to reach the \$3 million target by this fall.

"Owning these buildings will secure our future ability to do our work," said development director Jo Ellen Peterson. Before taking the plunge, she said, Raphael House looked at what comparable facilities would cost, and even explored the possibility of new construction. "We couldn't find anything that came close to the wonderful offer we had here: 40,000 square feet in two buildings for just \$2 million. In today's real estate market — even with the retrofit work — that's a bargain."

Hard Hats and Steel Beams

In mid-summer, hard hats and tool belts were streaming in and out of the boarded-up Thrift Store building as the place was stripped to its girders and reinforced. Gensler Associates and DPR Construction, who were donating tremendous amounts of time and materials, pushed the work along. Sparks flew as rebar was cut. Sheetrock and lumber were stacked along the walls. Raphael House staffers had long since traded their airy second-floor offices for dusty basement cubicles in the main building.

"Seismic retrofit is nobody's idea of fun and I'm glad it's almost over," said Fr. Lowell in July. "DPR Construction and the architects from Gensler have been great to work with. This has been a very complex project—with renovations in both buildings—and it's all being completed on time!"



BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE: Surveying the seismic work area (from left): Raphael House board chairman John Hinman, executive director Fr. David Lowell, and DPR Construction superintendent Nelson Vineyard.



KIDS: The Point of it All

When Raphael House opened its doors three decades ago, it was one of only four family shelters in the entire state of California, and the first shelter in San Francisco to offer families private rooms and round-the-clock services.

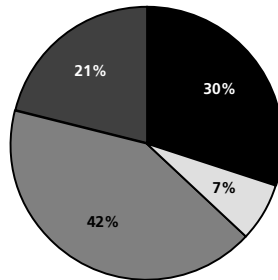
In its thirty-year history, the center's award-winning residential and aftercare programs have served more than 10,000 parents and their children. With its rooftop children's garden, hallways lined with brightly colored artwork, and story time and bedtime rituals, Raphael House's focus has been kids and their families.

Said one woman, who was struggling with drugs, alcohol, and poverty when she and her children stayed at Raphael House in 1983: "You welcomed us with warmth and integrity. You treated us as people, and never looked down on us. We came to Raphael House afraid, desperate, and alone — and left with pride, self-confidence, and hope."

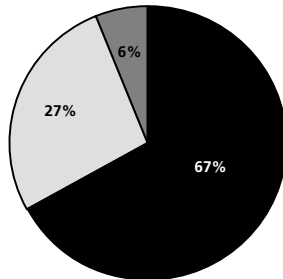
Wrote another former resident: "I know you hear this often, but I cannot say enough how many lives Raphael House has touched. Not just the temporary residents, but the volunteers as well. I have tremendous respect for the live-in staff also. They really 'walk the walk' in helping to solve the complex issues of homelessness and the many social problems addressed through your program. My life has truly been enriched by the experience."

Added a third, in Spanish: "The happiest times of my life were when I was at Raphael House. I found peace and tranquility. Thank you for your shelter. You are a gift from God."

Where the Money Comes From — and Where it Goes



By July 23, Raphael House had raised \$2,564,535 of its \$3 million goal, mainly from individuals (42 percent), foundations (30 percent), trusts and bequests (21 percent), and corporations (7 percent).



Of that amount, 67 percent is going to the buildings' purchase price and 27 percent for construction. Only 6 percent is being spent on project administration.

RAPHAEL HOUSE AT 30

Thanksgiving 2001 at Raphael House will be both the same and different. As usual, staff and volunteers will bustle around the dining room with plates of turkey, stuffing, gravy, and mashed potatoes for their guests: residents of the shelter and senior citizens from the neighborhood. As usual, staff and residents will break bread together. But this year, the holiday will be subtly different. Raphael House will be not only celebrating 30 years of service, it will be doing it in its own home.

Raphael House hopes to expand its services, offering longer-term, service-enriched housing — with educational, cultural, and parenting support — in strategic areas throughout the Bay Area. But buying and renovating the Sutter Street property is key to continuing and extending that work.

"Thanksgiving is going to be a very special day this year," said Fr. Lowell. "After 30 years, we'll be sitting down to dinner in our very own place. It's hard to believe, but it's true. Of course some things never change. We'll say grace, we'll eat turkey, and we'll all do the dishes together — same as always."



READING AND WRITING: Volunteer Ava Washington watches literature being created.