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## NUESTRA COMUNIDAD

Mission Neighborhood Centers | Monthly Community Newsletter

January 2021

*As we enter the new year, we reflect with gratitude on the contributions of our staff, board of directors, supporters, donors, and volunteers. We are especially thankful for our board, whose support has been crucial to our success.*

### BOARD LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

Beverly Hayon | Board President

This month's 'Spotlight' looks back at the many reasons why so many members of our community feel called to serve with our organization, including how they were first introduced to MNC, and their personal affinities with the communities we serve. We are excited to profile MNC Board President, Beverly Hayon.



#### **Were you born in the City or did you move here?**

I was born raised in Los Angeles, the first-generation child of Salvadoran mother who started out as a garment worker. Although I wasn't born in San Francisco, I certainly have an affinity with the Mission District and all that it represents. I have a very large extended family - both here in San Francisco and in El Salvador - and with Sam being Salvadoran it's been great to connect with him, and my roots. I definitely have a sense of the 'family-oriented community', which MNC embodies.

### **How were you first introduced to MNC?**

I came to San Francisco in 1967. Once I acclimated to the City, I became involved in [then] Bay Area Big Sisters by joining their Board. I've always been involved on some level - increasingly so over the years - as far back as when I was in my late 20s. That's when I got involved with Big Sisters, I've continued ever since.

### **How has your professional background informed your role as Board President?**

My career has been in broadcasting, as well as P.R. and corporate communications. There's a natural affinity between people who are involved in media and public relations with community organizations. When I was the Director of Public Affairs at ABC's Channel 7, I spearheaded community engagement, and the production of shows that represented the Latino community - which the community had been asking for.

In my very first job at Channel 7 as a Production Assistant on a show called 'La Raza' I helped ensure that members from the community appeared on the show. I eventually became the Director of Public Affairs - the first woman and the first Latina to have that role - where I continued to increase my involvement in the community.

An important influence in my career was my participation in a program created by CORO Foundation. CORO trains community leaders through various programs. At that time - in addition to their internship program for university graduates - CORO started a program for mid-career women, which touched on every aspect of civic and community life in the San Francisco.

From my early involvement with Bay Area Big Sisters - to my service on numerous boards and City Commissions I've always been involved in the San Francisco community. All of these experiences introduced me to community needs and social issues - particularly those impacting Hispanic and Latino communities - and informed my role as a member of various boards.

### **What social issues do you feel 'closest to' and how is MNC involved with those issues?**

The number one issue in my life has always been the role of women - opening doors for women and making sure that women have an equal opportunity - especially Latinas. Women are key to the success of MNC and the community, particularly if you look at who our employees are and who we serve: mothers at Head Start, aging and older adult women who come to the Center for lunch and kinship, young girls in youth programs.

Women are helping and teaching women - from taking classes, to learning computer skills, to providing assistance in other areas. I feel an affinity not only with those we serve, but the women on our staff as well, some of whom have moved into leadership

roles in the organization. This is particularly fulfilling for me. MNC is a place to build connection with other members of our cultural community. It's great to feel the warmth of fellow Latinas and Latinos whom I meet and interact with through MNC. That social connection is also something I feel very close to.

## ESSENTIAL SERVICES HUB PRESS CONFERENCE

Bayview District

On December 15, 2020, along with Mayor London Breed, Assembly member David Chiu and Supervisor Shamann Walton, MNC held a virtual Press Conference to announce the launch of our **Essential Services Hub** in the Bayview District to uplift our *communities of color who have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic*.

The hub, located at 1329-1331 Evans Street, provides a lifeline to essential services by providing critically needed access to food, housing, health services, and workforce stabilization during this pandemic.

Our essential services hub ensures that those most in need have access to:

- **Vital financial subsidies:** subsidies are provided to address housing and food insecurities.
- **Food pantry:** critically needed distribution of food, grocery store gift cards, diapers, baby formula, wipes and emergency personal protective equipment.

In addition, at the Essential Services Hub we have incorporated a **Learning Hub** for youth. It provides digitally connected, safe, full-day and in-person programming for youth from impoverished households as well as to residents of HOPE SF ([www.hope-sf.org](http://www.hope-sf.org)), public housing and single room occupancy hotels, youth experiencing homelessness, foster youth and English Language Learners. *All health and safety guidelines are followed and enforced which required face masks and social distancing.*

In partnership with UCSF and the Department of Public Health, the hub facilitates COVID-19 testing referrals, provides support to families testing positive, and collaborates with pop up COVID-19 testing sites.

Furthermore, in collaboration with the Latino Task Force, Bay Area Community Resources, Good Samaritan, the Mission Economic Development Agency and Young Community Developers we provide access to expanded emergency support services. Expanded services include holistic, integrated Family Resource Center services and assistance in applying for and securing funds from SF's Give2SF Housing Stabilization Program.



## FAREWELL

Maria Bermudez



After over 14 years of dedicated service to Mission Neighborhood Centers and the community we serve, we bid a fond farewell to Maria Bermudez.

Maria originally retired as Chief Operations Officer in January of 2020 but found herself back at MNC a few months later using her remarkable skills and talents to help management work in this new normal within the COVID crisis and assist in the implementation of

several strategic projects, including a successful capital campaign for our two newest Early Care and Education facilities projects.

The progress, growth, and successes that MNC has achieved could not have been done without Maria's contributions. We are grateful for Maria's even temperament, institutional knowledge, dedicated leadership, strategic thinking, and mentorship during her tenure at MNC.

We could not have done it without her! We wish her good health and all the best in her retirement!

## INCREASING CONNECTIONS FOR SENIORS

Healthy Aging & Disabilities | Activities

As we know, during this extraordinary time of shelter-in-place, social distancing requirements have increased feelings of social isolation and loneliness among our community of older adults and adults with disabilities.

To help address the mental health and wellness needs of our Healthy Aging & Disabilities Services clients, staff are offering even more ways for our seniors to get involved. A whole host of activities, designed to increase socialization for individuals with limited mobility, are fostering engagement and connections between our participants. Offerings include everything from virtual fitness classes and workshops, to remote group therapy, social hour, and art & musical sessions. It has been amazing to see the community strengthened among our resilient participants!



Our social services, translations, community resources, and naturalization programming have resumed and are being offered by appointment only. Our daily wellness calls provide daily touchpoints for clients, to remedy feelings of loneliness and check in on health and wellness.

To ensure our older adults continue to receive critically-needed meals, we continue to distribute hot meals to clients' homes - Monday thru Friday. Currently we are delivering around 65 meals per day. Clients also received special holiday dinners. In partnership with San Francisco-Marín Food Bank and volunteers, 200 low-income seniors are receiving home-deliveries, including a weekly grocery bag with fresh vegetables, protein and milk. For the duration of the City's shelter-in-place mandate, we also provide around 250 monthly emergency bags for community members who are unable to leave their homes to buy necessities.

### **FIRST MNC GED TESTING SITE** Youth Services Program

We want to announce that now we have an official GED testing site at Centro de Alegria on 1245 Alabama Street . We are also now an official partner with SFUSD Education placement Center so that our Bayview site can provide actual enrollment supports for families entering /transition into SFUSD. This means they do not have to go to the district office. We want to congratulate our Youth Services team who has tirelessly worked towards providing this important service to our community.



**GED Instructors (Above, left to right) —**  
Christian Leal, Ársalan Khan-Razavi, Che Shul

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