

## Spotlight: HomeAid

## HomeAid San Diego Teams up with Senior Community Centers to Build the LEED-Gold Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center Downtown

Construction has started on Senior Community Centers' Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center at the corner of 4th and Beech Streets downtown. The \$7.2 million, 17,000 square foot tenant improvement project is a partnership between HomeAid San Diego and Senior Community Centers.

Navigating their way through a rigorous entitlement process, Senior Community Centers was granted a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) in February 2009. Scott Cairns of Smith Consulting Architects, the lead architect for the project, was instrumental in guiding Senior Community Centers through this process, and continues to be an integral contributor to the project. Southwest Strategies' team of Chris Wahl and Jonathan Heller crafted a brilliant public affairs campaign to win all of the necessary governmental approvals.

Luce Forward is another critical member of the Project Team. The law firm has donated countless hours of pro bono legal work, assisting Senior Community Centers with all aspects of acquisition, financing and renovation. More than a dozen different attorneys, led by Ken Stipanov and Rebecca Gemmel, have worked on the project. The value of their contribution to this project is incalculable.

Through an RFP selection process facilitated by HomeAid San Diego, Ledcor Construction was selected as the General Contractor and



A rendering of the Gary & Mary West Senior Wellness Center on Fourth Avenue & Beech Street.

HomeAid Builder Captain for the project. They had the right credentials, the right team approach, and committed to a significant level of donation for the project. In addition, Ron Sutliff of Integrated Project Management (IPM) joined the Project Team as Senior Community Centers' Owners' Representative during the pre-and construction phases, donating a significant amount of time and expertise to the project.

A crucial part of the success of a non-profit facility is keeping the operating budget as low as possible so that donations go to the essential mission of assisting low-income seniors. The Design Team has incorporated energy savings features such as daylighting, high efficiency air conditioning units, lighting control systems and low flow plumbing fixtures. Daylighting alone in the Main Dining Room will eliminate the need for all electrical lighting during the daylight hours. All of these design concepts are sup-

porting the goal of obtaining LEED Gold rating for the project. Even the selection of a 60 year old building for rehab is conserving resources by not using all new building materials and the energy necessary for manufacturing new materials.

Since food service is part of the crucial mission, the Design Team has been working to find funding for a solar hot water heating system. Food service for 500 people a day creates the need for gallons of hot water for dishwashing. This system could save \$100,000.00 in energy costs over 20 years.

HomeAid San Diego, through its contacts with local and national suppliers and builders, is working together with Smith Consulting Architects, Ledcor Construction and their subcontractors, and IPM, to solicit donations of in-kind materials and labor to help defray the cost of construction for Senior Community Centers. In turn, Senior Community Centers is then able to use the savings to

expand the services provided to the low-income senior population they serve. This leveraging of donated time and materials facilitated by HomeAid San Diego can translate into a significant savings to Senior Community Centers on their cash investment in the new Senior Wellness Center.

"The Project Team we have assembled for this HomeAid build is outstanding," said Alexis Parker, Executive Director of HomeAid San Diego. "Our first RFP process to select a contractor was a huge success with the award of the contract to Ledcor Construction and every key member of our Project Team has eagerly embraced the HomeAid building model."

The Project Team of HomeAid San Diego, Smith Consulting Architects, IPM, and Ledcor Construction, along with numerous local subcontractors are proud to be work-

ing with Senior Community Centers and the Gary and Mary West Foundation to make the vision for the Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center a

seniors. I have been a proud supporter of Senior Community Centers and I am eagerly looking forward to the opening of this incredible new



First floor rendering of the Gary & Mary West Senior Wellness Center.

reality.

"For more than 30 years, Senior Community Centers has been providing housing and critical services to San Diego

Wellness Center. This facility will greatly help our seniors maintain active and healthy lives," said County Supervisor Greg Cox.

## About Seniors Community Centers

Senior Community Centers is replacing its decades-old Broadway Senior Center with a new, state-of-the-art, one-stop wellness center for low-income seniors in San Diego. The Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center will be a critical "hub" for senior services throughout all of San Diego, not just the downtown area. The collective vision of Senior Community Centers and the Gary and Mary West Foundation in developing innovative programs for seniors is the cornerstone of this project and it is positioned to become a national model for the future of healthy aging that is replicable in other cities.

"The Gary and Mary West Foundation is excited to partner with Senior Community Centers on this important project. It is our hope that the Center becomes a place of health and wellness for San Diego seniors, as well as an innovative model for future senior centers," said Roland J. Santoni, President, Gary and Mary West Foundation Board of Directors.

Scheduled to open in early 2010, the Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center will take the programs and services Senior Community Centers' offers to another level. The new facility will provide the support older adults need to be active, engaged and healthy so they can remain in their homes and communities for as long as possible.

"The Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center will truly transform the aging experience," said Paul Downey, Senior Community Centers' President/CEO. "It will provide seniors with support not just to survive, but to thrive."

Located just a few blocks from the heart of downtown, the Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center sits in close proximity to several senior high-rise apartments and smaller hotel-type buildings. It is perfectly situated to attract these seniors as this neighborhood does not currently offer a safe, welcoming place for them to meet, socialize, and participate in activities designed to keep their minds and bodies healthy and active. Lots of light and a modern, uplifting design will set the Wellness Center apart from senior centers of the past. A palette of warm, inviting colors will welcome senior clients into a safe and comfortable environment that for many will be a home away from home.

The first floor includes the main lobby with lots of seating plus a "living room" area for socialization or reading, and an activity room for chess, cards, or other board games. The Enrichment Center is available for lectures, art or exercise classes, demonstrations, job and volunteer training, or other group activities. The Cyber Café will be a fun place for seniors to learn and develop computer skills, use

the Internet, send emails to friends and family, and interact with youth from nearby schools who will serve as teachers and mentors. The kitchen and dining room area, nearly double the size of the current facility, will be extremely popular with those who come for the nutritious and tasty breakfast and lunch served each day.

"This is going to be a great project," said County Supervisor Ron Roberts. "Senior Community Centers continues to be innovative in tackling the needs of our neediest seniors. I expect the new nutrition tracking program at the Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center to become a national model."

The second floor is home to the Center for Healthy Aging where clinical staff and collaborative partners will provide a full range of health assessments, interventions, case management, and activities designed to promote optimum health and well being to benefit mind, body and spirit. Partnerships with leading San Diego health care, social service, legal and educational organizations enables Senior Community Centers to offer a wide spectrum of activities and innovative programs to improve the self-efficacy of a growing, and potentially more

discerning senior client base. Senior Community Centers' caring and committed staff will be the vital link that ties it all together.

"The Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center is a unique facility that will become a model for the rest of the nation," said San Diego City Council President Pro Tem Kevin Faulconer. "It will encompass Senior Community Centers' existing, nationally recognized programs, and will allow the creation of innovative new services that will help seniors thrive in the 21st century. Now, more so than ever, it is important for the public and private sectors to work together in partnership to help our seniors on fixed incomes."

If you are interested in participating in this worthwhile project by donating either time or materials, please contact HomeAid San Diego at 858-793-0292 or Alexis Parker, Executive Director at alexis@homeaidsd.org.

If you wish to make a donation to Senior Community Centers specific to this project or in support of their programs for low-income seniors, please contact Donna Pippins, Chief Development Officer, at 619-235-6572 x308 or donna.pippins@servingseniors.org.

## About HomeAid San Diego

HomeAid San Diego is the local chapter of HomeAid America, a national organization that is the largest builder of transitional housing for the temporarily homeless in the United States. HomeAid's mission is "to build dignified housing where homeless families and individuals can rebuild their lives". HomeAid San Diego is unique among nonprofits in that we partner with other nonprofits to help them build their facilities from which they provide social services to the temporarily homeless to help them move beyond their homeless situation, transform their lives, restore their self-worth and regain self-sufficiency.

HomeAid San Diego has been building transitional housing for the temporarily homeless here in San Diego since 2002 when our chapter was first formed by leaders of San Diego's real estate and building community. Through our partnerships with local nonprofits that provide services for our city's temporarily homeless citizens and San Diego's building industry, we facilitate the building of permanent multi-unit housing where these homeless families and individuals participate in programs to help them get back on their feet to again become productive members of the community. Our association with the real estate industry and nonprofit service providers is truly a collaborative partnership of giving and serving those most in need.

The key to HomeAid's success is leveraging in-kind donations of building materials and the labor of professional builders, well beyond the cash donations that the nonprofit receives. Through HomeAid San Diego's local and national industry contacts and the contributions of in-kind donations from building partners, HomeAid San Diego multiplies the effect of every cash dollar received two- to three-fold. In terms of return on investment (ROI) and increasing the retail value of our finished housing projects, the HomeAid

model remains unparalleled in the nonprofit world.

To date, we have proudly completed 8 projects. We teamed our nonprofit partners with leading builders in San Diego to build these permanent legacies of hope in our community that provide transitional services for the temporarily homeless:

Sylvia's Place  
Sullivan Group Homes  
Pardee Homes  
House of Rachel  
Catholic Charities  
ColRich Communities  
Mary's House  
Promises2Kids & YMCA Youth & Family Services  
William Lyon Homes  
Carol's House  
Community Resource Center  
Shea Homes  
Victorian Heights  
South Bay Community Services  
Standard Pacific Homes  
Merle's Place  
Interfaith Community Services  
Shamrock Development, LLC  
Burger Construction  
Veteran's Transitional Housing  
Interfaith Community Services  
Competitive Edge Construction  
San Pasqual Academy  
New Alternatives, Inc.  
Fairfield Residential LLC

In addition, we currently have three major projects in various phases of active development:

- Gary & Mary West Senior Wellness Center Senior Community Centers
- Casa de Amparo Children's Center + 3 Children's Cottages Casa de Amparo
- Double RR Ranch Orange County Rescue Mission

HomeAid San Diego thanks our corporate sponsors and donors for their continuing support of our mission to build dignified transitional housing for the temporarily homeless in San Diego:

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