

Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter Partner Profile: Community Action Partnership of Orange County

The Community Action Partnership of Orange County works to strengthen individuals and families by providing health services, workforce development and community engagement programs.

The organization also operate a 58,000 square-foot food bank complete with commercial grade refrigerators and freezers capable of handling 20 truckloads of perishable food. Volunteers receive and package about 26,000 boxes of food each month for distribution to 50 sites across the county.

Fresh Beginnings Ministries and Community Action Partnership have entered into an agreement to provide fresh produce and dry goods every week to Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter residents.

Prior to receiving food from the Community Action Partnership, there were several health code inspections that needed to occur. The Fresh Beginnings warehouse, the kitchen at the Bridge Shelter, and the Senior Center kitchen (where shelter volunteers cook many of the meals) all received A-plus ratings from health inspectors to clear the way for this program to begin.

Over the next two weeks, six volunteers will be trained as certified shoppers by the Community Action Partnership and will be trained on correct procedures at Orange County food banks.

The Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter team is always looking for new ways to innovate, create partnerships and better serve those

experiencing homelessness in Costa Mesa. If you would like to be a part of the team and test out your culinary skills, please contact Bill.Nelson@costamesaca.gov.

Additional volunteer opportunities are available and an easy way for you to take an active role and help create positive change in your community. Volunteer opportunities available include preparing and serving meals, hosting games and social gatherings, offering a unique skill set to shelter guests and more. For more information please contact AlyssaS@mercyhouse.net.

A volunteer application is available [here](#).

Not ready to volunteer but still want to help? The city is currently accepting in-kind and cash donations to assist individuals in the community experiencing homelessness. To make a financial donation or for a list of accepted items please visit [here](#).

Bridge Shelter Success: Cindy's Story

Removing barriers such as substance abuse and legal challenges is something that is happening daily at the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter, thanks to the physical and emotional support provided by shelter case managers.

Cindy, a young woman filled with anger, recently received that help at the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter.

She had lost her car and wanted to get a job. However, due to recovery issues and loss of transportation, she was

overwhelmed emotionally, unable to get work and had no idea how to begin a new 12-step program to help combat her addiction.

Additionally, Cindy was unfocused and dealing with many legal problems and medical issues. She wanted to return to her home state of Washington but was unable to come up with a suitable plan.

With the help of volunteers and thoughtful case management, Cindy was able to go before a judge and have her tickets and citations bundled and reduced.

Cindy is now getting her resume together and getting the confidence to look for work. She has also expressed interest in seeing a counselor to help get her back on her feet.

These simple, yet very important steps, are critical elements of Cindy's housing plan.

Thanks to the caring case manager staff and the shelter operator staff, Cindy is now on a path to a better life, and is encouraged to continue working towards securing housing.

Bridge Shelter Partner Profile: Clothing the Homeless

Clothing the Homeless is a ministry of Journey Christian Church, which is now helping Costa Mesa's Bridge Shelter clients regain dignity and improve their lives.

While the majority of homeless related clothing programs

require vouchers and/or are often a bus ride or more away, Clothing the Homeless is unique in that it comes onsite due to its ability to be a mobile clothing distribution system.

The organization's goal is to meet the needs of those experiencing homelessness with adequate clothing for different seasons and weather. They also want the clothing to be decent and clean to provide a boost to clients that often experience low self-esteem and to help them look presentable when appearing at job interviews.

Last month, Clothing the Homeless set up shop here in Costa Mesa and was able to provide new and gently-used clothing and accessories to both shelter guests and neighbors.

With its initial success, Clothing the Homeless now plans to serve shelter guests one weekend per month!

We are thankful for this partnership as it directly benefits those in the community that are experiencing homelessness by ensuring that shelter guests have the opportunity to choose fresh clothes as many of them embark on their housing and even employment plans.

It's because of organizations like this that we are able to continue to work towards changing lives for the better by putting Bridge Shelter clients on a path to personal and professional success.

To find out ways you can help Costa Mesa's Bridge Shelter clients call 714-836-7188 ext. 222 or visit our website at www.costamesaca.gov/homelessness

Former Navy Corpsman sets sail on new course with Costa Mesa Network for Homeless Solutions

Meet Paul Mahoney, one of the newest members of the city's team who helps Bridge Shelter clients on a daily basis to get out of homelessness.

Paul served a stint in the U.S. Navy until 1992, where he was a Hospital Corpsman.

He used his medical background from that service and got a job as a vocational nurse and was studying to be a registered nurse. However, he realized nursing wasn't his destined vocation, so he changed paths and chose to major in the field of psychology.

Paul graduated with a Bachelor in Psychology from California State University Long Beach. Since then, he worked with the developmentally disabled population in various roles including independent living skills, and management.

Shortly after graduation, he began a 12-year career with the Frank D. Lanterman Regional Center in downtown Los Angeles. His role was a Service Coordinator specializing in the senior population, overseeing skilled nursing and assisted living facilities that housed Regional Center clients.

In 2009 his focus shifted to forensic cases. At this time, Paul became involved in working with the court system, parole, probation and legal matters. Housing clients became difficult due to the inability to house felons with the state law restrictions so Paul became adept at housing navigation.

Paul continued his education and later received his Master in Business Administration with an emphasis on Health Care Administration and Finance from Brandman University.

In 2017, after 12 years at Regional Center, Paul left to take a position with Illumination Foundation. His primary duties and responsibilities included ensuring that all spending, staff allocation, budget allocation, planning and requirements for housing and compliance were being adhered to as per HUD requirements on several different federal, state and county contracts.

He also oversaw the case managers and housing navigators to ensure units were located, developed and maintained. Additionally, he was responsible for retention of the individuals placed in housing.

Paul bring to Costa Mesa a vast portfolio of education and experience and his impact can already been felt and seen as he works daily with some of the most vulnerable clients at the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter.

Thank you Paul for your hard work and dedication to the City and to the clients of the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter.

For more information and/or to volunteer or donate to the Bridge Shelter, visit our website www.costamesaca.gov/homelessness, or contact the shelter operators by calling 714-836-7188 ext. 222.

Bridge Shelter Success:

Jerry's Story

Jerry arrived at Share Our Selves in bad condition and in need of help. He had been living in his van for two years when he was assaulted, resulting in a local hospital stay. During that time, his vehicle was impounded by a neighboring police department.

He was referred to the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter shortly after this and immediately expressed interest in working towards housing opportunities. To get things started, Jerry worked with his assigned case manager to get new Medicare and Medi-Cal cards.

Unfortunately, Jerry struggled with addiction and had difficulty following through on even simple tasks which were exacerbated by the fact that most of his days were spent away from the shelter.

Because the City and Mercy House operate the Bridge Shelter with a 'Housing First Model', Jerry's case manager had a heart-to-heart talk with him and told him that if he didn't commit to meet on a regular basis, that he wouldn't successfully meet his housing goals and risk losing his bed at the facility.

After several false starts, Jerry agreed to a more consistent program and followed through with his case management action plan.

He confessed that he struggles with addiction and is tired of the life he has led. He knows that a new way of life is the only way to ensure that he does not end up in prison again.

Jerry was advised to attend outpatient clinics until a residential rehabilitation program could be arranged by case management.

Through the collaborative efforts of his case manager and his parole officer, Jerry has taken the first step toward independent living and has enrolled in a 90-day treatment program.

The compassionate team at the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter will continue to monitor Jerry's journey to recover from addiction and help guide him on his path to independent living.

For more information and/or to donate to the Bridge Shelter, visit our website www.costamesaca.gov/homelessness or contact the shelter operators by calling 714-836-7188 ext. 222, or [click here](#).

New City Manager takes office in Costa Mesa

Lori Ann Farrell Harrison was sworn-in as the City Manager of the City of Costa Mesa during an Oath of Office ceremony at the start of the workday on Monday July 1, 2019. She is Costa Mesa's eighth City Manager and first woman appointed to the city's top position.

"I am grateful to the Costa Mesa City Council for this opportunity and excited to get to work. Costa Mesa is a great community and I look forward to working together with Council, staff, residents and businesses to continue moving Costa Mesa into the future while focusing on fiscal responsibility, public safety and improving neighborhoods and quality of life."

Farrell Harrison, a local government expert with 28 years of experience in the public and private sectors, had been the

Assistant City Manager in Huntington Beach since 2017. In that role, she was responsible for coordinating complex initiatives in many aspects of city government with an emphasis on fiscal sustainability, transparency and process improvement. She also worked with the City Manager in the daily oversight of the city's 10 non-elected departments including police, fire and public works.

Additionally, she served as chief advisor to the City Manager, the seven-member City Council and the elected City Attorney, City Treasurer and City Clerk. She has also been a leader in citywide homelessness efforts, and has led successful labor negotiations with the city's eight employee associations covering 987 full-time employees.

Prior to her role as Assistant City Manager, Farrell Harrison served as the Chief Financial Officer for the City of Huntington Beach for seven years, overseeing a total budget of \$344 million. She was instrumental in helping the city reduce its unfunded liabilities.

"Ms. Farrell Harrison's extensive background working in government and the private sector prepared her for the challenges ahead to ensure Costa Mesa plans for a fiscally sustainable future, with quality services and facilities for the community," Mayor Katrina Foley said. "We look forward to working with her to restore our neighborhoods and parks, make our community safer, develop plans for economic stability and environmental sustainability, and increase community engagement."



Prior to Huntington Beach, Farrell Harrison served as the City Controller, and later as the Chief Financial Officer, for the City of Long Beach, the sixth largest city in California. In that capacity, she was responsible for working with 23 department heads in managing a city budget of \$2.3 billion.

Earlier in her career, she worked for the State of New York and later the City of New York's Administration for Children's Services overseeing the \$2.0 billion budget for child protective, adoption and day care services.

Farrell Harrison holds a Master's of Public Administration from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs and a Bachelor's Degree from Barnard College of Columbia University. She is fluent in Spanish.

photos courtesy Matt Fitt Photography

Costa Mesa Fire and Rescue adds OES engine to the fleet

On Friday, June 28, 2019 the Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue Department officially took possession of CAL OES Fire Engine no. 302 from the State of California, Governor's Office of Emergency Medical Services, Fire and Rescue Division. Fire Chief Dan Stefano, Captain Joe Noceti, Captain Chuck Torres, and Engineer Steve Savage traveled to the Garden Grove Fire Department to pick up the engine in an agreement facilitated through CAL OES Region Fire Chief Dave Stone. The engine will be housed at Fire Station no. 4 located at 2300 Placentia.

"We appreciate this highly valued opportunity to take on the assignment of an OES engine," said Chief Stefano. "We have been in close contact with CAL OES over the course of many years making both formal and informal requests for this assignment, and today marks the day this expanded partnership with CAL OES begins. This is a very special day for Costa Mesa."

The State of California Governor's Office of Emergency Services has responsibility for administering the California Fire Service and Rescue Emergency Mutual Aid Plan. This plan, in which the City of Costa Mesa participates, provides emergency resources to be shared throughout the state during major emergencies, which exceed the capability of a local jurisdiction to mitigate on their own. This includes emergencies such as wildfires, floods, and earthquakes. As part of the statewide mutual aid system, CAL OES has purchased fire apparatus and equipment for responding to incidents in furtherance of the California Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Plan.

These fire apparatuses are assigned, through agreement, to fire departments throughout the state to be staged for CAL OES purposes and for use by local jurisdictions.



In Orange County, CAL OES fire engines are currently assigned to Anaheim Fire & Rescue, Fountain Valley Fire Department, Huntington Beach Fire Department, Laguna Beach Fire Department, and now the Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue Department.

For questions please contact Captain Joe Noceti, Public Information Officer of Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue at (714) 754-5091.

Bridge Shelter Success: Deanne's Story Update

We recently told the story of Deanne, a Bridge Shelter client, who had agreed to enter into the shelter after living in her car for eight years.

Unfortunately, since then, Deanne had more medical issues that needed to be dealt with and she was hospitalized.

Her panic and breathing issues continued to be problematic for her at the shelter; however, staff kept in contact with the local hospital to ensure that they were aware of her discharge status and on top of her new medication requirements.

This involved receiving the medication list from the hospital and forwarding this to Deanne's primary care physician so that new prescriptions could be filled. Additionally, her medication had to be stored and dispensed correctly, which involved a great deal of time for shelter staff because Deanne has difficulty understanding and following instructions.

While this was going on, shelter case managers were continuing to seek housing options, as well as obtain financial information necessary for her to receive Medi-Cal.

At the urging of shelter staff, a Full Service Partnership (FSP) housing provider finally agreed to interview Deanne. Because she is a senior with a behavioral health diagnosis, the provider attempted to qualify her for housing.

After undergoing two required medical clearances, Deanne was accepted into an assisted living facility in Orange County!

Deanne is thriving there and now has complete control over her bank accounts. The assisted living placement will allow her to be protected both financially and medically since they have 24-hour staff who will monitor her on a daily basis.

Helping clients like Deanne through difficult times is just one of the many services individuals have come to expect from our caring and dedicated shelter staff.

The Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter is run by a combination of City outreach staff and staff from Mercy House, an experienced, well-respected shelter operator. If you have questions for Mercy House about the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter please call 714-836-7188 ext. 222 or e-mail CostaMesaBridge@mercyhouse.net.

To learn more about making a donation, volunteer opportunities and how you can help, please visit www.costamesaca.gov/homelessness.

Senior Engineer Arash Rahimian presented with City Manager Leadership Award

Senior Engineer Arash Rahimian was presented with the City Manager Leadership Award at the monthly Meet and Greet event on Thursday June 26 at City Hall.

“Arash has shown excellent leadership, dedication and hard work to see that projects are completed on time, within budget and to the highest standards,” Acting City Manager Tammy Letourneau said. “For the Costa Mesa Library he went above and beyond his normal duties to coordinate and resolve issues with utility providers, stake holders, regulatory agencies and departments, contractors and consultants.”

Rahimian joined the Costa Mesa’s Public Services team in April 2015 as an Associate Engineer. In October 2016 he was assigned as Acting Senior Engineer and in December 2017 he was promoted to his current position.

Rahimian’s responsibilities include planning, design and construction of Capital Improvement Program projects and the supervision of the Construction Management Section in the Engineering Division. Throughout his tenure with the City he has received numerous compliments from residents in regards to his professionalism and dedication.

He has completed a number of projects that include reconstruction of alleys citywide, street rehabilitation projects, Arlington Drive Bioswale and Pedestrian Improvements, Fire Station No. 1 Reconstruction, and most recently, the City’s most iconic building – the Costa Mesa

Library.

In 2017, Rahimian worked with the Coastline Regional Occupational Program to provide high school students the opportunity to work closely with Engineering Staff during a summer internship.

Acting City Manager Letourneau also welcomed several newly hired employees and recognized another for her recent promotion.

Julie Dance, originally hired as an intern in 1997, has been promoted to Civilian Investigator in the Police Department.

Nataly Jacobo is a new Building Technician I working in the Building Division of the Development Services Department, Phoebe Jin is a new Programmer Analyst II in I.T and Staphani Ogas is a new Community Outreach Worker working for our Network for Homeless Solutions.

Bridge Shelter Success: Deanne's Story

Deanne is a Costa Mesa senior woman who spent nearly eight years living in her car with relatives.

Recently, she became severely ill and was hospitalized. The staff at the hospital reached out to Costa Mesa's community outreach team and through collaborative efforts, Deanne was able to successfully move into the Bridge Shelter.

Initially, Deanne was extremely hesitant and reluctant to stay at the shelter because she was alone and without her relatives, since they did not want to move with her to the

shelter. She even experienced panic attacks due to this.

Shelter staff and Mercy House site coordinators spent a great deal of time working with Deanne to make her comfortable and to gain her trust. They reassured her that she was safe at the Shelter and that they worked tirelessly to find housing that would accommodate senior homeless residents.

As this was happening, Deanne unfortunately lost control of her bank account, so the shelter staff helped her get a new ID and a new bank account. She now has enough money to pay for health insurance and she also has the ability to save money as well, which will go towards her housing.

Deanne continues her stay at the shelter, in a safe and supportive surrounding, as shelter staff works to find her a stable place to live.

Congratulations Deanne on your recent commitment and stabilization and for working towards housing!

For more information and/or to donate to the Bridge Shelter, visit our website [here](#) or contact the shelter operators by calling 714-836-7188 ext. 222, or [click here](#).

Bridge Shelter Success: Derek's Story

Derek was homeless for three years on the streets of Costa Mesa until he recently made a choice to move into the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter to find daily stability, including food, shower and form a plan to end his homelessness.

City outreach and Bridge Shelter staff worked together and

helped Derek realize he needed to live in a place with a lower cost of living. Derek left the Bridge Shelter but continued to work with the outreach team to explore housing options.

With help, Derek made a list of people and places that he felt were good options. He began calling those places and friends to see if anyone had a room to rent that he could move into.

A secure home was found and the paperwork was completed for him to be reconnected to a friend in Wisconsin. Recently Derek called while he was on his way to his new home to say thank you for helping him realize he could not keep living check to check in California.

He is happy to be able to live in a state that he can afford, while having his daily needs met.

The city thanks Trellis for funding Derek's bus ride to his new home and also taking him to the bus depot and seeing him off with a lunch and support.

Through collaborative efforts like these, the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter has successfully facilitated a new lease on life for several clients in a short period of time.

Bridge Shelter Partner Profile: Russ Carter

Russ Carter first began his involvement with individuals experiencing homelessness in Costa Mesa 14 years ago as part of a small group from Saddleback Church that served breakfast and provided fellowship at the Sandpiper Motel.

Carter became an advocate for one of the men he served breakfast to. That led him to learn more about those experiencing homelessness and their issues, problems, needs

and the services available to them. His role quickly evolved from serving meals to advocating for the unsheltered, both individually and as a group.

Carter and the volunteers from Saddleback Church continue to provide meals and support to those in need. However, with the opening of the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter new rules and regulations have been implemented related to volunteers, food service and more.

Despite these new restrictions, Carter and Saddleback Church have adapted their routine and continue to serve a nutritious breakfast that Bridge Shelter clients enjoy and they hope to continue as meal partners with the shelter.

It is partnerships like these that contribute to the overall success at the Bridge Shelter and ensure the shelter successfully changes lives for the better and continues to make a positive and meaningful impact on the Costa Mesa community.