

Family Assistance Program

15075 7th Street, Victorville, CA 92395

Outreach (760) 843-0701 Fax (760) 843-9551 Hotline (760) 949-4357



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jan, 29th, 2020

Matthew Letellier

matt@familyassist.org

Work: 760-843-0701

Cell: 760-680-9872

Non-Profit Receives Funding and Support to Open a Second Youth Shelter

San Bernardino County, CA – Non-profit, Family Assistance Program, has received a \$100,000 donation from The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians Foundation to support the expansion of shelter for victims of human trafficking under the age of 18 and homeless youth throughout the County of San Bernardino. This generous donation is in response to the growing need for shelter options within the county for young individuals impacted by homelessness and victimization.

In San Bernardino County, the only shelter available to homeless youth and underage victims of trafficking is at Our House, a youth shelter currently operated by Family Assistance Program. According to Family Assistance Program, during 2019, Our House shelter remained at full capacity nearly every night - serving nearly 200 youth in one year. The non-profit agency continues to explore ways to address the challenge of providing sufficient shelter to meet the needs of San Bernardino County's growing underage trafficking victims and homeless youth.

This challenge caught the attention of Congressman Pete Aguilar and The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians Foundation. Pete Aguilar explains "Supporting victims of human trafficking requires cooperation and collaboration from all members of our community. I'm grateful to the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians and to Family Assistance Program for their partnership, and for their work to take on this urgent issue. As Vice Chair of the House Appropriations Committee, I'll continue to support federal funding to help combat human trafficking and provide resources for victims." Together they have supported and donated ample time and funding to help expand shelter options for young victims in the County of San Bernardino County. These efforts, combined with Family Assistance Program's experience, have resulted in the opening of a second youth shelter, named My House.

My House will officially be opened in March 2020, by the non-profit Family Assistance Program. During the first year of My House's operation, an additional 70 young victims of trafficking and homeless youth will receive emergency shelter in the county. This will expand the county's capacity to shelter youth under 18 by 35%.

The new shelter will be designed to address youth homelessness and all forms of victimization of individuals under the age of 18. "We are excited to further develop our partnership with Family Assistance Program with this \$100,000 award. San Manuel's relationship with Family Assistance started in 2017 through our Charitable Giving Program and they were also recently named our 2019 Forging Hope recipient. Family Assistance continues to provide supportive

Family Assistance Program

15075 7th Street, Victorville, CA 92395

Outreach (760) 843-0701 Fax (760) 843-9551 Hotline (760) 949-4357

services and housing opportunities to underage victims of human trafficking and homeless youth. At San Manuel, we want to make sure that such needed services continue to be available to our youth.” Said Chairwoman Lynn Valbuena.



The relation between youth running away from home and forms of victimization and emotional neglect has been correlated in many studies over the last 20 years. Homelessness is one of the leading causes of human trafficking in the County of San Bernardino.

Additional Background

Family Assistance Program operates multiple facilities throughout the High Desert, Inland Empire, and Morongo Basin, which offer a safe and supportive place to over 3,000 people a year. These facilities consist of three youth centers, two emergency shelters, two community centers, and dozens of transitional housing units. Services provided include 24-hour crisis hotlines, housing, case management, life skills education, legal advocacy, rental assistance, health assessments, and transportation. The overarching goal of all programs and services is to provide participants with the tools necessary for healthy interpersonal relationships, economic empowerment, and safe stable housing.