

2023 IMPACT REPORT



Community Health Fund

John Muir Health

Building Bridges to Better Health

Our Executive Director Moves On, Our Commitment Remains

The retirement of Lillian Roselin, our beloved executive director, has ushered in a transitional period for the Community Health Fund. **Lillian's leadership, her compassion and her rare ability to build lasting relationships have improved the health of so many in East and Central Contra Costa County.** We know the stable vision, mission and set of processes she leaves us with – along with the generous, ongoing support of John Muir Health – ensure the CHF's impactful work will continue to grow and evolve.



Gail Cristancho
Board Chair

To wit, this organization's most consistent thread has been its commitment to partnering with and learning from the nonprofits we support and communities we serve. In the last few years, this has led to a determined effort to address the root causes of poor health, which include food and income insecurity, inadequate housing, institutional racism and many others.

Our support for Hijas del Campo, the organization highlighted in this year's report, exemplifies this effort, as well as our willingness and ability to adapt when the situation demands it. While traditionally we have worked with long-established organizations to ensure limited funds are in proven hands, we recognized that to broaden our impact on health equity, sometimes it's necessary to take a chance on people starting out. The resourceful women leading Hijas had already shown what they could do on a shoestring, so we partnered with them and others to support and grow their efforts. What they continue to accomplish is truly remarkable.

We are proud of this work and grateful to Lillian for having established a powerful network of health-related nonprofits with deep community roots and for creating a process that helps ensure

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Community Health Fund • Board Members & Staff

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Jelissa Parham, MPH, *Executive Director*
Mary Serrano,
Grants & Financial, Operations Manager

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those organizations help the most people in the most enduring ways. Now, we are excited to welcome Jelissa Parham as our new executive director. We are confident she will use what Lillian has established as a springboard to a new and ever more effective philanthropic approach aimed at addressing the root causes of poor health and eliminating the health disparities they cause.

Gail Cristancho
Chair of the CHF Governing Board

Dear CHF Community,

I am thrilled to have the opportunity to build on the work Lillian Roselin and Mary Serrano have done with the Community Health Fund over the past 17 years. My goal is to use my background and experience to extend their thoughtful, compassionate approach to meeting the needs and challenges of this community because it's that intimate connection with community that drew me to this job. Everything from working with a community advisory board to the CHF's unequivocal commitment to health equity align perfectly with my background in and passion for public health.



I've been in philanthropy for the last six years and the public health space for over 10 years in a variety of roles. As Executive Director of the CHF, I intend to leverage my experience from time spent at two large Bay Area foundations, while also drawing on my direct service work with various nonprofits. Through these first-hand experiences, I have learned not only how to be a grantmaker, but also the unique challenges of working for a nonprofit and how to be a grant seeker.

The Community Health Fund's grantmaking is a trust-based and collaborative process that goes beyond providing funding to local nonprofits. The recipe of combining a grantee-centered approach with funding and technical assistance during a crucial period for an organization has generated incredible results. I'm committed to continuing to fund initiatives that focus on the social determinants of health with a clear racial equity lens, building new collaborations with both funders and local nonprofits, and piloting innovative system change strategies to achieve the very best health outcomes possible in East and Central Contra Costa County.

Jelissa Parham, MPH
Executive Director



Healing Music

For **Lillian Roselin**,
on her retirement from the CHF

Scientists tell us
trees talk to each other.
They deploy a root-bound
underground language
to signal distress
about drought and disease,
so their community of trees
can adapt and thrive.

Above ground, where diseases
of all types threaten,
similar networks exist,
but too often
human language distorts,
caught in crackling cross-currents
working at cross-purposes,
making messages
difficult to deliver.

Takes a special kind of magic
to hear what matters,
to sense what voices might match
amidst the static
and to build harmonies
that rise above the noise
to touch our hearts
with healing music.



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Hijas del Campo: “Mighty Moms” Drive an Essential Health Equity Effort

What began as a grassroots group of four volunteers has, with the CHF’s help, evolved into a sophisticated nonprofit organization meeting a wide range of health-related needs for the county’s migrant farmworkers.



Hijas Del Campo is addressing disparities in some of the most vulnerable communities in East Contra Costa County. Communities move at the speed of trust, and HDC has established that trust with our farmworker communities, thanks to their hard work and commitment to equity. We need leaders like Marivel Mendoza and HDC that have deep ties to communities that have historically been marginalized and continue to be marginalized. The CHF has a proven track record of addressing equity in Contra Costa County, and their vision and mission aligns with HDC in ways that ensure a county-wide impact. During the pandemic response the CHF provided invaluable funding to support HDC’s critical, lifesaving work. This partnership saved countless lives.



We’re a bunch of small and mighty moms...and there’s nothing a mom can’t do. We just went out there and did it.

2020

In the fire- and pandemic-blighted summer of 2020, Marivel Mendoza was driving through East Contra Costa County, watching migrant farmworkers do their jobs in smoke-strewn air. The daughter of one-time farmworkers, Mendoza was struck that while so many Bay Area residents were working from the safety of home, the farmworkers were risking their health to put food on other residents’ tables.

Services, who became a mentor, encouraged them to become a 501c3 organization and brought them on as members of the Contra Costa County Equitable & Ethical Vaccine Committee. He also connected HDC with the CHF, which had come to believe that its stepped-up emphasis on health equity would require support for emerging organizations focused on health equity in communities still struggling to receive services for root causes that impact their health.

Unless otherwise noted, all quotes are by HDC Executive Director Marivel Mendoza.

Farmworker Facts

40%
of farmworker families live on incomes below the poverty line

40%
lack health insurance

10%
of farmworker children graduate from high school

Mendoza began searching for organizations that could help farmworkers navigate the pandemic and the fires. Finding no coordinated efforts, she connected with Dorina Salgado-Moraido, another daughter of one-time farmworkers, and two other women. The four created Hijas del Campo (HDC) as a grassroots group of volunteers. After reaching out to the farmworker community to determine their needs, HDC began soliciting donations and delivering meals, school supplies and other essential items. They also connected with Gilbert Salinas, Chief Equity Officer for the Contra Costa County Department of Health



Lillian knew right away where our heart was. We explained we were embarking on something that is a life-changing endeavor: to help farmworkers and help people in the area understand how farmworkers’ lives impact all of our lives.

— Gilbert Salinas

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2021

HDC participated in a series of vaccine clinics that contributed to more than a thousand vaccinations for farmworkers. HDC also enlisted the California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA) Foundation as a fiscal sponsor, developed partnerships with organizations throughout the county and helped more than 200 families with meals, school supplies, winter coats and emergency financial assistance. The work earned them an Equity Impact Award from the East Bay Leadership Council.

In addition, Monica Bauman of the CRLA - who Mendoza refers to as HDC's Madrina de Campo, or godmother - helped HDC successfully apply to become a 501c3 organization. At the same time, exploratory meetings between HDC and the CHF ramped up so the CHF could learn more about farmworkers' needs and explore how the CHF might support the work.

It's important for people to always give thanks to where we get our food.

2022

The CHF staff and board approved a series of grants to HDC. One paired La Piana Consulting with HDC to help the group develop a strategic plan for steady growth. Another, which occurred after two of the founders decided to move on, allowed HDC to engage a part-time volunteer coordinator, easing the burden on the remaining founders. Finally, the CHF funded an executive director position, which enabled Mendoza to leave her job and focus on HDC full-time.

The CHF also connected HDC with other CHF grantees, while HDC continued its vaccination and food distribution work. HDC also began providing free educational counseling to farm-workers' children, partnering with La Clínica de La Raza to help address important health care needs, and partnering with Carondolet High School's engineering program to create a prototype of a tiny house that could help meet farmworkers' housing needs.



The CHF has truly prepared us to work in this sphere and continue helping more people. They'd never worked with an organization so new, like ours. By them choosing us - seeing the vision, mission and believing in it - it's really given us the opportunity to continue to grow.



The Future

As of this writing, HDC is serving over 400 farmworker families, helping to provide everything from food and clothing through healthcare assistance, educational counseling and housing. With the support of State Senator Steve Glazer, HDC has also secured \$500,000 in state funding to expand its Casita Project, which began with the tiny home built in 2022 by the Carondolet student engineers. The funding will enable HDC to purchase up to three more casitas for 1 to 2 campesinx each, provide the homes with solar power, hire a dedicated project manager, and assess what wraparound services might complement the housing to ensure the program's success.

Finally, the organization has a clear strategic plan in place and the funding it needs to hire more people and continue its growth.

2023 COMMUNITY HEALTH PARTNERS

ACCESS TO CARE

Care for Uninsured Adults



Contra Costa Services Network



African American Family Wellness Center



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Survivors of Human Trafficking



Direct Service Mindfulness



Mental Health Stigma Reduction



Mental Health Services for Youth and Families



ECONOMIC SECURITY

Healthcare Careers Pathway



Emancipated Foster Youth



SOCIAL SUPPORT

Contra Costa Senior Resource Expansion



Seniors & Adults with Disabilities Network



Migrant & Seasonal Farmworkers



LGBTQIA+



FOOD

Hot Meal Delivery Program



RACIAL EQUITY & INCLUSION

Board/Staff Training

