



NOVEMBER UPDATE



[Smart Solutions to Homelessness- Become an Ally!](#)

In This Issue

2015 CAP
Winter Shelter Update
Holiday Volunteering
Ally Spotlight

Get ready to support Smart Solutions to Homelessness this #GivingTuesday!



Success! North County Winter Shelter Now Operating



Art by a River Street Shelter Resident

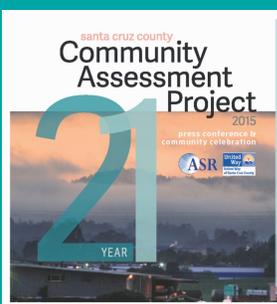
Thank you to everyone who contacted your elected officials and let them know that it is unacceptable that hundreds of people are sleeping out in the cold this winter. The County and Cities have contributed enough additional funding for the Homeless Services Center to open and operate the emergency winter shelter for 100 individuals every night from November 16th until early April. If our rainy season continues past April, the jurisdictions will reassess whether additional funds are needed.

Like you, Smart Solutions recognizes that 100 beds are not enough to keep every person living on the streets healthy and safe this winter, but it is an essential life-saving service and we thank YOU for supporting it.

For more information about how you can help our most vulnerable neighbors this winter, check out any of these important programs:

[The Warming Center](#)
[Pajaro Rescue Mission](#)

[Homeless Services Center- Volunteers are needed to help](#)



Did you know?
Homelessness has
decreased 44%
since 2013. [Learn
more!](#)

The 2015
Community
Assessment Project
is now available for
free [online](#) or
purchase a
hardcopy at the
[United Way of Santa
Cruz County!](#)

Join Us on Facebook



Don't want to wait a
month for the next
update? [Join us on
Facebook](#) and stay up
to date on the latest
happenings around
reducing and ending
homelessness!

What Are Smart Solutions?

Evidence-based

Produce measurable
results

Cost effective

Benefit the entire
community

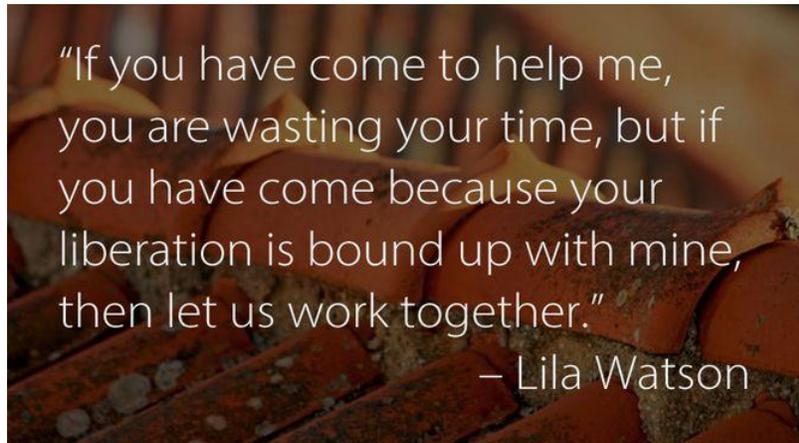
Take a step toward
ending homelessness

Support the dignity of
each individual

[operate the Winter Shelter](#)

Volunteer or Donate at any of the agencies listed on the
[Santa Cruz Free Guide](#)
And many more!

Thankful for So Many Ways to Give This Holiday Season



If you have received this newsletter and are reading this, then there is a good chance you are someone who already gives a lot of your time, energy, and resources helping make our community a better place to live. You may not need us to encourage you to donate, volunteer and advocate this holiday season. But just in case you could use a reminder, here are a few reasons why giving all year long makes a difference:

- [36%](#) of Santa Cruz County households live below self-sufficiency standards
- [25%](#) of residents sometimes or often run out of food for their families

Also, did you know that:

- Non-profits need you to help them help others
- Faith-sourced programs run almost entirely on unpaid volunteers
- You cannot put a price on neighbors helping neighbors

Check out the Volunteer Center's
[Holiday Volunteering Guide](#)
for a list of volunteer opportunities!

Ally Spotlight: River Street Shelter

Our VISION is a Santa Cruz County in which every community member has some form of safe shelter, and where homelessness is a rare occurrence.

Our MISSION is to build the community will to reduce and ultimately end homelessness in Santa Cruz County through education and collaborative action.



Tracey Heggum, Shelter Manager (left), and Monica Martinez, CEO of Encompass Community Services

After a solutions-oriented presentation on homelessness by Smart Solutions to Homelessness Leadership Council members Don Lane and Monica Martinez last Thursday, United Way's [Emerging Leaders Circle](#) toured the River Street Shelter.

The River Street Shelter is operated by [Encompass Community Services](#) and provides beds, meals, and showers for adults experiencing homelessness. The shelter is November's Ally Spotlight because this year they have secured permanent housing for 22 participants! This emergency shelter provides the necessary case management and supportive services to end homelessness for the people that find refuge from the streets under its roof.

Thank you to all the hard working staff at the shelter who provide a safe, welcoming space day after day!

Take a look at the photos of the [Emerging Leaders Circle tour](#), which also included the Homeless Services Center.



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Join us at United Way of Santa Cruz County