PO Box 2744
Petaluma CA 94953

And homeless near a
thousand homes I stood,
And near a thousand tables
pined and wanted food.

- William Wordsworth

Help Us Meet Our Match!

COTS is excited to announce the return of our Holiday Match Challenge!

An anonymous donor has challenged our community to raise **$100,000** by **#GivingTuesday,** and they will match it.
Will you help us reach our goal?

Let's Make a Difference Together!

COTS Est. 1988

FALL NEWS
2025

Meet Our Newest Board Members | Preventing Homelessness, Stopping The Cycle Before It Starts | Make an Impact Today | Get Involved This Holiday Season

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Graphic Designer
Lorena Aguilar

Photography
Lorena Aguilar
Other photos courtesy of the subjects

A Note From Chris

Dear COTS Supporters and Friends,

As the seasons shift, we're reminded that change is constant. At COTS, we see change as an opportunity, to grow stronger, more resilient, and more effective in our mission to ensure everyone has a place to call home.

COTS is thriving. Families are moving into safe housing, children are growing up with stability, and neighbors across Sonoma County are staying in their homes through our new prevention program. We have expanded permanent supportive housing, welcomed new licensed clinicians, and deepened partnerships that connect clients with healthcare, benefits, and jobs. None of this would be possible without the dedication of our staff, the wisdom of our board, and the generosity of our community.

Even as we celebrate this progress, we know the future holds uncertainty. Public funding is shifting, housing costs are rising, and nonprofits like COTS are being asked to do more with fewer resources. That's why resilience matters. COTS is building financial strength and organizational stability so that no matter what changes in the funding landscape, people in need will always find open doors, safe shelter, and a pathway home.

Building resilience requires community support. Your gift to COTS is not a band-aid, it's an investment in proven, life-changing work. It ensures COTS can keep families housed, support recovery,and create lasting stability for those who need us most. As you plan your holiday giving, will you make a gift to COTS today? Together, we can ensure hope, dignity, and stability remain within reach for all.

Warm regards,

Chris Cabral

Meet Our Newest Board Members

Dennis Pocekay, a former NCAA record-holding football kicker from Cal Tech, grew up in a tightly knit family community in Richmond, California, during the 1960s. Surrounded by relatives within a six-block radius, Dennis learned early the value of connection and mutual support. His grandfather owned a small grocery store and managed apartments, while his father often extended credit to customers in need, instilling in Dennis a deep sense of compassion. As racial tensions rose in the 1970s, his family gradually moved out of Richmond, but those early experiences continued to shape his values.

After moving to Sonoma County in 1982 and settling in Petaluma in 1991, Dennis and his wife both began working as physicians for Kaiser Permanente. She became the first female Chief of Family Medicine at Kaiser Santa Rosa, and Dennis advocated for stronger primary care systems. The couple adopted a son in 1988 and a daughter in 1991. Their son, despite early developmental challenges, overcame a difficult period of homelessness in his teens and has since stabilized his life and work.

In retirement, Dennis remained active in social justice causes, traveling abroad for medical work and training as a legal observer. As his wife's health declined due to dementia, he stepped back to become her caregiver but continued his commitment to the unhoused through ongoing support of COTS. Now a board member and donor, Dennis is inspired by the COTS staff and their collaborative work with neighborhoods and city officials, striving to ensure communities can compassionately support the unhoused. As he puts it, **"I'm really impressed with everyone on the staff. I think COTS is just an important organization,"** and he remains proud to stand by its mission.

Pictured right, Dennis Pocekay

Pictured left, Mary Stubbs

Mary Stubbs, once a creative force in San Francisco's newspaper and advertising world, transitioned into a quieter but equally creative life in Sonoma County after becoming pregnant with her first child. Seeking a slower pace, she moved north but didn't set aside her artistic drive. In 1996, she planted Stubbs Vineyard, which remains a thriving operation today. Mary has also designed every wine label since their first release in 2002, maintaining her creative touch while embracing a new chapter focused on family and community.

When her daughter began attending high school in San Francisco, Mary's connection to the city was renewed. She started volunteering with the San Francisco Downtown Streets Team, an organization that offered housing, healthcare, shelter, and meals in exchange for participants' work cleaning city streets. Mary volunteered for about three years and was deeply moved by the experience. She reflected, "I just cannot believe that we've become numb to the fact that we walk by these people every day and don't notice." Having raised her three children to be socially conscious, it's fitting that all of them now work in the nonprofit sector.

With her children grown, Mary had more time to give. After learning about the work of COTS, she immediately began volunteering at Mary's Table, the organization's kitchen program that provides two hot meals a day to anyone in need. Wanting to do more, she joined COTS' Red Tape Club, where she uses her professional skills to help clients complete paperwork, build resumes, and prepare for job interviews. Mary values the opportunity to connect with people on a personal level. **"I talked to a girl the other day that could have been my daughter. She's so well qualified to work, but she had violence in her home and had to leave," Mary shared. "I just can't bear the thought that she doesn't have a roof over her head." When asked why she supports COTS, she answered simply, "I just feel like COTS is the best organization I've ever had the luck to be involved with."**

Preventing Homelessness, Stopping The Cycle Before It Starts

Since launching last December, COTS' Keep People Housed (KPH) program has already helped hundreds of individuals and families across Sonoma County remain in the stability of their homes. With an average of just over $3,000 in direct assistance per household, KPH has proven that preventing homelessness is both effective and deeply dignified. KPH allows parents to tuck their children into their own beds, seniors to stay rooted in their neighborhoods, and workers to keep contributing to our community.

This work is urgent: for every one person an organization like COTS can house, three more fall into homelessness. That's why prevention is so critical. Keep People Housed represents a powerful and compassionate solution. COTS is meeting families and individuals at the brink of crisis and ensuring they never have to experience the trauma of losing their home.

$700,000+
Given in Direct Financial Assistance

610
Individuals Receiving Financial Assistance

254
Children's Lives Transformed by Keep People Housed Programming

400
Referrals to Legal Aid of Sonoma County

$3,029
Average Household Assistance Amount*

*As of 09/30/2025

Goal to Serving 400 Households in Sonoma County*

*As of 09/30/2025

Thank you to our partner agencies!

> "This program allowed me to have more time off so I can [attend job] interviews. KPH was helpful because I got behind on all my bills and was scared of what would happen to my housing. This assistance allowed me to focus on getting a better wage, [hiring afterschool childcare, go back to college, and pay off some debts. job and relieved me that we received this help. I'm very happy nonprofits like this help families. Thank you!"
>
> -Leslye, A Former KPH client who has remained housed with her family thanks to the support of KPH

> "This Program has been a life saver for me and my family. If it wasn't for this Program we would be homeless. I have cancer and now I can go have my chemo treatments and surgery with peace of mind knowing my housing situation is taken care of. This Program is a great program that kept people like me and my family safe."
>
> -Brett, A Former KPH client who has remained housed thanks to the support of KPH

> "As a mom, the support I received from the program [KPH] has alleviated not just a financial stress, but a mental and emotional one as well, and I am so grateful!
>
> This program has literally been a godsend!"
>
> -Kristi, A Former KPH client who has remained housed with her family thanks to the support of KPH

Make an Impact Today

At COTS, we believe that access to nutritious food and safe shelter is a basic human right. Our twice-daily meal service, offered seven days a week, supports both our clients and community members in need.

A donation of $500 can fund one month of shelter for families at KFFS. With a waitlist capped at 10 families, your support is more crucial than ever before. You can also join the Monthly Giving Society at $50 a month to provide 10 nutritious meals at Mary's Table for anyone experiencing hunger in our community.

Your involvement matters. Every act of support directly helps parents keep their children safe, students stay more focused in school, and individuals take the next step toward independence. Join us now for our Holiday Match Challenge. Every dollar you give will have twice the impact. Your support helps build a stronger, healthier community. Together, we can ensure every family has the nourishment and stability they need to thrive.

Support COTS Today and DOUBLE Your Impact!

"The Keep People Housed team gave us great help in these difficult times. To all who are part of KPH, we thank you with all our hearts for your support.

God bless you always."

-Anel H., A KPH client who has remained housed with her family thanks to the support of KPH

"A lot of [clients] are really nice people that you know, for some reason or another, they wind up here . . . they're just people who have had problems and they're people just like you and they deserve to have decent food. . . . It's actually helped me being here [at COTS because it's given me] some sense of purpose."

-Jennipher, Current Volunteer at COTS' Mary's Table

Thank you to all of our incredible volunteers!

Over the last year, your dedication and generosity totaled an astounding 8,929 hours, equivalent to the work of more than four full-time employees without a single day off. Your time, energy, and heart make a real difference. With the continued support of both our volunteers and donors, COTS has been able to expand our impact throughout the community. This collective effort is paying off: according to the 2025 Point in Time Count, Sonoma has seen a decline in homelessness. Your contributions are not just appreciated, they are transformative. Thank you for being the heart of our mission.

Get Involved This Holiday Season

Cook. Serve. Care.

Join us in the kitchen! Weekends and afternoons are when we need you most. Every shift means another neighbor gets a warm, nourishing meal. Sign up today by visiting cots.org.

Give the Gift of Home.

Imagine moving into a new place with nothing in the cupboards. A Welcome Home Basket filled with everyday basics helps a family settle in with dignity and warmth.

Fill the Pantry.

COTS serves over 200,000 meals a year. Help us keep shelves stocked and stomachs full by donating food from our holiday wishlist.

Questions? Reach us at volunteers@cots.org.

Get Involved!

ways to give

- ONLINE, CASH, OR CHECK
- APPRECIATED SECURITIES & STOCKS
- LEAVE A LEGACY
- MATCHING GIFTS
- MONTHLY GIVING

To learn more about giving to COTS, visit cots.org/ways-to-give, or contact Erin Krueger, Director of Development, at development@cots.org or 707.789.6396.