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# ANNUAL REPORT

# 2020







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							<i>This report was compiled, edited, and designed by Julia Ip and Tristen Tu under the guidance of Miracle Messages' leadership team.</i>



# DEAR FRIENDS,

At 11 a.m. on Thanksgiving Day of 2020, a group of [Miracle Messages](#) friends—homeless and housed—came together on a conference call to celebrate “Miracle Friendsgiving.” As we closed the call, an unhoused woman Nicole spoke up and said simply, “Thank you for this. I needed this to feel valued when things got so lost.”

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*“ Thank you for this. I needed this to feel valued when things got so lost. ”*

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It was a perfect reflection on the event, and on the year at Miracle Messages. In a year that proved to all just how much we need each other, Miracle Messages developed and scaled our most audacious programs yet towards ending relational poverty.

Our organization went into 2020 with the wind at our backs: 300 people reconnected, a funded pilot in South Florida up and running, and a fantastic new General Manager added to the team. In February of 2020, we held a spectacular 2nd Annual Homecoming at the top of Salesforce tower; a week later, we got the news that we had been selected to receive \$100K as finalists for the Google.org Bay Area Impact Awards. Going into March, we were scheduled to travel to Austin, Texas, to receive South by Southwest’s Community Service Award.

Of course, our best-laid plans were upended by the pandemic, and the upheaval that followed. But we never wavered in our commitment to supporting our unhoused neighbors. Instead, we did what we always do—we spoke directly

with people experiencing homelessness, found out what they needed, and mobilized to help. When we discovered that shortages of masks and hand sanitizer were jeopardizing the well-being of our unhoused neighbors, we mobilized our community. In a matter of weeks, we procured 250 handmade masks and produced 6,000 bottles of hand sanitizer to senior living centers and other nonprofit organizations.

We knew, too, that being connected with loved ones would be more important than ever during the pandemic. Though it was challenging at times, we continued offering our reunion service, with a particular focus on the San Francisco Bay Area, Los Angeles, and South Florida.

Our work in Miami and Fort Lauderdale provides an especially notable case study of what we achieved this year: General Manager Gabby Cordell has worked relentlessly on the ground, while our case solving community has worked tirelessly to find families and deliver messages. The results were astounding: by the end of the year, we had reconnected 60 people in South Florida, 13 of whom got off the streets as a direct result.

We also developed a new service called “Find Them” to help families locate missing homeless relatives. The Find Them team, led by Mark Askins, Robin McMillan, and Liz Breuilly, proved so effective at locating and communicating with missing homeless individuals that the National Missing and Unidentified Service (NAMUS) – the national information clearinghouse and resource center for missing, unidentified, and unclaimed person cases across the United States – reached out to us to develop a partnership, which has resulted in even more of these “needle in a haystack” reunions.

Miracle Messages has now surpassed 400 reconnections. Astonishingly, over 100 of these reconnections happened in 2020, in the middle of a pandemic.

**But that’s not all.**

In late April, a high ranking city official in San Francisco reached out to us to ask if we could develop a relational program to serve the unhoused individuals isolated in shelter-in-place hotels. This led to the significant expansion of Miracle Friends, a 1:1 phone-based buddy program we had been piloting for a few months with senior citizens at Sequoia Living. The Miracle Friends program offers an answer to a question that has been on our minds since the beginning of Miracle Messages: how might we provide social support when family isn’t part of the solution? Miracle Friends is now serving over 120 unhoused neighbors across the country, in collaboration with the City and County of San Francisco and numerous local partners.

Miracle Friends also showcases how far we have come as an organization, which has grown from two to five full-time team members this year! In a matter of weeks, and with the incredible support of our new Director of Operations, Madeline Connolly, we mobilized the programmatic machinery to manage and operate Miracle Friends. We devised a support structure for the volunteers—complete with training, mentors, a call logging system, and a resource board— that allowed us to match unhoused Friends across the country. We managed to also deliver over 100 phones, 23 pairs of shoes, and over 300 thanksgiving meals to our unhoused neighbors.

As we rounded the corner into December, we were overwhelmed with pride at all that we had accomplished. We have already seen myriad positive outcomes from the Miracle Friends program. Our [white paper on the impact of Miracle Friends](#) demonstrates that the program reduces loneliness among participants while increasing their sense of connectedness. Individual friends have reported that the program has been a lifeline, both emotionally and practically, during this period of great uncertainty. Our Miracle Friendsgiving event drew more than 100 people, and many at the event remarked that, without Miracle Friends, they would have been completely alone for the holidays. And at a focus group with the city of

San Francisco—made possible only because our Miracle Friends relationships made people feel safe speaking out—each of the participants said that their Miracle Friend was the only reliable source of information and communication during the shelter-in-place hotel stay.

And that was when we decided to take one of our most audacious steps yet.

In December 2020, we launched [Miracle Money](#), a direct cash transfer pilot offering \$500/month for six months to a select number of highly qualified participants in Miracle Friends. We did this for two reasons: first, because we believed it was the right thing to do, and second, because we knew that we could do it. Our core value is to meet people where they are in life, and give our unhoused neighbors the agency they need to make positive change. And we know that we have built a community that will help us make Miracle Money a success, and have built relationships with our unhoused neighbors, who are not only deserving recipients but also trusted friends.

In short, we know that we can launch a pilot like Miracle Money because we know that you will be right there with us. Despite all the heartache, pain, and terrible loss that we have all suffered to some degree in 2020, we are still here, working for change, working for a better tomorrow.

**We can’t wait for what 2021 will bring.**



*Kevin F. Adler*

Kevin F. Adler  
Founder & CEO



*Jessica Donig*

Jessica Donig  
Executive Director



# ABOUT US

Miracle Messages is an award-winning 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that rebuilds social support systems for our unhoused neighbors, primarily through family reunification services, a phone-based buddy system, and direct cash transfers. Our work has been featured in the New York Times, Washington Post, SF Chronicle, CNN, in an essay by President Bush, in a TED talk, and hundreds more. Founder and CEO Kevin F. Adler started Miracle Messages in honor of his uncle, who lived on-and-off the streets for 30 years.

We believe that  
**EVERYONE IS  
SOMEONE'S  
SOMEBODY.**



## VISION

We envision a world where everyone is nurtured by a social support system and sense of belonging whether or not they currently have access to stable physical housing.

## MISSION

We are on a mission to end relational poverty on the streets and, in the process, inspire people everywhere to embrace their homeless neighbors not as problems to be solved, but as people to be loved.

## CORE VALUES

We meet people where they are in life. For our neighbors experiencing homelessness, this means:

### 100% OPT-IN.

If a homeless neighbor doesn't want to reconnect with their loved ones or participate in a buddy system, that's fine. "You know your relationships better than we do," we say.

### ZERO EXPECTATIONS.

If a homeless neighbor just wants to say, "I love you," "I miss you," "I'm sorry," or "I want you back in my life," but does not want to go and live with that person, that's fine.

### 100% RESPECT.

We don't commit to anything we can't deliver. We don't promise that we'll be able to find a loved one, or that they'll want to reunite. But we do vow to treat each case with the same respect we'd want for our own loved ones. And we invite unhoused neighbors to call us anytime at 1-800-MISS-YOU.



“I never realized I was homeless when I lost my housing, only when I lost my family and friends.”



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

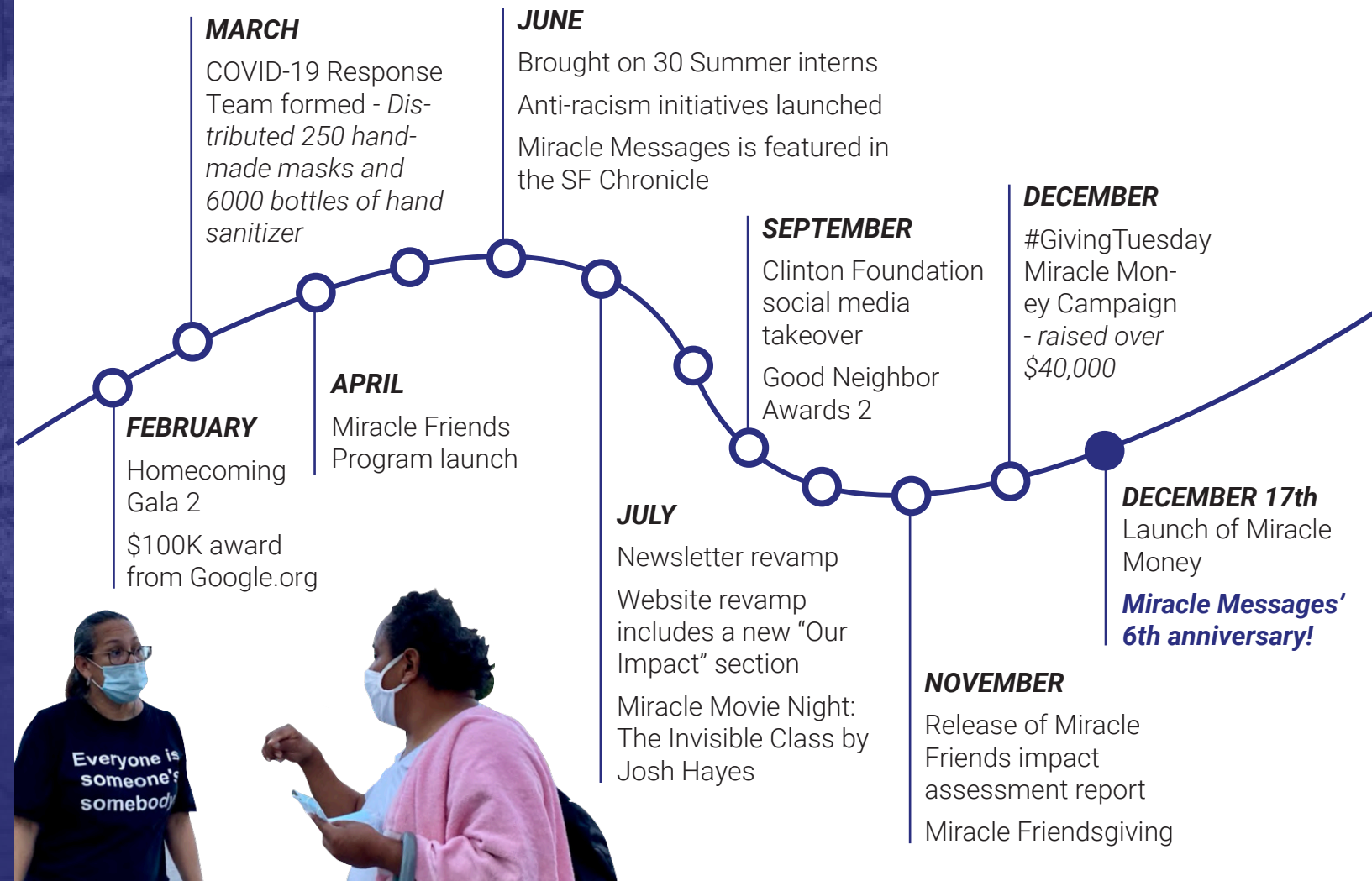
2020 has proven to be a difficult year with the pandemic and other tragedies in our nation and across the world, but it has also brought about beautiful, powerful change. We believe that our work is even more critical right now, as our pursuit of ending relational poverty and housing inequality is melded with our pursuit for racial justice and equity across all demographics in this country. We want to thank you for your continued support of this organization— we truly could not do what we do without all of you loving, supporting people. We are honored to make a difference together! Here are some highlights from this year:

To date, we've facilitated...

**400+** Total Reunions

**120+** Total MF Matches

**\$592,715.36**  
Donated from 2500 individual donors





# A RESILIENT YEAR

## COVID-19 RESPONSE

In this time of pandemic, people who are homeless are disproportionately affected without a steady place to sleep or the ability to socially distance. Despite lockdown and quarantine, it was very important to us to still continue to work in a safe manner while also expanding our programs to meet the immediate needs of homeless people. Throughout the year, Miracle Messages has initiated relief programs to help aid our unhoused neighbors with challenges such as social isolation, increased vulnerability, and a lack of resources to stay healthy. During this time, we:

- Created a **Covid Response Task Force** that focused on procuring necessary resources such as masks and hand sanitizer. To date, Miracle Messages has distributed and donated over 250 handmade masks and 6000 bottles of hand sanitizer to senior living centers and our other partners.
- Suspended outreach but continued to pay our community ambassadors
- Doubled our capacity to respond to calls via our toll-free hotline 1-800-MISS-YOU



- Helped hospitals locate family for homeless patients
- Focused on providing compassionate updates to our “Find Them” families in a time of uncertainty and unease
- Launched the first-of-its-kind buddy program, **Miracle Friends**.

We are grateful for the ability to adapt and continue our work amidst new obstacles. Although it has been a difficult year for many, it has still been amazing to see the positive impact Miracle Messages can have on people’s lives.

## ANTI-RACISM WORK

African Americans are disproportionately affected by the housing crisis. This year, we took time to reflect on how the issue of racism intersects with our work and began many initiatives to educate both ourselves and our communities:

**Rethinking the Volunteer Program and Partnerships:** One of our Miracle Friends mentors, Maryann Philbrook, will be helping to spearhead changes to our volunteer program. This means re-thinking how we recruit and train volunteers, as well as develop partnerships, so we can make our volunteering space more diverse and inclusive of individuals who come from different backgrounds.

**Using our Social Media as an Educational Platform:** Through our ongoing social media posts, we hope to educate ourselves and our audience about the intersection between housing and social injustice.

**Anti-Racism Podcast:** We started a podcast featuring interviews with marginalized individuals talking about their diverse experiences. This includes having discussions such as how black indigenous individuals are disproportionately affected by the housing situation and the experiences of those with disabilities. Our first guest, Elizabeth, shared her experiences with racial discrimination as a child and the effects it has had on her as she has gotten older.



## Feature: Elizabeth and Joan

Elizabeth Softky is an accomplished woman with a passionate commitment to bettering education: she was a former public school teacher who also ran a literacy profit for six years before receiving her cancer diagnosis. With her immune system compromised, Elizabeth had to step away from her job, and without health insurance, she couldn’t afford to pay rent. After leaving her house, she went from homeless shelters to a small motel on the coast of Northern California where she has continued to persist through the pandemic and the traumatic experiences of losing her job, house, and livelihood.

She remembered feeling alone in her motel room, accompanied by the experiences which had brought her to that point. But, her faith kept her going, and when she matched with our volunteer Joan Scott, we witnessed a beautiful

friendship forming. Elizabeth and Joan had similar commitments to volunteering and education; they both loved the outdoors and the beach and would often text back and forth to each other to share what they had seen that day. Elizabeth continued to attend virtual church services to stay in touch with her hometown church group before she lost her home. Especially during this pandemic, her ability to connect with her family and friends like Joan was essential towards her mental health and well-being.

Elizabeth has faced tremendous hardships in the face of this pandemic, but she has still managed to persist through the difficulties to stay connected to her roots and maintain positive connections. Elizabeth, we’re so encouraged by you, and we hope you know we are continuously rooting for you!



# PROGRAMS

Our programs, operations, and systems teams apply principles of human-centered design to reimagine the way that we relate to and support our neighbors experiencing homelessness. They conduct behind-the-scenes work on case solving/case management, product development, volunteer engagement, resource guides, online dashboards, as well as data analysis and survey administration.



## REUNION SERVICES

# 400+ Total Reunions

**366** Case Solving Community

**40** Find Them

### Feature: Raimond, Michael, Art

**A STORY OF RESILIENCE.** Raimond, a man Miracle Messages helped connect with his family, all of a sudden went missing. When volunteers initially helped Raymond find his family, they did not expect there to be such a turn of events. However, while awaiting Raymond after a bus journey down to Los Angeles, many were left wondering where he was.

With calls to shelters, hospitals, and volunteers, Miracle Messages mobilized what it could to find Raymond. After a hospital informed the volunteers of Raymond's location, Micheal Baldwin, one of the volunteers, began calling who he could to try and send a volunteer to Raymond. What was left is finding someone willing to make the journey to finally pick up Raymond. Art Gonzalez was that person. He was able to pick up Raymond, and get him home. Raymond and his family, thanked the community during the Good Neighbor Awards event for recognizing their "somebody."

[See more stories here!](#)

## Case Solving Community

Every Wednesday night, volunteers and community members meet for a weekly call to go over cases, help each other search online for loved ones, celebrate successes, and support one another. Our Case Solving Community made up of "digital detectives" works with diligence to make reunions achievable and tries to explore and recognize the complexities of family relationships.

## Find Them Team

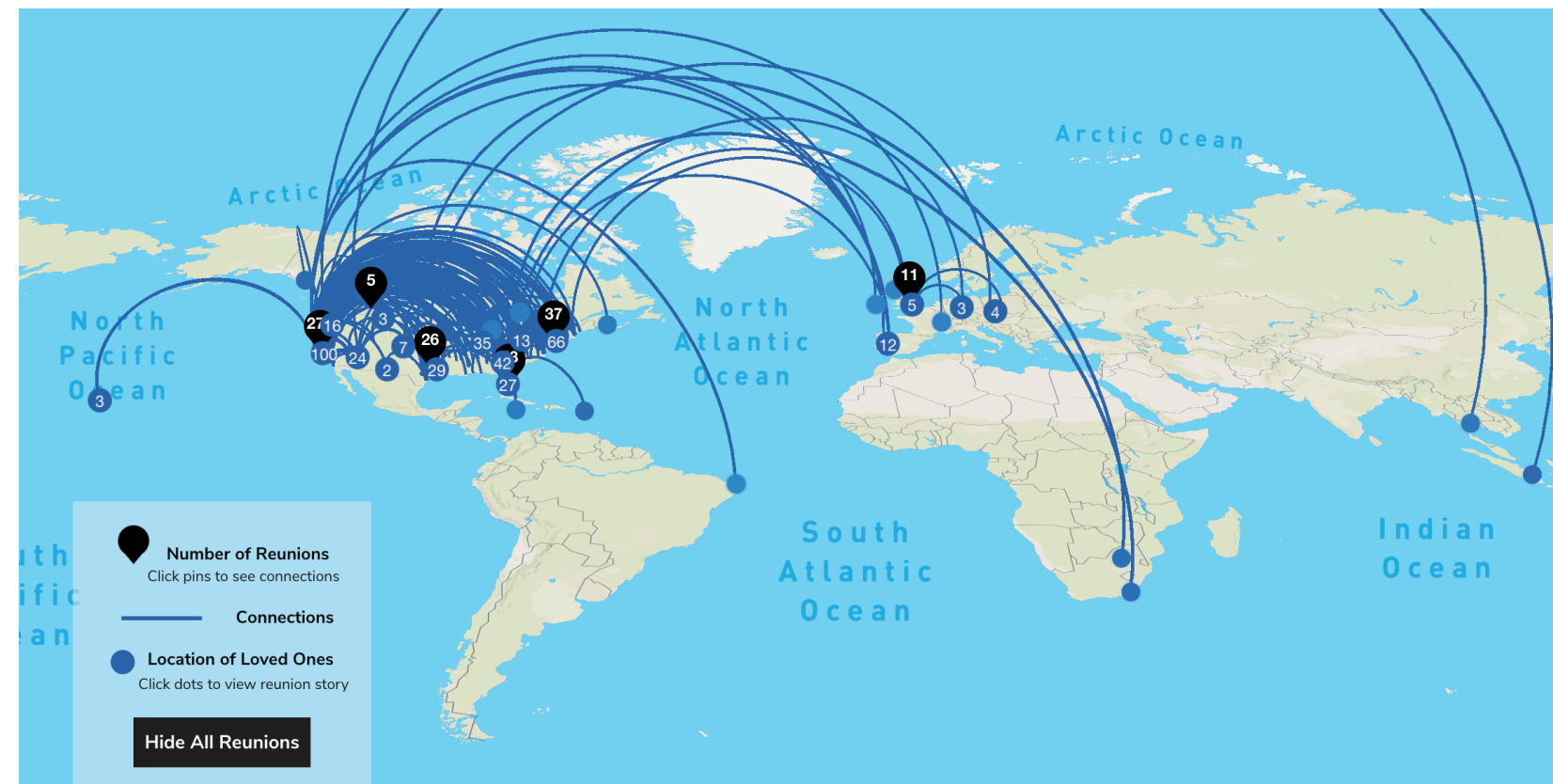
Each week, Miracle Messages receives inquiries from families looking for their missing homeless relatives. Although this is the opposite direction of our typical search process – from a person experiencing homelessness to their loved ones – we developed "FIND THEM" to solve these cases. Find Them cases are challenging, but our digital detectives and formerly homeless ambassadors are committed. To date, we have been able to facilitate over 40 of these "needle-in-a-haystack" reunions!



Reunion Impact Map

This year, Miracle Messages partnered with students at Lambda School to create an interactive way to watch the world change in the form of an Impact Map. With over 400 reunion stories to tell across the world, this map has made reunification results accessible and unified in a single visualization. Viewers can experience Miracle Messages' connections on a global scale by reading trend lines and stories that appear with every click.

[Check out the map here!](#)





## MIRACLE FRIENDS

Earlier this year, Miracle Messages sought to ease the hardship of COVID-19 on people experiencing homelessness through creating a new program, Miracle Friends. Miracle Friends is a phone and text-based buddy system that matches trained volunteers with individuals experiencing homelessness for weekly phone calls and texts, to provide basic companionship and social support.

# 120+

**Total Matches**

We have been able to facilitate over 120 matches this year with pilot programs in San Francisco, County of San Mateo, County of Santa Rosa, and County of Santa Cruz. Miracle Friends involves four key stakeholders: partner sites, volunteers, unhoused friends, and mentors.



Feature: John and Bob

### MF Impact Assessment

The Data Analysis & Surveys team created a report last month analyzing the impact of regular social contact through Miracle Friends (MF) on unhoused participants and volunteers. We surveyed 50 friends and 30 volunteers about their perceived loneliness, stress, and companionship. Results show MF had a positive impact on mean and median loneliness and companionship scores, as well as a reduction in stress for our unhoused friends. In addition, many volunteers expressed positive memories and a change in perspective on homelessness after participating. We hope that these insights will help MF expand and attract more participants.

[See the full report here.](#)



After five years of separation, John Hallstein was able to happily reunite with his brother Bob. After John and Bob's in-person meeting, Bob regularly visited John, renting him an apartment in Jacksonville – just a few minutes from Bob and his family. Meanwhile, John worked closely with one of our messengers to rebuild relationships with his other family members. In May 2020, Bob took John home, and they now live together as a family. Since then, John has reconnected with his family members.

A few of us in the Miracle Messages Family were able to witness this touching reunion. We're so glad to be able to facilitate such connections, in which people like John Hallstein are able to find their home and family.



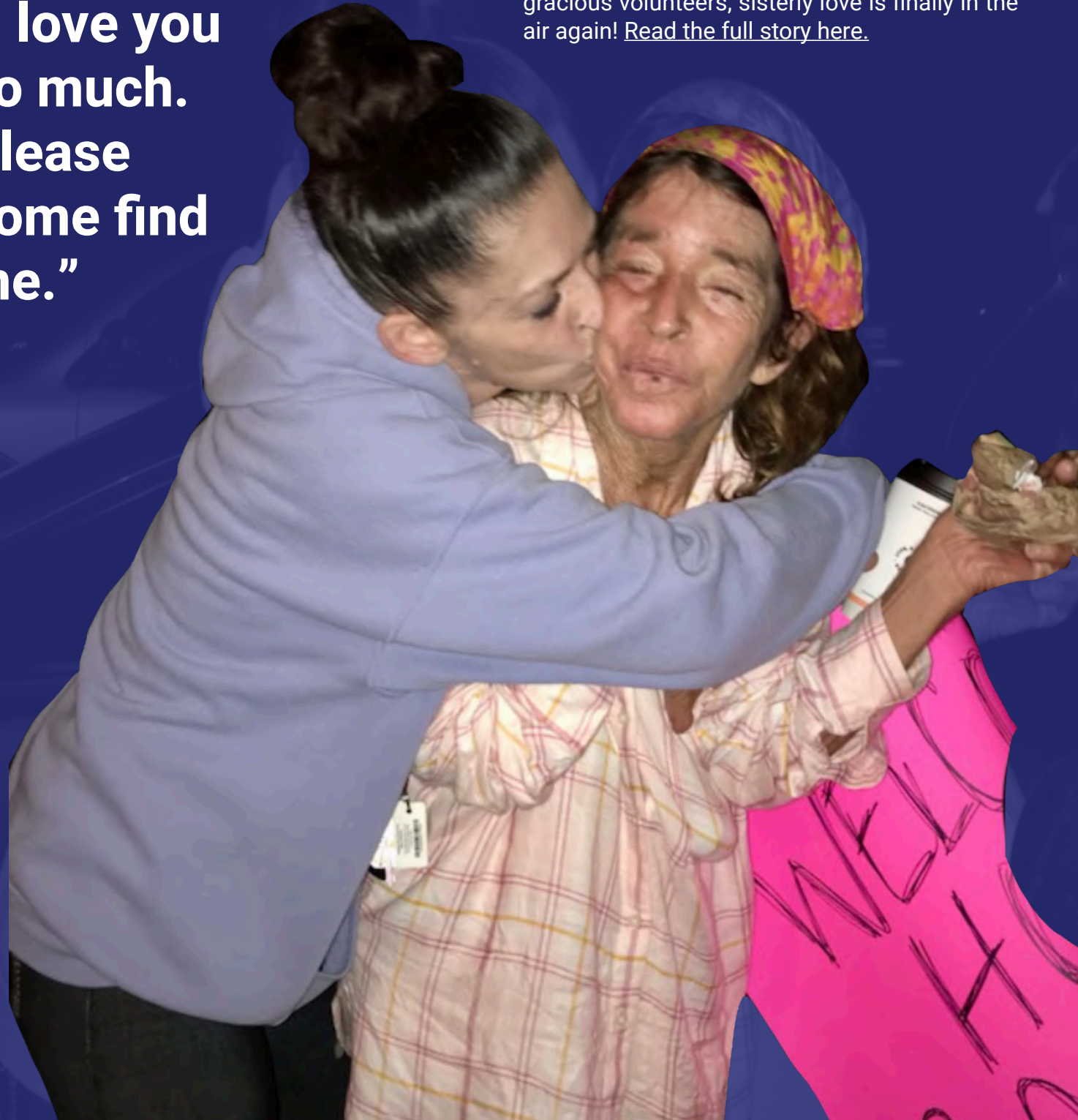


## Feature: Roberta and Rebecca

The reunion story of Roberta and Rebecca is an incredible testament to love, strength, and patience. Roberta was referred on September 22nd, 2020 to the HOPE South Florida branch from Pastor Perry. With the help of general

**“I love you so much. Please come find me.”**

manager Gabby Cordell, Roberta was able to have a conference call with her sister, Rebecca, and by the time the call was over, both agreed it was time for Roberta to come home. Now, with the two reunited in New Jersey with an intense few weeks prior filled with travel plans and gracious volunteers, sisterly love is finally in the air again! [Read the full story here.](#)



## MIRACLE MONEY

Miracle Money is a Universal Basic Income pilot (UBI) for people experiencing homelessness, modeled off of [this successful pilot in Canada](#). The project consists of monthly cash stipends for people experiencing homelessness to provide stability and the opportunity to plan for the future. On #GivingTuesday we launched a fundraising campaign for Miracle Money. Through many peer-to-peer campaigns and generous donors, we've raised over \$40,000 to provide twelve trusted Miracle Friend participants \$500/month for six months for transportation, housing, and other essentials.

These funds will be used to attain the goals outlined by the Friend; however, it is essential that Friends retain a level of autonomy over the way that they use their funds. We truly

believe in the agency of individuals, and that, when presented with the opportunity, people will choose to spend money on the things that will move them forward. That being said, there are some restrictions on how funds can be used. Friends are not permitted to use funds to purchase drugs, alcohol, firearms, or other illicit substances.

Recipients are members of the Miracle Friends community, whom we have grown to know and trust over many months. During their participation in Miracle Friends, we have learned about their life stories and hopes for the future. We believe that the money will make a meaningful difference in their lives and circumstances, and are excited to see how this program plays out! [Check out more details here.](#)

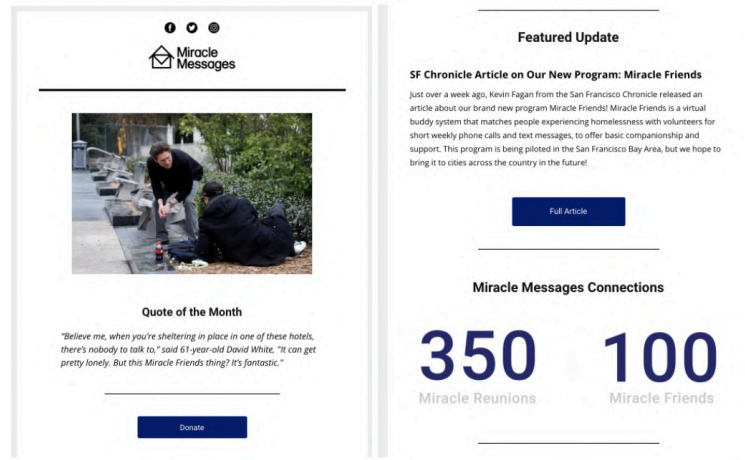


Elizabeth Softky, one of the first Miracle Money recipients.



# STORYTELLING

Storytelling helps us shatter the stigma around homelessness, build empathy around our neighbors living on the streets, and communicate our vision with the world. Our storytelling team helps translate Miracle Messages' stories into videos, blog posts, emails, pictures, newsletters, hashtags, and other content that can be shared widely on social media, our website, and with local and national media outlets. Our team had some pretty amazing opportunities this year from social media takeovers of prominent social media accounts to highlights in local newspapers.



## NEWSLETTER REVAMP

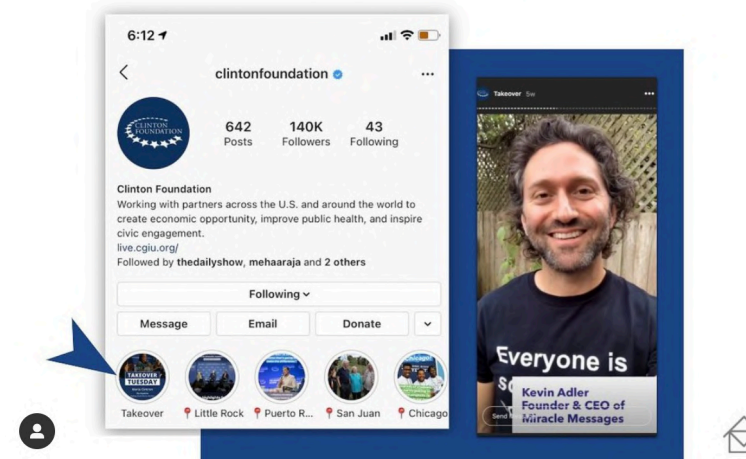
Our newsletter got a makeover this summer thanks to our interns. With a cleaner look, we hope you enjoy reading the stories of our un-housed friends and volunteers, and getting an inside scoop into our latest organization and program updates!

[Sign up for our newsletter here.](#)

## DID YOU SEE US ON @CLINTONFOUNDATION?

If not, go check us out!

Hear us share stories meaningful to us at Miracle Messages and what makes us the organization we are today!



## INCREASING SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

Clinton Foundation Social Media Takeover: Miracle Messages partnered with the Clinton Foundation to post about our organization for a few weeks in September: everything from the origins to our mission to our work.

You can watch through Clinton Foundation's Instagram highlight called "Takeover" @ clintonfoundation to read more about the stories that continue to inspire us! Some of these stories include how Jenna Hoskings went from living in a van to working with us today and how two USC professors created a curriculum for their classes to get involved in our program.

Spring 2020

August 2020

2021

## IN THE NEWS

- In March, Helen Hill released an article showcasing Miracle Messages' Reunion services in Street Roots.
- In April, Chase DiFelicianantonio from the San Francisco Chronicle released an article about our new program Miracle Friends.
- In June, Miracle Friends got a second feature in the SF Chronicle from Kevin Fagan.

**"It can get pretty lonely. But this Miracle Friends thing? It's fantastic."**

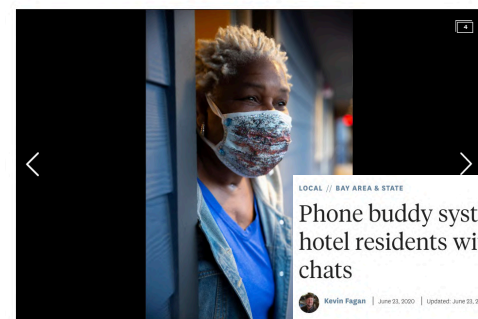
[Read the Street Roots March 2020 article here!](#)  
[Read the SF Chronicle April 2020 article here!](#)  
[Read the SF Chronicle June 2020 article here!](#)

July 2020

LOCAL // BAY AREA & STATE

San Francisco program forges bonds between young, old during coronavirus shutdown

Chase DiFelicianantonio | April 15, 2020 | Updated April 15, 2020 5:41pm

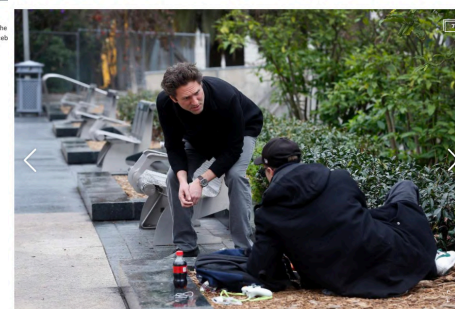


LOCAL // BAY AREA & STATE  
 Phone buddy system connects SF homeless hotel residents with volunteers for regular chats

Kevin Fagan | June 23, 2020 | Updated June 23, 2020 9:42am

1 of 6

A portrait of Emily Blake at her home on Friday, April 3, 2020, in Redwood City, Calif. Amid the coronavirus shutdown, she celebrated her 60th birthday at home with family and friends chatting with her through Facebook. Photo: Santiago Mejia / The Chronicle

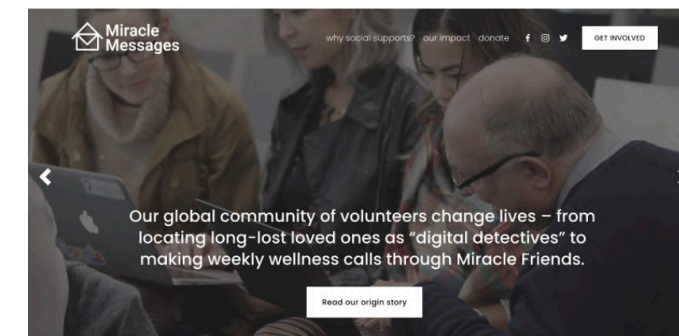


1 of 7  
 Miracle Messages founder and CEO Kevin Adler encounters a homeless man sitting in Union Square in San Francisco, Calif. on Tuesday, Jan. 29, 2019. Miracle Messages recommends people living on the street with long lost relatives and loved ones. Photo: Paul Olson / The Chronicle 2019

## WEBSITE REVAMP

Our website layout and design was updated to reflect our current work and brand values. Changes include: a more accessible layout, a new section for "our impact", details on the Miracle Friends program, and more consistent color scheme and font styles.

[Check it out here.](#)



Follow us on social media!





## Feature: Richard and Patricia

Richard wanted to reconnect with his sister Patricia when he found Miracle Messages. He hadn't spoken to or seen Patricia in 30 years. Finding Patricia was a difficult task as the name was common and the messenger did not have very much information.

About a month after first meeting Richard, a messenger had found Patricia and Richard's niece, Christina. He was able to speak on the phone with his family who were overjoyed to hear his voice. "You could see in his face he was too," a messenger shared. Miracle Messages gave Richard a phone so he could stay in contact with his family. After this first step of communicating over the phone, we were able to fly his sister Patricia into San Francisco and have them meet at our Homecoming Gala 2 event in February. Their reunion was beautiful and exactly what Miracle Messages strives to achieve.



# FUNDRAISING

The fundraising team at Miracle Messages cultivates and maintains donor relations, organizes and executes fundraising campaigns, and drafts/applies for grant proposals. This year marks a special milestone for Miracle Messages - we surpassed half a million dollars of donations to date! This year, we raised over \$100,000 from our Good Neighbor Awards and Homecoming Gala events. This could not have been possible without the help of our fundraising team and the outstanding people who continuously volunteer with our organization to make our work possible.

**\$592,715.36**  
Donated from 2500  
individual donors

In addition to our generous donors, we have also received a number of grants, awards, and contracts this year:

- **Google.org:** Miracle Messages received a \$100,000 grant from Google.org as part of their 2019-20 Impact Challenge. We were honored to be one of a very select few grant recipients from hundreds of worthy applicants, all dedicated to alleviating homelessness in the Bay Area.
- **Kenan Charitable Trust:** 2-year \$150,000 grant for our work in South Florida
- **SXSW community award:** \$5,000
- **Union Square:** \$15,000 contract for Miracle Friends
- **Sequoia Living:** \$25,000 contract for Miracle Friends
- **City of Riverside:** \$25,000 contract for Miracle Messages' reunion services

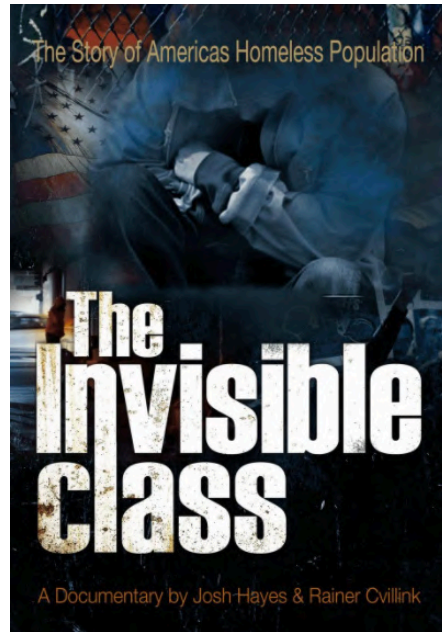




# EVENTS

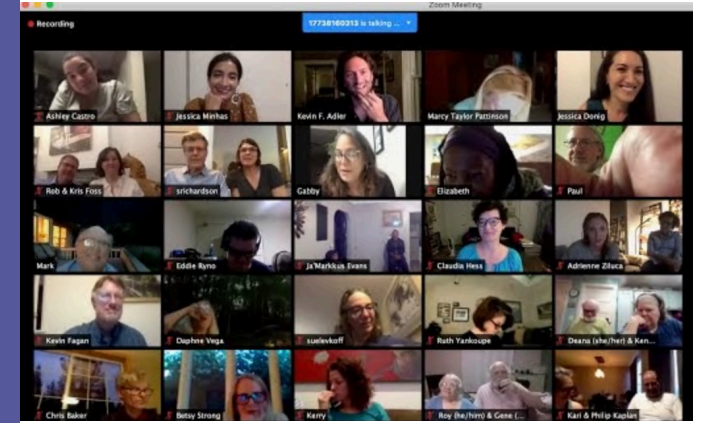
## MIRACLE MOVE NIGHT: THE INVISIBLE CLASS

In early July we had the pleasure of hosting a virtual screening of the film *The Invisible Class*, directed by Josh Hayes. Interns, friends, volunteers, and community members of Miracle Messages were able to watch one of the most realistic and grounded representations of homelessness that demonstrated the raw experiences and challenges many of our unhoused neighbors face. After the screening, a Q&A session with director Hayes took place as an opportunity to get to know more about him and his ideas around the need for politics rooted in humanity.



## GOOD NEIGHBOR AWARDS

It is very important to us to recognize and honor those in our community that are a large driving force behind Miracle Messages. That's why we created the first ever Good Neighbor Awards back in 2019. In September we held our Second Annual Good Neighbor Awards, this time, virtually! Over 300 participants tuned in to share and listen to inspiring stories and commemorate the work that the community has accomplished during the past year. 18 different awards were presented, each dedicated to the unique individuals who have gone above and beyond with their work in Miracle Messages. It was an exceptional time to connect with everyone after working remotely for so long and served as an excellent space to share the positive work being done amidst the numerous challenges of 2020.



## HOMECOMING GALA 2

In February 2020, we held our second annual Homecoming Gala to celebrate Miracle Messages' 300th reunion and renew our commitment to ending "relational poverty." Over 300 volunteers, friends, community leaders, corporate sponsors, nonprofit partners, and clients came together to commemorate the accomplishments of Miracle Messages and our community members. This includes programs in 4 major cities across the United States, a robust community of volunteers and partners, and new tools to scale our work globally. We also celebrated and shared the stories of people experiencing homelessness and their loved ones who've gained new hope, stability, and support as a result of a Miracle Messages reunion.

Looking over the city of San Francisco from the top floor of the Salesforce tower which was generously given to us for the night, it was an evening of food, fun, and friendship.



## MIRACLE FRIENDSGIVING

Miracle Friendsgiving was named in honor of the relationships that the Miracle Friends program has fostered during the trying months of the pandemic. We're grateful for our community, which is why we created a virtual place for our friends to come together on Thanksgiving to share gratitude and engage in community. During the event, we heard from Miracle Friends pairs and provided a welcoming space for unhoused neighbors to share their stories. We partnered with Salvation Army leaders of San Francisco like Theo Ellington, who donated 50 meals to Miracle Friends, as well as the Tupac Shakur Foundation, which generously donated 300 healthy and delicious gourmet meals to our unhoused neighbors.





# IN MEMORIAM

We would like to honor our unhoused friends who passed away this year. While they are no longer physically with us, they will always be in our hearts and memories.



## Wayne Cornett

January 1952 - September 2020

Two years ago at Powell St. Bart in San Francisco, we met Wayne Cornett. He hadn't spoken to his family for 19 years. But after recording a message addressed to his loved ones, we were able to reunite him with his niece Jasmine and her family, who helped him get off the streets and into his own apartment one year later. Before he passed, we were lucky enough to have him at the first annual Good Neighbor Awards where he expressed, "Thank you for giving me my family back." His niece Jasmine is thankful that she was able to restore a relationship with her uncle, and she emphasizes the idea that "Everyone is someone's somebody."

## Ronnie Goodman

Passed away on August 7, 2020

Ronnie Goodman was an unbelievable artist, marathon runner, and social justice advocate. He often used his paintings as an instrument to illuminate racial injustices and challenges that the African American community faces. Despite the obstacles that he encountered being unhoused for a number of years, Ronnie was one of those people who had an infectious zeal for life. He helped Kevin get started in his work assisting unhoused neighbors, and we continue to honor him at the Good Neighbor Awards with the Ronnie Goodman Award for "Running Free."

## Jeffrey Michael Gottshall

Passed away on January 22, 2020

To much of the world, Jeffrey was just another homeless man who spent many years on Market Street in San Francisco. But Jeffrey was so much more than that. He was a beloved brother, uncle, son, classmate, neighbor, and friend, as well as an inspiration to millions of people. In December 2014, Kevin helped Jeffrey record a message to his sister which then went viral. Soon after, he was able to meet face-to-face with his sister for the first time in 22 years. Jeffrey's reunion story was the first of many for Miracle Messages, and his legacy lives on in our continuing work.

## Richard Armstrong

Passed away on December 22, 2020

In early February at our Homecoming Gala, Richard reunited in-person with his sister Patricia after 32 years separated, along with his niece Christina. Richard served in the military, called everyone sir or ma'am, and was a beloved member of our community.

## Richard Vance

Passed away September 2020

## David Fusilier

Passed away October 2020



# THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS

We are constantly seeking opportunities to broaden the impact Miracle Messages has that helps our unhoused neighbors while addressing the deep systemic issues that cause and perpetuate homelessness. To help reach more people and create more efficient programs, we work closely with government and nonprofit partners to integrate our reunion service and virtual buddy system in communities. We also partner with corporations and universities across the country to train and mobilize volunteers. During 2020, we greatly expanded our partnerships to help our unhoused neighbors during the pandemic through Miracle Friends.

## MIRACLE FRIENDS PARTNERS

These partners provided valuable resources to make the MF program possible and helped us get and keep in touch with unhoused friends in shelter-in-place facilities.



## REUNION PARTNERSHIPS

These organizations help us with our reunion services by connecting us with people isolated by homelessness so that we can provide them the opportunity to record a short message to a loved one and potentially reconnect with those who miss them.



## UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

We are grateful to our university partners for continuing to engage their students with our cause.



## CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

These organizations help us with our everyday operations - from providing online meeting services to free cellphone service to contact our unhoused friends!



## Feature: NAMUS Partnership

With the new-found partnership between Miracle Messages and NamUs, success has already been achieved in a notable reunion story. Their vast resource center for missing/unidentified persons allows access to critical information that helps locate missing unhoused loved ones.

Earlier this year, Miracle Messages was contacted regarding the disappearance of an adult male in his 50s and asked to help in his search. He had disappeared in May 2018 after having lived in a shelter in Nebraska, and his friend was now searching for ways to contact him. NamUs was informed of this case and assisted the friend in filing a missing person's report. They also developed an open line of communication between authorities to transfer any new found information regarding this case. After a social worker contacted a local Sheriff's department regarding an unidentified individual in a California Medical Center, NamUs was contacted to cross-check the person with their records. NamUs was able to identify the man to be the missing person in question and developed contact between him and his friend. The partnership has yielded its first major success, and the Miracle Messages Team expects numerous more.



# THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

This year, we've been able to launch several new initiatives including Miracle Friends and Miracle Money with the help of all our generous donors. Thank you to all our donors who help make our work possible!

Anonymous	Brooks Barron
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Lynn Adams	Bryan Beard
Kevin F. Adler	Rachel Beck
Kristopher Adler	Laurie Bee
Paul Adler	Hilary Beech
Romy Agam Rom	Dorothy Beeson-caswell
Ashish Aggarwal	Doug Bell
Kwabena Agyeman	Brian Bennett
Daniel Ahmadizadeh	Eelco Bergman
Lesly Aispuro-Pugliese	Kevin Berry
Bouchra Akhertous	Revanth Bhattaram
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Naveen Ali	Zlata Bilbija
Anita Anderson	Michael Bingham
David Anderson	Carrie Bischke
Kim Anderson	Jon Bischke
Garrison Andrews	Erin bishop
Ketan Anjaria	Kerri Blake
Sarah Aref	Cece Blase
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Patricia Armstrong	Kristen Blomstrom
Richard Armstrong	Stephen Blomstrom
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Andrea Ballarini	Kevin Brennan
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Celia Barbaccia	Elizabeth Breuilly

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Marena Brinkhurst	Natallia Clancy
Shannon Broderick	Patty Clark
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Andy Brown	Jo Coder-williams
Katherine Brown	Mireia Codina
Meghan Brown	Jessica Coleman
Jason Brownstein	Randall Comer
Lisa Buchanan	Alyssa Conner
Preston Buck	Ryan Conner
Nicholas Bundra	Somer Connolly
Jim Burghart	Brittany Cook
Thomas Burke	Tovah Cook
Tanya Burnell	Zoe Cooper II
Don Burnes	Judy Cooper Rucinski
Becky Burnett	Gabby Cordell
Rochelle Bussi	Liz Cormack
Linda Butler	Christian Cornett
Charlotte Butterfield	Holly Cornett
Brenda Byrnes Weiss	Lisa Cornett
Lindsay C	Paul Cornett
Andrew Call	Rylie Cornett
Elena Call	Sara Cornett
Simo Calusic	Wayne Cornett
Joy Cameron	Marilyn Cote Miller
Diane Campbell	Kate Courteau
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Frank Canova	Mark Cronin
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Ashley Castro	Daniel D'ull
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Ingu Chang	Rob Davis
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Irene Chao	Renee Dean
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June Chi	Sue Dichter
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Ru-Yun Chiu	Patrick M Dixon
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Douglas Chrissan	Emily Dong
Kathy Churay	Grace Dong

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Mark Donig	Anita Goldstein
Reuben and Vivienne Donig	Albert Gomez
Reuben Donig	Rae Gonsalves
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Aaron Dropp	Nelson Gonzalez
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Thiago Lucas Faustino da Silva	David Hairfield
Virginia Fay	Claire Halbrook
Ann Felter	Justin Hall
Elizabeth Felter	Lisa Hallett
Thomas Felter	Rashele Hamren
Marc Fenigstein	Charlotte Hanson
Casey Fenton	Anne Harper
Mara Fenton	Kevin Hart
Tamika Fields	Julia Haupt
Debora Finkler	Lauren Hauser
Stephanie Fisher	Savi Hawkins
Donna Fletcher	Teresa Hay
Jill Floyd	Eran Hazary
Tracy Fong	Katherine Hazary
Amanda Forman	Susan Hazlett
Kris Foss	Martha Hein
Sarah Frank	Jenna Heiser
Bruno Frascino	Claudia Hess
Eliya Freidson	Angie Hether
Ann French	Manon Heurtel
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Zachary Gallagher	Meredith Hitchcock
Shaheen Gandhi	Emily Hodge
Robert Garcia	Patrick Hogan
Jay Gerdes	Tracy Hogben
Jenna Gille-Roux	DK Holland
Jennifer Gillett	Benjamin Horne
Cheryl Gilroy	Kathleen Horne
Mark Glaser	Mary Hosford
Karl Go-reynoso	Christine Hu
Olivia Godsil	Anne Hubert Cheruvanky
	Iris Hung
	Tim And Betty Gail Hunt

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Colin Hussey	Nicole Kirk
Pete Illes	Elvis Kiyomi
Raluca Ionita	Adam Klein
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Joyce Ip	George Koster
Julia Ip	Elizabeth Kountze
Kaitlin Ip	Shaun Kozolchyk
Kathleen Ip	Daniel Kraft
Lauren Ip	Dorian Kriston
Lyn Ip	Lucinda Kujawa
Peter Ip	Jeff Kurn
Winnie Ip	Lynn Kurn
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Lynn Jordan	John Leeper
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Eric Jorgensen	Debbi Lerman
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Gabi Jubran	Sue Levkoff
Stephanie K Beilke	Katherine Lewis
Raj Kadiyala	Jenny Li
Rajsekhar Kadiyala	Kunjue Li
Remon Kaldani	Edan Lichtenstein
Ridhi Kantelal	Rachel Lim
Alexander Kantor	Rachel May Lim
Kari & Philip Kaplan	Katie Lin
Kari Kaplan	Annika Lindner
Bonney Kapp	Diana Lindsay
Bianca Karim	Danel Lipparelli
Sang Karle-Gite	Larry Lipparelli
Sunil Kaul	Grooming Lisa
Hilton Kelley	Steven Liu
Dan Kelly	Karen Loing
Lottie Kendall	Erika Lonergan
Karen Kendzierski	Anna Loper
Wm. Kilgour	Brittany Lopez
Dusty Kim	Karla Lopez
Eugene Kim	Cindy Love
Myoungsoon Kim	Nancy Lue
Yeni Kim	Lisa Marie Lyckland
Lisa King	Katelyn Lyster



Sonia Macarie  
Ben Maddox  
Danny Maier  
Larissa Maier  
Subu Maleku  
Anreet Mand  
Emily Manny  
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Nilan Marktanner  
Amie Marois  
Mikel Maron  
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Sophie Przychodny  
Benjamin Quaye  
Cyrus Radhansson  
Vivek Rajarathnam  
Sreedevi Ramachandran  
Ramana Rao  
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Melissa Simon  
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Kathy Sittnick  
Peter Sittnick  
Martin Skou  
Valerie Slusher  
Denise Smith  
Gabby Smith  
Jefferson Smith  
Kate And Ted Smith  
Melena Smith  
Jennifer Smithson  
Marina Smyres  
Sam Soleimany  
Adam Souza  
Anna Speaker  
Michelle Spencer  
Shelly Spencer  
Kim Starkey Jonker  
Kate Steffy  
Beverly Stevenson  
Joy Stiefel  
Cyndi Stivers  
Sally Stone  
Elizabeth Strong  
Katherine Stuart  
Sherry Suisman  
Rosalie Sulgit-shay  
Mary Eileen Sullivan  
Tina Sun  
Barbara Suroz  
Matthew Swanson  
Paul Swanson  
Susan T-w  
Kristin Taylor  
Suzanne Taylor

Belen Techler Castillo  
Denise Thomas  
Devi Thomas  
Christopher Tilghman  
Marion Tiphaine  
Agnes Torchio  
Erika Toth  
Ba Thien Tran  
Susan Traverso  
Daniel Trepanier  
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Anejade V.  
Vicki Varghese  
Joseph Vasquez  
Hannah Vazquez  
Daphne Vega  
Aashi Vel  
Lisa Vermillion  
Donna Vinson  
Tammy Vinson  
Bogdan Vitoc  
Laila Volpe  
Leo Volpe  
Oscar Volpe  
Ned Walecka  
Deborah Walker  
Nathan Walker  
Natalie Walsh  
Megan Walton  
Suzanne Wang  
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Denise Warren  
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Daniel Weiss  
Jacob Weiss  
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Kristi Yamaguchi  
Joey Yan  
Ruth Yankoupe  
Martha Yates  
Moe Yoshioka  
Gilly Youner  
David Young  
Siavash Yousefi  
Karen Yu  
Tiffany Yu  
Aleksandra Yusim  
Tom Zappala  
Zack Zentner  
Moxie Zermeno  
Yoyo Zhang  
Susan And Joe Ziluca  
Nathan Zorndorf  
David Zwick



# OUR TEAM



**Kevin F. Adler**  
Founder & CEO

Born and raised in Livermore, CA, Kevin never learned the word “stranger,” and tries to live accordingly. Kevin started Miracle Messages in honor of his Uncle Mark, who lived on-and-off the streets for 30 years. His goal is to inspire people everywhere to embrace their neighbors experiencing homelessness not as problems to be solved, but as people to be loved. Previously, Kevin co-founded three education technology startups and authored a book on how shared traumas can bring us together or tear us apart. Kevin has been honored as a Presidential Leadership Scholar, TED Resident, and Rotary scholar, and has given talks at TED, SXSW, HUD, HHS, Google, Berkeley, and Stanford. Kevin’s work has been viewed by over 100 million people worldwide.



**Jessica Donig**  
Co-Founder & Executive Director

Jessica is an innovator and human-centered designer with a deep passion for improving people’s lives. After moving to San Francisco in 2017, she learned about Miracle Messages and joined Adler for a shelter visit. During this trip which was her first time ever stepping foot in a shelter, Donig was moved by a woman who wished to reconnect with her brother. The woman’s message to her brother was simple: “Tell him I love him.” Shortly after, she joined Kevin as the first full-time team member at Miracle Messages. Prior to this, Jessica served as the first employee and VP of Operations for a YC-backed MedTech startup and worked in clinical research at Stanford University.



**Madeline Connolly**  
Director of Operations

Madeline brings decades of experience in information technology, operations, and social service to the team. After graduating with a degree in Political Science and Computer Science, she spent her career as an information technology professional, retiring in 2019 as Director of Information Technology. She used her passion for helping others during her retirement by volunteering for several non-profit organizations, including Miracle Messages. While watching an interview with Kevin in the spring of 2019, she discovered she could use her IT skills and her desire to help our unhoused neighbors as a volunteer digital detective. Seeing the strong impact Miracle Messages and their volunteers had in every interaction convinced Madeline to come out of retirement to accept the position of Director of Operations.

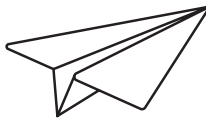


**Gabriela Cordell**  
South Florida General Manager

Gabby first came to Miracle Messages in early 2016 after seeing a sibling reunion highlighted on a local news show. She contacted Kevin and immediately started offering Miracle Messages to her unhoused friends in the community. Because of her personal experience in seeing the magic of Miracle Messages and how its unique reconnection service profoundly impacts those she was already serving, when Miracle Messages formally expanded to South Florida, Gabby was determined to make herself the chosen candidate. She continues to expand on the work that the team had begun in South Florida. Gabby has been an active member of the homeless service provider community in South Florida through her work with the Choose Love Foundation for over 10 years and has helped us bring Miracle Messages deeper into the community by partnering with other service providers.

# LEADERSHIP





**Mark Askins**  
Lead Digital Detective

Since December 2015, Mark has applied his abilities of 30+ years as a private investigator on over 100 cases. He actively works to find the loved ones of those experiencing homelessness and end relational poverty. Mark's journey of working to help those in his community began in high school where he worked in programs supporting special needs children. When Mark became a full time investigator, he perpetuated this giving mindset by involving himself in the Make a Wish foundation and made volunteering a full-time hobby. Mark has facilitated some of Miracle Messages most touching reunions and believes that, "Miracle Messages provides hope and perspective. We give people who are on the streets a chance to break the stigma of homelessness!"



**Beverly Stephenson & Brian Whitten**  
Community Ambassadors

Beverly and Brian are longtime residents of the Tenderloin in San Francisco. As individuals with years of lived experience of homelessness, they bring an invaluable perspective and expertise to our team in their street outreach efforts.

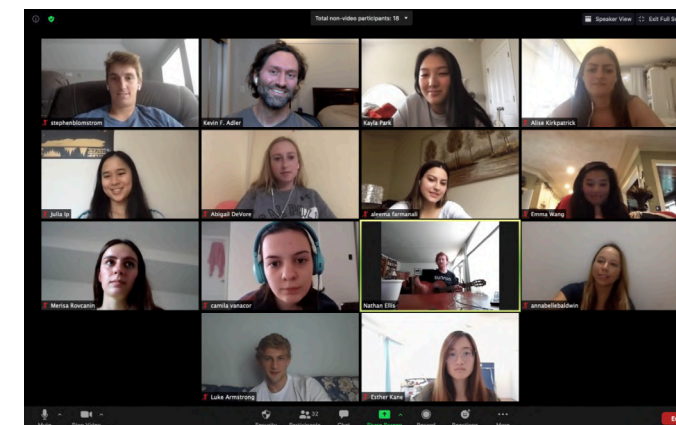
Beverly's brother had been searching for his sister for years. The ambassador asked for help in his search and within 72 hours, Miracle Messages was able to find Beverly. Beverly shared that the reunion made her heart feel whole again. Beverly has reunited with her family after two years of separation.

Brian had previously reunited with his brother, Steven, only to get disconnected shortly after. One of our investigators was able to track down Steven and help him and Brian reunite for the second time after two years of separation. Brian celebrated with "happy tears" and shared how meaningful this reunion was to him.

## INTERNS

This year we welcomed 36 summer and fall interns to the Miracle Messages team! Our interns are from multiple schools across the globe and help with all of our different projects here at Miracle Messages. They make up the Programs, Operations, Systems, Fundraising, Storytelling, Partnerships, and Strategy teams. From helping with day to day activities to assisting in long term projects, they are a valuable part of the organization.

- |                   |                       |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Abby DeVore       | Kayla Park            |
| Aleema Farmanali  | Luke Armstrong        |
| Alise Kirkpatrick | Maya Gite             |
| Andrijana Bilbija | Mehaa Raja            |
| Annabelle Baldwin | Merisa Rovcanin       |
| Ashley Kong       | Mohini Rye            |
| Ashley Nakagawa   | Mrinali Umashankar    |
| Caroline Drysdale | Neeharika Bandlapalli |
| Christina Nguyen  | Rachel Lee            |
| Emily Reynolds    | Raquel Abifadel       |
| Emma Wang         | Sarah Carter          |
| Eric Jiang        | Sophia Wenzel         |
| Esther Kane       | Stephen Blomstrom     |
| Evelyn Moradian   | Sydney Von Arx        |
| Famyrah Lafortune | Tionna Taite          |
| Gilia Wu          | Tristen Tu            |
| Jonathan Sin      | Urvi Bajaj            |
| Jonathan Wang     | Vanessa Murray        |
| Julia Ip          | Winnie La             |
| Kaitlin Ip        |                       |



## CASE SOLVING COMMUNITY

- |                        |                     |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| Larry Lipparelli       | Ellie Joo           |
| Thuy Le                | Emily Reynolds      |
| Shira Goldhaber-Gordon | Stacey Baxter       |
| Aparna Krishnan Girish | Stephanie Fisher    |
| Ben Pack               | Ashley Castro       |
| David Hairfield        | Justin Kim          |
| Emily Artiano          | Chris Thiel         |
| Jessica Minhas         | Xavier Brathwaite   |
| Karen Kendzierski      | Chris Baker         |
| Kim Glowac             | Ryan Kim            |
| Laurie Glowac          | Amanda Khadr        |
| Liz Breuilly           | Sarah Cooper        |
| Lonna Lipparelli       | Cindy Won           |
| Paul Swanson           | Victoria Leong-Ping |
| Priscilla Pena         | John Kissane        |
| Cece Blase             | Jason Gerck         |

## MIRACLE FRIENDS MENTORS

- |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Emily Artiano     | Bill Boehner      |
| Ben Pack          | Michelle Meyers   |
| Benissa Salem     | Paul Swanson      |
| Gabby Cordell     | Joan Scott        |
| Madeline Connolly | Maryann Philbrook |
| Mark Askins       | Tammy Vinson      |
| Stephen Blomstrom |                   |

## FINANCE & LEGAL

- Beth Attebery (Henry Levy Group)
- Brandon Salesberry (Salesberry Group)
- Mark Donig & Amy Toro (Covington & Burling LLP)
- Daniel Cody (Jones Day)
- Anjan Choudhury (Munger, Tolles & Olson LLP)

## COMPASSION CREW

Compassion Crew members review emotionally challenging cases and determine best practices for meeting the needs of clients, families and volunteers.

### Leadership:

- |                   |                  |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Michael Baldwin   | Robin McMillan   |
| Madeline Connolly | Stephanie Fisher |
| Mark Askins       |                  |



