



Spring  
2021  
No. 42

Enabling  
the People  
we Support  
to Live  
a Full Life

Connect  
with us and  
Share our  
Story



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## Lifehouse Embraces Growth

Lifehouse was founded in 1954 as a preschool, supporting 18 children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). Since that time, the organization has grown dramatically, now supporting over 360 people in a variety of programs specially designed for them. Lifehouse now employs close to 500 staff to meet the growing needs in our community. The growth in individuals supported is reflected in the significant increase in our budget, which has grown from \$3M in FY2000 to \$28M in FY2020. Lifehouse is proud to be the largest agency in the San Francisco Bay Area supporting people with I/DD and providing innovative support services for our community.

During the pandemic, Lifehouse has continued to support our community and has accepted additional individuals. With Day Programs closed, Lifehouse has hired and trained over 130 new staff to respond to the increased demand for daytime support. We have been able to provide support to 31 of the 60 new referrals received in the past year.

The majority of Lifehouse staff are direct support professionals. They are the backbone of the organization. We have developed a curriculum of 30 employee trainings that range from Health and Wellness to Philosophy and Best Practices and are looking forward to fully utilizing the Training Center in the new Lifehouse building for collaboration and innovation. Please join us in this historic effort to ensure the programs and services that Lifehouse provides continue to enrich our community.

# The President's Corner



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Dear Friends,

Throughout this challenging year, Lifehouse continues to provide individualized, quality services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) in our community. The Lifehouse Direct Support Professionals have continued to show up everyday to support people to stay engaged and safe. Ninety-three percent of the people we support are vaccinated and we are optimistic and looking forward to new freedoms!

We have moved the Lifehouse headquarters to our newly renovated building at 18 Professional Center Parkway in San Rafael! We anticipate welcoming you to our new space in the near future and to celebrate our permanent place in the community. This building will provide space for staff trainings, collaboration and innovation. We look forward to sharing this exciting space with you.

We are embarking on a second phase of the Home for Life Campaign to decrease the mortgage debt, increase operating reserve and provide new support services, trainings and technologies that will enhance the lives of the people we support. The campaign funds will support the growth in care provision allowing Lifehouse to keep pace with the growing demand for care in the Bay Area. As the mortgage debt is paid off, this frees up additional monies that would have been spent on rent for enhancement of services.

Your support continues to make all things possible! Thank you for your unwavering support of Lifehouse and making an impact so strong we are able to weather the most uncertain circumstances.

Warmest wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nancy".

Nancy Dow Moody  
President & CEO

**NOTE:** True Blue Supporters will be acknowledged in the Annual Report based on the Fiscal Year



Christine  
Leider

# Staff Spotlight

Christine Leider joined Lifehouse in 2019 as the QIDP/Administrator for the three ICF (Intermediate Care Facility) homes. Since she joined Lifehouse, the ICF Homes have seen the quality of care improve, especially as each resident's support services are more person-centered as a result of Person Centered Thinking practices being applied throughout Lifehouse. She loves working with the people we support and her dedication can be seen in her work in the homes and at Lifehouse.

Over the last year, Christine and her team faced various challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The ICF homes are required to follow the strictest rules, regulations and policies regarding COVID-19 due to each home being licensed by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and because long term care facilities were some of the hardest hit programs. Two of the biggest challenges Christine faced has been writing the COVID-19 policies, implementing them and keeping them up to date to reflect changing regulations from CDPH, as well as the increased amount of COVID-19 reports that are required to be submitted on a daily basis to CDPH and on a weekly basis to Marin County Public Health.

Christine has created comfortable and healthy living environments that support the ICF residents while maintaining COVID-19 protocols. We are happy to announce that none of the ICF residents were diagnosed with COVID-19, and that the majority of the residents are now fully vaccinated! Thank you to Christine and the ICF team for fostering an environment where residents remain safe and healthy!

# Volunteer Spotlight

Erin  
Uesugi



Erin Uesugi, mom to Sophie who is supported by Lifehouse, has been a steadfast advocate of Lifehouse since 2017 when Sophie joined Lifehouse. She immediately made herself available for volunteer opportunities. In 2019, we began a capital campaign to purchase and renovate a building in San Rafael to become the new Lifehouse headquarters. The building needed a complete renovation to accommodate the growing staff as well as the training needs to best serve the individuals we support.

As the Principal of Uesugi & Associates Architects in San Francisco, Erin happily volunteered her architectural services to re-design the 50-year-old building to accommodate Lifehouse. Erin met with the Lifehouse Executive Team to hear our office needs and desires for the space. She then developed a plan for the space that would accommodate our growing team. During the entirety of the project, Erin assisted in property evaluation, programming, conceptual design, fit plans and documents, and the permitting process. She also coordinated the overall work effort with multiple consultants that included civil engineers, structural engineers, architects and construction manager. We are truly grateful for Erin's amazing design work for the new Lifehouse headquarters. The entrance lobby has been named in honor of her architectural firm. We look forward to working with Erin for many years to come.

# Person Centered Thinking

Claudia Silva, Quality Assurance & Training Specialist  
Kate O'Connor, Director of Programs & Operations



The core of Lifehouse services is guided by Person Centered Thinking (PCT), which is a set of structured skills to help people discover things that are important to them and make decisions based on how they can have positive control over their life. Claudia Silva, the Quality Assurance & Training Specialist, leads this effort along with Kate O'Connor, the Director of Services & Operations. Kate builds Lifehouse's capacity to expand PCT training to the agency, and Claudia, a certified Person Centered Thinking Trainer, provides the trainings and planning services.

The Person Centered Thinking Training, led by Claudia, is taught in modules over 18 hours. Our goal is to train all Lifehouse staff so that they have the knowledge to help the people we support to achieve their goals and learn how to support personal choice while addressing issues of health and safety. We are excited to announce that we now offer this training to the community at large and to our partners who support people with developmental disabilities.

Lifehouse is also certified to provide Person Centered Planning (PCP) services as contracted by the Golden Gate Regional Center (GGRC) to support the individuals enrolled in the Self Determination Program (SDP). PCP is a process to help individuals make decisions toward a desired future and develop meaningful life goals based on their strengths. Through the use of PCT, a highly customized plan is developed to direct services that are desired by the person. When Lifehouse receives a referral,

Claudia will meet with the individual and identify what is important in their life. She then facilitates the development of a plan that will help the person supported in making personal choices, develop meaningful goals and the actions needed to achieve them, as well as finding ways to best support them in their services. The planning meetings are a collaborative process directed by the person receiving services in partnership with the PCP facilitator and his/her circle of support.

Lifehouse also received Home & Community Based Services compliance funding towards PCT coaching. An outside consultant trained 25 Lifehouse Managers, Assistant Managers, and Direct Support staff in PCT and how to coach others in PCT. The goal is to spread the reach throughout the agency and develop an ongoing coaching group where coaches support their colleagues and the people we support in using the PCT model, discuss what is working and not working, and how to best support our residents in making their own choices. The coaching group will consist of Managers, Assistant Managers, and Direct Support staff. The consultant also held a Person Centered Planning facilitation training with Managers and Directors on how to help the people we support create their own plan based on their own choices. We are excited to see the expansion of PCT throughout Lifehouse so that all the people we support have an opportunity to live in the most positive way.

For inquiries on trainings & planning:  
Claudia Silva  
[csilva@lifehouseagency.org](mailto:csilva@lifehouseagency.org)

# Prader-Willi Program



## Written By

Michelle Condit, Director of Programs & Operations

Lifeshouse is excited to undertake the development of a team skilled in supporting individuals with Prader-Willi Syndrome (PWS). PWS is a non-inherited genetic disorder, often associated with an abnormality of the Chromosome 15, which causes a multitude of serious and life-threatening conditions. The hallmark symptoms are the impaired ability to control emotions and behavior as well as hyperphagia, which is the insatiable biochemical drive to eat. Although people with PWS feel a constant drive to eat, they experience a metabolism that slows to about half of the normal rate. This can lead to morbid obesity and premature death.

Lifeshouse has provided services to individuals with this diagnosis within its Supported Living Program and has recognized that in some instances, traditional services have fallen short of offering adequate support. One needed ingredient is for staff members to “lend control” when the person supported is overwhelmed, often due to the symptoms of emotional dysregulation and hyperphagia. This is done through a combination of treatment and management strategies, with food and behavior management as a key component of the service plan.

Environments that are predictable, positive and limited in stress are frequently the best atmosphere of support for individuals with PWS. Locally, the Prader-Willi Homes of California (PWHC) purchased a home that will have four tenants with PWS who will begin receiving support in the summer to early fall. Austin and Leslie de Lone are the founders of this non-profit whose mission includes establishing and maintaining homes that serve people with PWS. Lifeshouse has been in conversation with the de Lones and PWHC Executive Director John McCue on ways to potentially partner to match Lifeshouse’s staffing and support services with the PWHC housing arrangement. BJ Goff, a renowned PWS expert and consultant who is a professor at Westfield State University in Massachusetts and has vast experience operating several programs for PWS, is providing consultation with Lifeshouse to guide in the creation of a framework for success in supporting individuals with PWS.

Embarking on meeting this community need, Lifeshouse is investing in staff training with Goff and through PWCF. We are excited to be able to offer services that are needed in the community. Staff who are interested in learning about staffing opportunities for this program can contact Michelle Condit.

For inquiries:

**Michelle Condit**

[mcondit@lifeshouseagency.org](mailto:mcondit@lifeshouseagency.org)



# Great Chefs & Wineries



# Sparkle Raffle

## Virtual Auction

Great Chefs & Wineries will remain a virtual auction again this year. We hope to see you once again when things open up. In the meantime, we hope you will help us on our mission of supporting individuals with developmental disabilities in our community by supporting our virtual auction. We have some amazing items at amazing prices!

### Date & Time

April 3rd at 9:00am -April 17th at 5:00pm

### Sign In, Register, & Bid on Items

[gcw2021.givesmart.com](http://gcw2021.givesmart.com)

## Your Chance to Win

Generously donated by Stephan-Hill Jewelry Designers, each unique diamond represents the spectrum of disabilities and the individuals supported by Lifehouse.

- 5 baguette cut diamonds
- 34 round diamonds
- .49 carat total weight
- 16" cable chain necklace
- 18K white gold pendant

### Raffle Pricing

- 1 for \$100
- 2 for \$150
- 5 for \$300

### To Purchase Tickets

Kati Dombrosky  
[kdombrosky@lifehouseagency.org](mailto:kdombrosky@lifehouseagency.org)  
415.526.5305

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# Great Chefs Cookbook

This exciting Great Chefs & Wineries Cookbook features recipes and wine pairings from our amazing chefs and winery partners.

## Featured

Ayesha Curry's BBQ Sweet Potatoes

From the collaboration between Chef Michael Mina, Owner/Chef of International Smoke, and Ayesha Curry, celebrity entrepreneur, television host, and New York Times best-selling author, this recipe offers a vegetarian take on the flavorful and signature meat preparations offered at International Smoke.

## Get a Copy

- Consider donating to our virtual event as an Individual Sponsor
- Individual Sponsor Tickets at \$350: Receive 1 cookbook
- Major Sponsors: Receive 10 cookbooks to gift to family and friends
- Sponsorship & Ticket Information:  
[greatchefsandwineries.org/ways-to-participate](http://greatchefsandwineries.org/ways-to-participate)



# Thank You

## Sid Sall Wine Committee Chair

Sid Sall has volunteered as the Wine Committee Chair for 18 years! A wine enthusiast, Sid coordinates the wine auction for Great Chefs & Wineries, Lifehouse's annual fundraiser. With his connections, Sid helps us get donations of amazing wine to feature in our auction.

We dedicated the wine storage room in our new building in Sid's honor, the "Sid Sall Wine Room". The room features a wine storage complete with a cooling system and a small tasting area.

With this new temperature controlled room, we will be able to accept and store donations year round.

Thank you Sid for all your support through the years.



# HALL Wines

## Thank you HALL, BACA, WALT

Thank you to HALL, WALT and BACA for hosting a Virtual Wine Tasting for Lifehouse on Saturday, April 2nd. The wineries extended their membership rate for the tasting packages for the Virtual Tasting in support of Lifehouse. We appreciate their support of Great Chefs & Wineries.

We are happy to announce that HALL, WALT, and BACA will be participating in the Great Chefs & Wineries Cookbook. Their wine will be paired with recipes from participating Great Chefs & Wineries restaurants.

GET A COPY TODAY:  
[greatchefsandwineries.org/ticket-sponsor](https://greatchefsandwineries.org/ticket-sponsor)

HALL: [www.hallwines.com](http://www.hallwines.com)  
WALT: [www.waltwines.com](http://www.waltwines.com)  
BACA: [www.bacawines.com](http://www.bacawines.com)

The top half of the page features a composite image. On the left, two dark wine bottles are shown against a background of autumn leaves. The bottle on the left is labeled 'CABERNET SAUVIGNON PERSEPHONE' and the one on the right is 'CABERNET SAUVIGNON CALISTOGA'. On the right side of the image is a white plate filled with a hearty stew, featuring chunks of meat, mushrooms, carrots, and onions, garnished with fresh herbs. The text 'Virtual Auction Sneak Peek' is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif font across the middle of the image.

# Virtual Auction Sneak Peek

## 1 PEJU Province Winery

A complete 2018 Stained Glass Collection of wines along with our Stained Glass Collection VIP five course tasting experience for 4 guests.

Experience a private tasting in front of the Stained Glass in our PEJU Tower Uluru room, for up to four people. Discover the difference terroir makes in wine with a guided, educational journey pairing each selection with a culinary delight prepared and presented by Executive Chef Nicolas Montanez.

The wine collection includes one each of:  
2018 Persephone Cabernet Sauvignon  
2018 Calistoga Cabernet Sauvignon  
2018 Rutherford Cabernet Sauvignon  
2018 Persephone Proprietary Red Wine Blend

2018 Persephone Cabernet Franc  
And... a wooden collection box

## 2 LEFT BANK, Larkspur

A dinner for six (6) including a multi course Chef's menu and wine pairings at the Left Bank in Larkspur, CA. This auction item will be an opportunity for you to dine in the patio at Left Bank with your friends and family!

Left Bank is a Parisian-style Brasserie by Chef Roland Passot. Using local, seasonal, and organic ingredients, their menu is reflective of French culture.

Left Bank is currently open for outdoor dining on the patio and indoor dining at limited capacity. Prior to shelter-in-place, Left Bank maintained a fun and French environment by celebrating holidays such as Bastille Day, seasonal harvests such as Beaujolais Nouveau, local artisans with wine and beer dinners and fellow chefs and gastronomes with cooks with book series and much more.

# Home For Life

We have settled into our headquarters at 18 Professional Center Parkway in San Rafael. This permanent “home” for Lifehouse professionalizes the services and providers of this sector, offering the Bay Area a symbol of its diversity, optimism and the dignity it affords a traditionally ‘unseen’ community.

“

“The efficacy of Lifehouse programs has demonstrated the importance of support and care in an individual’s home. The closure of other providers has contributed to a growing need for Lifehouse services. Lifehouse is best equipped and suited to deliver these services. Lifehouse has grown by over 400% in the past 12 years as the demand for these essential services has increased dramatically. I take great pride in being a part of this expansion.”

- Al Brayton  
Lifehouse Board

”



\$2.8M raised  
\$3.5M to go

FOR MORE INFORMATION  
ON CONTRIBUTIONS  
Nancy Dow Moody  
President & CEO  
[ndmoody@lifehouseagency.org](mailto:ndmoody@lifehouseagency.org)

# North Bay Office

We have a new office in the North Bay! The Petaluma office serves as a hub for the staff who support residents in Sonoma County. We currently support approximately 110 individuals in the North Bay, as well as additional individuals in the Sonoma Recreation Program. Lifehouse is excited to expand our ability to support services in the North Bay.

The Petaluma office space layout allows for 20 staff and is designed for teamwork and collaboration as well as for individual working spaces. There is a conference room for trainings and presentations. A Community Living Program (CLP) work station has been set up for staff who stop by the office and need a space for work. Due to COVID-19, the staff have been rotating going into the office. Once we are all able to come together, the office will be an exciting space for teamwork.



Sanii Nelson,  
Assistant Manager



From Left: Dara Sherrod, Lifehouse Staff  
Claudia Anderson, Lifehouse resident  
Anja Hansen, SLP Manager

# A Full Life

Defined by the Individual,  
Supported by Lifehouse



## KYLE QUICK

**Meet Kyle-** He is a kind and cheerful individual with a great sense of humor, gifts that allow him to connect with others in such a genuine and heart felt way. Kyle started his journey with Lifehouse over 20 years ago with travel training services and first called Comito House home in 2004. Throughout his time at Comito House, he has learned to cook, developed time management skills, and built life-long friendships with his fellow housemates.

Kyle's interests include listening and singing along to music, being the biggest fan of Disney, all things Christmas, and visiting friends and family. Kyle is known as the ambassador of the holidays. His enthusiasm for decorating brings an infectious joy to those around him.

The development and support we provide for the individuals served by Lifehouse is ever evolving. Even in the midst of an unpredicted year due to COVID-19, Lifehouse was able to help Kyle with

an exciting life transition when he moved into his own apartment in San Rafael. Through the Supported Living Program (SLP), this new chapter will afford Kyle the one-on-one support he needs to continue to be as independent and active as possible.

These days, Kyle keeps up with friends and family through Facetime and phone calls. Kyle regularly takes walks in his neighborhood to stay active and healthy. He looks forward to outings at his favorite dinner spots and meeting up with friends when it is safe.

Supported Living Programs can help individuals, such as Kyle, live inspired, purposeful and independent lives. Subscribe to our email list for more updates on individuals supported by Lifehouse, volunteer opportunities, and how to donate.



“

She wakes up excited to go to school everyday... This program is a treasure and we feel extremely fortunate to have found it!

”

# Great Expectations

“We are thrilled with our daughter’s experience at Great Expectations. The caring and supportive team along with the diversely skilled peer group has facilitated her growth in learning independence, patience, and agency. She is taking more risks and has matured in so many ways. She wakes up excited to go to school everyday.

The thought and planning that goes into the overall curriculum and projects is sincerely impressive. Every activity is intentional with objectives that tap into fine and gross motor skill building, social communication and teamwork. Every afternoon, the teaching staff sends home pictures and a descriptor of the daily events. This timely component allows us to have in-depth and meaningful conversations with our daughter about her day and allows us to continue the teaching at home. The team truly addresses the whole child- from social-emotional to physical and developmental growth. They pair a great amount of free play and investigation time with structured learning. This program is a treasure and we feel extremely fortunate to have found it!”

- Lauren Cazeau, GE Parent





Lifehouse  
18 Professional Center Parkway  
San Rafael, CA 94903

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a full life



# We are Open

Your support at this time is vital. Our sustainability as an organization depends on the support of our generous community.

HELP US BUILD A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

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