



# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

*"When you harvest the crops on your land, do not cut all the way to the corners of your field. Don't pick up the grain that falls on the ground. Leave it for the poor..." Leviticus 23:22*

CHRISTIAN ASSISTANCE MINISTRY NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2020

## CAM's COVID-19 Operations

As you know, since the Pandemic and community shut down began, CAM remained open; working without our incredible volunteers (for their safety) and with a team of about 10 staff and 8 additional temporary employees/interns. Every day we had to come up with a way to serve and meet the demands this tragedy put upon us and those we served.



As we became better at providing for physical needs, we have added on additional CAM services and figured out ways to provide the important information, referrals, and guidance most clients really need; especially at this time. We don't see an end to this new and increase

need for service and are planning to continue through the end of the year and likely into 2021. We are most grateful for the support community has provided so that we can do this direct service work.

## COVID-19 Relief

### DURING THE COMMUNITY SHUT DOWN: APR - JUN

1. CAM remained open and became an official City Homeless Hub for unsheltered Homeless.
2. Disseminated daily food for homeless 6 days a week: 14,400 sack lunches.
3. Provided increased number of showers for homeless: 1,800.
4. Provided clothing twice a week for homeless: 2,600.
5. Weekly Hygiene dissemination for homeless: 1,800.
6. \$51,000 worth of emergency rent assistance for working poor and those with homes.
7. Continued to provide groceries and financial assistance for prescriptions as well as referrals to other locations for food and help.

## How Can You Help

CAM's needs change on a weekly basis so check out our website for ways you can help at home.

You can also contact our Volunteer Director to learn about a variety of weekly or one time volunteer opportunities.

 [ekirtner@cam-sa.org](mailto:ekirtner@cam-sa.org)

## Donate Intentionally

- Sort through all of your donations first and separate by men's, women's, and children's items
- Label all of the bags/boxes you bring to CAM
- Only donate comfortable clothing

*Help us get necessary items into the hands of those that need it most in an efficient manner!*

## CAM Current/Ongoing Services

### WE HAVE DEVELOPED AN OUTDOOR PROCESS TO SERVE

1. We are maintaining this increased new level of service for unsheltered homeless until others open (probably the rest of the year or until spring of 2021).
2. We have partnered with Centro and SA Hope Center to have their case workers meet on our campus to offer case management to our homeless clients who are desperate for help now.
3. Providing all level of services to our clients whether homeless or not: groceries once a month (this is an increase), hygiene items, financial help: with utilities, birth certificates, prescriptions, and rent (new); free mail service, emergency clothing, diapers, formula and shoe assistance, bus passes, and special once a month clothing distribution for all clients.





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christian  
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FOLLOW US ON



WWW.CAM-SA.ORG

**CAM DOWNTOWN**  
110 McCullough  
210.223.4099

**CAM NORTHWEST**  
5048 DeZavala  
210.697.5771

## How You CAN HELP

### MAKING THE "NEW NORMAL" NORMAL

The Covid Crisis forced us to partner with the city, other nonprofits, and churches. We began thinking even more strategically. We all began a coordinated effort for food service each day for unsheltered homeless. At the same time via bus made riding free, and CAM committed to providing food to anyone while we were opened 6 days a week. We began giving out clothes, hygiene items, and providing showers each week (no limit) and just being here to guide our most vulnerable unsheltered homeless clients. In the past we were comfortable turning folks away when we ran out of food or clothing, limiting the times or amounts for clothing/hygiene (once every other month) because we felt like there were enough other resources.



Our feeling/strategy was that we could never provide enough and so we did what we could. In many ways this was true. However, as we have worked in this new way for 3 months, we see this population who are in such great need due to mental, physical health issues, length of time on the streets were finally really being cared for in the right way. They finally knew each day where to get food (3 times a day), a central place to get clothes each week, underwear, socks.... They had hygiene kits each week. No matter what time they arrived they could get food and they could take the bus to other locations offering resources.

What we realized is that we were/are able to do it. What we realized is that it never became impossible. What we realized is that we and our community had enough to provide this for the MOST IN NEED. It took a Pandemic for us to see how many people were in such great need. It took a Pandemic for us to realize we could give and still meet our own needs. It took a pandemic to do it right. We hope this "new normal" becomes just normal. We hope folks will realize that we can all help and make a difference.

## President/CEO's Corner

Small miracles and new partnerships have been such a silver lining during this very difficult time. Most recently I found myself outside talking with a few clients who had questions. One came up to me, I had not seen before, we will call him "John" and I could barely hear him or understand him. I had to keep getting closer and closer, disobeying all of the CDC recommendations. However, I sensed something was not right and asked him if he had a brain injury or a disorder of some kind. He shared that he had Huntington's disease. I had no idea what that meant and made sure he got a sack lunch and gave him a new mask. John was young, and frail and I kept thinking about him. After I had a chance to get to my desk I looked up the disorder, I was heartbroken to read that this young man had a degenerative disorder that causes dementia and would render him unable to walk, talk or move as it progressed. I just couldn't understand how he could be on the streets and wondered how could he even seek help. I contacted a partnering organization Centro who does case management with people on the streets and had been coming to our campus to help. We had worked out a plan to take John to a program at Haven the following Monday. This relationship with Centro is new and is part of the Covid response efforts for unsheltered Homeless. I felt elated. But wait there is more! I was on a weekly conference call with other partnering organizations and mentioned this effort. When I mentioned Huntington's Disease, Chris the Director at Catholic Worker house knew him right away and shared that she had been able to find help for him, he was a veteran, and that she had gotten him off the streets that very day. I am just so amazed that God had a plan for us all to serve John, he was not lost and collectively we could help.



**Dawn White-Fosdick**

CAM's mission is to share the love of Christ by providing immediate assistance and encouragement to people in crisis. All are welcome. CAM is a San Antonio-based nonprofit providing services to 60,000 people annually. CAM helps working poor families, children, elderly, homeless, veterans etc. by providing food, clothing, and financial assistance to help people through a crisis or avoid a more serious crisis.