

**Doing together what we cannot do alone*



Quarterly Newsletter

From the Board President

Dear Friend,

I want to reflect on the profound challenges our community has faced within such a short time of stepping into 2025. The Eaton Fire brought unimaginable loss to Altadena and Pasadena, and our hearts are with every individual and family impacted by this devastating event. During this incredibly trying time, I have been filled with immense pride in the perseverance of our Friends In Deed team. Their unwavering dedication has been a beacon of hope.

I am equally moved by the way our community came together in an extraordinary show of support. Your generosity has been nothing short of remarkable. From donations of hot meals delivered to the Bad Weather Shelter, to canned goods and water for our Food Pantry, to offers of hygiene supplies, volunteer time, and so much more—you have reminded us of the power of compassion and collective action. Please know that your kindness has already made an immeasurable difference.

As we look ahead to the coming months, we anticipate gaining a clearer understanding of the Eaton Fire's long-term impact on our community. Friends In Deed is committed to stepping in to help those who are rebuilding their lives. We will keep you updated as we continue this important work.

Thank you for your ongoing support and trust in Friends In Deed. We will continue doing together what we cannot do alone.

With gratitude,

Bret Schaefer



It is through your generosity that we are able to provide these programs and services

Donate today

Join the Legacy Society

Stories from the Fire

A Community That Cares

In the early hours of the morning, a simple yet extraordinary act of kindness unfolded during the Eaton Fire. Two clients, recently housed above Washington Boulevard through the hard work of Friends In Deed's Street Outreach and Housing team, were awoken by an urgent knock on their door.

[Read more...](#)



Supporting One Another Through Loss

Stacey McCarroll, Director of Eviction Prevention and Rental Assistance shares her story:

I spent an afternoon with our EPRA volunteer, Emily, who lost her home in Altadena. She has been staying in a hotel in Glendale, very close to my



home. I invited her to do a load of laundry (I borrowed the idea from a Facebook post on the page of another friend in Altadena who lost her home).

[Read more...](#)

Stories from Our Community



Feeding the Soul: Agnes Restaurant and Cheesery's Partnership with Friends In Deed

In the heart of Pasadena, Agnes Restaurant and Cheesery has become a beloved neighborhood gem. Co-owners Thomas Kalb, Executive Chef, and Vanessa Tilaka Kalb, Head Cheesemonger, have poured their passion into not only creating incredible food but also fostering a deep connection with the community they call home.

[Read more...](#)

Spreading Smiles and Compassion: Dena's Story

Upon retiring ten years ago, Dena was looking for a way to give back when she discovered Friends In Deed. After reaching out to several local organizations, it was Tim, the

Director of the Food Pantry, who responded first. "Come on in!" he said. From the moment she stepped through the doors, Dena felt at home.

[Read more...](#)



Stories from Our Staff

From Instability to Impact: Tish's Path to Friends In Deed

When Tish Inong joined Friends In Deed nearly three years ago, she stepped into a role that was, in her words, "a blank canvas." Today, as the Director of Street Outreach and Housing, she has transformed that canvas into a thriving program that supports some of Pasadena's most vulnerable residents.

[Read more...](#)



Stories from Our Board Members

Coming Full Circle: Lana's Journey to Friends In Deed

Lana and her husband's story is one of connection, giving, and a heartfelt return to Pasadena. Years ago, her husband ran a podcast, donating its proceeds to different charities each month. When they moved back to Pasadena from Minneapolis,



Friends In Deed stood out among the many nonprofits recommended to them.

[Read more...](#)

Programs

Bad Weather Shelter (BWS)

Providing cold-weather support for our neighbors experiencing homelessness

Eviction Prevention and Rental Assistance (EPRA)

Short- and medium-term rental support to prevent eviction

Food Pantry

Dignified grocery shopping experience for 600+ households weekly

Street Outreach and Housing

Team of workers on the streets engaging with our neighbors experiencing homelessness and connecting them to services

The Women's Room (TWR)

Daytime shelter for homeless and at-risk women

Program Attendant, The Women's Room (TEMPORARY HIRE)

In light of the impact the Eaton Fire has had on Friends In Deed staff members, The Women's Room is seeking to hire two additional team members for a



duration of 6 months to ensure continuity of TWR programming and support. Please help spread the word! Our ideal start date is by Wednesday, February 12th.

[Learn More](#)

Our Staff

(in alphabetical order)

Helen Angove

Director of Operations

Jane Armbruster

TWR Program Manager and Case Counselor

Isaac Arreola

Harm Reduction Specialist

Marty Campolo

Deputy Director and Grants Officer

Coty Dietel

Food Pantry Aide

Rosie Espino

TWR Program Attendant

Olivia Esteb

Housing Navigation Program Manager and Substance Abuse Specialist

Ryan Greer

Senior Director of Programs

Al Hackett

Outreach Specialist

Tish Inong

Director of Street Outreach and Housing

Jenny Juarez

Our Board

Bret Schaefer

President

Leslie White

Vice President

Christopher Pelch

Treasurer

Debby Singer

Secretary

Kevin Bourland

Tim Howett

Nishanthi Kurukulasuriya

Don Meaders

Jeff Salcido

Lana Slavitt

and;

Richard Cheung

Board President Emeritus

Pam Marx

Board President Emerita

TWR Program Associate

Rabbi Joshua Levine Grater
Executive Director

Kristina Martin
Food Pantry Program Associate

Marlene Martinez
Assistant Director of EPRA

Stacey McCarroll
Director of EPRA

Tim Nistler
Director of the Food Pantry

Najwa Payton Jones
Housing Navigator and Outreach Liaison

Elyse Reed
Development Associate

Lindsey Reed
Director of The Women's Room

Eva Rivera
Food Pantry Manager

William Shelby
*Senior Intensive Case Management
Specialist*

Virginia Valencia
*Outreach Program Manager and Mental
Health Specialist*

Laura Van Alstine
Director of BWS

Merria Velasco
Senior Director of Development

Dani Vinokurov Rivera
Development Associate

Kenyetta Wilson
Controller

Friends In Deed is committed to fostering, cultivating, and preserving a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion. We embrace and celebrate the spectrum of our employees', volunteers', and clients' ages, color, ability or disability, ethnicity, family or marital status, gender identity or expression, language, national origin, physical and mental ability, political affiliation, race,

religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, veteran status, neurodiversity, and other characteristics that make our employees, volunteers, and clients unique.

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