

# Social Accountability 2017



*“Our name has changed, but our mission and values remain the same: to build strong and engaging communities, to connect people with the services and relationships they need to thrive, and to provide compassionate support.”*

— PRESIDENT AND CEO KEVIN GERBER



# Power of Community

Early in the morning last October 9th, fierce, swift wildfires swept through Sonoma and Napa counties. Staff worked to safely evacuate over 500 residents from both our Life Plan Community, Spring Lake Village, and our Affordable Community, Jennings Court, in Santa Rosa. As we waited to hear if the communities' buildings and grounds would be destroyed in the fires, some residents went to stay with family or friends, while others were warmly welcomed by our Covia communities, including St. Paul's Towers and Oak Center Towers in Oakland, San Francisco Towers, Webster House in Palo Alto, and Los Gatos Meadows. Covia staff worked around the clock to support the displaced residents and also keep residents and families informed with updates regarding the fires. We were overwhelmed with the outpouring of donations and offers of help that came from generous community members.

Our two communities were mercifully spared by the fires, but after everything was contained, we were devastated to learn that 12 Spring Lake Village staff members lost their homes. The Covia Foundation opened a Spring Lake Village Employee Emergency Fund which quickly received donations from fellow residents, staff, and families, as well as our vendors and sympathetic industry peers; the Covia Foundation has been able to distribute over \$180,000 to staff in need. Through this experience, we are once again struck by how deeply we are all connected, and how grateful we are for the community we share.

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*“The continuing seismic shifts in our fair city can leave all of us feeling deeply unsettled.*

*So your gift contains much more than financial help: it brings with it our amazing community's message of 'we've got your back.' I have never before worked someplace where I feel blessed to arrive in the morning, where both residents and staff consciously contribute to the well-being of the whole.”*

— LETTER FROM AN SLV EMPLOYEE WHO LOST  
A HOME IN THE FIRE

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*“I can never forget how the Covia community staff coordinated the entire effort to evacuate us residents to safety and security. My family and friends off campus continue to comment on how they were able to communicate with me during the Sonoma county fire storms of October 2017. Thank you thank you thank you!”*

— A GRATEFUL SLV RESIDENT



*Covia's leadership includes (left to right): Diana Jamison, CFO; Bill Tobin, General Counsel & Chief Risk Officer; Kevin Gerber, President & CEO; Ron Schaefer, COO; and Mary McMullin, Senior Vice President of Organizational Advancement.*

At Covia we are committed to our mission and charitable purpose. While we have a new name, our purpose remains constant: for over 50 years we have worked hard to make a difference in the lives of the seniors we serve, wherever they call home. We honor our heritage and the values we have received from our faith tradition: inclusion, justice, and compassion. We celebrate aging by providing a strong continuum of care and services, promoting well-being, building strong and engaging communities, and connecting people with the services they need to thrive.

We balance service innovation with financial accountability to be prepared to meet the challenges people face as they grow older. To accomplish all this, we rely on the dedication of our staff, the energy of

our volunteer force, the commitment of our board members, the trust of our residents and community partners, and the generosity of our donors.

In the following pages, we share with you the programs and stories of impact that reflect our commitment to social accountability. Our new name, Covia, reflects our belief in the importance of community, connection, and compassion. At Covia, we come together on the path of life; we invite you to join us on this journey.

Kevin Gerber  
*President and Chief Executive Officer*

# Information & Referral and Emergency Funds

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*Senior Resource Directors connect thousands of older adults to local resources in Monterey, Santa Clara, San Francisco, Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, and Sonoma counties, and provide a much needed safety net through our Emergency Funds program. In addition, they work locally to address seniors' nutritional needs and to combat social isolation.*

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Covia wishes to thank the SCAN Health Plan, Community Foundation Sonoma County, Share the Spirit East Bay, and the Monterey Community Foundation for their support of Covia's Emergency Funds Program. In 2017, Covia distributed \$93,569 in Emergency Funds, providing life-changing support to almost 350 older adults.



An Information & Referral call may start with a simple question, but can lead to a big impact: After facing significant medical expenses, a distressed Santa Clara County senior called for help with paying an overdue utility bill. The Senior Resources Director was able to refer this senior to an energy forgiveness program, pay half of the outstanding bill with Emergency Funds, help set up a manageable payment plan, and connect her to two other energy cost-saving programs. What once felt like mounting expenses are now manageable, with a more comfortable future on the horizon for this senior.

## Market Day *formerly Senior Produce Markets*

*Held across the Bay Area in senior centers, churches, and Affordable Communities, Covia's 22 Market Days provide access to fresh fruit and vegetables at wholesale prices. 300 older adult volunteers set up and administer the markets, building a peer-to-peer social experience around senior nutrition and wellness.*



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*“This market saved my life: my husband passed away and I lost interest in eating. Now I love volunteering and I’m forced to eat well, since I’m surrounded by healthy produce each week!”*

— MARKET DAY VOLUNTEER

In 2017, Covia opened new markets at the Cloverdale Senior Center and the Oldemeyer Center in Seaside, bringing the number of seniors served to just over 1,300; Covia piloted accepting CalFresh at its market at the Margaret Todd Senior Center in Novato.

Mission within a mission:  
Each week, unsold perishable produce is donated to others in need. This last year, our partners included Food Runners in San Francisco, Loaves and Fishes in Pittsburg, the VA Center in Santa Rosa, and City Team in Oakland.

# Nutrition

*Understanding that food insecurity can lead to chronic health conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, and congestive heart failure, Covia provides a nutritional boost to hundreds of seniors through lunches, food pantries, and our Home Delivered Grocery Program (HDGP).*



In partnership with Novato Safeway, HDGP volunteers shop weekly and deliver groceries to homebound and socially isolated seniors, also providing a friendly check in to ensure the seniors are safe. Thanks to a grant from Marin Community Foundation, HDGP now accepts CalFresh!



Twice a month, community members find their way to the Pantry of Hope, housed at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Oakland. In addition to staples and fresh produce, participants receive a friendly hug, important referrals, and are even treated to an occasional spa day!

Three times each week, seniors gather at the Margaret Todd Café to enjoy lunch and comradery. "Thanks to our partnership with Good Earth Natural Foods and the County of Marin we were able to serve over 5,600 meals this last year!" says Marin Senior Resource Director Carol Ann Moore.

## Well Connected *formerly Senior Center Without Walls*

*Well Connected offers over 70 activities each week that connects seniors with each other through group activities on the phone or computer. Programming ranges from museum tours to brain health classes, book discussions and armchair travel to grief support — and it is all made possible through volunteers and partnerships with organizations such as the Art Institute of Chicago and the University of California, San Francisco.*



Well Connected  
engages over  
1,100 people  
in 34 states, every  
day of the week!

Dial in or log on:  
(877) 797-7299 or  
[covia.org/services/  
well-connected](https://covia.org/services/well-connected)

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*“Through Well Connected, we can be in touch with the world again, participating in life.”*

— GLORIA KASDAN, WELL CONNECTED PARTICIPANT AND VOLUNTEER

# Social Call *formerly ElderWISE*

*Trained, compassionate volunteers are matched with seniors for regular, one-on-one social companionship in San Francisco, Alameda, Marin, Sonoma, and Los Angeles counties.*

Social Call serves clients in eight languages: English, Spanish, Armenian, Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean, French, and American Sign Language!



Social Call volunteer Sandy visits Ilma and Russell. Not only do the three of them enjoy each other's company, Sandy helps by accompanying Ilma to the pharmacy, and getting books from the library for Russell.



“*You know what makes Social Call? The program is great, but the volunteers make it special.*”

—CELIA, SOCIAL CALL PARTICIPANT

During weekly visits, Social Call participants spend time sharing stories, looking at family albums or movies, working on art projects, reading together, chatting about current events, and ultimately building strong connections and relationships.

# Telephone Reassurance

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*In Marin, Sonoma, Contra Costa, and Santa Clara counties, friendly volunteers placed 6,500 calls this year, calling seniors three times each week for a neighborly check-in.*



Through the Forget Me Not friendly phone call program, high school volunteers enjoy meaningful conversations with seniors in San Jose.

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*“It warms my heart to be a part of a program that helps ensure that every member of our society, regardless of age, has the opportunity to live with independence and dignity, and can stay integrated within our community.”*

— SHIVA, TELEPHONE REASSURANCE VOLUNTEER

# Home Match

*Sharing a home provides companionship, decreases isolation, and reduces the cost of housing. In three Bay Area counties, Covia successfully matches homeowners with home seekers in exchange for reduced rent or an exchange of services.*

Home Match San Francisco is offered in partnership with Northern California Presbyterian Homes and Services and the Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development.

Through Home Match San Francisco, a woman in her 70s found a new home with a loving family. The San Francisco homeowner says, "Carolyn pays reduced rent in exchange for lending a helping hand when needed."



Home Match Contra Costa County launched in June 2017, and partners with the City of Concord and the Family Justice Center.

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*“Thank you for connecting us. The arrangement is working out really well and Claire has gone out of her way to make me feel at home.”*

— MARIN HOME MATCH CLIENT

# Rotary Home Team

*Covia partners with 17 Rotary Clubs in Santa Clara, Alameda, Contra Costa, and Marin counties to perform simple chores and provide home maintenance at no charge for seniors, helping them remain safe and independent at home.*



SNAPSHOT OF  
SERVICE IN CONTRA  
COSTA COUNTY:

Oldest Client: 102

Youngest Client: 59

84% Women

90% Live Alone

44% have Incomes  
below \$16,500

Served 352  
Individuals

1,062 Hours of  
Volunteer Service

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*“My husband tried to change the garage light bulb, but he fell from the step stool and had to go to the hospital. It is very helpful to have the Rotary Home Team for home chores like this!”*

— ROTARY HOME TEAM CLIENT

# Covia's Charitable Commitment

*Social Accountability is a deeply held value at Covia. In fiscal year 2017, the organization committed a total of \$4.5 million to provide life changing support for seniors across the state of California. Of that amount, Covia spent close to \$2.3 million, including raised dollars, to support programs in the community, helping seniors live well and age well wherever they call home.*

Employees share Covia's commitment to service: serving holiday meals at our Affordable Communities, hosting classes with Well Connected, helping open new Market Day locations, and volunteering at National Night Out celebrations.



Covia would like to thank all of the individuals, nonprofit partners, and vendors who so generously supported our fundraising efforts. In addition, we would like to thank the following funders:

- ◆ County of Marin
- ◆ City of Novato
- ◆ County of Marin, Aging and Adult Services
- ◆ Community Development Block Grant Program, Marin
- ◆ Community Foundation for Monterey County
- ◆ Community Foundation Sonoma County
- ◆ Daylight Foods
- ◆ Marin Community Foundation
- ◆ Mayor's Office of Housing and Development, San Francisco
- ◆ Metta Fund
- ◆ Rotary Club of Palo Alto
- ◆ SCAN Health Plan
- ◆ Share the Spirit East Bay
- ◆ Sonoma Wine Country Weekend

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*“I love working at Covia. I expect to make a difference at work.”*

— NEILA, HUMAN RESOURCES REPRESENTATIVE



covia  
foundation



Throughout a history of more than 50 years, Covia has provided a promise of care. The *Circle of Friends* Fund provides vital support for Covia Life Plan contract residents who outlive their resources. The majority of those receiving help from the fund are single women in their 90s who have lived in Covia communities an average of 16 years.

Each year, the Covia Foundation presents “A Tasteful Affair,” a gala event for residents to raise awareness for and to support the *Circle of Friends*. Gifts to the *Circle of Friends* show the true spirit of community in helping to provide for residents in need.

In keeping with its mission and promise to residents, in fiscal year 2017, Covia provided just over \$2.2 million towards residents’ assistance. This commitment continues to give residents the security they need to thrive and live full lives.

“The *Circle of Friends* represents the true spirit of Covia communities. We are neighbors helping neighbors,” said Margaret Handelman, resident of San Francisco Towers, a member of the “A Tasteful Affair” Planning Committee, and a member of the Board of Directors of the Covia Foundation.

# Wellness

*Wellness is integral to Covia's mission: we promote positive aging by providing services that support intellectual, physical, emotional, spiritual, and social well-being.*

Spring Lake Village's Wellness program focuses on good physical health, exercising regularly, and eating right. Residents can choose from over 45 exercise classes a week, from chair fitness classes to line dancing, from Pilates to indoor walking. In addition to physical health, SLV provides opportunities to engage in all eight dimensions of wellness. "True wellness is determined by the decisions one makes about how to live life with vitality and meaning."  
— Diane Waltz, SLV's Director of Wellness



Marin Senior Resource Director Carol Ann Moore created a four-part "Make a Plan to Age Healthy" seminar to help seniors address critical decisions. Over 200 attendees heard community experts address subjects such as healthcare directives, hospice, financial planning, and nutrition; the Annual Health Services Day provided hearing screenings, stroke and dental exams, blood pressure checks, glucose and cholesterol tests, memory screenings, and acupuncture.



Since 2005, Covia's San Francisco Senior Resources has partnered with 30th Street Senior Center to provide twice-weekly exercise classes, helping seniors to stay strong, prevent falls by maintaining balance, and link to other resources to maintain health and proper nutrition.

Well Connected offers weekly telephone events that address myriad health and wellness concerns, including: Oral Health and Aging, Maximize Your Memory, Opioid Use, and Nutrition and Brain Health.

# Darby Betts

*Honoring the work and legacy of Covia founder Father Darby Betts, a fund was established in his name in 2005 to support nonprofit organizations with a leadership commitment and focus on quality services to seniors, a connection to the Episcopal Church, and a plan for measurable and attainable program goals.*



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*“We are truly grateful for the Darby Betts Fund support to help poverty-impacted families and seniors rebuild their lives.”*

— DEANNE PEARN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
CONTRA COSTA INTERFAITH HOUSING

Since 2005, the Darby Betts Fund has distributed over \$700,000 to support programs that make a difference in the lives of seniors. In 2017, the Darby Betts Fund awarded over \$60,000 to eleven Bay Area organizations that provide crucial services, such as a safe place to sleep, nutrition, and chaplaincy in correctional institutions. Covia celebrates this year’s recipients:

- ◆ Church of the Epiphany, Vacaville
- ◆ Contra Costa Interfaith Housing, Pleasant Hill
- ◆ Correctional Institutions Chaplaincy, Milpitas
- ◆ Epiphany Lutheran & Episcopal Church, Marina
- ◆ Episcopal Community Services, San Francisco
- ◆ Holy Child and St. Martin Episcopal Church, Daly City
- ◆ Redwood Empire Food Bank, Santa Rosa
- ◆ River City Food Bank, Sacramento
- ◆ The Grubbio Project, San Francisco
- ◆ The Living Room Center, Inc., Santa Rosa
- ◆ Trinity Center, Walnut Creek

# Covia Affordable Communities



Oak Center Towers

Covia Resident Services Coordinator Margarita Molina-Hinckley receives African dance lessons from two residents. Every month, the Eritrean residents hold a gathering to enjoy socializing, dancing, laughter, and lots of food. Eritrean is one of the many cultures celebrated at Oak Center Towers.



Lytton Gardens

Lytton Gardens chose Veteran's Day to celebrate and honor its many war veterans. The festive program included a certificate presented to each resident, thanking them for the sacrifices they made while keeping Americans safe.



Presidio Gate Apartments

In September, Presidio Gate Apartments hosted six medical students as part of the UCSF School of Medicine Geriatric Models of Care program. "I thought the geriatrics week was fantastic," enthused one medical student. "It was an incredibly valuable learning experience, and hopefully we were able to enhance their resident programs and services."

**Covia is pleased to announce two new affiliations with Affordable Communities: Shires Memorial Center in San Jose and Bethany Senior Housing in San Francisco.**



### Jennings Court

Congratulations to the Jennings Court residents who participated in the Diabetes Empowerment Education Program presented by the Resident Services Coordinators. To celebrate, Jennings Court served a healthy lunch and each resident received a certificate of participation. "I received more information from this presentation than from my doctor," said one happy resident.



### Resident Services Coordinators

Resident Services Coordinators (RSCs) play a vital role at Covia's six Affordable Communities, as well as in the 18 other communities where Covia offers these important services. RSCs provide referrals to essential services, health tips and educational sessions on topics such as kidney disease and how to reduce the risk of falls. They also participate in events such as Senior Advocacy Day in Sacramento, local Alzheimer's Walks, and National Night Out in their own community. This last year, Covia RSCs presented the Diabetes Education and Empowerment Program at the 2017 National Service Coordinator Conference.

# Covia Life Plan Communities



**Canterbury Woods**

Every day is Earth Day at Canterbury Woods, as this year the entire community learned how to reuse, reduce, and recycle. Residents participated in a three-day event, where the community learned to make efforts such as going paperless where possible. Dining Services plays an important role in the community's environmental commitment as well, by buying local produce and purchasing from sustainable Monterey Bay Fisheries to support healthy oceans.



**St. Paul's Towers**

To ensure an inclusive environment, St. Paul's Towers hosted Ephi Stempler, a trainer from Life Eldercare and associated with Lavender Seniors of Oakland, to provide staff with tools on how to market sensitively to LGBTQ seniors, and more importantly, how to meet their needs once they are part of the community. "Many of our LGBTQ seniors were closeted most of their lives and only recently came out; we want to make sure they feel welcome and integral to the community," said Executive Director Mary Linde.



**Los Gatos Meadows**

Volunteering is part of the fabric of Los Gatos Meadows. Established in 2005, the Lila Lea Atkin Volunteer Service Award was awarded this year to 96-year-old Genie Stanton, who was honored for her dedication to brightening the days of staff and residents. Though the award recognized only one person, the entire community's commitment to volunteering is evidenced by such gestures as the residents' delivery of homemade cookies to the Los Gatos Fire Department!



### Spring Lake Village

Spring Lake Village residents, along with more than 1,000 California volunteers, have gathered acorns to grow oak trees for fire-damaged areas in Napa and Sonoma. Members of the Dell Garden Committee answered the call of the California Native Plant Society, "Help us gather acorns!" Once collected, the acorns were boxed and shipped to Sacramento, where experts sort and plant them. The 35 pounds of acorns shipped from Spring Lake Village represent approximately 5,250 potential trees.



### San Francisco Towers

In addition to his full-time role as Environmental Services Manager, Norman Ruiz sets aside time to give back to the community. Each Tuesday afternoon, Norman leads a group of seniors who call in to share things in their lives for which they are grateful. In addition to providing a social connection for isolated native Spanish speakers, the group offers an opportunity for Spanish language learners as well. San Francisco Towers is proud to make it possible for its employees to contribute and help seniors who live beyond its walls.



### Webster House

In September, 60 residents, staff, and volunteers joined together for an Alzheimer's Awareness Walk around Webster House. Along with the Webster House Health Center staff and residents, Palo Alto City Council Member Lydia Kou, as well as volunteers from Google, Wells Fargo, and Santa Clara University joined this inspiring event. Webster House Health Center is proud to offer an active Memory Care program that includes Healthy Connections, a volunteer program run with pre-med students, and the popular Share-A-Pet therapy program.



Live well and age well — anywhere you call home.

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