



Empowering Families at St. Joseph Center

St. Joseph Center's Food Pantry Offers Food and Access to Life-Changing Programs

September 2014: Venice, CA—St. Joseph Center is pleased to announce that it is the recipient of a \$25,000 renewal grant from the Santa Monica-based William H. Hannon Foundation. This grant will help the Center's Food Pantry cope with demand that skyrocketed in the aftermath of the economic crisis in 2008 and has continued at record levels ever since.

“The Pantry is St. Joseph Center's primary gateway program for housed families,” says Dr. Va Lecia Adams Kellum, Executive Director of St. Joseph Center. “The William H. Hannon Foundation's support has been key to the Pantry's success at helping vulnerable families regain stability and begin to make progress toward self-sufficiency.” On average, more than 400 households access the Pantry each week. Continued support from the William H. Hannon Foundation will help the Center link families who access the Pantry with additional agency programs such as case management, mental health services, and life-skills workshops. “Families come initially because they are hungry,” Adams Kellum observes, “Once they're here, we can connect them to a range of other services that can help them get back on their feet. The overall impact is powerful and long-lasting.”

St. Joseph Center's goal is to empower families and individuals in need to achieve self-sufficiency. One way this plays out in the Food Pantry is the recently implemented Choice Model, which allows clients to select individual food items from Pantry shelves rather than receive a pre-packed bag. “With help from the William H. Hannon Foundation and other partners, we created an environment where people get to choose what they take home to their families,” Adams Kellum states, “This helps them start to feel a measure of control over their lives, which is key to building self-reliance.”

“My late uncle, our foundation's founder, was a longtime supporter of St. Joseph Center. Today, given the continued difficult economic climate, our support is even more critical,” said Kathleen Hannon Aikenhead, President of the William H. Hannon Foundation.