



## FAMILY SERVICES

SUPPORTING TULARE COUNTY

### Contact

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### **Family Services of Tulare County Receives \$2.5 Million Bezos Day 1 Families Fund Grant to Help End Homelessness for Families in Tulare County** *Fund grants \$123.45 million to 40 nonprofits across the U.S. to move the needle on re-housing and supporting families experiencing homelessness*

**VISALIA, Calif. – (November 22, 2022):** Family Services of Tulare County (FSTC), a nonprofit that works to build safety and healing in homes, relationships, and families, today announced that it has received a \$2.5 million grant from the Bezos Day 1 Families Fund—the largest private gift in the organization’s history. Launched in 2018 by Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, the Day 1 Families Fund issues annual leadership awards to leading organizations on the frontlines that are employing compassionate, needle-moving work to help families move from unsheltered homelessness and shelters to permanent housing with the services they require to achieve stability.

“This funding will help us connect the missing pieces of the housing cycle for families in need in our community,” said Stephanie Burrage, interim chief executive officer of FSTC. “Tulare County has the highest unhoused per capita in California, which has increased since the pandemic. Many families we work with face new challenges due to layoffs, reductions in work hours and loss of housing or childcare. For some, this is the first time they are experiencing basic needs insecurity.”

With the economic shifts from COVID-19, housing barriers in rural Tulare County have become extremely hard to overcome. FSTC plans to use the grant funds to build upon a trauma-informed Housing First model, which prioritizes providing permanent housing to those in need. This grant will help provide sustainable housing coupled with comprehensive case management and connection to educational opportunities, job training, physical and mental healthcare and other critical services. FSTC will also increase its capacity to house and serve victims of domestic violence and their children through its emergency shelter.

FSTC was selected as a Day 1 Families Fund grant recipient by a group of national advisors who are leading advocates and experts on homelessness and service provision. National advisors brought expertise on housing justice, advancing racial equity and helping programs employ resources effectively to assist families out of homelessness.

Over the past five years, the Day 1 Families Fund has provided 170 grants totaling more than \$520 million to organizations around the country working to combat homelessness and help families gain housing support and stability. This year, the Fund issued a total of \$123.45 million in grants to the following organizations: Carpenter’s Shelter; CATCH, Inc.; Catholic Community Services of Southern Arizona; The Center for Women and Families; Changing Homelessness; Chapman Partnership; Coalition for the Homeless of Houston/Harris County; Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo County,

Inc.; Community Services & Employment Training (CSET); Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO); Family Promise of Hawai'i; Family Promise of Northern New Castle County; Family Services of Tulare County; Flagstaff Shelter Services; Gateway180; Heartland Alliance; H.O.M.E. Inc.; Homeless Alliance; Hope House of Milwaukee; Housing First, Inc.; Housing Forward; HRDC; Ka Hale A Ke Ola Homeless Resource Centers, Inc.; LA Family Housing; Mother Nation; Nashua Soup Kitchen & Shelter, Inc.; New Reach; Oglala Sioux Tribe; Partners for HOME; PATH; The Salvation Army, Denver Metro Area; Samish Indian Nation; San Diego Regional Task Force on Homelessness; Sojourner Truth House; Solo Por Hoy, Inc.; Start Corporation; Strategies to End Homelessness; The Wellspring; YWCA Cass Clay; and YWCA Missoula's Housing Programs.

FSTC Service Navigator Karen Cosio spoke to her experience of working with families experiencing homelessness: "Each person is valuable and has gold inside them if the time is taken to 'dig deep' and be there for them. It does not matter what they look like on the outside. Homeless individuals are just like you and me with a different set of life circumstances."

The Bezos Day One Fund made a \$2 billion commitment to focus on making meaningful and lasting impacts in two areas: funding existing nonprofits that help families experiencing homelessness, and creating a network of new, nonprofit tier-one preschools in low-income communities. The Day 1 Families Fund issues annual leadership awards to organizations and civic groups doing compassionate, needle-moving work to provide shelter and hunger support to address the immediate needs of young families. The vision statement comes from the inspiring Mary's Place in Seattle: no child sleeps outside. For more information, visit [www.BezosDayOneFund.org/Day1FamiliesFund](http://www.BezosDayOneFund.org/Day1FamiliesFund).

#### **About Family Services of Tulare County**

Family Services is a dedicated community-based provider of services for families in Tulare County. They help children, adults, and families heal from violence and thrive in healthy relationships through informed and compassionate care. Learn more at <https://www.fstc.net>.

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