



Address Panel  
PO Box 3517  
San Rafael, CA 94912

## Back-to-School Backpack Program




**THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR is upon us**, yet many low-income families simply do not have the means to purchase backpacks and school supplies for their children. Crippling inflation and record-breaking prices are having a devastating effect on households, hitting low-income families especially hard.

For these families, school supplies are a luxury when they're truly a necessity. Education is a way to break the cycle of multi-generational poverty, but having inadequate supplies or clothing sets kids up to fail in school; it can cause anxiety about not being prepared and damage their self-confidence among their peers, inhibiting their enthusiasm for education.

**Support our Back-to-School Backpack program!** Help us raise \$25,000 and give 170 kids in Marin the essential back-to-school supplies they need to learn and succeed in school. Kids need pencils, pens, notebooks, binders, calculators, clothing, water bottles, and backpacks to carry to school.

- \$50 buys great school supplies**
- \$100 buys a quality backpack + supplies**
- \$150 buys a backpack + supplies + clothing gift card!**
- \$1,500 buys a backpack + supplies + clothing gift card for 10 kids!**

Donating is quick and easy!  
Donate online at [RitterCenter.org/donate](https://RitterCenter.org/donate) or mail your donation to Ritter Center:

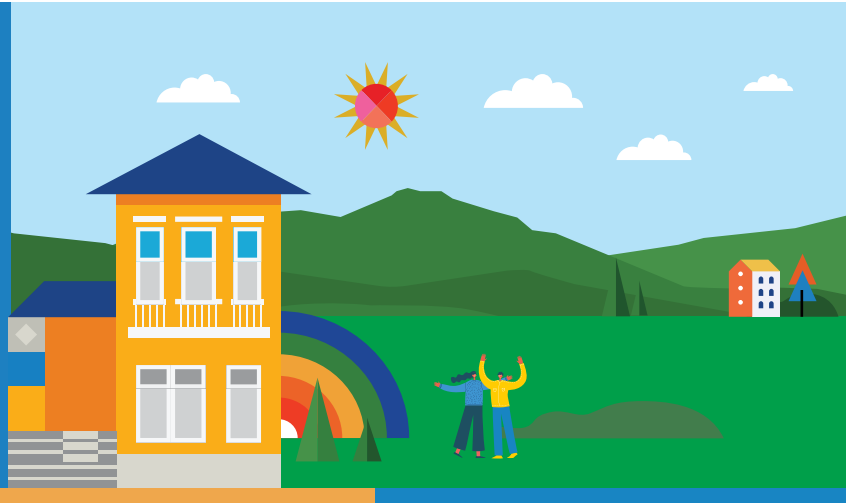
 **Ritter Center**  
PO Box 3517, San Rafael, CA 94912



ritter center  
home, health & community

# RESOLVE

Real People. Real Impact.



**RECENTLY, SOMEONE asked me how I hold hope for people who are experiencing homelessness when their lives seem so hopeless.** My response reflected on the value of life: wouldn't it be terrible for your life's potential to be judged when you are seen at your worst moment?

Many times when I talk to people, they refer to "the homeless"—it's almost as though our fellow human beings are viewed as a different species. The inference one might draw is that we need to study who they are in order to understand how to help them.

Truthfully, we know exactly who "these people" are; people who experience homelessness are just like you and me. The difference is they didn't have a safety net to help them through immense challenges and they couldn't stay housed. Ashley Hart McIntyre, Marin County's Homelessness Policy Analyst, puts it this way: "People don't become homeless when they run out of money. They become homeless when they run out of relationships."

**It's our responsibility to make sure people in our community do not run out of relationships.**

In partnership with other organizations and the county, we maintained our pace of housing individuals and families experiencing homelessness at six per month and increased it to 10 per month.

In addition, Ritter Center prevented homelessness as one of six agencies in Marin that distributed millions of dollars in short-term rental assistance to individuals and families impacted by the COVID-19 economic crisis. Thousands maintained their housing, avoiding serious problems and the traumatic outcomes that come with the experience of homelessness.

We still have work to do to ensure every Marin County resident has a safe and stable place to call home, and a multitude of relationships with people who care about them.

Thank you for your kindness and helping us to prevent and resolve chronic homelessness.

In unity,

Mark Shotwell  
Executive Director



## Meet New Board Member Toni Doyle



**RITTER CENTER IS THRILLED to announce our newest board member Toni Doyle.**

While discussing her career path, Toni recently reflected on her time working in the Tenderloin.

“What struck me as I parked on Jones and Golden Gate was how overwhelming a moment in my life it was to see up close and personal what it was like for people living on the streets,” Toni said. “I had never been confronted with the horrors of people no longer having the capability of living in a room. I started to see issues around drug abuse, alcohol, mental illness, physical ailments and disability start to chip away at people’s ability to stay housed. COVID made those cracks even wider.”

She further spoke on a big myth about living in Marin County. “In Marin, people live here under the delusion that only wealthy people live here. But it simply isn’t true,” Toni said.

*“Ritter Center should be the biggest wake up call for those who call Marin home. COVID has underscored time and again that we are all interconnected. Whether it is COVID, the labor shortage, the cost of housing, rising gas prices, or the systemic supply chain issues and shortages, the simple truth is here: we need each other in the most mundane ways and also in the most profound ways.”*

—Toni Doyle, Board Member

For her perspective and more, Ritter Center enthusiastically welcomes Toni to the board!

## Volunteer Spotlight: June Michaels




*“It feeds my soul to help them feed their souls literally and figuratively.”*

– June Michaels, Food Pantry Volunteer

**RITTER CENTER VOLUNTEER June Michaels is an Italian mother and she brings that fierce love to our food pantry.**

“I try to put a little bit of everything into each bag. I feel like I am a part of their family at that moment. You see, when you grow up being Italian, everything is around food. Food, love, and caring are all in that one package that we hand out. For those experiencing homelessness, I have to be sure they receive things you can eat right away that are full of good nutrition. If they aren’t able to cook anything, then I can give them fresh fruit, or really just anything that is easy and healthy to eat. In walking up to someone, that is where you create a space for both love and friendship. That interaction can change everything. It is important for the soul and the spirit. We are all the same inside. We are all humans. It feeds my soul to help them feed their souls literally and figuratively.”



 Read all of our stories in full at [RitterCenter.org/blog](https://RitterCenter.org/blog)

# Ritter Center Welcomes New FNP

**MEET RITTER CENTER'S new Family Nurse Practitioner Alec Bradbury.** It was in middle school when a close friend was diagnosed with pediatric cancer of the bone in his right leg that Ritter Center's Alec Bradbury, Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) first became interested in medicine and health care.

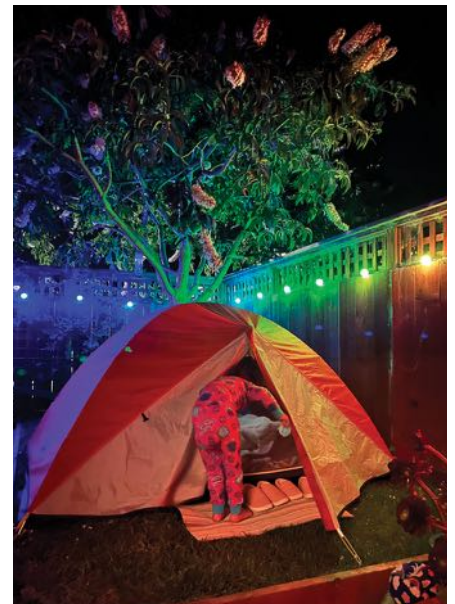


"I particularly like this idea of caring for the individual's full span of health needs: mental, sexual, spiritual and physical," said Alec. "Working with people experiencing homelessness and individuals challenged by mental illness at Ritter Center has been significantly rewarding. Supporting them on this journey extends beyond treating the symptoms. I can truly be an advocate."

**Welcome, Alec. Thank you for bringing your passion and experience to Ritter Center.**

## Under the Stars Sleepout a Big Success

**ON SATURDAY, MAY 21, families and individuals across the Bay Area took part in Ritter Center's Second Annual Under the Stars: A Sleepout to End Homelessness in Marin, leaving the comforts of their warm beds to sleep in their yards, cars, and gardens.** This year's Sleepout raised awareness about the complex issues surrounding homelessness, built advocacy and understanding about solutions like Housing First, and raised essential funds to help us end homelessness. With your support, we raised over \$142,600!



### Congratulations to our fundraising award winners!

- McCaskill Family – Team Award
- Clinic Team – Staff Team Award
- David Guggenhime – Individual Award
- Kim Baenisch – Individual Staff Award
- Ultragenyx – Corporate Award
- Two Pots & a Pan – Best Team Name Award

Our live streamed event featured the heartbreaking yet hopeful story of Sandi, a Ritter Center client for 17 years, and conversations with guest speakers Dr. Sam Tsemberis, Founder of Pathways to Housing; Damon Connolly, Housing First pioneer and County of Marin District 1 Supervisor; Summer Cassel, District Rep for Senator Mike McGuire; Eli Hill, City of San Rafael Councilmember; Kate Colin, City of San Rafael Mayor; and Benita McLarin, Director of Marin County Health and Human Services.

Our audience played interactive text trivia, heard an amazing bedtime story about a family living in two shelters read by Rashida Skaar, Children's Librarian of Marin County Free Library, and capped the night off with a meditative sound bath with Metta Yoga.

We thank our amazing participants, donors, silent auction bidders, and sponsors.

**In particular our major sponsors made our event possible:**



# Plan Your Impact with Planned Giving

**IF YOU'VE NAMED RITTER CENTER in your estate plans, or are interested in learning how to do so, get in touch with Jessica Hansen.** She'll share a variety of ways you can support the cause you care most about... and some of them are as easy as naming Ritter Center as a beneficiary on a life insurance policy or in your will!

Starting in 2023, we'll host an annual gathering for Casa Azul, the planned giving society of those who committed a deferred gift to Ritter Center, and begin sharing special communications with this special group of friends.

Tell us about your planned gift!

**Jessica Hansen, Director of Development**  
(415) 457-8182 ext. 129, [jhansen@rittercenter.org](mailto:jhansen@rittercenter.org)



## In Memory of Greg Baker

PJ O'Connell and Marin Homeless Aid presented \$10,000 to Executive Director Mark Shotwell, in memory of PJ's nephew, Greg Baker, who passed away earlier this year. Greg was a young man in his twenties who volunteered at two UK organizations, The Exaireo Trust and The Passage, which provide housing to the unsheltered and work to end homelessness. Greg's legacy is one of kindness and generosity, and he has left an indelible mark on those he helped.



## Greek Orthodox Church Gives to Ritter

Ritter Center feels incredibly blessed to have been the 2020 beneficiary of Nativity of Christ Greek Orthodox Church's Greek Festival. With the festival canceled in 2020 due to COVID, Father John and the Church made the gift to Ritter Center at this year's festival. Pictured from left to right: Board Members Carol Angel, Toni Doyle, and Bettye Kray accept the donation from Father Kocolas. Thank you so much—this contribution will go a long way in helping others!



# Calling All Compassionate, Caring Case Managers



**WE ARE GROWING to meet the needs of our community and are hiring multiple case managers for our Housing First, Whole Person Care and General Case Management programs.**

In this critical role, you'll help homeless and at-risk individuals who are experiencing a variety of complex needs, access healthcare, social services, and housing so they can regain stability and improve their lives.

The right person for this role is a natural collaborator, has three years of Case Management experience, trained in motivational interviewing techniques, and understands Marin County's community resources.

### Opportunity Highlights:

- From \$27 per hour + robust benefits incl: 100% employer paid health, dental and vision
- 24 days of vacation and sick time accrued in first year
- Free lunches every other Friday
- Commuter & EAP programs

**All Case Management roles are FULL-TIME, NON-EXEMPT and based at our offices located in SAN RAFAEL, MARIN COUNTY, NORTHERN CA.**

**Read more and apply on our [indeed.com](https://www.indeed.com) page.**





# Client Appreciation Day



**RITTER CENTER recently hosted our annual Client Appreciation Day!** Every year, it's an opportunity for Ritter Center to show our clients how much we appreciate their willingness to trust and work with us. In years past, registered clients, staff, board members, and volunteers would gather at our downtown campus to hang out and enjoy great weather, food, music and more. Covid-19 restrictions limited the event the last two years, but as our campus fully reopened this summer, we were excited to safely host the event in full. Thank you to Double Rainbow Café for donating delicious ice cream and sorbet, to our donors and to everyone who helped make this wonderful event possible!

## Become a Monthly Donor



Your recurring online donation is a simple way to provide ongoing, increased support for our clients and patients throughout the year.

Learn more and become a monthly donor:  
[RitterCenter.org/ways-to-give](https://RitterCenter.org/ways-to-give)

## We Need Volunteers!



As a Food Pantry volunteer you'll help people in need access everyday essentials. Call Jorge Garcia, our Client Services Manager at (415) 457-8182 ext. 109, or complete our contact form and a team member will reach out to you.

[RitterCenter.org/contact-us](https://RitterCenter.org/contact-us)