

VOL. 3 ISSUE 1 · JULY 2023

EL PUENTE

San Jose Bridge Communities



BE WITH

BY ANDY SINGLETERRY

I've been re-reading Robert Putnam's *Bowling Alone*, one of the foundational texts for San Jose Bridge Communities -- "bridge community" is basically a re-phrase of "bridging social capital," the resource Putnam describes. I first read the book twenty years ago while working at a non-profit service agency. That experience inspired me to build opportunities for cross-class friendships in mutual service, not just resource transfers from rich to poor. Two decades later, SJBC is the fruit.

Bowling Alone traces the recent history of social capital, i.e. community connections, in America. Coming out of the shared struggles of the Great Depression and World War II, America experienced years of deepening commitments to each other. More people participated in volunteer organizations, went to church, and hosted dinner parties. Then, about 1970, something changed. Americans

began to turn to themselves and let connections go. Just as social capital steadily rose from 1945 to 1970, it steadily fell from 1970 to 2000.

Putnam calls it "social capital" to name connections as a real resource. In losing community, we don't just have less fun. He marshals convincing evidence that we lose health, safety, prosperity, and democracy.

Bowling Alone came out in 2000, before 9/11, social media, or smart phones. The new edition includes new sections examining the twenty years since, finding that, sadly, the trends of 1970 to 2000 have mostly continued. What would it take to turn back these forces? We don't know -- we certainly wouldn't wish for depression and war to band us together. But, for our participants, we hope San Jose Bridge Communities is building their bridging social capital.



NEW CHANGES

TRANSITIONS FOR DIANA

For the past year, San Jose Bridge Communities was blessed to see one of our participants grow in leaps and bounds! Diana went from being a program participant, to a volunteer, to our Office Manager! We are extremely grateful for the many ways that she blessed our community and organization. As the Office Manager, Diana coordinated the facilities, food distribution, led the faith support group and supported our computer class and program director. She became an essential part of the work we do at San Jose Bridge Communities! We are sad that we will not see her around as much, but excited for the new opportunities she is stepping into. Diana will continue to volunteer in the computer class and will be a part of our Parenting Classes Team. Don't forget to say "Hello" to her when you run into her!

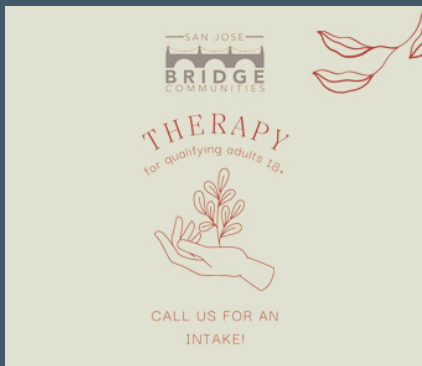


Meet our new Food Distribution Coordinator

JOEL GONZALEZ



It has been a rarity to have men leading our programs. We are excited to have Joel Gonzalez volunteer to be our Food Distribution Coordinator! Joel is a long-time resident of East San Jose and knows the community well. For the past couple of years, Joel has supported SJBC by volunteering in the Food Distribution when we first started the program, and last year he supported our Summer programs. He brings leadership skills as he manages a painting company, Guacamaya Painting. Joel is looking for volunteers to help with unloading the food for the distribution and packaging of food. Join me in welcoming Joel to the team!



TAKE A CLOSER LOOK!

SHORT-TERM THERAPY

Through the generous support of Silicon Valley Community Foundation, we were able to hire a part-time Therapist. This program will provide individual therapy to Spanish language immigrant adults ages 18+ who do not have medical insurance. For a free consultation, please contact our office at 650-391-6323.



LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

This year we are excited to offer an exciting opportunity for our community leaders and community residents who are interested in developing their leadership skills. Our Leadership Development Program will be led by Doctor of Leadership Candidate, Andres Quintero. Mr. Quintero was born and raised in East San Jose and has served our community all of his career bringing positive changes to our school systems and educating many of our students at Evergreen Valley College. Starting February 23, 2023 through July 2023, our program participants will learn essential skills and engage with professionals who have risen above all odds to successfully lead in different ways. Our goal is to inspire, encourage and invest in people who are taking steps to make their dreams come true. For more information, please contact our office at 408-640-2122.



CALPULLI SUPPORT GROUPS

We are expanding! Last year we started a partnership with Calpulli Support Group starting our weekly Faith Support Group. This year, we have adopted the program, making it our own and staying true to the meaning of the word calpulli [clan, community in Nahuatl]. We have one Calpulli Support Group running in East Palo Alto, our Faith Support Group running at our location on Tuesday morning 9am, and a new Calpulli Women's Support Group at our location every Friday morning at 9am. We are preparing new facilitators to start their own Spanish Language groups in more San Jose locations, Sunnyvale, and Mt. View. If you are interested in hosting one of our groups, please reach out to us at 650-391-6323 and ask to speak with Carlos Jalpa.

PRAYERS

ANSWERED PRAYERS

- We were seeking to have a robust leadership program and we were blessed to have a qualified instructor commit to make this happen!
- We were looking to have community leaders step into spaces Diana was leaving and we received several people excited to step in to help!
- We were in need of funds to train our leaders and we got a generous grant from SVCF!

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- For Florinda, Filadelfa, Reynalda and Jesus. They were very active participants and are struggling with their health.
- For several of the children who were participating in our toddler class. They have been struggling with their health.
- For many of our program participants who have seen a decline in income and are struggling financially due to the increase in living costs.
- For food supply. There has been an increase in people signing up for our food distribution, but our food supply is not increasing fast enough.
- Four grants we are waiting to hear from. We pray that we receive them as they would help us create systems, cover program costs and hire staff to help us scale our organization.



JOIN US!

Do you have time available? Would you like to meet more people? We invite you to join us as a volunteer. We have opportunities for unloading food, preparing food boxes, delivering food boxes, and participating in our programs. Location: First Apostolic Church
480 McCreery Ave
San Jose, CA 95116
For more information:
Annabel Leyva 408-991-4003.

GET INVOLVED!

