



Silicon Valley Open Arms Key Messages

In these tough economic times, we have to come together as a community and open our arms to those in need.

An increasing number of our neighbors are seeking food, shelter and other basic services just to get by.

There is the “new face” of people accessing the safety net due to:

- Foreclosure/credit crisis
- More loss of jobs due to business slow down
- Loss of retirement income
- Increased cost of transportation and food
- Government cuts at all levels now and in the future

While the need for services is dramatically rising, funding from individual and corporate donations, foundations, government grants, and investments is shrinking.

Anyone and everyone can potentially be hurt by this economic crisis, including people who already needed assistance.

No one should ever go hungry or spend the night huddled in a doorway.

The numbers show an alarming increase in need:

From July 1 to September 30, 2008, calls to United Way’s 2-1-1 Santa Clara County information and referral service seeking food increased by 55 percent over the same period last year. Requests for housing jumped 20 percent.

Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County has seen a 37 percent increase in clients over the last year and a 41 percent rise in the number of seniors participating in its senior nutrition program.

Second Harvest Food Bank reports that from July to September 2008, the amount of food distributed increased 22 percent over the same period last year. The number of people served rose 17 percent while requests for food assistance jumped 55 percent.

Nonprofits are stepping up for the community, opening their arms to new clients, and meeting the greater demand for services, but they need your help.

Your support is critical. That’s why United Way Silicon Valley brought together a group of concerned funders and community-based organizations to form the Silicon Valley Open Arms Coalition.

Please open your arms:

- Rethink your gift – consider increasing your giving
- No gift is too small
- Share your time and volunteer
- Take part in civic activities

Anyone who needs help or wants to support the cause can get connected to services or areas of need by calling 2-1-1.

2-1-1 is a free, confidential phone service and website (www.211scc.org) that connects users to hundreds of community services, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, in more than 140 languages.

To learn more about the Silicon Valley Open Arms campaign, go to www.211scc.org.