



Volunteer Center
OF SONOMA COUNTY

September 30, 2010

Dear Robert:

Kathy didn't know where to turn. A single mom with three children under 12 years old, she had been laid off from her job when her long-time employer, a local title company, downsized. She knew that her savings wouldn't last more than three months, and she barely slept at night, worrying about losing her home.

Harold had recently been widowed after 63 happy years of marriage. Disabled and previously dependent on his wife to drive him to medical appointments, he was terrified of the future and emotionally devastated by his loss.

Jenny is a first grade teacher in a local elementary school. Seventy-nine percent of her students are English learners and from economically disadvantaged homes. Some did not have the benefit of preschool or kindergarten and now are way behind. Helping her students become readers by the end of first grade seems like an overwhelming challenge.

Although each one faced difficult situations, Kathy, Harold and Jenny are lucky to live in Sonoma County because of the help and caring they found here. Despite these unsettling economic times, painful life transitions, and social/educational needs, there is hope. Each one was helped by the Volunteer Center, by our programs and our partners. Once again, we have found solutions, answers and options for thousands like them – our neighbors who are struggling to meet basic needs that many of us take for granted.

For 39 years, the Volunteer Center has been the heart of Sonoma County. This past year, we connected over 3,000 volunteers to hundreds of organizations that save lives, heal hearts and inspire hope.

We are doing more than ever because the community needs are greater than ever.

Let me explain. Did you know that Santa Rosa was ranked first statewide in volunteerism, according to a report just released by the Corporation for National and Community Service? Each year since 2005, 146,300 volunteers, or 38.7% of Sonoma County residents, contributed an estimated value of \$414.8 million in services to our community. *We* are the organization that made it happen! (The national average is 26.5% of residents volunteering!) Because promoting volunteerism and strengthening community service in

Sonoma County is our mission, this exciting news quantifies our effectiveness and dedication.

But we can't do this important work by ourselves. The challenges facing people like Kathy, Harold and Jenny can only be met with help from people like you – people who care about others who are less fortunate.

We need your help now to continue to respond to the pressing needs throughout the county, from the daunting high school drop out rate, to homelessness, hunger and giving seniors renewed life purpose by helping them find meaningful volunteer work. Please donate today as generously as you can.

The need has never been greater – our work has never been more needed.

A donation envelope is enclosed for your convenience, or you can visit www.volunteernow.org and click the DONATE button on our home page if you prefer to give through our secure website. Thank you, in advance, for showing how much you care.

With gratitude for your support,

Kim McEachron
President, Board of Directors

Eunice Valentine
Executive Director

P.S. The enclosed annual report highlights our accomplishments this past year and how we are changing lives for the better. Please join us by supporting this important work with your generosity today!

P.P.S. In case you were wondering... Kathy called our 211 referral line and was given the name of two agencies that provide foreclosure prevention counseling; Harold found help with Volunteer Wheels and the Partner Loss support group at Sutter Hospice; and Jenny reached out to our Literacy Connection Program where a team of tutors works with her neediest students.