



# Casa Esperanza Homeless Center

*offering hope and help every day!*

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**Simon Kiefer**

City of Santa Barbara

630 Garden Street

Santa Barbara, CA. 93101

Dear Mr. Kiefer:

This is our formal request to access Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (HOME Funds) on behalf of homeless individuals who seek help through the Casa Esperanza Homeless Center.

For the last three years Casa Esperanza successfully provided deposits and first month rental assistance to homeless individuals via the HPRP program via ARA funding available through HUD. Through this program, Casa Esperanza has helped people move from homelessness to housing in the City of Santa Barbara over the last 3 years.

The ARA program will come to an end in July 2012, and there is a desperate need to replace this funding. We are requesting \$135,000 in grant-based rental assistance funds to be used for both deposits and first-month rental assistance. We will ensure that first-month assistance covers no more than 70% of the grant amount and that each client is able to provide 30% of the necessary payment. We will use this funding to leverage County funds for housing assistance and both County and philanthropic resources for case management and administrative costs. Thus far we have secured \$50,000 from the County for this purpose, in partnership with Good Samaritan in Santa Maria, \$25,000 dedicated to Casa Esperanza and the South Coast.

Over the last twelve months we provided initial rental entry assistance to 126 individuals in the City of Santa Barbara. All of these individual were homeless and met low-income guidelines. We estimate that we can provide rental assistance to a minimum of 125 individuals and families.

We have found that once a client secures a job or SSI benefits that it takes an average of 3-4 months of saving money to cover the costs of moving into housing. This exposes the client unnecessary shelter time and clogs the shelter system, creating waiting lists and increased levels of homelessness on the streets. When the ARA/HPRP program went into effect, Casa Esperanza has operated with virtually no waiting list, and homeless people are no longer exposed unnecessary periods of homelessness and shelter environments. This is a specific goal of the HEARTH Act and best practices in the effort to end homelessness.

Our target population is low-income people who are currently homeless and meet current HPRP guidelines for Rapid Re-Housing. Each potential client fills out a complete intake form and provides proof of income, identification, etc. Each client must meet federal low-income guidelines. Each client works with the Housing Case Manager to complete a budget. In order to qualify for funding, the budget must show that the client has a balanced budget, with all costs covered by income. If this threshold is not met, the client is not eligible for assistance.

Casa Esperanza will use the current HPRP forms to provide proof that each housing unit meets

*Michael J. Foley*  
Executive Director

## Board of Directors Emeritus

*David Borgatello*

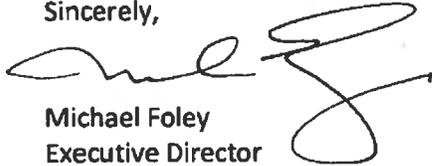
*Naomi Schwartz*

*Sandra Tripp-Jones*

physical standards, verified by the Case Manager in person. We determine rent-reasonableness by comparing the proposed rent with similar available units, via Craig's List and other advertisement venues.

Thank you for considering this very urgent request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Foley', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Michael Foley  
Executive Director