

Fall 2021

Quarterly Report

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Prepared by Julia Ip, Sophia Ahn,
Allison Peart, Lei Nguyen



Announcements

Updated Mission Statement and Brand Refresh

In addition to our new brand font and purple brand color, we also have updated our mission statement (right):

~50% of Miracle Money recipients are HOUSED!

The results of our proof-of-concept are in: over 50% of unhoused recipients were able to secure housing as a result of \$500 a month over 6 months (6 of 14 total recipients, 6 of 9 unhoused recipients).

Welcome Fall 2021 Interns

We have 9 amazing Fall interns helping with a variety of projects such as marketing, fundraising, and reporting. If you would like to intern with us or know a student that would make a great intern, [direct them to this page](#), we are recruiting for Spring 2022 interns.

Full Circle Fund Partner Funding

Miracle Messages was selected as a Grant Partner by the Full Circle Fund, and we just finished our six month collaboration!

Stanford Social Entrepreneur in Residence

This semester, Founder & CEO Kevin F. Adler is serving as the Social Entrepreneur in Residence at the Stanford Graduate School of Business course on nonprofit leadership and strategy.

Miracle Messages helps people experiencing homelessness rebuild their social support systems and financial security.

Fall 2021 Interns

Julia Ip
Merisa Rovcanin
Kaitlin Ip
Sophia Ahn
Ilma Rovcanin
Allison Peart
Lei Nguyen
Angelo Florio
Denisse Castillo



Reunions

Miracle Reunion Story: Kane

On September 17, 2019, Kane Stephen Powell completed a Miracle Messages Referral Form. Though he knew very little about Miracle Messages, he placed his trust in the organization that might help him locate and reunite with his mother and siblings. In a short but sweet expression of faith, Kane wrote: "Life is short and precious. I would like to get to know who you are."

Later on, a group of USC students and Mark Askins, Lead Detective for Miracle Messages, successfully located Kane's mother, Trudy, who had been searching for Kane for decades without success. After exchanging messages with Kane, Trudy joyfully invited her son to rejoin his family, and the rest was history.

Trudy wants to thank Miracle Messages: "I want to give you hope and encouragement to continue your work . . . If I was with you, I would give you all a big hug and bake you all some cookies. You are doing God's work, reconnecting people with their families"

Flash forward to August 2021, Kane is now living with his family and is thriving with his new life. He adores playing with his nieces and spending time with his mother and siblings. It has been an utmost privilege and joy to reunite Kane with his family. We hope this story of Kane gives hope, comfort, strength to our unhoused friends, and will inspire many more reunions!

[See the full story here.](#)

Miracle Reunion Story: Linda

In our Spring 2021 issue we shared earlier this year, Miracle Messages was able to reunite Linda with her family after being homeless for 25 years. Linda's children, who hadn't seen their mother since they were 3 and 5, immediately flew to Miami and brought Linda back home. Since then, Linda has been home, taken care of by her children.

This past July, Linda's family invited Gabby, our South Florida General Manager, to a huge family reunion. The whole family had not been together for decades, but they all came back

together to celebrate a wedding and welcome Linda back to the family. Even family who had never met Linda were affected. Gabby shares that one niece told her "I've never met my Aunt Linda, but all my life I've seen my mother cry over her little sister."

"Linda's case is the one that will stay with me for the next forty years," says Gabby. "It brought healing for the whole family."

[Watch the full reunion story and video here.](#)



UT-Austin Update

We have been expanding our mission across communities all over the United States by partnering with local homeless service providers that support those facing homelessness. Following Gabby's trip to Austin this summer, a new community of local volunteers formed at the University of Texas, with three undergraduates and three medical students volunteering out of Austin.

They are actively recruiting and training more volunteers. If you are interested in helping, contact Sai, the Austin volunteer community lead, at vannem@utexas.edu.

Depaul University Partnership

Professor Charles Drehmer at DePaul University has partnered up with Miracle Messages this Fall to provide his "Sales for Social Impact" course students a chance to apply their learnings for good at Miracle Messages. The class seeks to help Miracle Messages by conducting market research and applying sales frameworks to help Miracle Messages expand its local reach. We are excited to see the results of this partnership at the end of the semester! If you are an educator and are interested in partnering with Miracle Messages, please feel free to contact colette@miraclemessages.org.





Miracle Friends

Since the spring, the Miracle Friend program has seen a significant increase in self-referrals. More and more unhoused neighbors are calling our hotline and demonstrating interest in our program. We receive up to five new calls a week now!

New Mentors

Additionally, we are excited to announce the addition of two new mentors, Jen and Josh, joining our team. You might remember volunteer Jen and unhoused friend Ray from a Miracle Money story in our Spring 2021 issue, when Ray expressed that Jen had given him hope. We are incredibly happy to welcome Jen and Josh in their new positions as Miracle Friends mentors.



“Getting to now be a mentor, after being a friend for over a year, is a wonderful way to get to give back to this incredible program! I get to companion volunteers through the beginnings of a beautiful life changing friendship and support them in one of the most important relationships they will ever have. I was honored to be asked to serve as a mentor and I look forward to connecting more volunteers with those in our society most in need of a caring friend.”



Jen,
MF Mentor



Miracle Friend Volunteer Story: Debórah

After discovering Miracle Messages through the evening news, Debórah jumped straight into volunteering as soon as she could, sharing that she knew working with Miracle Friends “was gonna be something special.”

It wasn't long before Debórah bonded deeply with her friend Angela (photo on left), sensing deep reserves of strength in the woman who would become a dear friend. “Her openness, I think, is what really made everything in this relationship start out so easily,” says Debórah, “the transparency that she is willing to have . . . just drops me to my knees.” Debórah treasures the opportunity to provide some level of support: “I’m here today to be the nest to hold her heart.”

Debórah shares that when overwhelmed with worries about Angela’s well-being, she tries to remind herself of the little things she can do to help. “You can only handle what’s in front of you,” Debórah wisely advises, “I am just ears, and a heart, and support for her.” Ultimately, Debórah’s experience with Miracle Friends emphasizes the power of sincere relationships. “Having a voice that’s not part of her current world is important,” Debórah says firmly. “People find you for a reason. When they need you.”

In Their Own Words

What our Miracle Friend volunteers are saying

“I want to encourage anyone who wants to make a difference to try Miracle Friends. Homelessness is not a statistic. It’s about human beings.”

- Hilary

“Volunteer for Miracle Friends because it can make a difference in someone’s life. Being a senior and going through my life process, it’s important to have someone that you can look forward to talking to”

- Sarah



Miracle Money

Six months have flown by, and we are happy to announce that we have successfully completed our first-ever Miracle Money pilot. Miracle Money is Miracle Messages' guaranteed income program aimed at providing stability and the opportunity to plan for the future to our unhoused friends that we have gotten to know through the Miracle Friends program.

Key program outcomes include:

- ~50% of recipients secured independent housing by the end
- 77% of recipients had lower levels of psychological distress at the end of the program compared to at the start
- At baseline, 31% of recipients rarely or never had money left over at the end of the month. By the end of the program, this number halved to 15%.
- Funds were used most towards food (31%) and rent (30%)

If you would like to read more about our results and recipient stories, be sure to watch out for an email from us in the next few weeks where we will be releasing the full program evaluation report.

If you would like to help continue funding this program, [please donate here.](#)

Miracle Money In the News

As featured on....

- [CNBC](#)
- [Business Insider](#)
- [Mercury News](#)
- [Voices of Community Podcast](#)
- [MIT Technology Review](#)
- [Fast Company](#)



Miracle Money Story: Martin

At the start of Miracle Money, Martin set his eyes on getting a much needed service dog to help him with his disability. Six months later, Martin has gained a renewed sense of confidence and independence with his service dog, Summer. "Miracle Money has been a blessing" says Martin.

Martin has been able to buy food, toys, and equipment for Summer. The funds have also helped him purchase essential items for himself. Over the hot summer, he lacked access to cold water but was able to buy bottles of Gatorade. He also purchased toiletries, medication, food, and a haircut. Miracle Money made food and transportation more accessible for Martin, and he was even able to buy a birthday present for his dad and a friend, while also celebrating his own birthday.

Martin says Miracle Money has helped him feel more financially stable, and he looks forward to the Smart Money financial coaching as an investment in himself. To Martin, Miracle Money is like a set of training wheels. When they come off, he'll ride the rest of the way himself. [Read more about Martin's journey here.](#)

In Their Own Words

What our Miracle Money recipients are saying



"I don't know how to describe it... it's amazing. Miracle Money has been helping a lot for my daily basic necessities. I'm very grateful and thankful to be given this chance and opportunity to survive, especially during the pandemic."

- Sandi

"Miracle Money made me feel more secure. I'm always pushing my social security funds to the limit, so Miracle Money was a good boost. I'm saving up for a bike frame!"

-Brian





Miracle Money Story: Caridad

Caridad moved to San Francisco in 2002 with her husband and daughter. After her husband passed away in 2009, Caridad was unable to pay rent and lost her apartment. After almost ten years of living in very tight quarters with her daughter, Caridad moved into a shelter in 2019 and joined Miracle Friends in May. When her friend, Kim, nominated her for Miracle Money, Caridad was ecstatic.

After the first month of Miracle Money, Caridad was able to secure independent housing and started to feel much more comfortable with her surroundings. Since moving into her new room, Caridad has started feeling and looking much healthier. Without the stress of Covid and wondering where she was going to live or how she was going to pay for it, her legs and hands have stopped hurting. She started using her walker less and began feeling so much better overall. She is now able to cook healthy food and take better care of herself. Caridad also met with Smart Money coaches to help create a budget.

The stipend she's received has made a huge difference. Caridad is so grateful for both Miracle Friends and Miracle Money, and for finally having a permanent home. [Read more about Caridad's journey here.](#)

In their own words

What our Miracle Money recipients are saying

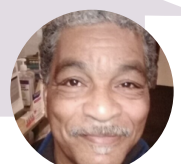
"Miracle money has helped me 101%+. God bless me. I got a place, I'm not living on the streets, and not around negative individuals. Plus, I have a few Miracle Friends that I can call when I'm feeling down."

-Joanna



"I'm so grateful, I can't even express it...I can't find words. It truly is a miracle! I look forward to having my own place soon! I'm so happy."

-Drake





Jess is an innovator and human-centered designer with a deep passion for improving people's lives. She joined Kevin in 2017 as Miracle Messages' Executive Director, Co-Founder, and first full-time team member.

Parting Note

"I just finished my last team call at Miracle Messages. What an extraordinary journey these last four years have been. At the meeting, the team had a surprise for me - a tribute video from our volunteer community. The things that they said brought me to tears. To all of you who contributed to the video and who were part of my time at Miracle Messages, thank you. One of our core values at Miracle Messages has always been "people over programs". As we've grown, we've made a conscious effort to see every person in our community - the unhoused neighbors, the

"Jess was more than a co-worker to me - she was a mentor and a friend. I learned so much from her - but the thing that will always stay with me was her ability to make everyone feel comfortable to share their thoughts and know that they were being heard."

- Madeline

families, and the volunteers - as people to be loved, and to treat them as such. We've achieved more success and scale than I could have dreamed about when I joined 4 years ago - more than 500 unhoused people reconnected with loved ones across the country, over 100 people in our Miracle Friends program, and a first-of-its-kind direct cash transfer pilot underway. Yet, with all of these successes, this commitment to "people over programs" might be the thing that I'm most proud of. Today, watching that video, I felt the full impact of being part of a community that loves and embraces people so completely. I cannot fully express the gratitude I feel towards each person who was part of my Miracle Messages journey.

Everyone is someone's somebody. To each of you at Miracle Messages, you will always be someone special to me." - Jess

"Jess helped define the essence and character of Miracle Messages. Her passion and compassion for our Mission was contagious and helped grow Miracle Messages into the renowned go-to cutting edge service provider that we are today..."

- Mark



Bombas Newsletter Spotlight

Miracle Messages was spotlighted in Bombas' newsletter, which talked about the partnership between Bombas' and Miracle Messages. For every clothing item bought from Bombas, the same item is donated to someone experiencing homelessness. Kevin also spoke at their 'Families & Homelessness' panel.



TogetherSF Panel Discussion

The TogetherSF panel, 'Homelessness in SF: Fight Relational Poverty with Miracle Messages', featured Miracle Messages. This panel focused on Miracle Messages' Buddy System and the impact of relational poverty.



Kevin Speaks at the Commonwealth Club

Kevin was a speaker at the 'Steps Everyone Can Take to End Homelessness' talk at the Commonwealth Club (San Francisco). The conversation focused on how to address homelessness on the individual and familial level.



Basic Income March Highlight

Kevin was the opening speaker at the Basic Income March which was headlined by Andrew Yang (Mountain View, California).





Looking Forward

Good Neighbor Awards

Our 3rd annual Good Neighbor Awards will take place virtually on Wednesday, December 8th, 2021 @ 5pm PT. Join us as we recognize the unsung heroes who make this work possible. [Register here!](#)

Miracle Money Pilot Results

Our Miracle Money proof-of-concept final evaluation will be coming out in a couple weeks. Watch out for an email!

GM-Led Outreach

We will be inviting volunteers to join local General Managers in outreach in San Francisco, South Florida, and Los Angeles, in the near term. Stay tuned for more information!

Want to Get Involved?



Volunteer to be a buddy in our Miracle Friends program or a digital detective to help reunite families. [Sign up here.](#)



Intern by filling out [this form](#). We're always looking for more help - especially marketing gurus, graphic designers, and amazing writers!



Give. Make a tax-deductible donation [here](#). EIN #82-4179328

Your support changes lives.

In order to be the most efficient with your contributions and maximize our efforts toward the mission, we do not print or mail our quarterly or annual reports. However, if you wish to receive a printed report, please email colette@miraclemessages.org