

THE SAN FRANCISCO FOUNDATION

The Community Foundation of the Bay Area

2008 Ashland/Cherryland Koshland Fellows

The San Francisco Foundation's Koshland Civic Unity Program recognizes Bay Area grassroots risk-takers – those social innovators of bold spirit who accept the most stubborn neighborhood problems as a personal challenge and who work collaboratively to overcome them. In recognizing these individuals, we seek to promote civic unity by building mutual respect among diverse people in the community and encouraging small, voluntary efforts to address neighborhood problem. For more information, please visit: <http://www.sff.org/programs/koshland-program>



Shanale Allen

Shanale Allen is a community outreach worker for Alameda County Department of Human Services, and specializes in working with low-income and young mothers. She has lived in the Eden House apartment complex in Ashland for the past ten years and loves her community of neighbors, whom she describes as very close knit and always watching out for each other. She has been very active at Eden House, volunteering to teach a dance class for girls in its recreation room and a leader in the parent group. She has also been involved with the PTA and Site Representative Council of her middle-school-aged children's schools. She is passionate about creating a safe space and more opportunities for young people. She helps keep an eye on the children that live in her apartment complex and lets them know that she cares about them and the choices they are making. She is currently working on completing her B.A. in Psychology at Patten University.



Rafael Avendano

Rafael Avendano is the coordinator of the Ashland Neighborhood Sports Initiative, a Team-Up for Youth project led by the Boys and Girls Club of San Leandro. Rafael knows first hand what the impact of not having anything to do after school can mean and has been involved with the Boys and Girls Club since he was 15 years old. He brings enthusiasm, charisma, and passion to his work of creating quality sports programs that transform kids' lives. Rafael has organized outside events for the kids, including a trip to the UC Berkeley campus on Cal Sports Day and Warriors and SaberCats games that expose kids to new things. His passion for sports and his unique teaching ability has helped him inspire kids to find the confidence to try things they have never done before. Rafael is currently a student at Chabot College, working on a major in Recreation Management and a minor in Spanish. He will be transferring to California State University, East Bay in the spring.



Hilary Bass

Hilary Bass is the youth development coordinator for Alameda County's Associated Community Action Program where she is responsible for developing youth services for the Unincorporated Eden Area of Alameda County. She works with local teens to prevent violence and teen pregnancy in their community by surveying their peers to gain knowledge of what strategies would work as well as hosting teen events to foster positive youth engagement. Previously she worked for four years as the resident services coordinator at Eden House Apartments/Mercy Housing, a low-income housing development in Ashland. While at Eden House she helped to coordinate a Youth Leadership Council (YLC), which encourages youth to discover their personal values and goals in order to become positive leaders in their personal lives as well as agents promoting beneficial change within their community. She was also recently awarded the Family Services and Self-Sufficiency Award from the American Association of Service Providers, for her work at the Eden House Apartments in Ashland for creating positive youth activities and helping families in her community become more self-sufficient.



Susan Beck

Susan Beck has a passion for transformation, organization, and creative collaboration. She has been an author, an administrator, a project manager, fundraiser, and operations manager in fields as varied as her interests - including herbalism, education, real estate, and high-tech, among others. Susan recently moved to Cherryland with her family and hit the ground running, actively searching out ways to get involved in her neighborhood. Community has always been important for Susan and she quickly became involved with the Cherryland Association and the Eden Area Livability Initiative (EALI). She is concerned with health disparities and lack of access to healthy foods and envisions her neighborhood as a potential "Garden District" filled with fruit trees, gardens, and public open green spaces.



Christen Gray

Christen Gray is the Team-Up for Youth Ashland program director for the Boys & Girls Clubs of San Leandro. Team-Up for Youth Ashland provides quality youth sports programs with a direct mission to create a sense of community through sports, combat childhood obesity, and increase the number of girl athletes. When the program started just over four years ago, Christen was the program's dance and volleyball coach. Within a short amount of time she has become charged with the entire

project planning for Team-Up for Youth Ashland. Christen grew up in Ashland and considers herself lucky to be able to give back to the community that she came from. In fact, she currently plans sports at her old elementary school, and has three staff members that graduated from San Lorenzo High School. Christen graduated from Cal State University East Bay with a B.A. in Mass Communication and a minor in American Sign Language. Her future goals include creating a college scholarship fund for student-athletes in the San Lorenzo community and receiving her masters in Recreation and Leisure.



Maria Haro

Maria Haro works as the parent liaison for Cherryland Elementary School, where she can also happily keep an eye on her three children who attend the school. She previously worked as an outreach coordinator for County Supervisor Nate Miley’s office, where she worked to engage senior citizens and families around safety, transportation, and land use issues. She was instrumental in promoting the Safe Route to Schools project, which included building new sidewalks along the routes to the school and a “walking” school bus that picks up children on their way to school. She still volunteers her time to this effort. Maria has lived in Cherryland for 15 years, and has passionately been involved to help her community deal with issues of crime, gangs, unlit streets, affordable housing, and access to healthcare. She is a PTA member and is part of the English Language Advisory Committee for the Hayward School District. She has also been involved with outreach to the Latino community for the Eden Area Livability Initiative (EALI). This outreach was critical in bringing in the voices of this population who surfaced many additional issues to be considered by the EALI.



JoAnn Irons

JoAnn is the Coordinator for over fifty-three programs at the Ashland Community Center managed by Hayward Area Recreation and Park District (HARD). She is responsible for developing and implementing activities and events for low-income families. A native of San Leandro and Hayward, JoAnn has worked in the Ashland neighborhood for over 14 years. Her involvement in Ashland began through a ministry at her church that revealed a need to support vulnerable families in the area. She birthed the idea of providing a one-stop resource center for the community including food programs, opportunities for further education including ESL classes, job training, and other self-sufficiency types of training to help families reach specific goals. She partnered with Supervisor Nate Miley to bring these programs to the community. JoAnn is a member of the San Lorenzo Youth Collaborative, the Ashland Violence Prevention Collaborative, and the Eden Area Livability Initiative. JoAnn is passionate about helping people in need and is continually identifying ways to bring more attention and visibility to this community.



Alfonso Macedo

Alfonso J. Macedo is the youth pastor at New Hope Christian Fellowship in Cherryland. He mentors young people and opens the church on Friday evenings to provide a fun and positive space for young people to hang out. He uses sports, games, and other activities to help them work through the challenges in their lives. He has great passion for working with young people and has done so for the past ten years.

Alfonso grew up in Oakland, but found his way to the Trinity Bible College in North Dakota, where he graduated in 1998. After school, he ventured to Omaha, Nebraska and served as the youth director for an inner-city church for three years. Alfonso decided to return to the Bay Area and began work in the child welfare system at the Seneca Center in San Francisco County as an intake worker, followed by working at the Child Protection Services as a case worker. He then found himself back in Alameda County, mentoring and creating a positive atmosphere for teenagers through his role as youth pastor where he has been for the past three years.



Amparo Ramos

Amparo Ramos is a natural sympathizer to the human condition and has a long history of social welfare work and providing educational opportunities. She is an ESL teacher for the San Lorenzo Unified School District and the Ashland Community Center. She cares deeply for her students and is often called upon to help them connect to resources and listen to their troubles. She worked for many years in Mexico as a social worker and psychologist and then with a curiosity about the world she

moved to the U.S. 18 years ago, where she began to raise a family and teach ESL classes. Amparo received her teaching degree from San Jose State and completed her Masters in TESOL (Teachers of English for Speakers of Other Languages) from Cal State East Bay. She has also studied and practiced Zen Buddhism for the past 16 years. Amparo is also a teacher at Chabot College where she works with immigrants from Latin America who are studying to become teacher's associates. She often partners with organizations to bring information and training to the students in her classes.