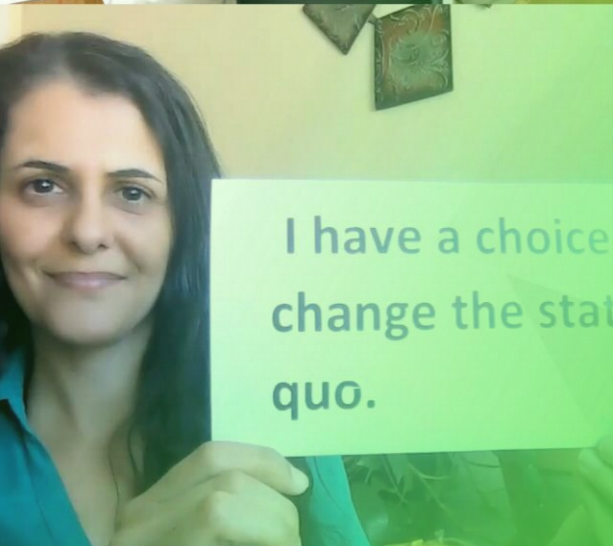




**THINK  
DIGNITY**  
Hands-on Advocacy & Activism with  
People Experiencing Homelessness



# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



# MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & MANAGING ATTORNEY



2021 marked an important year for Think Dignity as we celebrated our 15th anniversary. 15 years of grassroots advocacy by uplifting the voices of those most impacted by homelessness, advocating for system level changes and creating innovative

solutions to meet the needs of the people we serve. 15 years of thinking dignity.

As we celebrate this milestone, we reflect on the years ahead and remain committed to our vision for San Diego as a place where basic dignity is understood to be a universal human right, where everyone has a voice, and where those who suffer from a lack of services have a safe place from which they can be heard.

We remain dedicated to our mission to advance basic dignity to people experiencing homelessness by continuing to provide access to safe storage, essential sanitation and hygiene, nutritious meals, and equitable access to justice. Most importantly, we are steadfast in our foundation of advocating for basic human rights.

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**“We have learned that what distinguishes one person from another is not their ability. Rather, it is their access to opportunity, access to resources and access to support.”**

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We are determined and dedicated to continue working towards recognizing housing as a human right, access to basic sanitation as a necessity, and decriminalizing poverty as imperative to empowering our community to thrive.

We encourage you to stand alongside us as we continue to do the work that transforms our communities into a place where dignity is always present and always felt. We believe in the power of humanity, the momentum in collectivity, and that the best way to find ourselves is to lose ourselves in service to others.

In solidarity,



Mitchelle Woodson, Esq.

**“DON’T LOOK AWAY”**  
Addressing Homelessness in San Diego County



# WHO WE ARE

## MISSION

Advance basic dignity for people experiencing homelessness through advocacy and innovation

## VISION

We embrace a vision where basic dignity is understood to be a universal human right; where everyone has a voice; and where those who suffer from a lack of services have a safe place from which they can be heard.



# 15 YEARS OF DIGNITY

On October 5, 2006, nine women gathered to discuss the challenges of homelessness. The ladies passed many of their displaced neighbors on the streets in downtown San Diego, and they desired a tangible way to restore basic dignity to these individuals. That night, the female professionals decided to call themselves Girls Think Tank, originating from "girlfriends." In 2015, we rebranded to "Think Dignity."



## 2006

"Girls Think Tank" officially founded

## 2007

First Backpack Distribution (now known as "Survival Supply Distribution"), a bi-annual event where thousands of hygiene items, food, supplies, and resources are distributed



## 2009

Advocacy began on dignified access to and availability of public restrooms in San Diego

## 2007

Held the first Community Picnic in the Park that invited hundreds to enjoy food, resources, and entertainment as a community



## 2012

Legal Referral & Advocacy Clinics launched to offer equitable access to justice



## 2010

Basic Dignity Coalition launched to advocate for dignified solutions towards issues affecting homelessness



## 2012

Took over management of the Transitional Storage Center, San Diego's first free storage center that safeguards the belongings of people experiencing homelessness for an unlimited amount of time

# 2013

Created weatherproof Know Your Rights cards - covers 7 areas of law that people face when living unsheltered

# 2014

"First Flush" - Years of advocacy led to the first Portland Loo 24/7 public restroom installed in downtown San Diego

# 2015

Rebranded as "Think Dignity" to reflect our values of inclusivity and advancing basic dignity



# 2016

Launched the Fresh Start Showers, San Diego's first mobile shower program to provide hygiene access



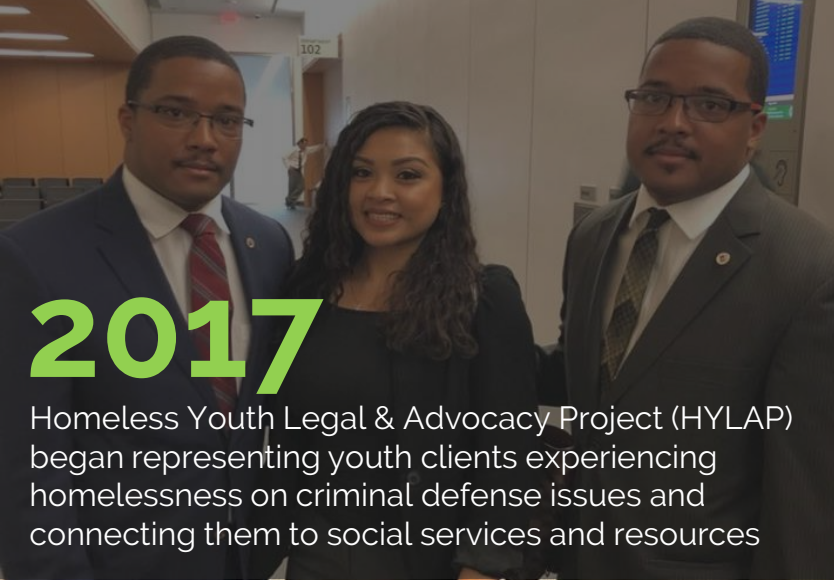
# 2017

Street Boutique created as the only mobile program for unsheltered San Diegans to shop for undergarments and menstrual products for free



# 2018

Opened the Street Cafe to offer free nutritious meal options to unsheltered individuals



# 2017

Homeless Youth Legal & Advocacy Project (HYLAP) began representing youth clients experiencing homelessness on criminal defense issues and connecting them to social services and resources



# 2019

Led and supported advocacy campaigns on housing and the decriminalization of homelessness and poverty



# 2020

COVID-19 response: Launched a Mask Distribution, Dignity Kits (hygiene), and a COVID-19 Resource Database

Through the support of our Dignity Defenders, we launched innovative social and legal programs that were the first of their kind in San Diego County, developed advocacy campaigns that strived to reshape our systems to be humanistic and just, and worked alongside our communities to create impactful ways of advancing dignity.

# OUR IMPACT

Our programs supported

## 2,764

people experiencing homelessness  
throughout San Diego County  
and provided

## 8,691

resources and referrals for essential  
services to support each person's  
stability and growth.

How did our programs support  
San Diegans?



**9,158**  
water bottles  
given



**14,798**  
hygiene items  
distributed



**2,800**  
menstrual  
products  
delivered



**136**  
undergarments  
provided





## Our Advocacy Focus

Prioritization of COVID-19 safety for unsheltered people

Police transparency & accountability

Housing rights

Dignified access to and availability of public restrooms

Racial justice

**12%**  
criminal cases

**88%**  
civil cases



**3,111**  
meals served



**9,423**  
masks distributed



**53**  
youth clients  
assisted through  
HYLAP

# OUR DIGNITY DEFENDERS

We are humbled to have compassionate sponsors, donors, and community partners who empower our efforts in advancing basic dignity for those experiencing homelessness. **We want to especially thank the following partners and donors for their incredible support:**

**A.B. Data**

**Aetna Better Health of California**

**Banner Bank**

**Baxter Hotel Group, Inc.**

**CaseyGerry**

**City Ballet of San Diego**

**The Country Friends**

**County of San Diego**

**Dreher Law Firm**

**Dummit Buchholz & Trapp**

**Haeggquist and Eck**

**James McElroy**

**Kendra Scott**

**Lauren Scott**

**Lawyers Club of San Diego**

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**San Diego County Bar Foundation**

**San Diego Food Bank**

**San Diego Housing Commission**

**Teichert Foundation**

**University of San Diego**





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Think Dignity is a grassroots 501(c)(3) non-profit organization working towards community-based solutions through hands-on advocacy and innovation.