

# THE PROMISE



MISSION PROMISE  
COMUNIDAD PROMESA DE LA MISION  
NEIGHBORHOOD



Avilo, Vilma, Luis and Axel in their new home.

## FROM GUATEMALA TO SAN FRANCISCO

Avilo and Vilma first emigrated from Guatemala in 2014. Ever since the couple has called San Francisco their home. They have two children: Axel, who attends Bryant Elementary School and is currently in the third grade; and Luis, who is now in daycare.

In 2018, Avilo and Vilma were displaced from their apartment, which they have been renting for over five years. Their landlord had decided to sell the property, and the new owner was planning to remodel and resell. Vilma attended a housing workshop that MPN Family Success Coach Luis Ostolaza was hosting for parents at Bryant. Vilma stayed after the workshop and told him about her family's living situation. Luis Ostolaza then referred the family to Eviction Defense Collaborative (EDC), which would inform Vilma about her family's housing rights. After this, Luis Ostolaza helped her get familiarized with DAHLIA, the SF Housing Portal, and she began applying to upcoming housing lotteries. Almost two years later, they were granted a Displaced Tenant Housing Preference (DTHP) Certificate.

With the DTHP Certificate, they were able to gain priority when applying for housing on DAHLIA. It wasn't until September 2020 that they heard the news back from a building called La Fénix. Luis Ostolaza, Vilma, and Avilo were able to submit all the paperwork required within one week. However, they had to move out on Dec. 15, and they had yet to finalize their contract with La Fénix. Fortunately for Vilma and her family, they found a bedroom where they could stay until they heard any news.

While it was challenging for Luis Ostolaza and Vilma to together due to all the safety guidelines COVID-19 brought, they were still able to secure their housing. On Jan. 11, a pleased Vilma and her family moved into their new, affordable three-bedroom home.



Briana taking one of her online classes.

## LEARNING HUBS: AN ALTERNATIVE WAY TO COPE AND LEARN IN THE MIDST OF COVID-19

Community HUBs are designed to support children and youth that are struggling with distance learning.

Briana is in the second grade at Buena Vista Horace Mann School. Due to the pandemic and the safety restrictions for shelter-in-place, she does not attend school in person but does participate in the 826 Community Hub. She likes attending the hub since she can get online to take her school classes, create art, have physical education classes, and other enrichment activities such as dance and music. Her favorite part about attending the Hub is that she can create art projects, and her favorite assignment is creating paper flowers.

Briana shared that she would like to go back to regular schooling, as she misses having fun with her friends. She has been working very hard to catch up on missing assignments and continues to improve academically. Due to the pandemic, it has been difficult to socialize with other students but attending the Community Hub has provided her with the opportunity to be around other students.



Everett Middle School

## EVERETT'S RAPID RESPONSE TEAM

The pandemic has impacted our community and our daily lives. Several school support teams have reconfigured to best support their families. One of our MPN schools, Everett Middle School, provides a case in point. Around November 2020, Everett staff noticed a spike in families testing positive for coronavirus, so in response they created a COVID-19 Team. This team consists of members from the Parent Teacher Student Association, School Site Council, English Learners Advisory Committee, African American Parent Advisory Council and more.

Some of the prominent people who take the lead in this effort are;

- Roberto Aparicio, Family Success Coach, MPN
- Wilson Jimenez, Beacon Program Director, Mission Graduates
- Nayeli Ornela, After School Program Leader, Mission Graduates
- Ana Reyes, School Secretary at Everett
- America Vega, Family Liaison at Everett
- Jose Guevara, Student Advisor at Everett

When the COVID-19 team was created, they first met to find different ways to support families beyond making referrals for families who were testing positive. Families testing positive had to follow the safety guidelines and quarantine. Due to this, they were having difficulties accessing essential items.

As a way of providing support through the school, the COVID-19 Team coordinated efforts and started to distribute COVID-19 Kits to families testing positive. The team started planning, Ana Reyes began to draft a list of items, and, along with the rest of the group, they agreed on what to include. As the plan was finalized, Ana prepared a budget for these resources. America Vega then took this list and began drafting a Parent Teacher Student Association proposal for approval.

All knew that the proposal would be approved since it would

provide some aid to families. Ana understood the urgency for creating these kits, so she selflessly planned to purchase them with her own money and then ask for reimbursement once the proposal had passed. But Wilson Jimenez generously volunteered to pay for the items, as he would deal with the reimbursement later.

After the items were purchased, Roberto, Wilson, Nayeli, America, and Jose created 30 kits. Each kit contained 10 items, in addition to literature related to COVID-19.

The Everett Staff has adjusted to the needs of families facing hardships through this time. Aside from creating a kit with essential supplies for families, they have also shared food resources and distributed over 100 gift cards to families in need. Cross communication between teachers, after-school programs, and school staff has been very successful, and the team has been able to respond to the needs of Everett families and be a support system in these difficult times.



## THE PROMISE COMMITTEE

*From left: Alejandro, Ana, Pedro, Mariana, Liz, Dannhae, and Flor. Our mission is to share accomplishments and stories by students, families, and partner organizations that are part of our network. The Promise Newsletter will be published quarterly, so the next one will be on Spring, 2021. If you have an idea or would like to share your story, contact Alejandro at (415) 282-3334 ext. 126 or [abautista@medasf.org](mailto:abautista@medasf.org).*