

# The CBAs

are under way. Benefits are being given, and received. Paid volunteers are serving in the soup kitchens, teaching tech and tutoring in the schools. These stories hint at what the process is like for the tech firms, and for some of the community beneficiaries. They are the tip of an iceberg emerging from a sea of plenty in an ocean of need.



PHOTO BY MARK DONEZA



PHOTO BY ADAM WOOLEY, YAMMER



PHOTO BY GABRIELLE WAGNER, ONE KINGS LANE

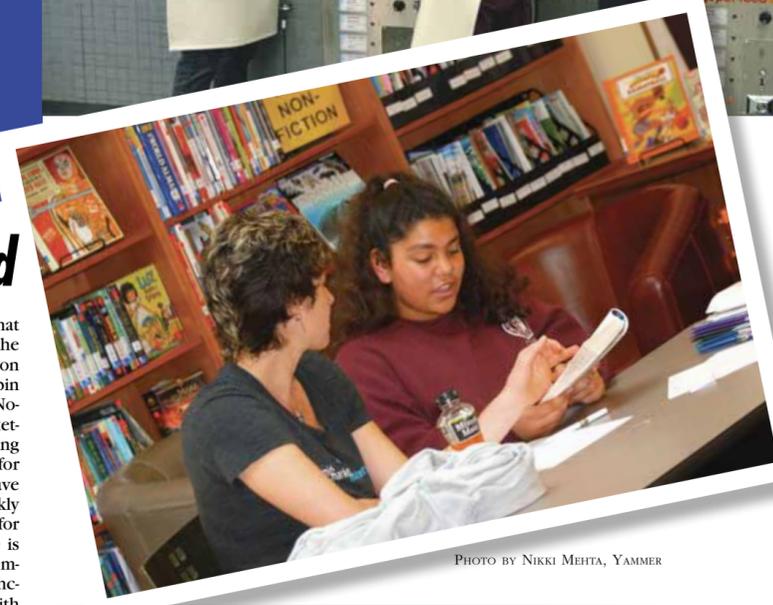


PHOTO BY NIKKI MEHTA, YAMMER

## Nonprofits: Snapshot of aid

BY MARJORIE BEGGS

What neighborhood groups have gotten from the tech firms won't be known until the companies' quarterly reports come in, due to the city administrator this month.

Meanwhile, The Extra reached a handful of nonprofits whose benefits from their new tech neighbors range from modest grants and equipment donations to patronizing their activities.

**Episcopal Community Services'** 16-year-old CHEFS program at (Canon Kip Community House, 705 Natoma St.), which trains homeless and low-income people in culinary skills, then places them in internships at restaurants and other food services:

"Zendesk has been working with us since 2011," says Sandra Marilyn, head of CHEFS. "They call us as much as once a week to cater events for them, and they've been just great, supporting and promoting us all along. We're just starting to talk to Yammer and Zoosk, but I don't know what will come of that. The best thing they can do is sample our wares, meet our students and encourage internships."

**Hospitality House Community Arts Program**, the only free fine arts studio for homeless and poor artists (1009 Market St.), and annual auction, the May 9 fundraiser for the arts program.

"We never put in a specific proposal to any of the companies — but Twitter and Yammer called us," says Executive Director Jackie Jenks. "Twitter gave us a \$10,000 grant to support the arts program, and Yammer is one of the major sponsors of this year's auction."

**Central YMCA's** community garden and after-school youth program (387 Golden Gate Ave.).

Leslie Truong, director of programs, has contacted most of the companies' community liaisons, but only one has come through with a viable benefit. "Yammer was here on April 12 as part of their Day for Good, helping with our after-school youth," Truong says. "We also had set up a day for Twitter employees to come and work in the garden, but it was right around New Year's and only one person showed up."

**Alonzo King Lines Ballet** (26 Seventh St.), performance company and school:

A CAC member suggested that Lines put in a one-page proposal to the city administrator's office to get in on the benefits, recalls Co-Director Robin Anderson. "I sent the proposal in November for our new outreach marketing program, and this April we're doing hip-hop classes on-site at Yammer for its employees." About 10 people have been coming to the hourlong weekly classes, she says. "Yammer's paying for the classes, of course, but the hope is to generate interest among all its employees in our classes and performances." Anderson's efforts to connect with Twitter, she says, have been "difficult" and, so far, unfruitful. Yammer says it also bought 40 tickets for Lines Ballet's season opener at YBC.

**The Arc San Francisco** (1500 Howard St.), supports independent living, trains for employment and encourages creative expression for adults with autism, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy and intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The Arc is not in the mid-Market area designated by the tax exclusion and benefit agreements, but many of its clients reside there, says Stacy Trager-Carls, Arc community resource manager. "Our job developer, Gary Gregerson, attended a CAC meeting last fall and then met with One Kings Lane to talk about employment possibilities for our clients," Trager-Carls says. "We're waiting now to hear if we have one placement with them starting in May."

Stephanie Pettinati, One Kings Lane community liaison, says it has discussed "opportunities" with Arc but is not now working on any "specific placements."

**Central YMCA's** community garden and after-school youth program (387 Golden Gate Ave.).

In March, Yammer donated 40 large-screen computer monitors with keyboards and accessories to the Lab, which operates as a drop-in site for casual computer users and offers month-long classes, from bedrock basics to sophisticated software applications.

"The monitors are great," said Karl Robillard, communications manager for St. Anthony Foundation. "People love working with the new equipment." ■

## EDITORIAL

# You're being gentrified — make the most of it

This is a critical moment for the neighborhood. The city signing the CBAs with the tech firms signaled that gentrification of the central city is officially under way.

These agreements with the six Internet companies obligate the city to ensure that an untold amount in grants, goods, services and volunteer hours accrue to the area that the big guys have invaded it. Traditionally, when the haves move in, the have-nots are pushed out. That's gentrification.

The largess is meant to mitigate the irreversible effects of gentrification, though the G word is never mentioned in the CBAs.

Gentrification here and now is like the warming climate. Globally, it's already way too late to halt the catastrophes sure to ensue as the Arctic melts. Locally, with City Administrator Naomi Kelly's John Hancock affixed to these contracts, the central city's future has been formally sealed; we're being gentrified. So we might as well make the most of it, because they're not going to go away.

Each company has pledged to ease the trauma to the neighborhood that their dominant presence presents. Each agreement calls for the big guys to bestow item upon beneficial item to mitigate the personal and social pain.

Some firms have vowed to help

preserve affordable housing — and that means SROs, too — so as not to displace residents. The most important help they could give would be to ensure that all who live here now will remain. But no one can assure that. Rents in central city offices and storefronts already are spiraling. Soon that will render this place unrecognizable. No CBA offers a blueprint for stopping the inevitable, though all vow to try.

The neighborhood can get lots of other things out of these agreements, help that's more likely to happen, such as: Patronizing our businesses, training us in tech and outfitting us in state-of-the-art hardware and knowledge, ensure that we have more to eat and healthier food, hire our residents so they can provide for themselves, increase the perks to the community as these agreements mature.

The hiding of information about the tax break and the unresponsiveness to community contact by some of the firms encourages suspicion among neighborhood players.

The firms and the city must be clear: We are very needy and vulnerable, and our social fabric is fragile. So be generous. We want to land on our feet for a change. ■

— Geoff Link,  
Editor & Publisher

**Companies giving back**, from left: Yammer tutors at DeMarillac Academy, Zoosk washes dogs for PAWS clients, Yammer serves meals at Episcopal Community Services, and One Kings Lane helps green the Tenderloin People's Garden.

## Tech companies: Sampler of neighborhood assistance

Companies that do something good for the community usually call local newspapers to tell all about it. But, as the community benefits agreements officially got under way, persistence didn't always pay off as The Extra sought the tech companies' side of the story.

Zoosk blew us off, and 21Tech wouldn't talk at all.

Zendesk, now in its second year with a CBA, was the most forthcoming. The others eventually responded to our reporters, but Twitter and Yammer — the two biggest CBA companies — took months.

### TWITTER: \$70,000 IN GRANTS

In its seminal year of giving back, Twitter, the master monitor of terse tweeting and abbreviations, is spreading thousands of grant dollars around the neighborhood while enthusiasm to volunteer runs high, says Colin Crowell, Twitter's head of public policy.

"Employees are wanting to get into volunteer activities — and that's with no prompting from me or the company," Crowell says.

The social media giant's list of proposed CBA activities for 2013 runs to 26 goals. It's given \$10,000 each to Tenderloin Community School, Vietnamese Youth Development Center, Cutting Ball Theater, Heart of the City Farmers Market, Larkin Street Youth Services and Hospitality House Art Program. Twitter employees voted to give \$5,000 bonuses to their top picks, Larkin Street and the Community School.

Another outreach has been coaching in the Tenderloin Tech Lab every Friday and at the Main Library's tech lab, too.

Volunteers have been tutoring students in the Tenderloin Community School on Eddy Street, Bessie Carmichael Elementary School, in SoMa outside the tax break boundaries, and the private De Marillac Middle School on Golden Gate Avenue. At Bessie, the focus every Wednesday has been on helping eighth-graders with algebra, though the school's Website posts a lengthy "wish list" of needs for supplies and equipment.

Employees also are volunteering at the S.E. Bar Association's Volunteer Legal Services Program on housing ad-

vocacy and negotiations. Cases are in the works, Crowell says, but he can't discuss them.

- 1355 Market St.
- 1,000 employees
- Community liaison: Jenna Sampson, sf@twitter.com

### ONE KINGS LANE: DONATIONS

The 4-year-old online company that offers bargains on name-brand, vintage and designer items, has begun meeting its first-year CBA agreement. In February, three employees helped serve dinner at Raphael House, the shelter for homeless children and families. March 28, it donated money and beverages to Bold Italics and Yammer's annual Mid Riff Microhood party celebrating mid-Market arts, eats and drinks.

Volunteers helped celebrate Earth Day by getting their hands dirty, cleaning up and planting at TNDK's People's Garden.

In the works, says Stephanie Pettinati, community liaison, are product donations and design makeovers for Hamilton Family Center and Tenderloin Housing Clinic.

"We'll bring in tables and rugs and maybe artwork" to Hamilton's lobby, for example, to make the space "more welcoming," Pettinati says.

- 1355 Market St., Suite 400
- 200 employees in San Francisco
- Community liaison: Stephanie Pettinati, 489-9892

### ZOOSK: FEW DETAILS

The Extra's repeated attempts to get details from the online dating service Zoosk about its CBA activities were fruitless.

"What I can say," wrote Melinda Perales, community liaison, in an email, "is that Zoosk is very excited to be in the community. We are new to the CBA so at this time I do not have much to report other than we are busy with volunteering and meeting our commitments per our CBA."

Tipped by PAWS, The Extra's photographer did get to snap Zoosk employees washing dogs on May 1.

- 989 Market St., 5th floor
- 130 employees
- CBA community liaison: Melinda Perales, 529-3020, melindap@zoosk.com

### 21TECH: MUM TO THE EXTRA

Technology and business consultants to local governments and some Fortune 100 companies, 21Tech, founded in 1996, has been in the neighborhood since before the mid-Market tech boom. It has a \$4.5 million contract with the city to develop an automated permit and project-tracking system for City Planning department and the Department of Building Inspection.

Beginning in February, two Extra reporters tried numerous times to contact Deborah Trette, community liaison, and 21Tech partner Dilraj Kahai for CBA details. Phone calls and emails were never returned.

- 1390 Market St. 12th floor
- Community liaison: Deborah Trette, 355-9090, Deborah.Trette@21Tech.com

### YAMMER: BIG DAY OF GIVING

Five-year-old Yammer moved from its Townsend Street location into its Market Street digs in January. The cloud-based intranet computer system was acquired by Microsoft for \$1.2 billion last June.

In its April 12 Day of Giving, 30 employees in bright safety vests went to the Tenderloin to work with DPW's anti-litter campaign. The same day, 15 employees cooked lunch for Episcopal Community Services clients and played bingo with seniors.

During a monthlong, in-house clothing drive, employees donated 400 pounds of clothing, including \$1,000 worth of new underwear and socks, to St. Anthony's clothing program.

Jason Rodrigues, Yammer's community liaison, has been asked to join Hospitality House's Board of Directors.

Computers worth \$3,000 went to Project Homeless Connect for use at the Sixth Street Safety Hub. It also has 50 Plantronic wireless telephone headsets, Mac keyboards and four projectors to donate to interested organizations. Grants to local nonprofits have totaled \$41,000 so far to unidentified recipients.

And food? Yammer employees eat out at Show Dogs, Dottie's True Blue Café and Brenda's French Soul Food. Ma'Vealous, a coffee shop at 10th and Market, a block from Yammer's offices, reports a 30% increase in business

since the tech firm moved in.

- 1355 Market St.
- 300 employees
- Community liaison: Jason Rodrigues, 796-7453, jason@yammer-inc.com

### ZENDESK: REACHES OUT

Zendesk, founded in 2007, specializes in customer service applications for its estimated 20,000 clients. During 2012, it made a financial investment in the central city neighborhood of approximately \$140,000, says Tiffany Apczynski, CBA community liaison.

Half of that \$140,000 went to local caterer Small Potatoes on 6th Street for its launch and holiday parties; \$10,000 more went to rent Great American Music Hall and Mezzanine for the two company events. Another \$33,000 was spent on on-site catering from Tenderloin restaurants during the year. Of Zendesk's 397 catered meals, including lunches, 176 were handled by neighborhood establishments.

When Zendesk needed AV equipment, it spent \$15,000 at World of Stereo. And two Tenderloin students scored paid summer internships, at \$5,000 each, at the tech company.

For this year, Zendesk plans to donate \$10,000 to a Tenderloin community garden, and continue its in-house "lunch and learns" where invitees come and present to employees during lunch. Guests so far have included Episcopal Community Services, and two documentary filmmakers, muralist LisaRuth Elliott and photographer Darcy Padilla, all from the Tenderloin.

Zendesk recently bought 30 tickets for employees at the Cutting Ball Theater, and sent tech experts to a May 2 City College event. Employees gave TechSF feedback on its latest curriculum. The company plans to place TechSF graduates as interns, costing an estimated \$10,000, and to host a Nerd Underground networking event for new TechSF graduates at its offices.

- 989 Market St. 3rd Floor
- 200 employees
- Community liaison: Tiffany Apczynski, 987-5643, tiffany@zendesk.com ■

— Mark Hedin, Tom Carter, Marjorie Beggs and Jonathan Neuman contributed to this story.