

Miracle Messages Launches Miracle Money: California, A \$2 Million Basic Income and Social Support Pilot

Miracle Messages will launch Miracle Money: California In the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles County with support from Google.org

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- [Miracle Messages](#), an award-winning 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, announced

today that it has received more than \$2 million in funding to launch [Miracle Money: California](#), a basic income and social support pilot for people experiencing homelessness. Miracle Money: California will launch in the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles County. The pilot is being funded through a mix of local philanthropists and foundations, including a \$1,150,000 grant from [Google.org](#), Google's philanthropy and is being evaluated through a randomized control trial, in partnership with the University of Southern California (USC).

“

With the support of Google.org, USC, AidKit and others, we hope to demonstrate that a little bit of love and financial support can transform lives, restore dignity, and help people get off the streets”

*Kevin F. Adler, Founder & CEO,
Miracle Messages*

Miracle Money first launched in December 2020 as one of the first basic income pilots for people experiencing homelessness in the United States, and the first to focus on the potentially life-changing impact of social support. In its proof of concept in the Bay Area, 66% of unhoused recipients (6 of 9) were able to secure stable housing as a result of \$500 a month for six months. Recipients

overwhelmingly used their funds toward food, housing, transportation, savings, storage, child care, medications, debt reduction, unexpected family emergencies, and other essentials.

Through this significant expansion of the Miracle Money basic income program, 100 individuals experiencing homelessness in San Francisco, Oakland, and Los Angeles County will receive \$750 a month for 12 months in direct cash transfers, plus social support through the Miracle Friends



**Miracle
Messages**

phone buddy program, which pairs unhoused individuals with trained volunteers from around the world for weekly phone calls and texts to provide social support.

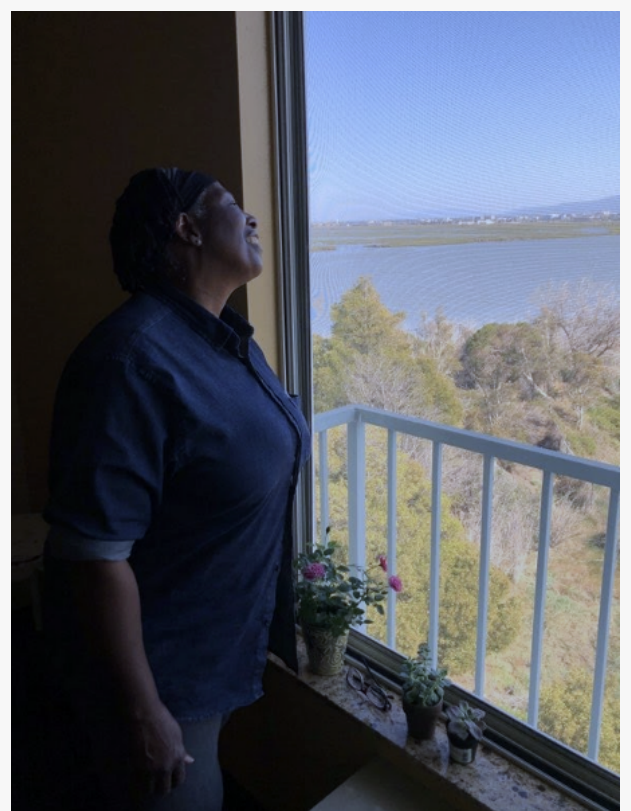
Miracle Money: California will track multiple outcomes including housing stability, food security, mental and emotional health, and relational poverty. The Los Angeles arm of this pilot is being funded through local philanthropists, the Wayfarer Foundation, The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation, and others. The San Francisco and Oakland arm is being primarily funded through Google.org.

More than \$1 million will be distributed directly to individuals experiencing homelessness through this pilot, with the first cash payments currently underway. Dr. Benjamin F. Henwood who directs the Center for Homelessness, Housing, and Health Equity Research at the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work will lead a randomized control trial in order to evaluate the impact of social support with and without basic income.

“When we invest in our neighbors experiencing homelessness, offering even modest financial resources and supportive relationships, problems get solved and people get housed. As we say at Miracle Messages, relational poverty is poverty. And so, with support from Google.org, USC, AidKit, and many local service providers and philanthropists, Miracle Money: California hopes to demonstrate that a little bit of love and financial support can transform lives, restore dignity, and help people get off the streets,” said Kevin F. Adler, Founder and CEO of Miracle Messages.

“Approximately 20 years ago the idea of providing housing first to people experiencing homelessness and mental illness was not widely accepted; today housing first is national policy based on rigorous research. Based on this promising but limited data, we are moving quickly to conduct a randomized control trial of social support and basic income in partnership with the Miracle Messages team. My hope is that science will again demonstrate that there are person-centered interventions that can address homelessness and alleviate suffering; to that end we will let the data speak for itself and be our guide,” added Ben Henwood, PhD, MSW, Professor, USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work.

“We’re long time supporters of cash transfers, so we’re particularly excited to support Miracle Messages’ new pilot of combining cash assistance with social support for adults experiencing homelessness. It’s our hope this grant will not only help individuals experiencing housing insecurity, but also expand the evidence base around the effectiveness of cash transfer



Elizabeth in her forever home

programs for the houseless community," commented Adrian Schurr, Google.org Regional Giving Lead.

In order to overcome the challenges of dispersing funds to the unhoused participants, Miracle Messages has partnered with AidKit, a technology company focused on delivering direct cash with dignity. "We're excited about our mission alignment with Miracle Messages. We are both focused on upholding dignity, removing stigma, and reinforcing personal autonomy for the people we serve. AidKit is going to help participants get cash in a way that works for them and save the Miracle Messages team time so they can focus on the critical relationships they are building with the unhoused communities they serve," Katrina Van Gasse, CEO, and Co-Founder of AidKit

Miracle Messages is partnering with many local service providers and county offices to recruit unhoused recipients into this pilot. In Los Angeles, this includes HOPICS, the LA County Department of Health Services (DHS), Union Station Homeless Services, Home At Last CDC, Hope of the Valley, Safe Parking LA, SELAH Neighborhood Homeless Coalition, LA Neighbors 4 Neighbors, Food on Foot, PATH, The People Concern, and the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, among others, including the Asian American Drug Abuse Program (AADAP) and the FAAAM Outreach Foundation for help with benefits navigation and financial coaching, and the LA County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) for exemption waivers. In San Francisco, this includes the SF Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH), the Downtown San Francisco Partnership, the Tenderloin Linkage Center, Urban Vision Alliance, LavaMaex, YWAM, Code Tenderloin, Urban Alchemy, and Downtown Streets Team. And in Oakland, this includes Urban Compassion Project, West Oakland Punks with Lunch, and Youth Spirit Artworks. These partnerships will help Miracle Messages increase its presence in these two regions while identifying individuals experiencing homelessness who would benefit from weekly calls and text exchanges with volunteer phone buddies and, if randomly selected, one year of basic income.

About Miracle Messages

Miracle Money is a program of Miracle Messages, an award-winning 501(c)3 national nonprofit organization, headquartered in the San Francisco Bay Area and serving worldwide. Miracle Messages was founded on the belief that no one should go through homelessness alone. Miracle Messages helps people experiencing homelessness rebuild their social support systems and financial security, primarily through family reunifications, a phone buddy program, and basic income pilots. <https://www.miraclemessages.org/>

Media Relations

Miracle Messages

+1 415-545-8405

kevin@miraclemessages.org

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