

BACK-TO-SCHOOL DRIVE 2024



Case Statement



Introduction

Imagine the anxiety of a young student starting their first day of school knowing they don't have any of the supplies the teacher asked to get for the school year. Or the stigma a parent feels because they can not provide even the basic tools their child needs for an education. This is what Family Giving Tree (FGT) works to prevent with its Back-to-School (BTS) Program.

Founded by Jennifer Cullenbine and Todd Yoshida as a San Jose State University MBA class project, FGT has grown into California's largest gift and backpack donation program over the past 34 years, removing the barriers that stand in the way of student success and providing joy throughout the Bay Area.





**AT FAMILY GIVING TREE, WE ACTIVELY WORK TO
INSPIRE OUR COMMUNITY'S VALUES OF KINDNESS,
PHILANTHROPY, AND VOLUNTEERISM.**

Mission:

Connecting those who can give to those in need with educational support, gifts, and volunteerism.

Vision:

We envision a world where giving brings joy, offers hope, and creates learning possibilities.



Community

We foster an inclusive culture of volunteerism and philanthropy with people of all ages and backgrounds. We strive to inspire people to “pay it forward” by uplifting others in our community.



Kindness

We demonstrate genuine empathy and compassion in all that we do. We are advocates for treating people with respect and consideration. We make giving back a joyful experience.



Empowerment

We recognize that we don't all start from the same place in the world. Through community alliances, we provide those we serve with gifts & tools to give them the equitable opportunity to dream & grow.

VALUES



Adaptability

We collaborate creatively to adapt and provide relevant resources to meet community needs. Family Giving Tree tests new ideas and explores innovative ways of delivering value to our community.



Accountability

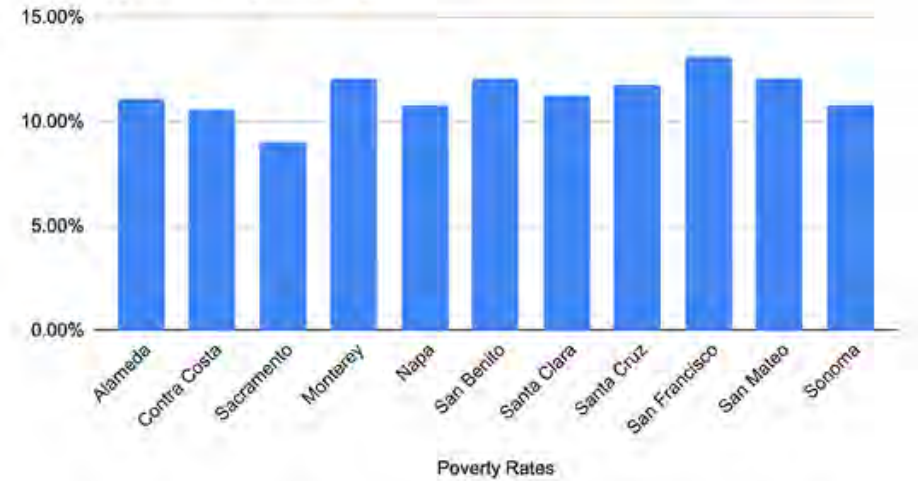
We take the initiative to meet our commitments to each other and our volunteers, agencies, donors, and community. We are responsible stewards of the gifts we receive on behalf of those we serve.

Statement of Need

In the Bay Area, *poverty rates** among families vary by county, ranging from 13% in San Mateo to 15% in Contra Costa and San Benito.¹ Many households **struggle to afford essentials like groceries, utilities, transportation, and school supplies due to the region's high cost of living.** The rise in inflation further strains family budgets and exacerbates these challenges as prices are driven even higher.

*Low-Income Family 4 for Santa Clara is \$90,650 - \$181,300
Very Low Income for a Family of 4: \$54,390 - \$90,650³

Poverty Rates by County²



¹ "Child Care Data Tool," San Francisco Bay Area Region, accessed April 26, 2023, <https://rrnetwork.org/research/child-care-data-tool>

² Public Policy Institute of California, "Poverty Varies across California's Regions," <https://www.ppic.org/blog/poverty-varies-across-californias-regions/>
Accessed January 2024.

³ SV@Home, "Area Median Income & Eligibility for Affordable Housing" <https://siliconvalleyathome.org/resources/finding-affordable-housing/>



AVERAGE MONTHLY EXPENDITURES FOR A FAMILY OF FOUR



Salary (Two Parent Household)

\$5,084 \$17.75/hour x 40 hours/week (after taxes)

Source: [City of Santa Clara](#)

Conversion after taxes source: [Smart Asset: Federal Paycheck Calculator](#)



Rent

\$2,658

Average rent in Santa Clara for 1-bedroom.

Source: [Rent](#)
Updated 02/2024



Water

\$100.64

(Based on 2 inch water meter size)/Electricity)

Source: [Water Rates](#)

Utilities

(Gas/Electricity)

\$192.03

Source: [Cost of Living in Santa Clara, California](#)



Food

\$1,288

Source: [What is the Cost of Living in California??](#)



Car Insurance

\$224

Source: [Average Cost of Car Insurance in California for 2024](#)

Gas

\$201.60

\$4.20 x 12 gallons =
\$50.40 x 4 weeks =
\$201.60.

Source: [Cost of Living in Santa Clara, California](#)

Sanitation/Garbage

\$41.41

Source: [City of Santa Clara: Residential Solid Waste Rates](#)



Cellular Service

\$120 (4 lines)

Source: [Best Family Cell Phone Plan in 2024](#)



Total After Expenses: \$258.32/month*

*Does not include Health insurance, out-of-pocket medical costs, internet, allocation of additional savings, 401k, or child care costs.

Statement of Need

With a 33% price increase over the past two years, as calculated by our surveys and research, many parents must plan to spend less than desired on school supplies. While it is one of the most significant purchasing events for many, it's a burden when a family budget is already stretched to the limit. In addition to the inflated cost of goods due to economic circumstances, the average rent for a one-bedroom apartment in Santa Clara increased by 12% to **\$34,104 a year**.⁴ Families already struggling to keep food on the table and pay rent are finding it increasingly difficult to cover the costs of essential school supplies and backpacks.

Family Giving Tree (FGT) believes every child deserves educational equity and designed our Back-to-School program to empower community members facing these socioeconomic barriers. This program offers essential backpacks and school supplies to the K-12 students who need them most. Working directly with school administrators, FGT identifies and supports these students, fostering positive attitudes toward education and ensuring they can achieve their full academic potential.

In 2023, FGT provided over 27,500 K-12 students with supply-filled backpacks. Ultimately, an educated workforce benefits employers and the entire community. Education is directly linked to poverty rates; 22% of adults without a high school diploma live in poverty.⁵ For the youth served by the Back-to-School Drive, the educational support they receive helps fill the gaps where the systemic inequalities exist as they relate to relative, absolute, and generational poverty, leading to brighter, more prosperous futures.

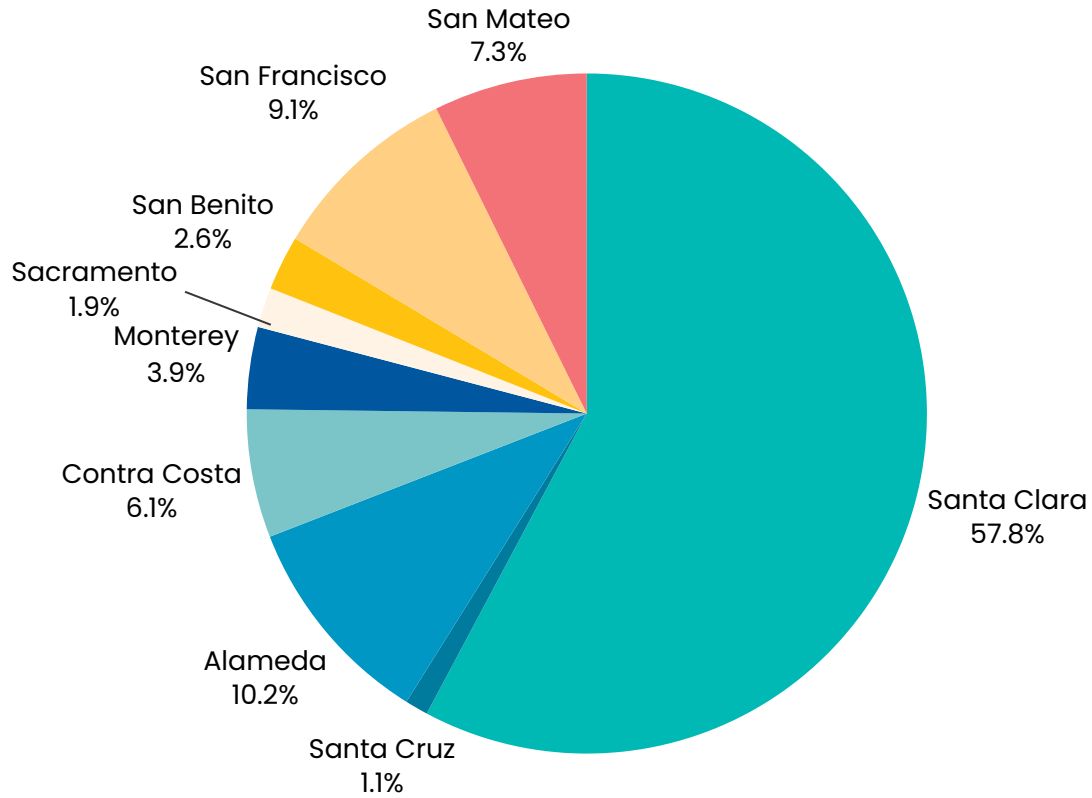


⁴ Rent. "Renter Market Trends". Updated August 31, 2022. Accessed: September 2023.

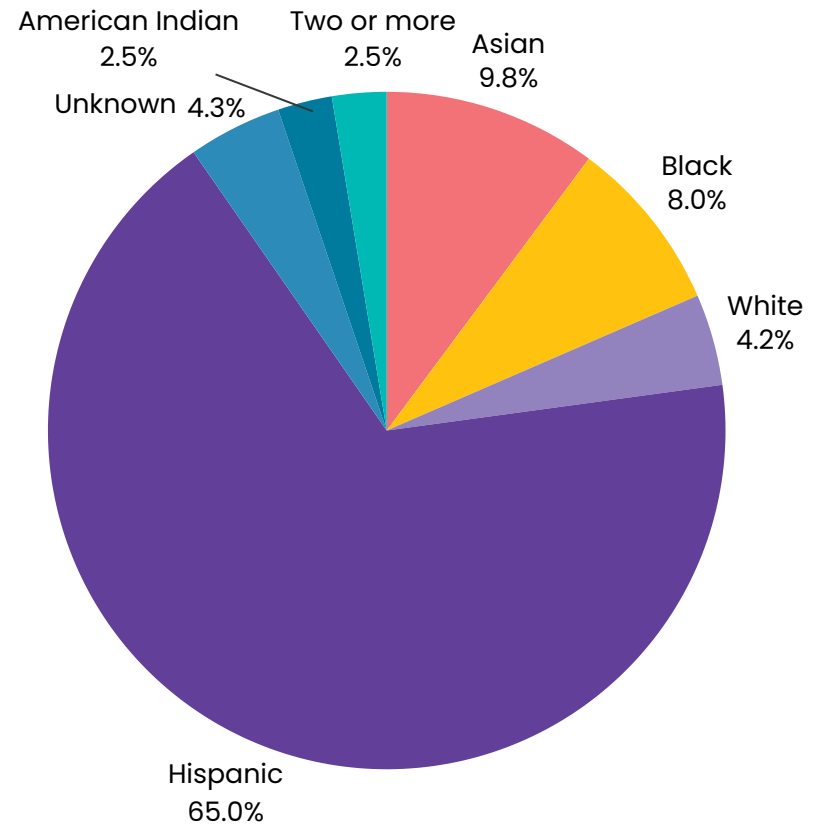
⁵ Public Policy Institute of California. "Poverty in California". <https://www.ppic.org/publication/poverty-in-california/> Accessed January 2024.

DEMOGRAPHICS

BTS Counties Served



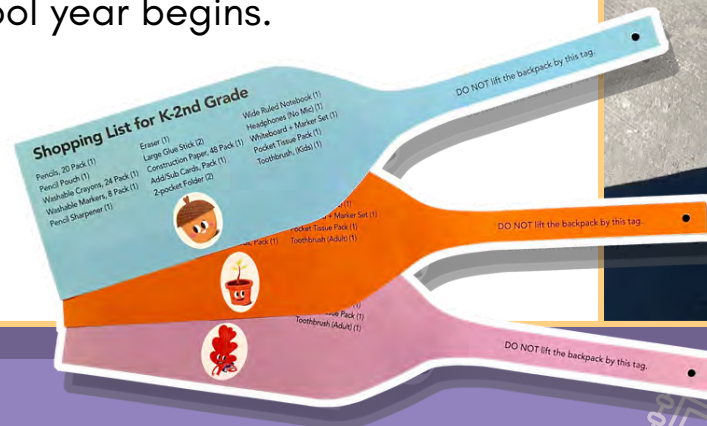
Ethnicities Served



Our Model:

Family Giving Tree (FGT) collaborates with **over 200 partner schools**, utilizing district information to identify the schools that need the most assistance. By partnering with educators and administrators, we support the students with the appropriate backpacks and tailor our supply lists to accommodate the specific requirements of each grade level.

Our program structure encourages widespread community involvement by inviting companies, community organizations, social groups, and small business owners to become Drive Leaders with no age limit on volunteering. Drive Leaders collect supply-filled backpacks and monetary donations during late spring to early summer, and volunteers sort, check, and prepare the backpacks for distribution before the school year begins.





Maximizing the Impact of Every Donated Dollar:

FGT's strategic partnerships with vendors allow us to negotiate bulk purchase agreements and secure school supplies at 40-69% below retail prices. These agreements allow our organization to **maximize every monetary donation to support two times the number of students** for the same amount. Even as inflation makes these supplies more expensive, FGT can still impact more students through these cultivated relationships.

In the Words of Those We Serve:

"Backpacks and school supplies can impact students because it helps them feel equal to their peers. I can say from experience that's really important, especially for recent immigrant newcomer students."

- **Hong Thach**

Community Engagement & Relations Manager, The Oakland Public Education Fund

"It means so much to me that I know there is someone out there in this world who is willing to help us! What I liked the most is the markers because I really needed markers to use at school!"

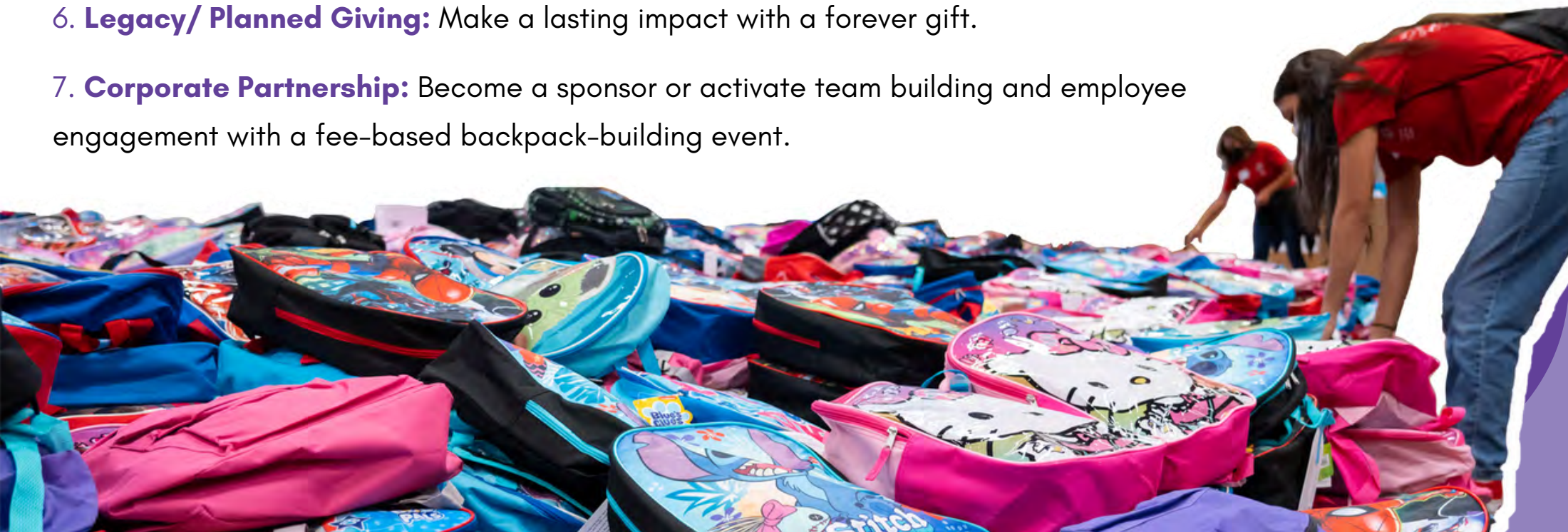
- **Sherry**

4th grade student

MAKE AN IMPACT FOR FAMILY GIVING TREE

Financial Contributions:

1. **Become a Community Champion (Monthly Donor):** Deliver lasting support to those in our community.
2. **Corporate Matching:** Check if your employer matches your donations.
3. **Direct Donation:** Visit <https://familygivingtree.org/donate> to make a one-time or recurring contribution.
4. **Stock Proceeds:** Donate proceeds from the sale of stocks.
5. **Donor-Advised Funds:** Allocate funds from your DAF account.
6. **Legacy/ Planned Giving:** Make a lasting impact with a forever gift.
7. **Corporate Partnership:** Become a sponsor or activate team building and employee engagement with a fee-based backpack-building event.



MAKE AN IMPACT FOR FAMILY GIVING TREE

Volunteer Opportunities:

1. **Lead a Drive:** Organize a backpack drive to collect donations or set up a Virtual Giving Tree.
2. **Backpack Preparation:** Sort, quality check, and prepare backpacks for distribution.
3. **Leadership Roles:** Explore opportunities to serve on our Board of Directors or committees.

Learn more at: <https://familygivingtree.org/get-involved/volunteer>

Build Awareness:

1. **Connect on Social Media:** @familygivingtree on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn
2. **Newsletter Subscription:** Sign up for our newsletter on FGT.org to stay updated.
3. **Invite Friends to Volunteer:** Encourage your friends to volunteer.
4. **Spread the Word:** Share your experiences & tell your friends about FGT.

Leadership

Jennifer Cullenbine

CEO and Founder

Jess Gutierrez

Chief Financial Officer

Jill Mitsch

Deputy Director

Charlotte Wood

Director of Marketing and Development

Staff

Amelia Capsuto

Development Manager

Ashley Jacques

Community Drive Coordinator

Brianna Williams

Development Officer

Celeste Delamore

HWD Agency Coordinator

Doug Harney

Facilities and Trucking

Evelyn Huynh

Partner Relations Manager

Kim Foster

Development Associate

Kristina Afzal

Salesforce Tech Support Specialist

Liza Levin

Executive Assistant

Margarita Galindo

Institutional Giving Officer

Mikey J Smith

Marketing Coordinator

PinnPinn Sha

Content Creator and Coordinator

Shannon Fey

Volunteer Coordinator

Tennille Fyre

Bookkeeper/Payroll Specialist

Board of Directors

Andrea Borch

Board Chair

Dominic Mills

Sachi Patel

Shelene Huey-Booker

Malcolm Humphrey

Gagan Sekhon

John Mansperger

Joelle Hurlston

Lee Du



Family Giving Tree™

fgt.org

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