

# March 2014 Newsletter



Convening. Advocacy. Incubation.

## About Us

Step Up Silicon Valley is a social innovation network focused on reducing poverty in Santa Clara County through convening, advocating for policy changes, and incubating innovative solutions to help people move out of poverty. We achieve this by working closely with representatives from various organizations and community members to coordinate breakthrough systems change that allow us to holistically create a thriving community in which none are too poor to give or too wealthy to be in need, and where everyone has access to affordable health care, sufficient nutritious food, decent affordable housing, meaningful educational and career opportunities, and reliable income that meets their basic financial needs. Learn more at [www.stepupsv.org](http://www.stepupsv.org).

## Our Vision & Mission

Our vision is to reduce poverty and increase economic opportunities in Santa Clara County. The mission of Step Up Silicon Valley is to achieve this vision by transforming community awareness and generating the political will to create systems change that will enable individuals and families to step up and out of poverty in Santa Clara County.

Learn about our steps forward:

## 1,000 Out of Poverty: The TeenForce Perspective on Progress

by John Hogan, Founder & CEO of TeenForce



Ian Knapp, 22, has improved his situation since getting a job as a tow truck driver

The 1000 Out of Poverty program has brought clarity to our mission at TeenForce while simplifying and organizing our outcomes measurement system. We always knew we were doing important work when providing job opportunities to Opportunity Youth (with an emphasis on current and former foster youth). But, sometimes, we struggled with the question of, "You got them a job....so what?" It seemed obvious to us that the job would help young adults move toward self-sufficient adulthood. The reality was, we had trouble documenting this linkage, and, in some cases, the job didn't seem to help the youth make progress.

Adopting the 1000 Out of Poverty measurement scale has helped solve these

issues by providing a simple, repeatable scoring system in five critical areas: Income, Housing, Education, Food Security, and Health Care. We are now

Step Up Pay for Success  
[Idea to Action Document](#)

2013 Annual Report  
[Step Up Progress Through 2013](#)

Join our [mailing list](#) or visit our [website](#) to learn more about SUSV.

#### Community Announcements

Good Jobs Build Strong  
Communities Summit

Saturday, March 15, 9:00AM-  
2:30PM

Over a third of all families in Silicon Valley don't earn enough money to be self-sufficient. Join us for a strategy session on improving the lives of low wage workers.

Breakfast and Lunch provided  
Please RSVP to 408-606-2060  
or [lita@southbaylabor.org](mailto:lita@southbaylabor.org).

Free Tax Prep Services!  
The VITA Program offers free tax help to low- to moderate-income people (\$52k and below) to prepare tax returns. Individuals and families who qualify are encouraged to use this free resource! Go to [Earn It! Keep It! Save It!](#) for more information. A free alternative online resource for people to self-complete their taxes is also now available online [here](#).

Save the Date: Spring Forward  
A 5K/10K Charity Run  
Saturday, April 5, 8AM  
Microsoft Campus, 1065 La  
Avenida, Mountain View, CA 94043  
SGI and Microsoft host our Spring Forward Charity Run! Proceeds will benefit Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County programs that help people overcome poverty and become self-reliant. [Register](#) today!

The Silicon Valley Third Annual  
Social Innovation Leadership  
Forum  
Friday, April 25, 9:00AM - 4:00PM

seeing that TeenForce youth who have successful placements are moving up on these measurements over time. When the youth isn't succeeding in the job, the scores do not improve. This has caused us to improve our program design and service levels by adding a career mentoring component. The mentors are able to work with youth with an eye of helping the youth improve their situation as it related to the five key measurement areas. Lastly, our participation in 1000 Out of Poverty has made it easier to explain and demonstrate our outcomes measurement strategy to potential funders.

[Watch a video](#) about TeenForce's latest progress.

For more information on TeenForce, please contact [John Hogan](#).

### Step Up Silicon Valley Learning and Development Series

**Environmental Injustice:** A Spatial Analysis of Cumulative Environmental Benefits and Burdens for Santa Clara County's Neighborhoods.

Presented by Professor Iris T. Stewart, Professor Christopher M. Bacon, and William Burke

March 20, 2014, 9:00AM-10:30AM, Santa Clara University  
Nobili Dining Room, 500 El Camino Real, Santa Clara, CA  
RSVP to [Adelene Ramos](#)

The distribution of environmental benefits and burdens has a significant impact on human health and raises questions about environmental justice and equal access. We expanded upon research methods used by scholars at UC Berkeley and California's Environmental Protection Agency to complete an assessment of cumulative environmental impacts in Santa Clara County. This study uses Geographic Information Systems integrating three difference indices. They include a social vulnerability index (e.g. census tract level data about poverty levels, race/ethnicity, age, education, and English proficiency), environmental burdens index (e.g. hazardous emission sites, transportation, and agricultural releases), and environmental benefits index (e.g. parks and open spaces). These indices are mapped and conjunctively analyzed to understand the spatial patterns among social vulnerability and distribution of environmental benefits and burdens. The results find that in some cases low income residents and more socially vulnerable communities are associated with higher concentrations of environmental burdens. They also suggest the need for additional study and environmental monitoring. They could also inform community action and policy.

#### Speakers Bio

Iris T. Stewart-Frey and Christopher M. Bacon are faculty members, and William Burke is a research assistant in the Department of Environmental Studies and Sciences, Santa Clara University.

Professor Stewart's research interest include the effects of climate change on water resources, groundwater pollution, and the application of GIS (Geographic Information Systems) for water resources and interdisciplinary environmental justice research. Aside from her recent primary focus on rising water temperatures in the streams of the West, for which she has received a grant from the U.S. EPA, she has used GIS to monitor issues such as the

Friday, April 25, 8:30AM-4:30PM  
San Jose City Hall  
The Social Innovation Leadership Forum (SILF) 2014 is an initiative by the Global Leadership Advancement Center (GLAC) designed to encourage cross-community collaboration to drive innovation issues in addressing our community's social issues.

We need YOU to help disrupt Silicon Valley towards a better tomorrow...[Register](#) for the event today!

1,000 Out of Poverty Meeting  
Friday, April 18, 8:30AM-10:30AM  
The 1,000 OOP network meets monthly to discuss new ideas and share successes, challenges, and opportunities.

Contact [Adelene Ramos](#) to learn more about our initiative.

Upcoming Community Action  
Poverty Simulation Dates

3/16 St. Christopher Parish  
4/7 Presentation High School

Contact [Adelene Ramos](#) to learn more.

grant from the U.S. EPA, she has used GIS to examine issues such as the distribution of school gardens, toxic sites, and pesticide applications in the San Francisco Bay Area. She has co-edited a special issue of Climatic Change and published articles in Water Resources Research, Climatic Change, Hydrologic Processes.

Professor Bacon's primary research examines the political ecology of conventional and alternative food systems and their impacts on rural food security, farmer livelihoods, local institutions and landscapes in Central America. He often uses a community-based participatory action research approach. In addition to continued work in Latin America, he also conducts research focused on environmental and food justice in northern California. He was the lead editor for *Confronting the Coffee Crisis: Sustainable Livelihoods and Ecosystem in Mexico and Central America* (MIT Press) and has published articles in the *Global Environmental Change*, *Journal of Peasant Studies*, *Ecology and Society*, and other journals.

## Poverty Simulation Goes to Hawaii – February 19

On February 19, Step Up facilitated a Poverty Simulation in Honolulu, Hawaii, for 80 participants in Partners in Excellence, a regional convening of Catholic Charities in the islands and territories. Special materials were prepared for the participants to reflect the self-sufficiency situations in the islands where the minimum wage is still \$7.25. Step Up shared our common measures that report the outcomes of our work from the point of view of the clients rather than the output of the social services. The conference focused on social innovation projects and the value of networking for collective impact.

## Business and Community Leaders Participate in Poverty Simulation – February 21



Sunnyvale community members participate in the February 21 Poverty Simulation

In partnership with Sunnyvale Community Services, on February 21, Step Up facilitated a Poverty Simulation where participants experienced what it is like to live on limited income in this expensive community. Also participating were low-income residents of Sunnyvale who took on the roles of banker, teacher, store owner, etc. Texas Instruments sponsored this meaningful event, with

over 60 people participating, including representatives from local companies such as Apple, LinkedIn, Texas Instruments, and Synopsis.

The Community Action Poverty Simulation (CAPS) is one of the tools that Step Up uses to educate the community about the daily realities of people living in poverty in Santa Clara County. During the two hour simulation, a "month" is divided into four, 15-minute "weeks" and participants role-play the lives of low-income families trying to provide food and shelter, while interacting with community resources including a bank, store, utility company, pawn shop, and more. The Poverty Simulation is an opportunity for community members of all income levels to come together and talk about real world poverty and what steps we can take to alleviate poverty in our community.

## Next Poverty Simulation – March 16

Please join us on Sunday, March 16, from 9 am to 1 pm, at St. Christopher Parish in San Jose. If you would like to participate, volunteer, or host a Poverty Simulation for your organization, please contact [Adelene Ramos](#).

## California's Food Stamp Program

California's CalFresh federally funded food assistance program, which is known in other states as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), is the nation's largest food assistance program. It is also an integral part of the social safety net. Each month an average of 4.16 million Californians living in 1.91 million households received CalFresh assistance. An average of \$150 a month was received by each recipient to be used for their household's grocery bill. Californians received nearly \$7.56 billion in federal food assistance for the year, which is 9.6% of the total national spending on SNAP benefits.

Learn more about [The Food Stamp Program in California](#) through the [Public Policy Institute of CA](#).

## Thank You to Our Sponsors!



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