

## What's HIP Housing? By Christopher Sturken

*Note: Upside is deferring to a guest column about a county nonprofit engaging homeowners in providing affordable housing for vulnerable sectors and helping them achieve self-sufficiency, a true win-win equation.*

**E**VER heard of HIP (Human Investment Project) Housing?

Since 1972, the non-profit organization has specialized in affordable, creative housing solutions in San Mateo County. Each year, HIP Housing helps 1,400 people find housing or stay housed through its Home-Sharing and Self-Sufficiency Programs as well as through housing units owned and managed by the organization.

How?

“HIP Housing’s free Home-Sharing Program can make renting a room in your home or finding a tenant for your second unit a safe and comfortable process,” says Kate Comfort-Harr, the organization’s executive director.

The program is a free service to help homeowners or renters with extra space find a housemate who lives, works, or attends school in San Mateo County. Home Sharing coordinators interview and screen applicants, conduct background searches, provide references, develop a “Living Together Agreement,” and provide ongoing follow-up support.

People home-share for a variety of reasons including to share housing costs, earn extra income, receive help at home, for companionship, and to help out their neighbors. Home sharing makes more efficient use of existing housing stock and benefits our whole community. One spare room changes (at least) two lives!

Home-sharing is ideal for older adults and working professionals.

Working professionals who work long hours or multiple jobs may find a housemate to help split costs. Older adults and retirees who live alone or on a fixed income may find a housemate for companionship or to share housing expenses.

“Home-sharing can be like living with family,” says Clarice Veloso-Lugo, development director at the organization. Participants can share their preferences for a housemate and home-sharing coordinators then provide referrals that match those preferences as best as possible.

HIP Housing recognizes its role in providing essential services and remains committed to helping members of our community find housing or stay housed during this difficult time. In compliance with the San Mateo County Health Officer’s Shelter in Place Order, its offices will be closed until May 31. However, staff provides services remotely.

For more information or to apply, call (650) 348 6660 and mention “Philippine News Today.” Leave a message as needed. Or visit [hiphousing.org](http://hiphousing.org). HIP Housing now offers video appointments.

\*\*\*

*Foster City resident Christopher Sturken is a current home-sharing client and the community outreach specialist for HIP Housing.*

*Cherie M. Querol Moreno is an award-winning journalist and community educator-volunteer who has lived in her Daly City home for 30 years. Upside will return next week.*



**CHERIE M. QUEROL MORENO**



**Christopher Sturken is the best endorser of his organization.**