"No, sorry, that is not acceptable." Those were Gordon Packard’s words, spoken in his measured tone, to the Mayor and Council in 1983 when they threatened to close down St. Martin’s Center. St. Martin’s was the predecessor of the Primavera Foundation, a program where church volunteers came together to serve a daily meal to homeless men, women, and families.

Gordon had convinced the Phoenix-based Episcopal Diocese of Arizona to sponsor it, and it ran successfully over the course of a year. Since that moment 35 years ago, I heard his words play out over and over: Gordon politely but firmly standing his ground, convincing the City of Tucson, the County Board of Supervisors, the legislators of the State of Arizona, and the National Coalition for the Homeless in Washington DC of the need for attention to the growing challenge of homelessness. After the demise of St. Martin’s Center, Gordon and I made the decision to start a non-profit agency to address the gaps in homeless services and the Primavera Foundation was born. Gordon’s laser-like instincts drew him to all the right places: locally to the government, businesses, schools, faith organizations; and nationally to newly-available federal funds directed to address poverty issues.

We created our first program, an emergency shelter, in 1986. It still serves about 100 men each day along with all meals provided by volunteers. Gordon’s mind never stopped working. He envisioned an integrated system of support, where an individual could move from a crisis situation to stable housing and permanent employment.

To make this happen, we built houses, renovated apartments, created an employment program and built a training center to house it, designed programs to provide financial literacy skills, created a water harvesting program, and community gardens—everything to help a homeless person or family get back on track.

We also addressed special needs such as a shelter for unaccompanied women and a community center in South Tucson for low-income families. Gordon’s passing in September 2018, he left a powerful legacy and will be remembered as a unique, generous and determined individual who will continue to inspire us to reach beyond oursevles in service to others.

The Primavera Foundation provides pathways out of poverty through safe, affordable housing, workforce development, and neighborhood revitalization.
CELEBRATIONS

Honoring Multicultural Roots

A three-panel “Water is Life” mural was designed and created by local artists and Las Artes Arts and Education Center students, to celebrate and honor the multi-cultural roots of the City of South Tucson.

Funded by a Project-Reinvest Neighborhoods grant, the mural is visible from the Greenway, which connects to the 131-mile loop of multi-use paths around Tucson.

The Lasting Legacy of Rick Eck

The Primavera Foundation’s four “S’s”: Survival, Stability, Security, and Sustainability, are the building blocks of our diverse continuum of programs and advocacy strategies. Over the past 20 years, they have also guided our strategy of investing in organizational capacity, innovation, and organizational financial health.

But it wasn’t always this way.

In 1993, Rick Eck, a person deeply devoted to Primavera’s mission and vision, was invited to join the Primavera Foundation Board of Directors. Rick’s expertise in behavioral health and his passion for bringing greater equity of opportunity to people with special needs filled a huge gap. Rick also led the Board and staff in planning for long term organizational sustainability.

When an unexpected bequest arrived one day, Rick challenged the Board to use the money to pay off a multifamily rental housing property loan and to start a Board-advised quasi-endowment, with the goal of raising $1 million dollars. Primavera’s practice has been to funnel unexpected bequests into this quasi-endowment.

Today, the Board-advised quasi-endowment sits at nearly $1.7 million. It has enabled Primavera to create our own internal line of credit to pay expenses while waiting for government contracts for services to be reimbursed. It has also enabled Primavera to have immediate resources to respond to changing needs in the community and fill the gap created by the reduction in government support for critical public services.

In 2011, our beloved friend Rick Eck passed away, too early. But Rick’s lasting legacy lives on in the Rick Eck Memorial Endowment. And, Rick’s spirit still guides us each day, as we continue to create supportive, valuable programs and strategies to bring about justice in our time.

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Now, as springtime nears with its period of warming and regrowth, I am reflecting on Primavera’s roots and this great community of a virtual “garden” that we all tend together. Primavera (which means “spring” in Spanish) has deep roots, started by the seeds that Nancy and Gordon planted 35 years ago, and visualized in the squash blossom design that is our logo. The seeds have long been watered and the growing blooms tended by you, our cherished donors, funders, volunteers, staff, and community partners, for giving selflessly of your time, talent, and treasure.

Together, we provide our neighbors with the opportunity to transform their lives. We couldn’t do this without you, and the thousands of individuals and families that we serve are so deeply grateful to all of you for making their stronger, more sustainable futures possibilities that become true realities. These are the most beautiful blossoms of all.

Visio nary Gr a titude

We’re honored to feature the very special individuals and community groups we call our gracious friends, who have dedicated their time and/or support for our cause:

Community Partners
Primavera Cooks! Partners
Donors
Funders
Volunteers

Visit this featured area*:
PRIMAVERA.ORG/THANKS

*Lists based on FY, Includes donor dedications and in memoriam.

WANT TO HELP?

Please consider making a donation today.

Go to PRIMAVERA.ORG/THANKS to learn more about how you can join our growing family of friends.

Support Our Fundraising Initiative

PRIMAVERA.ORG/DONATE

Thank you for your support of Primavera.
PROGRESS

Our Homeless Intervention and Prevention Drop-in Center (HIP) now partners with Pima Animal Care Center (PACC) and Friends of Pima Animal Care Center, to provide pet supplies kits for people experiencing homelessness and their pets.

“People facing homelessness in our community love their pets just as much as anyone else and they will often feed their pet before they feed themselves,” PACC Director of Animal Services Kristen Auerbach said. “This program means they will no longer have to make that choice. With this partnership, they’ll be able to more easily get supplies for their pet.”

Pet supplies are packaged in easy-to-transform bags and distributed at HIP and throughout the community.

“We are excited and grateful for this partnership with PACC!” Primavera Chief Executive Officer Peggy Hutchison said. “Pet companions provide healing, love, and emotional support for community members experiencing the isolation, marginalization, and violence of homelessness. The ‘Go Kits’ really matter to our friends who are working hard to secure a safe place to call home.”

Together, we also served hundreds of pets at the first-ever homeless outreach mega-event in January, “Tucson Homeless Pet Connect.”

Our neighbors facing homelessness had the chance to get food, leashes, collars, microchips, and vaccines for their pets. 218 pets received vaccines, 140 pets were seen by a volunteer veterinarian, Dr. Erin O’Donnell, and 102 pets were microchipped.

Additional support was provided by Cody’s Friends Charity, No Kill Pima County, and Sister Jose Women’s Center. Thank you all!
2018

This was our 17th season of Primavera Cooks!, a series of fundraiser dinners that takes place exclusively in locally-owned Tucson restaurants.

Each year, community members, sponsors, and restaurants come together to create this unique culinary event that has continued to grow since its inception in 2001.

Over the years, this event has raised almost $2.5 million dollars, with 80 percent of that revenue directly benefiting Primavera’s programs in the fight against homelessness and poverty in Southern Arizona.

Get engaged with Primavera Cooks! this upcoming season:
PRIMAVERA.ORG/COOKS

54 APPRENTICE CHEFS

1200 DINERS

9 RESTAURANTS: Agustin Kitchen, Janos/Carriage House, Contigo, Feast, Kingfisher, Pastiche, Reforma, Tavolino, and Vivace.


$230,000 RAISED

Photos this page: (top, left to right) Apprentice Chefs Anna Don, Christy Friske-Daniels, Troy Pastniak; Agustin Chef Alex O’Neill, Kathy Dixon, and Valerie Greenhill. (middle) Bob Coleman offers hors d’oeuvres to diners at Reforma. (bottom left) Apprentice Chef Dave Massanari plates up at Tavolino. (bottom right) Apprentice Chefs Don Eugene and Tucson Electric Power’s Cat Schladweiler at Pastiche.

Photos this page: (top) Apprentice Chefs Allen Freed, Primavera Board Member [right]; and Herman Salazar [left] man the grill at Contigo. (middle left to right) Apprentice Chefs at Tavolino: Paul Wheeler, Dee Dee McCabe, Michael Arzon; Tavolino Executive Chef, Eduardo Jara-Garcia; Jeff Schuchart, David Massanari, and Southwest Gas District Director, Tom Muise. (bottom) Diners enjoy an amazing evening out at Tavolino.

THANK YOU FOR OUR BEST SEASON EVER!