



MASONS OF CALIFORNIA

FRATERNITY REPORT 2024



Filling a Need

SO MUCH HAS HAPPENED over the past 12 months, it can be hard to know where to begin in trying to sum it all up. As a fraternity, we've made incredible strides on our membership efforts, public awareness goals, and new lodge openings. Our Foundation has invested heavily in public education and vocational training in the Sacramento area. The Masonic Homes have expanded eligibility to serve more Masons and their families than ever before, and recently put the finishing touches on a brand-new skilled nursing facility in Covina. And Masonic Outreach Services have brought relief to Masons throughout the state and inspired

our members to reach out and help others in need.

That last part is key.

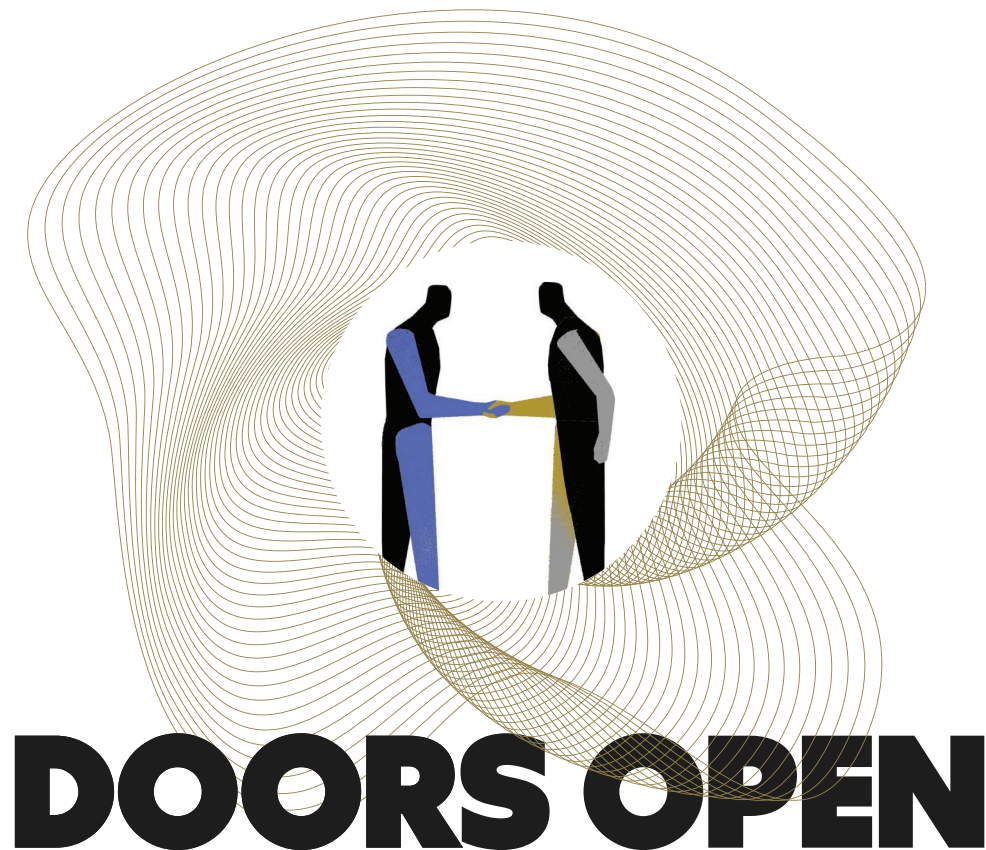
If there's a common thread to the work we do as a fraternity, it's identifying the needs of those around us—and then working to fill those needs.

When we saw Masons from other traditions in need of senior care and relief, we met it through our Masonic Homes. When we saw a need for dual-language literacy support among refugee students in West Sacramento, we worked with our nonprofit partners to meet it. When we saw a need for new kinds of Masonic lodges to serve members of different backgrounds, or with specific interests, we helped them develop new lodges that could address those needs head-on.

That's what we're all about. So as we move into our 175th year as the Grand Lodge of California, I call on all California Masons to look around and seek out ways to help. Find out what the needs of your fellow members are. Identify the needs in your local community. Reach out to lodge widows and our wider fraternal family and ask what they need. By doing so, we prove our value as Masons and as a fraternity. We fulfill the obligations we all took when we became Masons. And we make good on the shared vision we've set for ourselves to create a world in harmony.

To all California Masons, thank you for your energy and generosity. I can't wait to see what the next year brings.

Arthur L. Salazar Jr.
GRAND MASTER OF MASONS IN CALIFORNIA



DOORS OPEN

AN INCREASED EFFORT ON PUBLIC AWARENESS IS PAYING OFF FOR CALIFORNIA LODGES.

BY NOW HE SHOULD expect it, but each Thursday, when lodge master Frank Barbano opens the doors to **Elysian N^o 418** for its regular dinner get-togethers, he's blown away all over again

BY IAN A. STEWART

by the scrum of people waiting to get inside.

Over the past year, Elysian N^o 418, in Los Feliz, fashioned itself into the buzzing center of Masonry in California. As a result, its meetings swelled with not just existing members but,

increasingly, would-be Masons eager to get a taste of what the fraternity is all about. As a lodge of just 153 people, Elysian nonetheless initiated 19 new members in 2024. Another dozen filed their applications for degrees, and a further 30 prospects are now preparing to do so.

More than most, Elysian N^o 418 reaped the benefits of a concerted effort on the part of the state fraternity to increase public awareness of Freemasonry. That was seen in recurring social

media campaigns, an increase in press mentions, and a greater focus on public events. Crucially, the lodge made the most out of the resultant surge of interest. It was one of the first to assign a prospect manager to handle incoming requests, established a committee to pair mentors with lodge newcomers, and made a point of hosting frequent social gatherings. Hence the weekly dinners, where at least 50 people—including many prospects—come together to eat, hear a lecture, and get to know one another.

At Elysian and elsewhere, those efforts are starting to pay off. Since 2022, when the Grand Lodge launched its first social media campaign, it has added more than 13,000 new prospects—nearly all of whom came through its online portal. Of those, approximately 80 percent were referred to a California lodge, and thus far about 10 percent have become Masons here. As a result, our lodges have also seen their greatest upswing in applications in a decade (nearly 3,000 since 2022–23).

The lesson is clear: Interest in Freemasonry remains high. Now it's just a matter of capitalizing on it.

PART OF THE PLAN

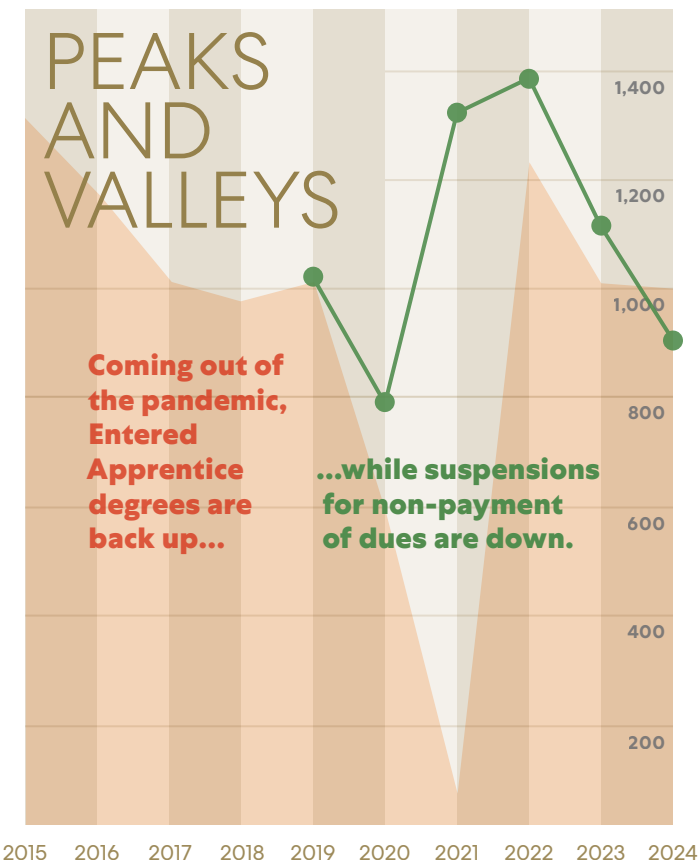
Increasing public awareness was one of the central pillars of the organization's 2025 Fraternity Plan. On that front, it made some incredible strides.

Consider: The annual #ImAMason social media challenge, asking Masons to describe what they value about their membership, reached 8.9 million people in 2024—up from six million the year prior and 2.8 million in its first year. And over the three-year summer awareness campaign's run, it generated more than 50,000 clicks from those interested in learning more about

the fraternity. Meanwhile, press releases for Masonic events were picked up by several news outlets, reaching a combined potential audience of more than 50 million.

And in a true sign of the times, the Masons of California even started a TikTok channel! Since launching in May 2024, it has gained more than 6,000 followers. As one of the few Masonic grand lodges on the platform, the page has already become one of the most trustworthy (and entertaining) authorities on Freemasonry in the space.

Those weren't the only aims of the fraternity plan, however. Supporting members and removing barriers to participation were equally important goals. To that end, the organization unveiled a series of programs to increase member retention. The member restoration program, introduced in 2019, has



returned more than 6,000 Masons to good standing, while an automatic dues-payment system, which rolled out in 2024, has already seen some 600 members sign up. Further, more than 200 lodges have opted into a centralized dues-payment service through which the Grand Lodge bills members directly. Other, related efforts include an option to pre-pay next year's dues, a partial-dues-remission program, and online payments.

The results have been encouraging: Over the past fiscal year, suspensions for non-payment fell to 915, one-third lower than they were just two years ago.

Another goal of the 2025 Fraternity Plan was to provide members and prospects with more options for finding a lodge that fits their needs. Over the past year, an incredible six new lodges received their charter, including the state's second-ever affinity lodge, **Wayfarer's No 889**, a group organized around outdoor activities. Over the past decade, 37 new lodges were constituted through this program—that's 12 percent of all California lodges. Whether it's an intimate lodge in a big city (à la **Seven Hills No 881** in San Francisco), a group catering to an ethnic or linguistic subculture (such as **La France No 885**, **Pilares del Rey Salomon No 886**,

or **Kapayapaan at Pagkakaisa No 888**), or something a little more out-there (like **Royal Street No 890**, which organizes trips to Disneyland), there's surely a lodge for everyone.

BRANDING FREEMASONRY

Another exciting development is a branding study commissioned by the Grand Lodge aimed at better communicating the aims of Freemasonry to the public. As the first phase in this effort, the Grand Lodge developed a manifesto that will help guide its future communications and strategies:

Masons are builders. Where once we built magnificent structures, today we build character. Steeped in tradition and ritual, our values are based on a bedrock of friendship and philanthropy. We believe that harmony between diverse individuals is a powerful force for good. And just as ancient stonemasons perfected their craft, we employ timeless lessons that create meaningful change in ourselves, stronger communities around us, and a better world for all.

Sound familiar? For most Masons, it should. By continuing to hone our messaging for the general public, the Masons of California will be in a better position to increase awareness and positive sentiment—and ultimately strengthen membership, the backbone of our organization.

That so much organizational weight rests on such a simple premise may be counterintuitive. But for Masons like Barbano, it makes perfect sense. After all, the essential truths of Freemasonry have changed little over 300 years. "Everybody wants to belong to something that's fun and exciting and where you can grow as a person," he says. "And when you find it, you get a huge result." ■



GRAND MASTER ARTHUR L. SALAZAR JR. SIGNS THE CHARTER OF KAPAYAPAAN AT PAGKAKAISA No 888 IN NOVEMBER.

We Are Family

AT KAPAYAPAAN AT PAGKAKAISA No 888, A FAMILIAL FEELING IS BAKED INTO THE LODGE CULTURE.

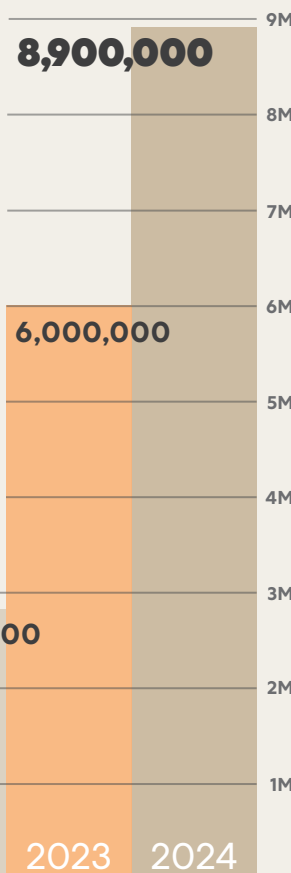
THE NAME OF THE newly formed **Kapayapaan at Pagkakaisa Lodge No 888**, in San Diego, translates to "peace and unity" in Tagalog, the native language of many of its Filipino members. To its founders, the name also connoted Masonic values like harmony, camaraderie, and reconciliation. In other words, family.

That's very much intentional: Lodge leaders have worked hard to instill a deep sense of family in the group's dynamic. That extends to lodge events and social outings, which often involve members' partners and children. When they're together, the group proudly sport green hats, ties, and other lodge-branded gear. Having a shared sense of purpose, along with a shared heritage, has given them a special double bond.

Since the lodge's constitution in November, it has also made a point of putting philanthropy at the heart of its mission. Already, KAP (as members call it) has initiated fundraisers for the Masonic Homes and Masonic Outreach Services and is beginning a new partnership with the Father Joe's Village homeless nonprofit to volunteer monthly at its pantry. ■

FEELING SEEN

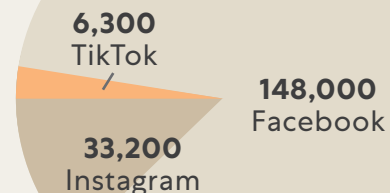
Our online awareness campaigns are reaching more people than ever.



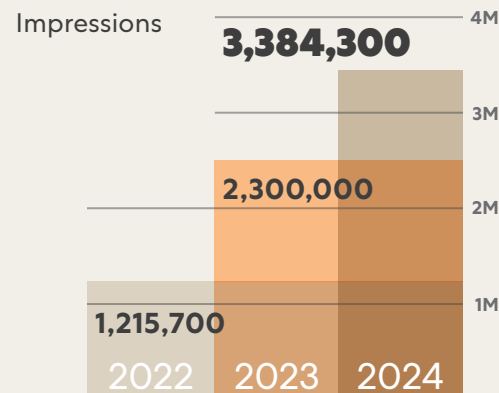
#IMAMASON SOCIAL MEDIA CHALLENGE

Total online reach

SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS 2024



FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN





THE WIN-WIN

IN SACRAMENTO, THE CALIFORNIA MASONIC FOUNDATION IS REFINING AN APPROACH TO PHILANTHROPY THAT BENEFITS ALL.

“WHAT WE KNOW IS THAT when we can bring educational opportunities into a community, we can make a difference.” That was the message

BY IAN A. STEWART

that Douglas Ismail, president of the California Masonic Foundation, delivered to the half-million weekly listeners of Capitol Radio KUOP, the NPR affiliate in Sacramento, on October 2, 2024. The radio interview came on the heels of the Foundation’s announcement of an expansion to its classroom

literacy programs that would begin delivering dual-language Farsi and English books to more than 100 kindergarten and transitional-kindergarten classrooms in West Sacramento, home to the country’s largest Afghan enclave.

Then he pivoted to praising the Foundation’s partner in the effort, the national literacy non-profit Raising a Reader.

Michelle Torgerson, CEO of Raising a Reader, returned the compliment before saying, “The



IN SEPTEMBER, GRAND MASTER G. SEAN METROKA WAS ON HAND AT RIVERBANK K-8 SCHOOL IN WEST SACRAMENTO TO LAUNCH A NEW FARSI AND ENGLISH BOOK PROGRAM.

simple act of reading out loud to a child is the single most important thing you can do to prepare them for success in reading and learning.”

In the space of about 90 seconds, both organizations had effectively made their pitch—both explaining who and what they were, and why their work dovetailed so perfectly together. And downstream from that partnership were the true beneficiaries: the students, many newly settled in the United States, who are typically severely under-resourced, particularly when it comes to language learning. For the Masons, for the non-profit, and for the children, it was a win-win. Or rather, a win-win-win.

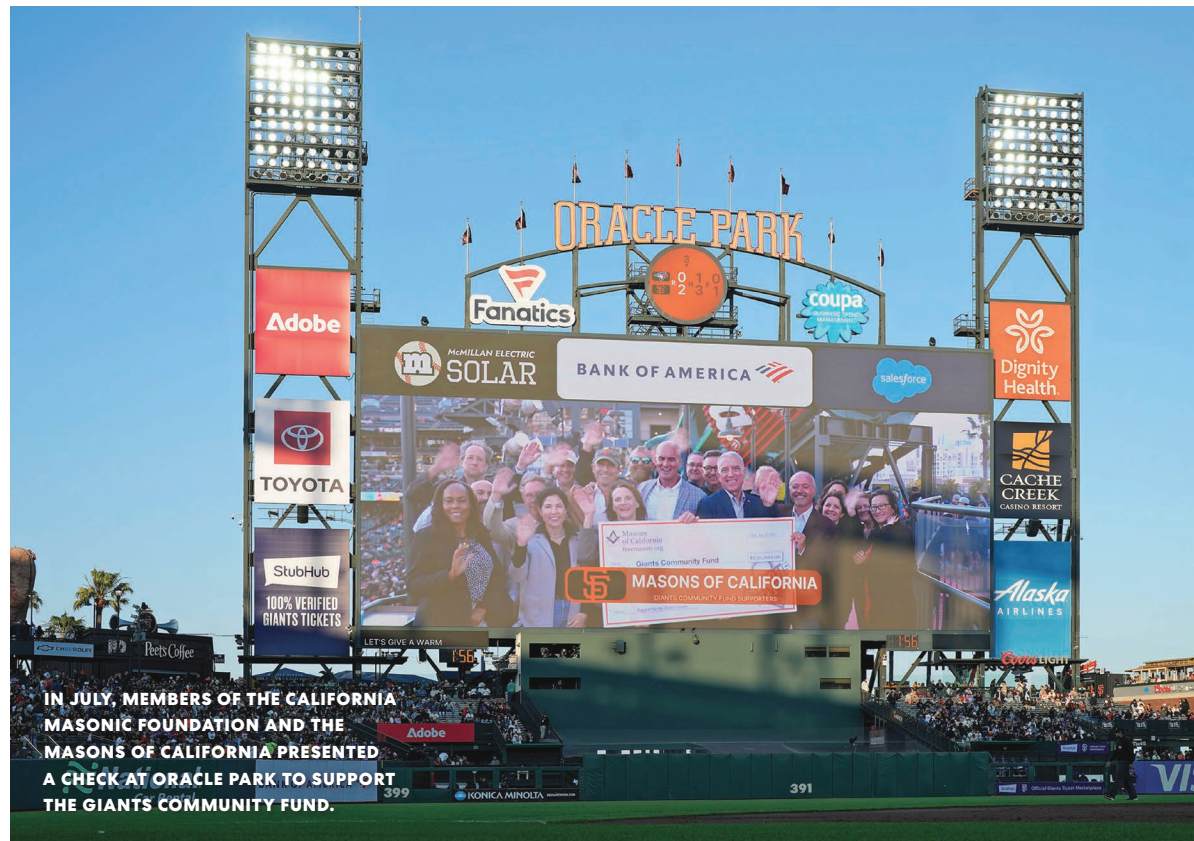
If any moment encapsulates the Foundation’s community-building approach to philanthropy in 2024, it’s that one: bringing existing partners together with new ones, identifying gaps and opportunities to make an impact, and then publicly celebrating that success together. Coming on the heels of last year’s focus on the San Diego area, the Foundation in 2024 turned its attention

to Sacramento, convening a wide range of partners and organizations aimed at supporting students in literacy and in career and technical skills. Those efforts have paid off in a major way.

In addition to working closely with Raising a Reader and the Washington Unified School District on the Farsi-language book collection (an effort that was profiled on three local TV news stations), representatives of the Foundation and its Public Education

“The simple act of reading out loud to a child is the single most important thing you can do to prepare them for success in reading and learning.”

Advisory Committees also met in recent months with leaders from Sacramento Community College, the Elk Grove Unified and Sacramento City Unified school districts, the Sacramento Municipal Utility District, and the California Mobility Center to discuss building pathways to careers in the trades—part of



IN JULY, MEMBERS OF THE CALIFORNIA MASONIC FOUNDATION AND THE MASONS OF CALIFORNIA PRESENTED A CHECK AT ORACLE PARK TO SUPPORT THE GIANTS COMMUNITY FUND.

the Foundation's Working Tools vocational-skills program. Through Working Tools, the Foundation is helping train Sacramento high school graduates for careers in green energy, zero-emissions automotive engineering, and other in-demand, high-tech industries.

In 2023, the Working Tools program was rolled out in Southern California through a three-year, \$390,000 gift to the San Diego Unified School District to fund an expansion of its career and technical education offerings.

By bringing together community organizations and public-education partners in Sacramento, the aim is introduce similar initiatives in that part of the state.

STATEWIDE EFFECT

Sacramento isn't the only place where the Foundation has focused its efforts, however. Other ongoing programs saw enormous success in 2024, perhaps none more than Masons4Mitts. Coming off its highest-ever fundraising total in 2023, the annual

drive—now in its 12th year—once again set records, with more than \$300,000 pouring in from Masons and lodges throughout California. That included record giving in three of its four Major League Baseball markets (Northern California, Los Angeles, and Orange County). Since 2009, Masons4Mitts has raised \$2.35 million. That translates to more than 115,000 custom-embossed leather baseball mitts for kids participating in its MLB partners' after-school and summer enrichment programs for underserved kids.

Fittingly, in July leaders from the Foundation, the Grand Lodge, and the Masonic Homes gathered at Oracle Park in San Francisco for a special check presentation to announce a three-year, \$650,000 gift to the Giants Community Fund that cements the Masons as the team's official "mitt champion."

Elsewhere, the Foundation saw record-high applications to its Investment in Success scholarship program. Working with a new partner, the college-readiness program 10,000 Degrees, the Foundation issued

93 awards in 2023–24, the most since 2017. Going back to 2011, nearly 1,000 students have received more than \$6.7 million in gifts through the Investment in Success scholarship fund. Similarly, the Foundation issued a record-high 25 awards last year through the C.E. Towne Scholarship, given in partnership with the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of California. The Masonic Youth Leadership Award also reached an important milestone in 2024, surpassing \$1 million in total gifts to members of the Masonic youth orders since that program launched in 2016.

LEAVING A LEGACY

Back in January, when the Foundation hosted a special reception in Sacramento for its educational partners, one of its

highest-profile champions took a moment to recognize the fraternity. Delaine Easton, the longtime state superintendent of public instruction, recalled how the Foundation was one of the first groups to support the California Teacher of the Year Awards and helped her build its charitable foundation.

Spending a lifetime in education, Easton said, she came to appreciate the importance of groups like the Masons who step up to fill in the gaps. "You know who was standing at the front of the line to help? The Masonic Foundation," said Easton, who passed away in April. "I owe you so much. The real heroes in this room are the teachers. But we need people like the people in this room to support you. This Masonic order has been amazing and will continue to be amazing." ■

THE GIVING SPIRIT

California Masons stepped up to support charitable initiatives in 2024.

\$1,347,114

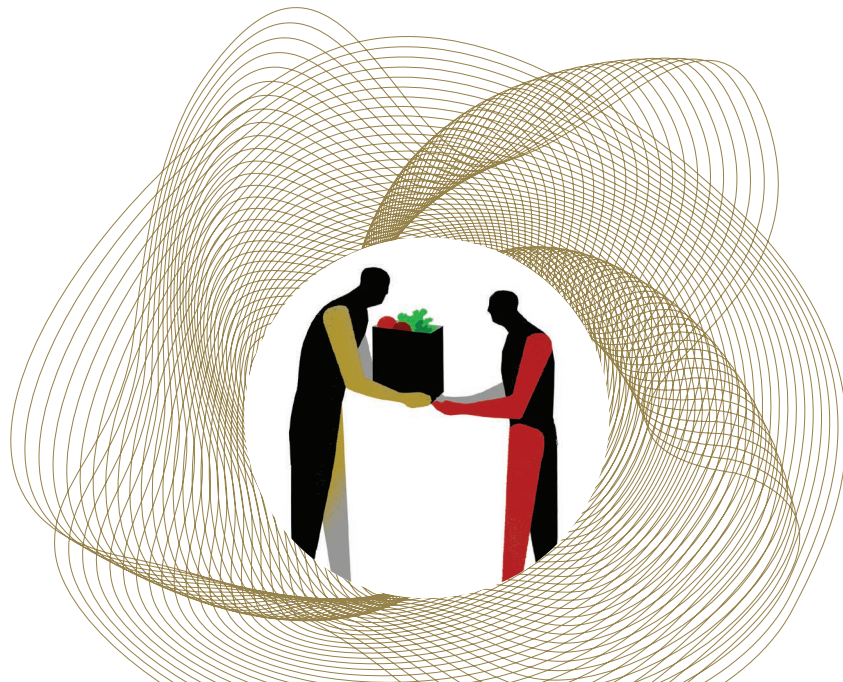
TOTAL GIFTS TO THE ANNUAL FUND

\$4,397,503

PLANNED GIFTS RECEIVED IN 2024

\$306,072

RECORD-HIGH GIFTS TO MASONS4MITTS



BETTER FOR ALL

THANKS TO AN EXPANSION OF ELIGIBILITY, MASONIC ASSISTANCE IS SERVING MORE PEOPLE THAN EVER.

FOR CENTURIES, MASONS have taken an obligation to care for their fellow members and their families. But who exactly is counted among that family?

Over the past year, the concept of Masonic family grew more inclusive in California—and allowed more people than ever access to the sup-

BY IAN A. STEWART

ports and services offered through Masonic Assistance. “This is a huge change,” says Sabrina Montes, vice president of community-based services for the Masonic Homes of California. “It’s about being able to serve Masons and meet them wherever they are and whatever their needs are.”

The expansion, announced in late 2023, extends admission to the Masonic Homes’ senior residences to not just California Masons and their partners, but for the first time, also to their parents and parents-in-law, and their surviving spouses, who in turn have two options for payment: First, a simple fee-for-service arrangement, or, for those related to a California Mason who has been in good standing for five years, an assignment-of-assets model that’s partially underwritten by charitable dollars. The latter offer also extends to Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft Masons, as well as members of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of California and the

Grand Lodge of Iran in Exile. Other Masonic Assistance programs also saw an expansion of eligibility: Prince Hall and Iran in Exile Masons are now able to receive support through Masonic Outreach Services, including case management and prescription-drug discounts, while groups including the Order of the Eastern Star are now eligible for the Shared Housing program in Covina.

Says Montes, “Historically, admission was only open to Masons or their widows, so the fact that we can now serve more of that Mason’s family is really important. In the past, we could never help a Mason’s father, for instance. To be able to assist a Mason by helping their parents or parents-in-law, it’s wonderful to be able to open that door.”

The new model is still in its infancy; from December 2023 through November 2024, a total of 52 newly eligible people (parents, parents-in-law, Prince Hall members, etc.) applied for residency. More than 100 have already called Masonic Assistance to get more information or begin the process of applying. Says Sol Silverman, director of Masonic Assistance, “We knew it would take a little bit to get the word out there, but that it would just be a matter of time before they start blowing up our phone.”

COMING BACK STRONG

Five years since the outbreak of COVID-19, occupancy has finally rebounded at the Masonic Homes and Acacia Creek, with 88 percent of apartments at the Masonic Homes’ campus in Union City and 98 percent at Covina now occupied, along with nearly 90 percent of those at Acacia Creek—up from 69 percent in the depths of the pandemic.

Usage of other Masonic Assistance services remains high: Calls to the central hotline reached 2,632 in 2024, while the Masonic



REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE MASONIC HOMES AND THE PRINCE HALL GRAND LODGE OF CALIFORNIA TOUR THE UNION CITY CAMPUS IN EARLY 2024, PART OF AN EXPANSION OF ELIGIBILITY TO THE HOMES ANNOUNCED IN 2024.

Senior Outreach Services program retained its record-high client list at more than 300, about half of whom received financial assistance totaling some \$2.5 million. The Masonic Family Outreach Services program also provided case management and other resources for couples and children of Masons. The Masonic Center for Youth and Families served 750 clients around the state, including 60 senior residents of the Masonic Homes.

The largest spike came from calls to the Distressed Worthy Brother Relief Fund, developed in 2020 to provide one-time financial support to Masons and their families in times of crisis. In fiscal year 2024, that program supported 104 Masons (up 50 percent over 2023), 67 of whom accessed emergency funds. The rest were connected to care managers and other resources.

“Credit for that goes to our lodges, who did a lot more outreach to members in distress,” says Amy Averweg, director of Masonic

Senior and Family Outreach Services. “They were getting that word of mouth out, so folks were reaching out a lot more.”

To that end, staff from the Masonic Outreach team held numerous training sessions around the state in 2024, arming hundreds of Masons with information and advice on making contact with members in need. Staff from MOS also presented up and down the state at lodge meetings.

ALIGNING SERVICES

Less visible, but perhaps just as important, was a change to Masonic Assistance through a behind-the-scenes rearranging of the organization. In 2024, the Masonic Center for Youth and Families moved its Northern

California headquarters from the Presidio in San Francisco, where it had been located since launching in 2010, to the former administrator’s home at the Masonic Homes campus in Union City.

In addition to the efficiency of operating just steps from the Masonic Homes’ central administration building, the move better allows MCYAF to serve the senior residents there—a growing part of its clientele. Similar to the on-campus model MCYAF uses at the Masonic Homes in Covina, this change also opens up opportunities for that organization to partner with community and educational groups in the Tri-City area, many of which are already closely connected to the Masonic Homes and Acacia Creek.

Even more consequential was the unanimous decision of the board this summer to appoint Terry Quigley as chief executive of Acacia Creek Retirement Community. Quigley, who was hired as CEO of the Masonic Homes in July 2023, will now assume executive responsibility for both organizations, allowing services to be better aligned. That can already be seen in the shared sales and marketing team, which is able to route and refer calls for assistance from Masons and non-Masons to where they’re needed.

The result, leaders envision, is a single shared campus offering a range of services, from independent living to assisted living to skilled nursing and memory care. Masons and others can choose the environment and payment plan that best suits them.

Now, 125 years from the date that the first cohort of Masons, widows, and orphans set foot in the regal brick building atop the hill, the Masonic Homes have swung the doors open even more widely, to more people than ever, and with even more services and facilities available. But the commitment to care and the obligation underlying it have not changed. “It’s about caring for Masons,” Montes says. “That will always be there.” ■

Contact Us Today:

MASONIC HOMES AND MASONIC OUTREACH SERVICES:

masonichome.org
(888) 466-3642

MASONIC CENTER FOR YOUTH AND FAMILIES:

mcyaf.org
(877) 488-6293 (Union City)
(626) 251-2300 (Covina)

DONOR PROFILE



MASTER, FRIENDSHIP Nº 210
GRAND MASTER’S CIRCLE DONOR
CORNERSTONE SOCIETY MEMBER

Gilbert Cruz

What inspired you to give back by donating to the California Masonic Foundation?

It all started when I first became involved with DeMolay in the Philippines. I can remember that we would help at the Annual Communication—us and the Job’s Daughters and the Rainbow Girls. We’d stand at the door and assist the Masons and ask for donations. I saw how nice it was that as a Mason, you’re helping out the youth. That was ingrained in my mind back then.

What inspired you to make your first gift?

Well, I came to the U.S. in 1984, but I didn’t become a Mason right away. At that time, I was giving to the Red Cross, the Salvation Army, and some other organizations. When I became a Mason, I started learning about the Foundation, and once I was more stable in my career, I started making contributions. When I was treasurer at **Acacia Nº 243**, I started talking to the other officers of the lodge and said, “Let’s all donate and be recognized at the Annual Communication.” So that’s how we became a 100 Percent Officer Giving lodge.

You’re also a member of the Cornerstone Society, meaning you’ve provided for the Foundation in your will or trust. Why did you choose to make that pledge?

That will be a big part of my legacy as a Mason. I was speaking with a brother recently who’s a nursing assistant at Kaiser. He told me about meeting an elderly patient who saw the square and compass pin on his scrubs, and he was so glad to meet a brother in that setting. To me, that was touching. You never know what will happen in life, but if you meet another Mason, you know he’s a brother. ■

HELP WHERE YOU NEED IT

Usage of Masonic Assistance services remained high in 2024.

2,632

CALLS TO THE MASONIC ASSISTANCE HOTLINE IN 2024

346

CLIENTS SUPPORTED WITH CASE MANAGEMENT OR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE THROUGH MASONIC SENIOR AND FAMILY OUTREACH

104

CLIENTS ACCESSING EMERGENCY FUNDS OR CASE MANAGEMENT THROUGH THE DISTRESSED WORTHY BROTHER RELIEF FUND, A 50% INCREASE FROM 2023

750+

CLIENTS SERVED THROUGH THE MASONIC CENTER FOR YOUTH AND FAMILIES, INCLUDING MORE THAN 60 SENIOR RESIDENTS AT THE MASONIC HOMES



HOME AT LAST

IN COVINA, THE CITRUS HEIGHTS HEALTH CENTER IS USHERING IN A NEW ERA FOR THE MASONIC HOMES.

THE RESIDENTS, STAFF MEMBERS, and administrators were standing by, ready to ring their bells and clang their various noisemakers. A sense of excitement hung over the crowd who'd gathered at the Masonic Homes' retirement community in Covina for a moment that by then had been years in the making. At last, the guests of honor arrived and were wheeled into the library, and the party could begin in earnest.

BY DREA ROEMER

The May 2024 return to the Covina campus of eight former residents, each of whom had been

outplaced in order to receive skilled nursing care at other facilities, was certainly a cause for celebration. But it also represented something larger. In bringing those residents home, where they would be surrounded by friends and in some cases family members, the Masonic Homes made good on a promise that for years animated the entire fraternity. The opening of the Citrus Heights Health Center, the Masonic Homes' brand-new facility for short- and long-term skilled nursing, means that senior residents are finally able to age in place on the Covina campus without ever having to move

outside the community to get the care they require. That means no need to separate couples or friends at what is often a difficult time of life. "It's the culmination of the Let's Write the Future campaign, which was driven by a passion that couples and families should never have to be separated because of their care needs," says Terry Quigley, CEO and president of the Masonic Homes of California. "That's really what drove the building of the skilled nursing home in Covina, and we were able to deliver on that belief and promise to bring those residents back home."

In what was a transformative year for the Masonic Homes, the opening of the

"Our Masonic families and friends can now stay together, which is essential to maintaining connections, feeling loved and supported, and having the best possible quality of life."

Citrus Heights Health Center was without a doubt the high point. The state-of-the-art skilled nursing facility is designed for those in need of around-the-clock nursing support. Featuring a first floor for Masons and their spouses requiring long-term care and a second floor for short-term rehabilitation

THE EXTERIOR OF THE CITRUS HEIGHTS HEALTH CENTER IN COVINA FEATURES NATURAL WOOD AND A WELCOMING PATIO.





THE GRAND STAIRCASE PROGRESSES BY THREE, FIVE, AND SEVEN STEPS—A NOD TO MASONIC INITIATION CEREMONIES.



RESIDENTS IN A SHARED GATHERING SPACE AT THE NEW CITRUS HEIGHTS HEALTH CENTER.



(which is open to the general public), the Citrus Heights Health Center includes a wide range of services, from physical, occupational, and speech therapy to memory care and all manner of support for those who need help with daily activities.

Beyond the medical services on offer, Quigley stresses the importance of the emotional bonds that residents make within the Covina community. “Our Masonic families and friends can now stay together, which is essential to maintaining connections, feeling loved and supported, and having the best possible quality of life,” she says.

That first cohort of residents will soon have a lot more company: In receiving its certification from Medicare in January 2025, the Citrus Heights Health Center can soon begin admitting residents from the general public. Vince Gonzaga, the executive director

of the Covina campus and a nursing home administrator, says there’s already a wait-list for the new building’s eight remaining beds. “We’re excited,” he says. “Now we’ll be able to cater to our Masonic residents for all of their skilled nursing needs, which is the reason the facility was built.”

In opening the Citrus Heights Health Center, the Covina campus can now offer the same spectrum of care as does the Masonic Homes’ campus in Union City, where residents are able to progress from independent living apartments to assisted living and skilled nursing settings, if and when they need them. On the northern campus, the Masonic Homes opened the Pavilion in 2021, which is outfitted and staffed especially for residents in need of high-acuity assisted living support, with 24-hour nursing care. Both facilities were

LEVELS OF CARE
 Overall capacity, especially in specialty care, is up at Union City and Covina.

157
 MASONIC HOMES APARTMENTS NOW LICENSED FOR SKILLED NURSING AT BOTH CAMPUSES.

57%
 INCREASE IN OVERALL CAPACITY AT THE TWO CAMPUSES SINCE 2018.



DONOR PROFILE

PAST MASTER,
HUNTINGTON BEACH № 380
GRAND MASTER'S CIRCLE
DONOR
MEMBER SINCE 2010

Dale Quelle

What initially led you to join your lodge?

I entered Masonry fairly late in life. I'm an independent type of guy; I've been self-employed since I was about 22 years old. I'm not someone who's told what to think. I analyze things and put together conclusions of my own. That said, in my late 50s I started to realize many of the really good men in my life were wearing rings with the square and compass on them. And one year, I went to a friend, who also has a tax business, and asked him what Masonry was really about. And he told me that it's a fraternity of like-minded men who are more giving than taking. So he invited me to his lodge for a firefighters' awards banquet, and I kept coming back and eventually put in my application.

And I understand you've become a go-to guy for music in lodges in Southern California. How did that happen?

Well, when I was raised as a Master Mason, I remember asking the master of the lodge about the piano and organ, and why no one was playing them. I'm an entrepreneur; we fill voids. So even though I have no musical talents, I thought, "I have a computer and a PA system." So that's how I started being in charge of music for not just degrees but also installations and funerals and things like that. That got the attention of Jack Rose, who was the grand lecturer at the time, and through him, I started visiting other lodges and being invited to do the music for them.

What inspired you to donate to the California Masonic Foundation?

I figured out in my 20s that I wasn't going to get rich off business profits; if I was, it was going to be off investments. So now, decades later, it's like, "What am I going to do with this?" I might as well donate it to causes I believe in. And I believe in Masonry. I've got to have faith and trust in an organization if I'm going to support it financially, that those dollars are being used rightly and not frivolously. And Masonry has held pretty steady in doing the right thing. ■

built through the fundraising efforts of California Masons.

Thanks to the new facilities, the overall capacity at the two homes has risen by more than half; meanwhile, the share of those beds has shifted toward higher levels of care. Today, across the two sites, nearly all apartments are dual licensed for assisted or independent living, and the number of skilled nursing and memory-care accommodations has risen dramatically.

With the completion of the new facility, Quigley is also thrilled to be able to reach beyond the Masonic community in Covina to welcome other seniors living in the area. As in Union City, the Citrus Heights Health Center is open to all members of the general public who need high-acuity postsurgical rehab. "For those short-term residents, the goal is not to keep them—the goal is to get them home," Quigley says. With 32 rooms in total (16 per floor), the space is already staffed with an array of skilled nurses, rehab therapists, and a registered dietitian. Quigley says the Citrus Heights Health Center is unlike any other facility in the area.

"Until now, the Masonic Home at Covina has been a well-kept secret," she says. But in opening its doors to those outside the fraternity, she says, administrators are now in close contact with other local care providers and hospital networks, opening the door to partnerships and opportunities in the future. "Our campus is gaining a whole new level of visibility, which is allowing our wider community to see and experience what the Masonic Homes of California has to offer," Quigley says. "Part of how Masons make the world a better place is by providing for people in a time of need. Now we're making that accessible to everyone—and when we do that, we are sharing the light of Masonry." ■

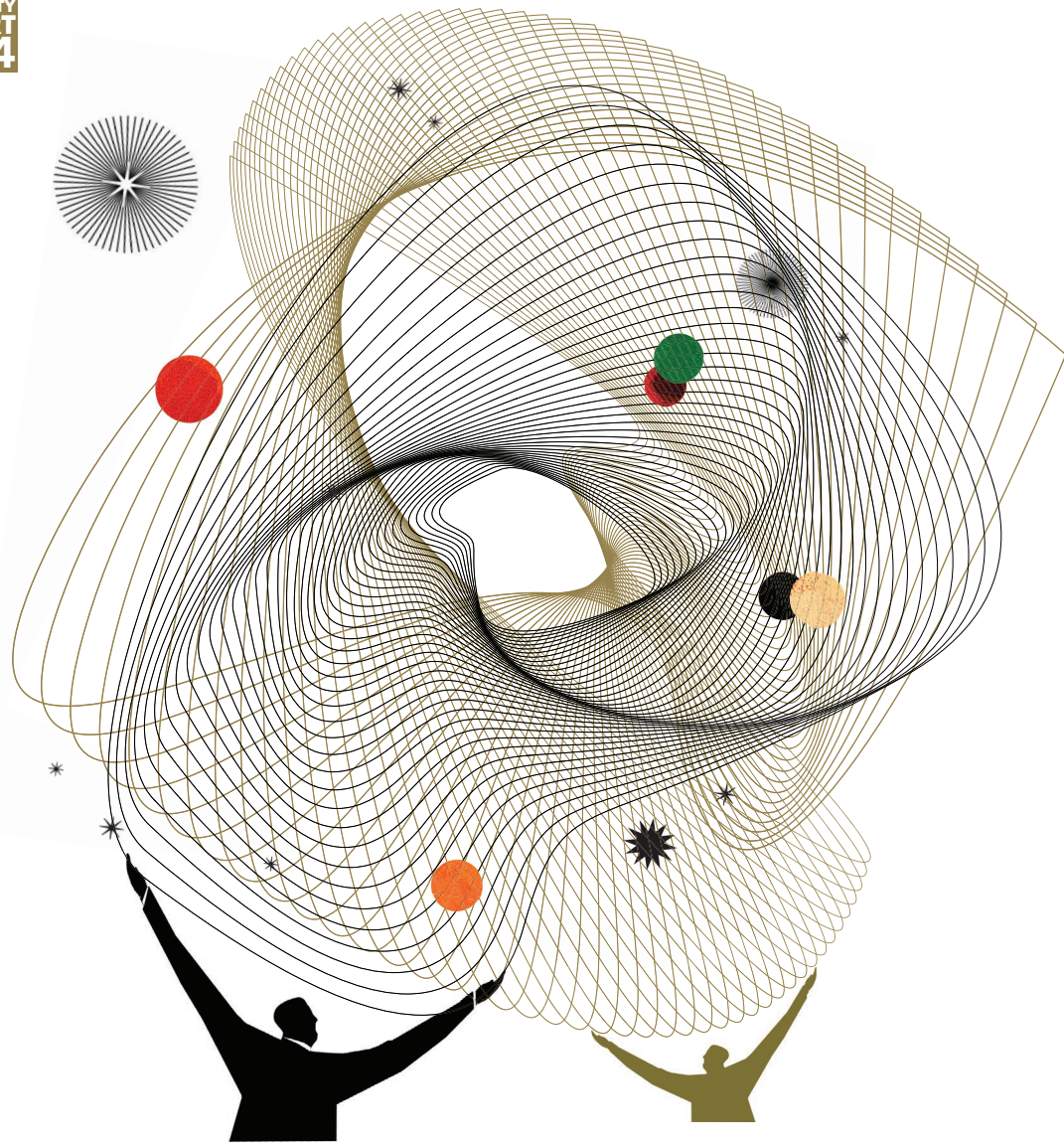
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Roberto Saucedo

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 GRAND MASTER'S CIRCLE DONOR
 MEMBER SINCE 2014

Growing up in Zacatecas, Mexico, how did you first learn about Freemasonry?

When my father died, in 1956, I went to live in Tijuana with my aunt and my uncle, who was a past master there. He never insisted I join Freemasonry, but I'd go play with the other kids at his lodge when they had their stated meetings. So that's how I got started in terms of learning about Masonry. Later on, I came to live in San Diego and met my good friend Eugene Yee. We used to be on a bowling team

together, and since we only had one car, to save time, I'd come with him to the lodge.

“With the fraternity, you know both by observing it and doing it that you're helping. You're making a difference for the better.”

to work in San Diego with the team that built Petco Park. I actually own the second baseball that was thrown out on opening day.

As a retired civil engineer, what are you proudest of in your professional work?

I worked for the city of Chula Vista for 30 years. I started from the bottom of the bottom, and thanks to my friends and wife pushing me, I ended up pretty high up in the ranks. But eventually, I went

I understand you're very involved in the concordant bodies, as well.

Yes, I try to be active in the programs of the different organizations—the Shriners, the Scottish Rite, you name it. I drove the van for the Shriners for four years, picking kids up at 4 a.m. in Tijuana to bring them to the hospital. I got to enjoy it, actually.

What makes you want to give back to the fraternity?

With the fraternity, you know both by observing it and by doing it that you're helping. You're making a difference for the better. There's never been a moment that I've doubted that Masonry is a plus in our society. So it's a little bit here, a little bit there. But when you add us all together, you can really make a difference in this world. ■

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DONOR PROFILE



ARARAT № 848
ANNIVERSARY LEVEL DONOR
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MEMBER SINCE 2022

Saro Halajian

What first piqued your interest in Freemasonry?

When I was growing up in Aleppo, I was part of Junior Chamber International, and several members of JCI were also part of the fraternity. I'm a curious person and I like history, so when I'd find a Mason, I'd ask them questions, and the first thing they'd always say is, "Come to lodge and see what we do." Unfortunately, the war started there in 2011, so I came with my family to the U.S. After a few years, one of my JCI friends who's also a Mason moved here as well and said to me, "If you're still interested, come see what the brothers do." When I saw that, I knew I wanted to be a part of the craft.

What is Masonry like in Syria?

Well, it was stopped in 1965, or at least it went underground. So if you want to join, most people join a lodge in Beirut or in Turkey or Jordan, where Masonry is not banned by the government. I actually gave a whole presentation about it to my lodge. It was Robert Morris from the Grand Lodge of Kentucky who started Masonry in Syria before the regime took over the country and suspended the lodges.

What can you tell me about your work? Are you in the same industry here as you were in Syria?

I work in dietary supplements, mostly wholesale but a little bit of retail here and there. In Syria, my family were in cotton sportswear manufacturing for 40 years. Since brands like Nike, Puma, and Lululemon were not allowed, consumers could only get what was manufactured in the country. So that's what we made. I wanted to continue that and work in my father's business, but only a few weeks after the war started, everything we owned had been robbed or bombed. It was a devastating moment. When you lose everything, whatever opportunity comes in front of you, you'll take it. So I started from scratch. Thank God I'm in the U.S. and there are lots of opportunities. Thank God I'm able to live here and make a living. Over the years, things have gotten better and better. So when the time came to give back, I wanted to make sure I did something, no matter how big or small it was, and also that the money was going to a good cause. And there's no one better to trust than the fraternity. It doesn't matter if it's \$1, \$100, or \$100,000, I believe it all adds up. I just wanted to be a part of that. ■

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WELCOME TO THE CORNERSTONE SOCIETY

WHERE MASONS CREATE AN UNDENIABLE AND LASTING IMPACT



THERE COMES A TIME WHEN A MASON REFLECTS ON HIS LIFE AND CONTEMPLATES THE VALUE AND IMPACT HE'S HAD ON HIS FAMILY AND COMMUNITY.



MASONS KNOW THAT A BEQUEST THROUGH YOUR ESTATE PLAN CAN BE ONE OF THE MOST MEANINGFUL THINGS YOU CAN DO TO CEMENT YOUR LEGACY TO THE FRATERNITY YOU LOVE. THIS COMMITMENT HAS BEEN HANDED DOWN THROUGH GENERATIONS OF MASONS.



THE PROCESS IS SIMPLE. HAVE YOUR ESTATE PLANNER ADD LANGUAGE TO YOUR EXISTING ESTATE PLAN THAT INCLUDES A SIMPLE BEQUEST TO THE CALIFORNIA MASONIC FOUNDATION. THEN NOTIFY US AND BE WELCOMED INTO THE CORNERSTONE SOCIETY.

THE CORNERSTONE SOCIETY DRIVES OUR FRATERNITY'S IMPACT ON OUR COMMUNITIES. MASONS WHO MAKE A BEQUEST DEMONSTRATE LEADERSHIP AND GENEROSITY, ESTABLISHING A LEGACY THAT WILL BE FELT FOR GENERATIONS.

"THE GREATEST OF THESE IS CHARITY"



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175TH ANNIVERSARY GALA

April 19, 2025

Celebrate the 175th Anniversary of the Grand Lodge of California!

JOIN US FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY EVENING commemorating 175 years of Freemasonry in California. This milestone celebration promises to be a memorable experience filled with tradition, camaraderie, and festivity.

Guests will enjoy a delightful gourmet banquet, uplifting toasts, and captivating entertainment. This is a unique opportunity to gather with friends, reflect on our shared history, and honor the enduring legacy of Freemasonry in California. Let's come together to celebrate this historic occasion and show our support for an organization that has stood the test of time. Don't miss this once-in-a-lifetime event!

EVENT LOCATIONS:

California Masonic Memorial Temple
San Diego Scottish Rite
Sacramento Scottish Rite
Pasadena Scottish Rite

*Reserve your place today
and be part of this
historic celebration!*

freemason.org/175gala



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