

# GOOD NEWS for...

**MINI BUSINESSES** Tax-Aid, which prepares taxes for free for low-income families, now is offering tax help to owners of very small businesses and self-employed people — housekeepers, gardeners, child care providers, home health aides, handymen. If you have no employees and last year received a tax Form 1099, filed a Schedule C or owed self-employment taxes, you're probably eligible for a free two-hour workshop. Among the practical things you'll learn are how to determine if you're considered self-employed by the IRS, and how to record revenue and expenses so you can deduct the cost of doing your work from your income. Workshop leaders will explain self-employment taxes, why you have to pay them, how to avoid costly surprises next year at tax time, and how to reduce your chance of an IRS audit or penalties. After the workshop, bilingual professionals will answer questions. English workshop: June 7, 10 a.m.-noon, Jones United Methodist Church, 1975 Post St. Chinese workshop: June 14, 10 a.m.-noon, Salvation Army Chinatown, 1450 Powell St. Pre-registration: Email name, phone and session desired to [tax-aid@kpmg.com](mailto:tax-aid@kpmg.com), or leave a message at 963-8633.

**TNDC** celebrates its 27th birthday at a glittery dinner May 30 at Moscone Center's Esplanade Ballroom. Besides more than a quarter of a century in the nonprofit housing business, TNDC hasn't forgotten its residents: Among its many services to them in the last 15 years, it's distributed 2.3 million pounds of comestibles from the S.F. Food Bank; served 10,000 holiday meals and 6,000 pieces of birthday cake; made 15,000 referrals to other community providers; hosted 4,000 community events; gave out \$38,000 in scholarships through TASP, its after-school program; got ten 3,432 pizzas donated for TASP kids; and made them 61,750 sandwiches. TNDC also celebrated the lives of 250 of its residents at memorials at their hotels.

If you have some good news, send it to [marjorie@studycenter.org](mailto:marjorie@studycenter.org) or [tom@studycenter.org](mailto:tom@studycenter.org).



PHOTO BY KATHLEEN HARRISON

**Jeff Kositsky**, CHP executive director, told of a tiff with the mayor during negotiations.



PHOTO BY DARYL DUARTE

**Mayor Newsom**, after praising the city's deal over the Essex, acknowledged Kositsky had been right.

## Essex back better than ever

*Nonprofits make old hotel new home for 84 people*

BY TOM CARTER

**T**HE Essex Hotel, at 684 Ellis, was a failing tourist and residential hotel more than five years ago when Mercy Housing California eyed it as a candidate for housing the homeless.

April 17, the Essex reopened as home to 84 people who previously had no home.

The seven-story building had only two residents when Mercy teamed up with Community Housing Partnership to buy it and transform it into spiffy, 250-square-foot SRO units, each with a bathroom and kitchenette.

At a time when the city was cash-strapped, the partners scratched for city funds for construction and wrap-around services. They ended up with \$6 million from the mayor's office, \$7 million from the state, an \$11 million loan from Citi Community Capital and other help from Enterprise Community Partners, plus the Department of Human Services bankrolled supportive services.

The Essex is a big success for CHP, which now owns and operates the building and is

developing three other homeless projects.

"It took a whole city to get it done," said CHP Executive Director Jeff Kositsky, whose parents were among the 25 people seated in the downstairs community room where twice that many were standing. "And what we are really celebrating is 84 opportunities (for the residents)."

Then Kositsky told an amusing story about his struggle to persuade Mayor Newsom that the city should fund all of the hotel's daily operations through CHP. He said his mother had called the day after that meeting and asked how he was feeling, and he said he was glum because he'd had a tiff with the mayor and had gotten angry when the mayor wouldn't see things his way. There was a long pause on the line, Kositsky said.

"And then she said what a good mayor he is and that I should go right back there the next day and apologize," Kositsky said. Laughter filled the room. "But of course I didn't."

Even so, as a result of Kositsky's campaign, the Essex became the first SRO that the

city alone is fully subsidizing. DHS pays \$1 million from the general fund for rents (a subsidy that enables residents to pay only \$216 a month on average), the ongoing supportive services and the building management. Other such SROs are in the pipeline for the city's new full-support program.

"There will be things we can't do if we do this," Newsom said at the reopening event, referring to having redirected budgeted funds for the Essex. "It's not an easy debate, and I appreciate the hard-headedness it took to get here. But this is what we need more of. We've begun to turn the page (on homelessness). And, yes, I love bragging about it in other cities.

"It is just 84 units," said the mayor. "But for the changed lives it is an extraordinary day. I know we can solve homelessness. The lives here, you are changing forever. I know cynics are out there. But bring them to the Essex."

Then he nodded to Kositsky and struck a repentant note as he recalled the day of the tiff.

"And I was wrong that day," the mayor said. ■

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## Office of Self Help

Proudly serving San Francisco and Central City Mental Health Clients for more than 15 years.

We help mental health clients enhance their quality of life by explaining how to get the community resources they need. We help clients find services that respect their perspectives. We advocate avoiding facilities that restrict client freedom.

**Peer Support Line: 575-1400**

Lonely? Depressed? Sad? Just need someone to talk to? We're here to listen and support you. This is not a suicide line, but we can support you by listening and giving feedback.

All support line counselors are trained to listen and get you the information you need.

The Peer Support Line operates Wednesday-Sunday 9 a.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Monday and Tuesday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

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CENTRAL CITY  
**EXTRA!**  
SAN FRANCISCO

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