



### **Success Story provided by International Children Assistance Network (ICAN):**

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted low income families and individuals in a myriad of ways. ICAN responded with the COVID-19 rental assistance and San Jose Digital Inclusion programs to help our local Vietnamese community manage difficulties caused by the pandemic.

Mr. Tran came to ICAN to seek financial relief when he incurred overdue rent in August and September 2021. ICAN staff screened him and found him eligible for the Homelessness Prevention Program. While speaking with him to determine other needs, ICAN also successfully helped him qualify for the ACP program. Now, he is able to save \$30 a month on his internet bill.

Since the initial ACP application, Mr. Tran now frequently comes to ICAN's digital inclusion lab every week to improve his computer skills. During those sessions, we noticed that he didn't have his own electronic device to practice on. As a result, we provided a free laptop for him to take home and anywhere he goes, reinforcing his learning more effectively.

Mr. Tran expressed his deep gratitude for our HPS and SJDIP programs. He told us that he did not expect that ICAN could provide him such a high level of support. He had visited two other agencies to seek assistance, and it was then that he got referred to ICAN. An outcome for which he was glad, as we were the only Vietnamese-speaking organization to provide continued engagement and all-around assistance, not only to help reduce expenses from rent and internet bills, but also to equip him with the skills to become more independent. He says he will happily introduce ICAN's services to his friends and family members, and will think of ICAN when he needs support in the future.

A graduate of the Digital Inclusion Program returned to Goodwill of Silicon Valley as a peer mentor where she helps facilitate digital literacy workshops to her peers. Through the Digital Inclusion Program, she was able to subscribe to an affordable Internet plan and a laptop to continue her schooling at San Jose City College and be certified as a Peer Mentor. She recently moved out of the transitional housing unit where she was temporarily living and into her own studio apartment where her hotspot provides access to unlimited data in her new home. Now, she shares her experience to help other participants connect to the Internet and a device and learn digital skills.

### **Success Story provided by Cristo Rey San Jose High School:**

A senior at Cristo Rey San José High (CRSJHS) School raised by her single mother, who works long hours as a janitor. Her older brother currently attends one of the most selective UCs, and as a small family unit, they all work hard to support each other in any way possible. She was raised to be proud of her Oaxacan roots, and to pursue any opportunity that would help her grow in new ways. At school, she is



taking the most rigorous courses offered while also leading several clubs. Outside of school, you can find her either playing for the San José Symphony or decompressing with a bowl of popcorn watching k-drama. She is passionate about making a positive impact in her community, which is why she is pursuing a major in public policy. It's hard to keep up with her, but she presses forward in the most humble, friendly, and inclusive manner. She truly is a friend to all and wants everyone to win.

For someone who is constantly on the go, you can only imagine her reaction when her computer that was issued by CRSJHS in 9<sup>th</sup> grade finally started falling apart during college application season. She spent her summer thoroughly researching colleges, finding the perfect fit. However, when it came time to write those college essays and complete the applications, her computer would randomly shut down, the keys would not work forcing her to use the digital keyboard that pops up on the screen, and it would take forever to load a webpage that would test anyone's patience. After several trips to the IT department, she was finally lent a computer which was ten times better. When it was time to return it, she successfully hid for almost two weeks. The first college application deadline was just days away, and she didn't want her old computer to slow her down. When CRSJHS announced that seniors had the opportunity to be granted a new laptop, her eyes beamed with gratitude.

CRSJHS is proud to share that the student has been admitted to Stanford University, her dream school, and continues to apply to colleges across the country. She has worked hard to earn the opportunities she's been granted and is grateful to have access to the technology needed to keep up with her work ethic.

### **Success Story provided by Sacred Heart Community Service:**

Carolina came to the United States from Colombia about two years ago. She went to Biblioteca Latino Americana in San José in search of assistance with writing a resume and cover letter. Since she was looking for employment and didn't have access to the Internet or a device at home, the Librarian referred her to Sacred Heart Community Service. Carolina received the assistance she needed, including Digital Inclusion services. She completed all basic and intermediate computer classes, and decided to put into practice what she learned by volunteering in the Economic Empowerment Office, where she learned how to input data in Salesforce. She has become a committed volunteer by informing community members about Digital Inclusion services. During Holiday events, she volunteered to engage with members and encourage qualified households to complete the Digital Inclusion Intake and begin the process of converting to an Adoption. Additionally, Carolina has been hired by Sacred Heart as a Volunteer Income Tax Assistant. She will be using an IRS database to help community members file their 2021 income tax return.



**Success Story provided by Goodwill of Silicon Valley:**

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