



THE LEAVEN



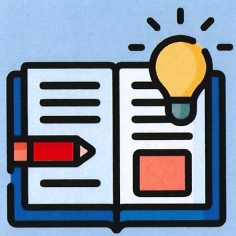
What is THE LEAVEN?

The Leaven is a visionary, faith-based non-profit, and a powerful, compassionate agent of change for kids and the neighborhoods they live in.

Hundreds of kids who live in areas challenged by crime and poverty go to their local Leaven center each day after school. The Leaven provides a safe place to receive safe one-on-one mentoring, help with schoolwork, school supplies, unique learning opportunities (including STEAM Curriculum), sometimes meals, and compassionate support that helps them become responsible young people and successful adults. They also have a lot of fun.



2220 Boynton Ave, Suite A, Fairfield, CA 94533 • www.myleaven.com • 855-622-KIDZ



A Safe Place for Kids to Grow After School

The Leaven is a safe place where under-privileged kids, grades kindergarten through five, can go after school to have fun, improve their literary and math skills, receive one-on-one mentoring from adults in the community, learn and exhibit healthy patterns of behavior, and improve their self-esteem.



Community Building

The Leaven brings together parents and leaders in the community, churches, local businesses, fire department and police department to not only help the kids succeed, but build bridges of understanding in the neighborhood.



Improving the Neighborhood

Our research shows that when The Leaven opens a center, morale goes up, crime rates go down, school retention goes up, and entire communities are motivated to overcome the vicious cycle of poverty and crime around them. In fact, occupancy rates in housing complexes with Leaven centers increase an average of 21% and crime rates decrease an average of 53%.



Help & Hope During the Pandemic

With so much uncertainty caused by COVID-19, The Leaven has provided a sense of stability for neighborhood families. Through online tutoring, school supply distribution, socially distant in-person learning, meal deliveries and more, The Leaven is still a refuge in the storm.



Small Investment, Tremendous Return

The Leaven utilizes a small staff, donated funds and a dedicated group of volunteers to grow incredible programs that really help kids and save potentially millions of dollars for the community. At no cost to taxpayers!

[DONATE](#)



WHAT IS THE LEAVEN?



THE LEAVEN



Leaven Kids

Faith

Children (Safety)

Community Leadership

Volunteers

The Leaven

FAITH

Faith is the underpinning of everything we do at The Leaven. Our goal is to serve God by being his hands and feet on earth, serving his children in need, providing love, and demonstrating Biblical values in a confusing world.

CHILDREN (SAFETY)

Children in today's world face a myriad of challenges. Some as simple as having a safe place to go after school. We're providing that safe place to be nurtured and mentored, and offering hope for a future beyond their daily challenges.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

The Leaven brings together parents and leaders in the community, churches, local businesses, fire department and police department to not only help kids succeed, but build bridges of understanding in the neighborhood.

VOLUNTEERS

The Leaven relies on a dedicated group of volunteers from the community who share our vision. They provide much of the tutoring, one-on-one mentoring and experience-building that kids in under-served neighborhoods need.



ABRIL'S STORY

Abril is a special six-year-old. You would not know by just looking at her though. She seems like a typical pink-and-purple-wearing, unicorn-loving, glitter-and hair-bow kind of girl. But she has that perfect mix of happy sass and sincere respect that makes her one-of-a-kind.

Another atypical thing is that Abril has been so extraordinarily successful - even though Abril has never actually attended school in a classroom due to a year of Covid-19 precautions. She did distance learning and came to the Leaven during her kindergarten year. In fact, Abril believes the Leaven is 'real school.'

At the beginning of the last school year, Abril was a limited English speaker, and a non-reader. She knew only 15 English words. After a year in lock-down working with The Leaven, Abril had learned all the kindergarten site words, all the K-1st CVC (Consonant/Vowel/Consonant) words and over half of the site words for first grade.

Reading site words is a real accomplishment because, unlike reading words in a story, there is no context to draw from in understanding a word. You either know the words - or you do not. Abril knows words. As she "graduated" from Kindergarten to First Grade, Abril is now reading at a strong mid first grade level (1.5 which means first grade level fifth month) and shows no signs of slowing down.

Abril and another Leaven student, Michelle (1st grade), live in apartments across from one another. The friendship the girls developed at the Leaven led to the parents growing a friendship between the families.

Prior to the girls' friendship the parents just nodded and walked past one another every day. Now, when the Leaven children are outside doing relay races or painting, it is common for both families to come out, sit, and chat with each other - and with The Leaven staff. Abril and Michelle now can even translate for their parents as they talk to the staff.

Abril has also learned much about God's goodness and grace this year at the Leaven. She is one of the first to say, "Let's pray about that..." whenever a problem arises.

The future is looking brighter for Abril and her friend - and their families. The first small step to a break in the cycle of poverty so common in Abril's neighborhood and among so many under-resourced families.



Northern California

Benicia

Burgess Point
91 Riverview Terrace
Benicia, CA 94510

Concord

Eden Housing
1121 & 1140 Virginia Lane
Concord, CA 94520

Fairfield

Dana Drive
1180 Dana Drive
Fairfield, CA 94533

Grande Circle
1970 Grande Circle
Fairfield, CA 94533

Groves Apartments
855 East Tabor
Fairfield, CA 94533

Phoenix Drive
1350 Phoenix Drive
Fairfield, CA 94533

Signature
1189 Tabor Avenue
Fairfield, CA 94533

Napa

Stoddard West
345 Gasser Drive
Napa, CA 94559

Woodland
12440 Old Sonoma Road
Napa, CA 94558

Sacramento

Kensington Apartments
3644 Kings Way
Sacramento, CA 95821

Suisun City

Village Apartments
506 Civic Center Boulevard
Suisun, CA 94585

Vacaville

Alamo Gardens
1501 Alamo Drive
Vacaville, CA 95687

Camden Parc
159 Aegean Way
Vacaville, CA 95687

East Monte Vista
1020 E Monte Vista Avenue
Ste A
Vacaville, CA, 95688

Mariposa Neighborhood
1625 Alamo Drive
Vacaville, CA 95687



Vallejo

Carolina Heights
135 Carolina Street
Vallejo, CA 94590

Harbor Park
969 Porter Street
Vallejo, CA 94590

Sereno Village
750 Sereno Drive
Vallejo, CA 94589

Waterstone
1333 N Camino Alto
Vallejo, CA 94589

Southern California

Ontario

Summit Place
1130 W 4th Street
Ontario, CA 91762

Rialto

Bella Apartments
210 N. Beechwood
Rialto, CA 92376



When The Leaven Moves In, Crime Moves Out

RESEARCH SHOWS THE LEAVEN IMPACTS CRIME RATES



CRIME RATES REDUCED BY AVERAGE OF 53%

Our research shows that crime rates decrease an average of 53 percent when The Leaven opens a center in a neighborhood.

It happens because children at The Leaven become friends. Their parents then become friends.

And, all of a sudden, the neighborhood residents begin to watch out for each other. When word gets out that The Leaven is in a complex, we've even learned that occupancy rates rise an average of 21 percent.



OCCUPANCY RATES UP 21%

Police report that after The Leaven at The Groves in Fairfield opened, calls for police intervention went down 60%. Violent crime rates went down over 82%.



**CALLS TO POLICE
DOWN 50-60%**

**VIOLENT CRIME
DOWN 60-82%**

Police report that after The Leaven at Alamo Gardens in Vacaville opened, calls for police intervention went down 50%. Violent crime rates went down over 60%.

A PLACE FOR POLICE TO ENGAGE WITH STUDENTS

The Leaven brings together parents, churches, leaders in the community, local businesses, fire departments and police departments to not only help the kids succeed, but build bridges of understanding. Kids interact with, and even befriend, adults they may never otherwise have the confidence to approach.



A Safe Environment to Learn Improves the Entire Education

INCREASED GRADES, FEWER DROPOUTS, AND SELF-BELIEF



LEAVEN KIDS SEE THAT A DIFFERENT KIND OF FUTURE IS POSSIBLE

One of the most significant advantages to engaging with kids in their environment is helping them see that they can break the cycle of poverty in their families and neighborhoods.

The Leaven is committed to helping our children broaden their horizons. By seeing how others contribute to the community, they will be more likely to do the same. These opportunities are seeds planted that can spark an interest for a future career path.

**Increase in
Hope for a
Better Future**



The Leaven's partner schools report that Leaven K-5 kids are changed by the program:

- **88%** of Leaven students show improvements in reading and reading comprehension
- **40%** of students show "strong improvement"
- **83%** show improvements in math skills
- **81%** show improvements in class participation

This improvement continues in the following years as well:

- **100%** of Leaven students show improvements in reading and reading comprehension, with **38%** of students showing "strong improvement."
- **88%** show improvements in math skills
- **81%** show improvements in class participation



Mark Lillis, Executive Director The Leaven



Mark Lillis has years of experience working to improve the lives of kids. First as the founder of a summer camp program for Las Positas Park in the City of Santa Barbara, and then as leader of the city's youth programs. His years as a founder and executive director of The Leaven rounds out an accomplished history of service to kids in need.

Having achieved a master's degree in organizational and strategic leadership at Azusa Pacific University, Mark was inspired by his church to help find The Leaven in 2009. The Leaven has become an award-winning program providing after-school and summer tutoring for children in grades K-5 living in under-resourced communities in California.

In fact, The Leaven under Mark's leadership has become the fastest growing grassroots nonprofit in Fairfield, California, and has expanded its programming to Southern California. Mark now sees that the undeniably strong results of The Leaven's educational and character-based programming is a model that can work almost anywhere.

In addition to leading The Leaven's after-school tutoring centers, Summer Success program, volunteer recruitment, and development, Mark is enjoying the support of his exceptional board of directors and staff in branching out beyond California.



Joe Allio, Board President Interim Police Chief, City of Vacaville, California



Chief Joe Allio is a 34-year veteran of law enforcement. He began his law enforcement career in South San Francisco and four years later joined the Fairfield Police Department where he rose through the ranks to become Chief of Police.

Joe has also served in pastoral positions at local churches, was a member of the Host Lions Club and the President of the Northern California Batten Disease Association. As a member of the Fairfield Police Department, he served on the SWAT team, was a founding member of the Peer Support Team, participated in the development of “active shooter” response training and developed and implemented the Police Probation Team. He has earned two Exceptional Performance Citations and completed Senior Management Law Enforcement Institute hosted by Boston University.

After retiring from the Fairfield Police Department, Joe served as the interim Chief and Deputy Chief for the Vallejo Police Department. He is now currently the interim Chief for the Vacaville Police Department. Joe and his wife Kathy reside in Vacaville.



General Maryanne Miller (Ret.) Honorary Board Member



General Maryanne Miller is a retired 4-star U.S. Air Force General with over 39 years of military service. In her career, she has led two Major Commands and is the only Reserve Officer in the history of the United States to achieve the rank of General to-date.

General Miller has extensive experience in rapid, global mobility and sustainment as the Commander of Air Mobility Command and the Commander of the Air Force Reserve. As the Air Component for U.S. Transportation Command, General Miller was responsible for directing global air mobility operations in support of national security objectives. Her commands played a pivotal role in providing global airlift, air refueling, aeromedical evacuation, humanitarian relief and Presidential airlift support as directed.

General Miller serves on the Board of Directors of Bristow, an advisor to New Vista Acquisition Corp., and a member of the Board of Trustees for Manhattan College in the Bronx, New York. She is also a co-worker for St. Teresa of Calcutta's Missionaries of Charity serving some of the poorest communities around the world.

General Miller was drawn to The Leaven because it is a powerful agent for good through faith, hope and love. The Leaven transforms lives, families, and communities to realize the power of good within us so that we can transform the environment around us.



Monica Ready, Vice President **Principal, Napa Unified School District**

Monica Ready began her educational career at Napa High School as an English teacher, and then served as an Assistant Principal at that school. Monica, who has an English degree from Pepperdine University and a Masters in Educational Leadership from Touro University, was named Principal at Harvest Middle School in 2016.

I am proud that the Napa Community recognized the need for after-school tutoring and mentoring in a safe environment," Monica says. "It was a dream come true for me when The Leaven opened a center across the street from Harvest Middle School. My desire is that the children served through The Leaven will be equipped with hope and goals for their future, and a faith that sustains in all circumstances."

Monica attends First Christian Church in Napa.



Sue Ovitt, Treasurer **Chaffey Joint Union High School Board of Trustees**

Sue Ovitt is a lifelong resident of the Inland Empire in Southern California and a former elementary school teacher.

When The Leaven expanded to San Bernardino County, California, Sue and her husband, Gary, became deeply involved in helping establish roots and connections. "I know the importance of education," Sue says, "and that means I greatly value tutoring, mentoring and providing positive role models in our children's lives."

In addition to serving on The Leaven's board, Sue is on the board of Chaffey College Foundation, OPARC (training, employing and transforming the lives of adults with disabilities), and The Community Foundation and West End Family Counseling Services. Sue and Gary attend Community Christian Fellowship in Ontario.



Ruth Meyer, Secretary **Pilot, United States Air Force**

Ruth Meyer is an airline pilot and member of the United States Air Force. When working at Travis Air Force Base, she learned about The Leaven, and wanted be part of our mission.

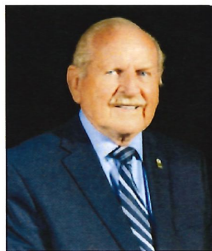
With an educational background in math and financial planning in addition to aviation, she brings her considerable skills and experience to our board. She said "I wanted to get involved because the children of this area need and deserve to be provided a safe and engaging environment after school that allows them to dream beyond their streets, obtain support to excel in academics and be their best for not only their benefit but their family and community."



Mike Nail
Superior Court Judge (ret)

Mike Nail is a retired Judge of the Superior Court for the State of California, holding that position for more than two decades. Prior to assuming the bench, Judge Nail was District Attorney for Solano County for 11 years and Assistant District Attorney for 14 years.

Upon his retirement in 2007, Judge Nail wanted to invest his time into helping at-risk children. He was a former member of the Lion's Club and a member and past president of Fairfield-Suisun Chamber of Commerce. He and his wife have three children and five grandchildren.



Len Augustine
Mayor, City of Vacaville, California (ret)

Mayor Leonard "Len" Augustine is a retired USAF Colonel and former Mayor of the City of Vacaville. Len gives back to his community not only through his involvement with The Leaven, but also by serving on the board for Travis Credit Union and as Chairman of the Travis Community Consortium where he is an advocate for Travis Air Force Base.

When Len first learned of our center in Fairfield, he became interested in starting a center in his city. He says "I saw the need for the City of Vacaville to participate in providing 'safe havens' for children in our neighborhoods where working parents were spending long hours to make life better for their families. It seemed to me that after school hours spent with adult supervision would be beneficial for kids needing some direction. And I was aware that crime could be cut in half." Len has been married to his wife, Susan, for 56 years.



Osby Davis
Mayor, City of Vallejo, California (ret)

Mayor Osby Davis is the former mayor of Vallejo, CA, where he served in that role for 9 years, in addition to maintaining his law practice in Vallejo.

An advocate of early childhood reading, Osby raised funds for The Leaven to pioneer a preschool reading program in Vallejo. "Being on the board of The Leaven allows me do what I like to do," Osby says, "and that is supporting positive activities for at-risk youth in our communities who would otherwise have little or no hope of success."

Osby and his wife, Terrye (a Contra Costa County Court Judge) have 4 children and 13 grandchildren. They attend Lighthouse Covenant Fellowship Church in Benicia where Osby has taught adult Sunday School for the past 20 years.



Randy Fenn

Police Chief, City of Fairfield, California (ret)

Chief Randy Fenn, a police officer since 1991, joined the Fairfield Police Department in January 2012 as a police lieutenant. In this role, Randy served as both a patrol and traffic commander, and facilitated the creation of the department's Homeless Intervention Team. This initiative helps people access services that can lead to permanent housing and reunification with their families. Randy, who has a bachelor's degree in Human Relations and a Masters of Science in Criminal Justice, was promoted to Captain in 2014 and appointed chief in March 2017.

Randy and his family attend Parkway Community Church. His hope for The Leaven children is that they will see the Gospel in action and that they will be placed on a trajectory for success that ultimately leads them back to Fairfield to serve the community.



Staci Pauly

Senior Finance Manager, Genentech (ret)

Staci Pauly was the Senior Finance Manager at Genentech in Vacaville. She was born and raised in the City of Vacaville and has volunteered with several local organizations over the years.

Staci was introduced to The Leaven through Crossroads Christian Church which she has attended since 1998. She has a lot of hands-on volunteering experience and is excited to be on The Leaven's board to help steer the organization to be "the best it can be for our children and our entire community."



Ian Schmutzler

Captain, Vacaville Police Department

Captain Ian Schmutzler started with the Vacaville Police Department in 2000 and quickly rose through the ranks to oversee the Field Support Bureau. He began working with The Leaven as a volunteer in 2015 and is now a proud board member.

"I've been able to see the incredible work that they do and the tangible results of having The Leaven involved in a neighborhood and everything that comes with it: a dramatic drop in crime, a sense of community, and in some of the high-density housing areas that they've established after school programs, the tenancy has gone up. I've seen all kinds of wonderful outcomes that are due to The Leaven and those that support The Leaven."

As a police captain who has seen first-hand the kinds of challenges under-privileged children face, Ian is thrilled to be joining our team and to be making a difference.



Frank Lizarraga, Esq.
Attorney, Lizarraga Law Firm

Frank Lizarraga obtained a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the University of La Verne in 1980, as well as a Juris Doctorate degree from Western State College of Law.

Frank is a practicing attorney with offices in the Inland Empire region of Southern California. He is an accomplished civil litigator with over 30 years of legal and courtroom experience and has been honored to be a member of the National American Board of Trial Advocates, an invitation only, peer review organization, recognizing extensive litigation experience, as well as civility, integrity and professionalism.

He is currently serving as legal counsel to the Inland Valley Association of Realtors, The Greater Ontario Convention and Visitors Bureau and former general counsel to the Southern California Association of Governments, the largest metropolitan planning organization in the United States. Frank was also a Planning Commissioner for the City of Ontario for 17 years and chaired that commission for over 10 years.

Frank currently sits on several private and public boards, including chairing the Board of Advisors to the University's College of Law and is a member of the Board of Trustees to the University of La Verne.



David Zellner, Emeritus
In-Park Services Director, Six Flags Magic Mountain and Hurricane Harbor

David Zellner is the past President of The Leaven's board, serving as a board member from 2015-2021. He served as our Board President for three of those years. He is the Director of In-Park Services for Six Flags Magic Mountain in Valencia, CA.

David was first introduced to The Leaven through a friend and was impressed by the success of our model. "Day-to-day, I see the result of kids dropping out of education," David says. "What our young people need most is to find Christ and to succeed academically so they have opportunities for the future."

David is a former Executive Sous Chef and worked for the corporate offices of Six Flags before relocating to Northern California and assuming his current role at the Valencia theme park. He and his wife live in Southern California.



Rick Rigsby, Honorary President and CEO, Rick Rigsby Communications

As President and CEO of Rick Rigsby Communications, the internationally acclaimed speaker presents to the top companies worldwide. Dr. Rick Rigsby is also a favorite among professional and collegiate sports organizations. Rick—a former award-winning professor—spent over two decades teaching at various colleges, most of those years serving at Texas A&M University. In addition to academic duties, Rick was hired by legendary football icon R. C. Slocum as Chaplain and Life Skills Coach for the Aggies football team.

A former award-winning journalist, Rick is a regular contributor on numerous national television and radio programs.

Inspired by a genuine conviction to help people realize their full potential, Rick brings a combined four decades of experience and expertise to the set of How Ya' Livin'? This transformative podcast encourages, inspires and challenges people at every level to dream bigger, stretch beyond comfort zones and achieve the impossible!