



MASONIC  
OUTREACH  
SERVICES

*It's good to be home...*

## Beyond Obligation | True Tales of Masonic Support in California

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### The Journey Home

The past five years were one heartbreak after another for John and Sarah,\* but they never gave up. The couple is in their 50s and 60s, respectively, and care for their 15-year-old grandson, Michael, of whom they have full custody.

Here in California, they have a strong support network of friends, family, and John's lodge brothers. But when financial difficulties hit, they were forced to follow John's work to Texas. Harder times followed. John suffered a massive stroke, severely impairing his speech and physical abilities. And, as the family struggled to adjust to their new situation, they were also hit with another hardship: Due to a clerical error between the Social Security Administration and his employer, John received next to nothing in disability benefits. Sarah had left work to care for the family and began drawing on her own Social Security benefits, but it wasn't enough to support all three of them. Thousands of miles from their family, friends, and fraternity, they weren't sure how they would cope.

Then, John's brothers at Huntington Beach Lodge No. 380 urged them to come home. The lodge arranged for temporary financial relief so the family could live in an extended-stay hotel in Orange County, and chipped in to help cover groceries and essentials. Perhaps most important, they got John and Sarah's permission to call Masonic Outreach Services (MOS).

"They were trying to do as much for themselves as they could without having to reach out. It took a lot of courage to call MOS," says Kimberly Bomar, who was assigned as the family's MOS care manager. "It took a lot of trust."

Kim was able to resolve the error between Social Security and John's former employer, and at long last, secure his full disability benefits. She immediately began the search for permanent housing for the family, making it a priority to find something close to Michael's old high school, where he could thrive. When they found the right place, she guided them through the lease signing and moving process. Now, MOS provides financial support for John and Sarah's modest expenses. Just the other day, Kim picked up some furniture donations from a friend to help them furnish their apartment.

"The fraternity and Kim have been wonderful. I mean wonderful," says Sarah. "It's been rough, but thank God it's getting better." Thanks to the lodge's initiative and the help of MOS, the family is once again surrounded by a strong support network, no matter what lies ahead.

Throughout these difficult years, Sarah has been the backbone of the family, caring for her husband and grandson and fighting to get them back to a secure place. "She's held this family together," Kim says. "They count on her." Thanks to the charitable dollars of California Masons, all three of them have also been able to count on the fraternity.

*\*Names and identifying details have been changed to protect client privacy.*

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