



Felton Institute Newsletter

The *July 2020* Issue

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TRANSFORMING LIVES
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SPOTLIGHT

Edith Yamanoha

Program Manager of Felton's Aging Services



Edith Yamanoha, Program Manager of Felton's Aging Services, has a focused and calm demeanor. When she discovers new techniques of serving others, she beams with joy. Edith comes from a family of five that includes her parents, brother and sister.

"My mother was a warm and generous person and an excellent home cook who loved to connect with anyone and everyone, especially at grocery stores," Edith recalls. "She noticed all the children and babies and often made conversation with their mothers and fathers. My mother taught me to become financially independent as a woman and to lead a life of kindness and generosity. My father was an engineer whose hobby was playing golf; he taught me the importance of having a sense of curiosity and to pursue my passion."

Edith lived in Japan until the age of nine and then lived in Korea until she was 17. She attended Cal State Hayward (now known as California State University, East Bay) for five years. She shares, "I majored in chemistry. It took only one summer job at a lab to realize that I was not pursuing science as my career path. I was far more interested in taking art classes, socializing and later, in cooking."

After college, Edith returned to Japan where she worked and studied Japanese for six years before beginning her career in the United States. She worked with two telecommunications corporations for a total of 13 years in several different positions, as a market manager in business development and as a market analyst.



Photo: Edith (Left) and Cathy (Right) at Felton Institute's 130th Anniversary Gala, October 2019

Edith says, "After working in the private sector for almost 20 years, I wanted to work with a grassroots organization, possibly working with young people, introducing food and cooking as a means to teaching basic education. One of my goals was to design an educational curriculum to inspire learning, bringing relevance to culture and history through food and cooking. If only we could engage all five of our senses to pique our desire for learning, I believed that we would naturally raise a generation of worldly adults who appreciated lifelong learning.

"I volunteered for a couple of non-profit organizations, but there were also long gaps between jobs. I was in perpetual limbo since 2008 until I discovered Felton's Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) and enrolled in 2016. It was a life-changing experience. SCSEP gave me a second chance to build a career in the most unexpected times in my life."

SCSEP is part of The National Council on Aging (NCOA), the nation's leading nonprofit service and advocacy organization representing older adults. NCOA's goal has been to improve the health and economic security of 10 million older adults by this year 2020. For more than 60 years, NCOA has been a trusted voice and innovative problem-solver, helping seniors navigate the challenges of

aging in America. NCOA works with local and national partners to give older adults tools and information to stay healthy and secure and advocate for programs and policies to improve the lives of all seniors, especially the most vulnerable. SCSEP currently operates 25 projects in 10 states and Puerto Rico and is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor.

"I was hired by Felton in 2017 and am deeply grateful for this opportunity to work with the most compassionate and hardworking people who genuinely care for some of the most neglected populations in our community. I love my job and appreciate all my coworkers at Felton. Not only do I feel that I can think outside of the box; I feel the opportunities are boundless. My goal is to make a lasting difference at Felton and with the community that I serve. What is most rewarding is to experience the happiness of the people and community at large and that I have done my best to contribute to the satisfaction of our management and colleagues.

"I appreciate the diversity, management and employees. Also, I appreciate how employees are treated fairly, including 21 days of vacation, and how everyone cares about the quality of their work and the well-being of their clients," Edith smiles.



“[The impact of COVID-19 on senior division services] is forcing us to think on our feet and find creative solutions NOW. This pandemic is accelerating our need to integrate technologies in the lives of our colleagues and clients. Not only is COVID-19 pressing against us to make urgent changes, but the current climate of addressing systemic racism squarely is also coming to the surface.

We are moving into the digital age, exploring ways to help seniors adopt technology and access online resources which will affect every facet of their daily life. Access to devices, access to high-speed internet and a warm friendly training designed for seniors can help us make strides toward closing the digital divide. The changes may feel restrictive when we can't meet face-to-face, but we are preparing for the future, which has arrived sooner than we expected.”



Edith says her personal motto is to never be defeated by her own personal weakness. In her time away from work, she is dedicated to nurturing her spirit and always expanding her skills. She has been studying Spanish and hopes to become fluent in 10 years. Edith loves hiking, especially near a body of water or the redwoods. When possible, she enjoys traveling to other parts of the world and cooking and dining with friends. Music is important to her; she loves to dance, and enjoys listening to live jazz and classical music with friends. For 14 years, she enjoyed many of her hobbies with her beloved pup Pumpkin, who has since passed away.

Edith is always eager to help others, and she encourages seniors who need support during these challenging times to reach out and be sure not to isolate themselves. 🐾

If you're interested more information about Felton's Aging Services, you can reach Edith Yamanoha at eyamanoha@felton.org, or call 415-474-7310.

Felton's Senior Division: Dealing with the Pandemic through Technology

Felton's Senior Division Director Cathy Spensley, MSW, LCSW, joined the Felton team in 2006, and oversees programs that serve over 2,000 seniors a year in geriatric mental health and aging services.

In the video below, Cathy shares how she first became an advocate for older adults and explains how many of Felton's services provide care and case management to enhance the quality of life of adults ages 55 and older.



You can watch videos of Felton's Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) Success Stories below:



Cathy notes, “Felton’s Senior Division has been involved in bridging the digital divide with older adults for many years now. We are a founding member of the [San Francisco Tech Council](#), and we have worked closely with Comcast and other service providers to connect seniors and school children to low-cost broadband. The pandemic, however, has transformed an important effort into an essential requirement. Being connected today is critical for accessing healthcare, seeking employment, and overcoming social isolation – all areas that Felton’s services are deeply committed to.

“Within our mental health programs, we continue to meet clients in person when necessary, but for the vast majority, it is safest now to provide services virtually through telehealth. We have doubled our efforts to make sure every client is equipped with the specific technology that works best for them. For some, this might be a landline or basic cell phone. For others able to use a smartphone, tablet, or laptop, we are working to get them this equipment, and then provide computer training via video. Filling an important gap, we are hoping to secure

funding for a Felton Tech Squad to troubleshoot the individual issues around internet connection and downloading of needed applications.

“In our [Senior Community Service Employment Program \(SCSEP\)](#), we are developing a lending library of laptops, so that the trainees can continue to develop the essential technology skills to find permanent employment. And throughout all our programs, we are providing check-ins via telephone surveys — asking for needs, providing resources, and attempting to reduce the social isolation that everyone is feeling, but especially those older adults needing to continue to shelter in place for the foreseeable future. As many geriatricians have told us, the health risk of social isolation is the equivalent of smoking 15 cigarettes a day for an entire lifetime. When we have groups of seniors calling other seniors, some of that isolation can be reduced. And even here, technology is helping us, as we are able to track all the responses in our [CIRCE electronic charting system](#). Technology has indeed become more important than ever to our agency and to our work with our clients.” ■

FELTON INSTITUTE'S SERVICES FOR OLDER ADULTS

Providing citywide services and workforce opportunities to help older adults remain in the community and age with dignity, security, and a high quality of life.

GERIATRIC MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES | SAN FRANCISCO

- **Senior Full-Service Wellness Program (Mental Health Act)** – A collaborative partnership with other community-based programs to support older adults in need of intensive case management including mental health and substance abuse treatment, medical health care, housing assistance, vocational and educational support, and counseling. Following the Mental Health Recovery Model, participants have primary control over decisions about their care. The program includes a workforce component. Referrals through Community Behavioral Health Services, San Francisco Department of Public Health.

Locations at 1500 Franklin Street and 6221 Geary Avenue in San Francisco.

Population Served: 60 years and older

Program Manager ICM and GOS (1500 Franklin): Monique Hamilton, LCSW, (415) 474-7310, ext. 491

Program Manager GSW (6221 Geary): Hubert Lau, LMFT, (415) 386-6600

- **Intensive Case Management and Outpatient Mental Health Services** – Comprehensive case management, counseling, and psychiatric services provided for older adults with mental health concerns, including substance abuse, to help maintain independence and dignity while aging in place. Includes a specialized Intensive Case Management team. In-home and clinic-based services offered, including evidence-based practices and assessments. Referrals from CBHS, the community, and walk-ins.

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Population Served: 60 years and older

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Program Manager GSW (6221 Geary): Hubert Lau, LMFT, (415) 386-6600

OLDER ADULT SERVICE TEAM ALAMEDA COUNTY

- **Older Adult Service Team (OAST)** – A specialized team in geriatric mental health providing services countywide. Includes comprehensive clinical case management and psychiatric services for older adults with mental health concerns and substance abuse, helping them maintain independence and dignity while aging in place. Extensive work with community partners in developing effective resources and supports.

Location: 1005 Atlantic Avenue,
Alameda CA 94501

Population Served: 60 years and older

Program Director: Caiti Crum, LMFT, (510) 239-3064

ALAMEDA COUNTY

- **Case Management for Alameda County** – Case management, under contract with Alameda County Adult Protective Services (APS), to help older adults and adults with disabilities with time-limited care management services.

Program Director: Caiti Crum, LMFT,
(510) 239-3064

AGING SERVICES

SAN FRANCISCO COUNTY

- **Case Management for Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities** – Care management services for frail and cognitively impaired seniors and adults with disabilities who may also need brief counseling or access to more extensive mental health services.

No fees are charged to participants, 18 and older

Location: 6221 Geary, SF, CA 94121

Director of Programs: Lynn O’Leary, (510) 924-7667

Case Manager: Kham Lam, (415) 474-7310, ext. 248

- **Long-term Care Ombudsman Program** Mandated by federal and state law, professional staff and outreach volunteers investigate complaints and resolve issues affecting elderly and dependent adults in long-term care facilities. The program receives mandated reports of alleged abuse of elderly and dependent adults within facilities and provides visits and advocacy.

No fees are charged to participants. Licensed long-term facility resident.

Location: 6221 Geary, San Francisco, CA 94121

Program Director: Benson Nadell, (415) 751-9788

- **Foster Grandparent Program** – Limited-income, mobile seniors receive small stipends for providing support services for 15-30 hours a week with children who need extra support and attention. They serve in pre-school, elementary, and high school classrooms, and with children in community clinics. The volunteers develop one-to-one consistent relationships with the children, by tutoring, mentoring, and providing emotional support. Stipends are tax-free and not counted as income for entitlement programs.

- Featured Video: [“Grandma Connie” & “Grandma Alicia”: Felton Institute’s Foster Grandparent Program](#)

- Featured Video: [Foster Grandparent 50th Anniversary Celebration](#)

No fees are charged to participants or volunteers

Location: 6221 Geary, SF, CA 94121

Population Served: 55 years and older.

Program Manager: Tieu Ly, (415) 474-7310, ext. 239

- **Senior Companion Program** – Limited-income, mobile seniors provide companionship services 15-20 hours/week to frail, isolated, and homebound seniors. A new component of the program includes specialized Senior Peer Escorts, assisting people with cognitive impairments continue to ride safely on group vans and attend essential day programs. Senior Peer Counselors are a specialized unit of the Senior Companion Program, trained in working with older adults with mental health concerns. Small hourly stipends are provided for income supports.

No fees are charged to participants or volunteers. Ages 55 years and older.

Program Manager: Tieu Ly, (415) 474-7310, ext. 239

6221 Geary Blvd. San Francisco, CA 94121

AGING SERVICES Continued

- **Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)** – Workforce training for older adults in community service organizations and government departments, leading to permanent job placements, including the private sector. The program includes a collaboration called Work Matters, with other community and city partners to bridge the employment gap for older adults

No fees are charged to participants.

Location: 601 Van Ness, San Francisco, CA, 94102

Population Served: 55 years and older

Program Director: Amy Yu, (415) 982-7007, ext. 611

- **Community Liaisons at the DAAS Service Hub** – Older adults and people with disabilities providing welcoming customer service at the Department of Aging and Adult Services Hub at 2 Gough Street, San Francisco. Community Liaisons assist in providing language and culturally accessible access to service connection, as well as establishing rapport and assistance with other connections in the community, additional outreach activities, and other assistance to Hub staff.

No fees are charged to participants.

Program Manager: Edith Yamanoha,

(415) 982-7007, ext. 631

- **Visitation Valley Senior Health & Wellness** – Outreach and wellness programming to isolated older adults in Visitation Valley. Projects include Chinese dancing, psycho-education, discussion groups around trauma, and community connections and neighborhood collaborations among the diverse groups of older adults in the southeast sector of San Francisco. In process are plans for a multi-cultural Senior Council to lead aging-friendly efforts and to create a strong voice in developing services and wellness programs.

No fees are charged to participants.

Senior Division Director: Cathy Spensley, LCSW, (415) 474-7310, ext. 435

Program Manager: Edith Yamanoha,

(415) 474-7310, ext. 631

- **Community Services for Seniors and People with Disabilities** – Activities and service connection to meet the needs of the diverse neighborhood residents of older adults and adults with disabilities, including opportunities for social, wellness, educational, and intergenerational activities, in collaboration with multiple community partners.

No fees are charged to participants or volunteers

Location: 66 Raymond, Visitation Valley

Program Manager: Edith Yamanoha, (415) 982-7007, ext. 631

Senior Division Director: Cathy Spensley, LCSW

Senior Director of Programs: Lynn O'Leary, PhD

Main Office: 1500 Franklin Street, San Francisco, CA 94109,

Main Office Phone: 415-474-7310

Felton's New Board Officers

As of July 1, 2020, Felton instituted new board officers.



SANDRA SMITH
Felton Board Chair

Sandra Smith is now Board Chair, succeeding Amy Solliday, who is now Board Chair Emeritus. Darren Skolnick, the new Vice-Chair, succeeds Gretchen Eichinger. Gretchen Eichinger is now serving as Board Secretary, in the position previously held by Elisabeth A. Madden.

Sandra Smith is a retired Administrative Law Judge, and an attorney with experience in civil litigation, general civil advice and consultation, employment law – litigation, prevention and investigations, health law compliance and administration. She has an extensive background with public entity litigation defense and is a former partner with a statewide private firm representing public and private entities.

Regarding her appointment as Board Chair, Sandra Smith shares,

“I was excited to join Felton’s Board of Directors almost two years ago, and most recently, I am honored to have been appointed as Chair of the Board.



"Initially, I was drawn to Felton based on its values, mission, and goals and offer of a variety of programs and social services that 'transform lives'.

The demonstrated dedication to continuing the mission of providing services to families is in sync with my personal mission of offering and sharing my limited professional and life experience skills to assist with social justice and being socially responsible on a broader scale.

Thus, I find working with the Felton Board a small contribution to the depth and wealth of services offered by Felton from addressing the needs of individuals and families from infancy to the elderly; to providing mental health, shelter, substance abuse, and re-entry services to those in need.



"In short, I am honored to offer my meager assistance in the highest and best way possible to the Felton Board as a Director, and now as the Board Chair, with hope I can assist with the advancement of Felton's values, mission, and goals. I thank Felton, its employees, Board members, volunteers, and recipients of the offered services for allowing me to give a small part of myself."

While working for the California Office of the Attorney General as a Deputy Attorney General, and as a Deputy Attorney for Caltrans, earning an award for excellence in litigation. Ms. Smith defended public entities in federal and state courts, mediations and arbitrations, and a variety of administrative forums.

Ms. Smith's public sector legal work includes two years with the County of Alameda representing the county in juvenile dependency proceedings, civil litigation, employment and personnel, advice, consultation, and investigations for various Alameda County departments and the Alameda County Medical Center. She demonstrates

judicial qualifications while employed as an administrative law judge with the California Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board.

In addition to her legal experience, Ms. Smith brings a broad array of life experiences and diverse personal history and background to her work. She previously volunteered for the State Bar sponsored "Volunteers in Parole Program" to mentor Youth Authority parolees and to help them become productive in the community, and she has served as an alumni mentor for Hastings students. Her current practice includes general civil advice and consultation, health law advice and consultation on compliance issues, education law, and employment law. Ms. Smith has served as a contributing author of legal publications on employment and labor law.

Ms. Smith graduated from University of California, Berkeley, and earned her Juris Doctor from University of California, Hastings College of Law.

*For more information about Felton's 2020 board,
please visit: <https://felton.org/board>*



DARREN SKOLNICK **Felton Vice-Chair**

Darren Skolnick is the new Vice-Chair of the Felton Institute Board. He has served with the Felton Board of Directors since 2017 and is a member of the Finance Committee.

Darren says, “Being chosen as Vice-Chair is an honor, and I will support the Chair in helping Felton fulfill its critical social mission and steer Felton towards a sustainable and thriving future during this unprecedented time.”

Mr. Skolnick offers over 30 years of progressive and diversified business experience with a proven track record of successfully leading internal audit functions and is currently the Vice President of Internal Audit for Verify Health System in Redwood City, CA. Previous experience includes work with Affinity Health Plan, Ioan College and KPMG.

Mr. Skolnick brings previous board experience, having served on the Board of Directors for The Bridge in New York City. Much like Felton Institute is for the San Francisco Bay Area, The Bridge is one of New York City’s premier social service agencies. The Bridge provides mental health and substance abuse treatment, housing, vocational training, job placement, healthcare, education and creative arts therapy to men and women in Manhattan, The Bronx, Brooklyn and Queens. The Bridge’s programs and services have been replicated nationally and internationally.

Darren received his Master of Business degree from the Lubin School of Business at Pace University, and his Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting from the Brooklyn College at the City University of New York.

*For more information about Felton’s 2020 board,
please visit: <https://felton.org/board>*



GRETCHEN EICHINGER
Felton Board Secretary

Gretchen Eichinger is the newly appointed Felton Board Secretary and immediate past Vice-Chair.

She is an experienced product leader and business strategist in computer vision, 3D graphics, digital media, cloud computing, and data analytics. During her career, Ms. Eichinger has held executive-level positions at such firms as Microsoft Corporation, Mattel Interactive, and Sony Computer Entertainment America. Currently, Ms. Eichinger is an independent consultant using her more than 20 years of experience providing vision and leadership to help clients with new product development, marketing initiatives, business performance, and profitability.

Ms. Eichinger has a Bachelor of Arts, English Literature, from the University of California, Berkeley.

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AMY SOLLIDAY
Felton Chair Emeritus

Amy Solliday, now Board Chair Emeritus, served as Board Chair from 2017-2020. She joined Felton Institute's Board in September of 2006. Ms. Solliday is the Vice-President of Store Operations for Gap Inc., where she has held numerous roles for over 30 years. She specializes in building work practices that optimize productivity and customer experience. Ms. Solliday's key accomplishments include: business process and system implementations for store managers, store organizational structures, and numerous large-scale field conferences. She drives results through a focus on organizational effectiveness, talent development, and continuous improvement.

Ms. Solliday graduated Phi Beta Kappa with a B.A. in English Language and Literature at the University of Maryland College Park. She is also a member of the Human Resources Committee and helped create the operating model for Felton Early Psychosis Programs. Amy believes in giving back to her community and joined the Felton Board of Directors as a way of making a difference in the lives of so many in need.

*For more information about Felton's 2020 board,
please visit: <https://felton.org/board>*



MARVIN DAVIS Felton Board Treasurer

Marvin Davis continues as Felton Board Treasurer. He is a Senior Executive with more than 25 years of professional accounting, audit, tax, financial consulting and management experience in the nonprofit and small business sectors.

Mr. Davis joined Felton Institute in 2004 as a turnaround consultant tasked with restructuring the financial operations of the organization. Shortly thereafter, he accepted the position of Controller, and served in that role for seven years. In February 2013, he was promoted to Chief Financial Officer (CFO), with overall management and oversight of financial operations. In July 2017, Mr. Davis was promoted to Chief Financial and Operations Officer (CFOO), where he now additionally has management and oversight for the operations of Felton's IT, Quality Assurance, Real Estate, Facilities, and Adult and Senior Service Divisions.

Prior to joining Felton Institute, Davis headed Marvin Davis Consulting, where he provided accounting and consulting services to various small businesses and nonprofits. A San Francisco Bay Area native, Davis earned his Bachelor of Science in Accounting from CSU Hayward. Outside of his work with Felton, Mr. Davis serves on the Board of Directors of Mt. Diablo Soccer Association. He currently resides in the Bay Area with his wife and their two children.

*For more information about Felton's 2020 board,
please visit: <https://felton.org/board>*

Kitty Felton: An Innovative Life of Service

In this month of July, we celebrate the birthday of [Dr. Katharine \(Kitty\) Felton](#), the maverick executive director of the agency named in tribute to her, Felton Institute.



Kitty Felton was born on July 7, 1873, in Oakland, California, to a prominent Bay Area family. Her father, John Brooks Felton, was a judge and former mayor of Oakland. The city of Felton, California, near Santa Cruz, is named for Kitty's father.

Kitty started life with all the economic and social advantages, but she worked hard for her community in a myriad of socially responsible and selfless ways. In San Francisco, she was fondly known as the "Conscience of the City" because of her dedication to social work.

Standing barely five feet tall, [Kitty Felton](#) is described as a personality larger than life: brave, brilliant, and dynamic. A famous anecdote about young Katharine Felton recounts

that she initially refused to accept the gold medal awarded to her for graduating with the highest honors from the University of California Berkeley in 1895. Twenty years later, Kitty suddenly remembered the medal and asked if she might reclaim it, since her beloved agency needed funds. That medal contained gold worth about \$100.

By experience and training, [Kitty Felton](#) was a social worker. But her genius and accomplishments transcended her profession - trailblazing and innovating social work, with many of her innovations still used as a standard practice today.

By experience and training, [Kitty Felton](#) was a social worker. But her genius and accomplishments transcended her profession - trailblazing and innovating social work, with many of her innovations still used as a standard practice today.

At the young age of 28, Felton was appointed director of Associated Charities (now known as Felton Institute). It is difficult to list all of her career accomplishments, but here are some highlights:

- **Innovations to the foster parenting system result in the lowest infant mortality of any city of its' size in the world.**
- **Creation of the State Board of Charities and Corrections, the forerunner of the State Department of Social Welfare.**
- **Formation of the very first employment agency in the U.S.**
- **Development of mental health counseling to deal with those who are traumatized.**
- **Changes in the way funds are used, combining private and public resources so that widowed and single mothers could remain at home with their children.**
- **Drafts of nearly all of the early legislation covering welfare and relief in the State of California.**

[Kitty Felton](#)'s embodied values remain in the foundation of Felton Institute today.

“

“People are so brave. It has always seemed to me that the human race, by and large, is more valiant than we have any right to expect.”

- Kitty Felton, 1939



Historian Dan Kelly shares some of the highlights of Kitty Felton's impact in this interview from Felton Institute's 125th Anniversary Celebration back in 2014

Kitty Felton was Anti-Racist.

In 1906, in the days after the devastating earthquake, [Kitty Felton](#) signed and sent a telegram, along with other social welfare leaders, to President Theodore Roosevelt, urging him to furnish relief to the Chinese community, without regard to race or nationality.

The telegram, dated April 24, 1906, reads:

"All reports that the people of the administration or the relief committee of San Francisco are making any distinction between relieving, supporting or protecting the Chinese, and any other people differing in race or color, are totally false and unfounded. The committees and even the homeless people themselves are treating the Chinese and all other unfortunates with the consideration and kindness worthy of our civilization and our country. The people of San Francisco are striving with all the means in their power and with all their heart to relieve their destitute, care for their sick and helpless, and uplift their stricken, in accordance with the dictate of humanity and in a manner worthy of Americans, irrespective of race, creed or color, in the common brotherhood of man."

Kitty Felton was a Fierce Woman Leader.

Kitty Felton was one of two female members of the Committee of Fifty. Mayor Eugene Schmitz assembled the group during the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake. In the crucible of the disaster relief following the earthquake, Kitty Felton became the head of the social service efforts to restore the life of the people of the city and developed innovative solutions that are common practice today.



Katharine Felton at home

Kitty Felton was a Champion for Refugees.

Survivors of the 1906 Earthquake slept in tents in city parks and at the Presidio. Kitty was responsible for emptying the refugee camps and finding placements for the dispossessed, all of which she accomplished within one year. These innovations became known as the "San Francisco Model" by 1907.

In its 131st year, Felton Institute still embodies the spirit of its namesake. In Kitty's later years, her life was one long passionate campaign to improve health care, education, and psychiatric counseling for all children, regardless of ability. Kitty Felton was a woman ahead of her time. She advocated, lobbied, fundraised, and provided hands-on care to some of the most vulnerable members of society. ■

**Felton Institute is immensely proud of Kitty's
legacy of charity and advocacy.**

The Long-term Care Ombudsman Program

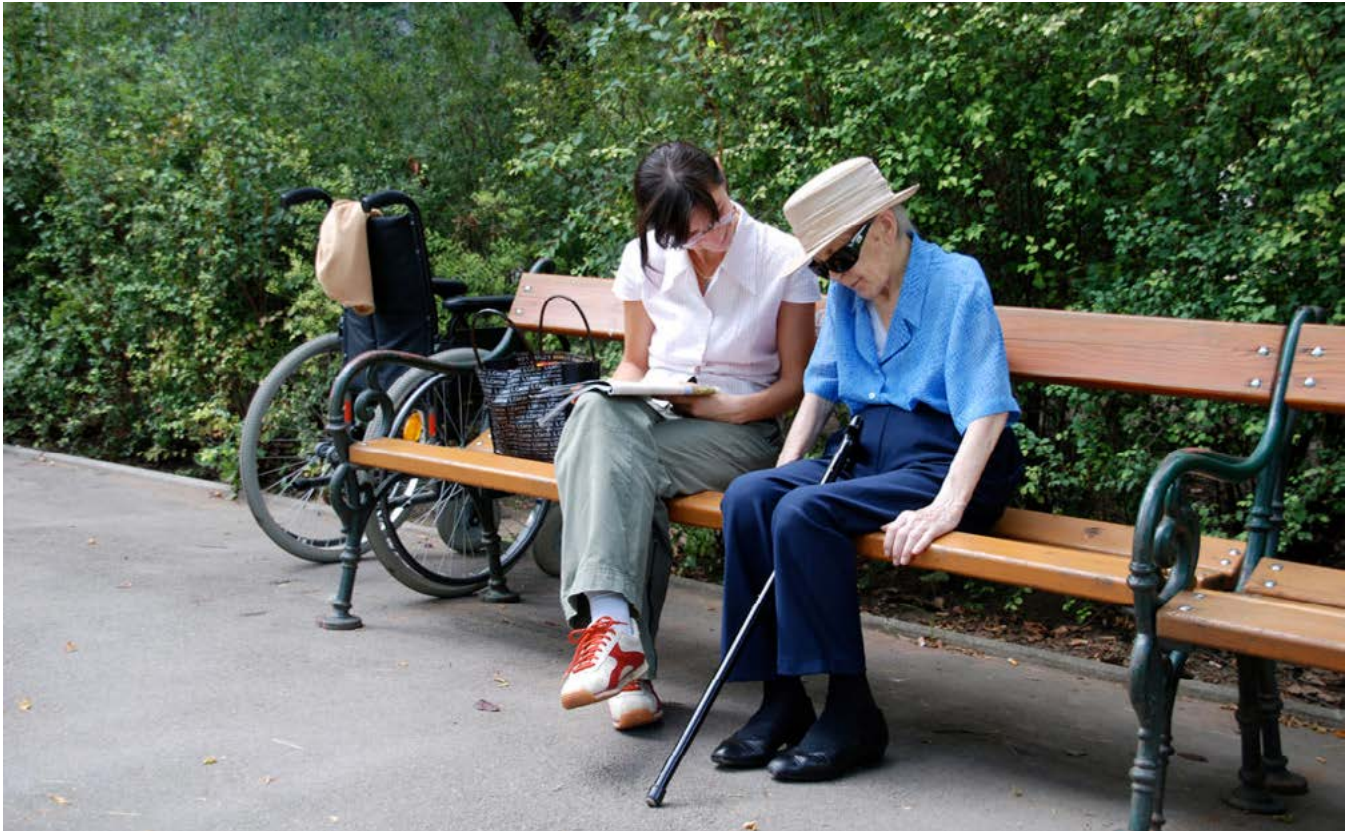


At a time when communication with loved ones in skilled nursing facilities, assisted living and board and care homes is more critical than ever due to the pandemic, the services provided by [Felton's Long-term Care Ombudsman program](#) are essential.

The Ombudsman Program is a federally mandated visiting advocacy program. Professional staff and volunteers receive and investigate complaints regarding the health, safety, welfare, and rights of older adults and people with disabilities living in long-term care facilities. It is the only long-term care advocacy program in the United States. Its mission is to advocate for the dignity, quality of life, and quality of care for residents living in long-term care facilities. They investigate and report abuse or neglect and work toward resolving problems. Additionally, if a person in a licensed nursing home wants to draft advance health care directives, one of the witnesses must be an ombudsman.

Senior Division Director Cathy Spensley says,

"Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the [Long-term Care Ombudsman Program](#) has been at the center of the crisis, which first impacted residents in skilled nursing facilities, like Laguna Honda. Working with [San Francisco's Department of Emergency Management \(DEM\)](#), within days of being asked to distribute materials about the virus, the Ombudsman staff and volunteers distributed essential informational materials about COVID-19 to all 81 skilled nursing facilities, assisted living and board and care homes in the City. Since then, the Ombudsman program staff continues to provide essential information to residents and family members to help them adapt to the restrictions in facilities, as well as to conduct investigations around any reports of elder abuse and provide important mediation, as needed, in these difficult times for everyone."




Benson Nadell is the program director of the [Ombudsman Program](#). He first joined Felton's staff in 1986 and leads a dedicated team devoted to advocacy. Julie Schneider, a Field Service Coordinator, first joined the ombudsman program as a volunteer in 2012 and has been a staff member since 2015. She is passionate about the work.

Here Julie shares some thoughts compiled from staff and volunteers:

- "There are no words that convey the great honor and pleasure it has been to help folks living in long-term care facilities.
- Being an Ombudsman fits with the notion that 'it is in giving that we receive'.
- This has been one of the most personally rewarding endeavors of my adult life.
- It's a great feeling to be able to help solve a problem, no matter how small, for a resident.

Being an Ombudsman gives me the opportunity to apply my best skills. It feels great to be able to sit with someone and listen to their life stories that otherwise might not have been told."

Ombudsman services are free and confidential. Anyone can file a complaint on behalf of a person living in a nursing or residential care facility. Ombudsmen are trained professionals who are certified by the State of California. Their chief concerns are residents' rights, dignity, and quality of life. They play an indispensable part in the well-being of people who cannot speak for themselves. 

This month we invite you to consider a contribution to Felton Institute for its programs. If you are moved by the work of [Felton's Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program](#) or any of [Felton's programs](#), we invite you to invest in services that continue making our communities stronger during unprecedented times.

For more information, contact:
ombudsman@felton.org or 415-751-9788

Feeling Stressed?

These last few months, you've been handling a lot.
If you need ANY emotional support,
you know you can call us, ANYTIME!

You don't have to be considering suicide to call.

TRUE OR FALSE

You must be actively suicidal
to call our hotline.

FALSE

Anyone can call our hotline to talk
through emotional challenges.

IF **YOU** OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW
IS IN CRISIS, CALL OUR **24HR HOTLINE**



(415) 781-0500



sfsuicide.org





Make a *Donation* to Felton Institute today!

Help Felton continue creating impact in the Bay Area by making a [monthly or yearly commitment](#).

All contributions are tax-deductible.

Felton Institute is a tax-exempt organization registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit under EIN 94-1156530.



DONATE

Help transform your community!



MOBILE PHONE DONATION:
Text 'FELTON' to 41444 to donate today!



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