

The logo consists of a solid blue rectangle. Inside the rectangle, the words "Shelter" and "Tech" are stacked vertically in a white, bold, sans-serif font.

**Shelter
Tech**

**2019
Annual
Report**

An Intro to ShelterTech





Message from Bill Soward

Executive Director

“At ShelterTech our mission is to help bridge the digital divide, providing WiFi connectivity to shelters and leveraging technology and technology skills to connect people at-risk to resources that can help them solve their issues. In 2019, ShelterTech made huge strides as an organization. Eight more shelters went live with WiFi and the dream of [SFServiceGuide](#) became a reality with a soft launch in November. SFServiceGuide is the result of thousands of volunteer hours and the support of an engaged ecosystem of partners from across the city. For the first time, we have a centralized directory of resources built for the community, by the community!

2019 was also an important year of transition for ShelterTech. In May, Molly Cohen stepped back from her role as Executive Director and moved into a new role as first-time mom. During Molly’s tenure, ShelterTech matured as an organization and through her excellent stewardship, the potential for impact has never been greater. Many thanks to Molly for her hard work and dedication and most of all for infusing her sense of empathy and humanity into everything we do! I am humbled to have the opportunity to follow in her footsteps.

Joining ShelterTech as Executive Director has been an amazing experience. Every day, I am energized by the passion of our volunteers and partners and we work together to make a difference for those who are less fortunate. I am especially encouraged by the engagement we see at our community outreach events; it fuels our all-volunteer approach, and reflects our values of prioritizing the human lives we are changing.

Read on to learn more about who we are and what we do. Hopefully our story will inspire you to get involved. Working together, we can make an even greater impact!”

Mission & History

Mission

ShelterTech is an award-winning non-profit solving the biggest technology challenges faced by people experiencing homelessness in San Francisco. Our unique, all-volunteer organization is committed to bridging the digital divide, inspired by the belief that digital equity and connectivity is a right, not a privilege.

With over 8,000 people in San Francisco and over 28,000 in the Bay Area currently unsheltered and tens of thousands more at risk of eviction, the situation has never been more dire. The tech boom in San Francisco has created thousands of jobs and great wealth. It has also widened the digital divide and created an affordable housing crisis, making a bad situation even worse.

Now is the time for action!

A note from our Founder, Darcel Jackson

I became homeless when I was injured and lost my welding job working on the new Bay Bridge in San Francisco. I realized the longer I stayed in that condition, the harder it would become to escape it. Living on the streets, you spend most of your time just trying to survive. It's hard to know where to start, what services you need, how to get training in a new field, or search for jobs. I had a smartphone and could find WiFi, but there weren't any apps or websites to help me get off the streets. Now I want to give back and help people that become homeless.

Darcel founded ShelterTech to help bridge this digital divide.



Our Programs

Access for all

We have a bias towards action with impact maximized by building a vibrant ecosystem of partners and people with lived experience. Solutions built for the community, by the community!

People experiencing homelessness rely on the internet to apply for housing and benefits, schedule appointments with doctors and case managers, search for jobs, and stay in touch with family and friends. It's a lifeline for getting back on your feet.

Founded in 2016, ShelterTech is now a 100+ member strong volunteer-only organisation with over \$100,000 in annual funding, \$2,000,000 in in-kind contributions, and 2 program offerings.



ShelterConnect

WiFi access where it's needed most

ShelterConnect works with partners to deliver a free, turn-key WiFi solution for shelters and transitional housing facilities.

Any organization that operates a shelter or other transitional housing facility can apply for ShelterConnect.



SFServiceGuide

Find social programs for your needs

Our goal is to help anyone with access to a smartphone, tablet, or computer to find the services they need.

ShelterTech developed SFServiceGuide as an online directory of human services in San Francisco.

The ShelterTech Difference



All-Volunteer

- Bridging the digital divide using the tech community
- Application of work skills to make an impact
- Networking and professional development opportunity



Partners

- Growing network of community-based organizations
- Updating content via domain knowledge
- Key source of referrals



Datathons

- Verification of system data by volunteers
- Organized public and corporate events
- Held 2-3x per month



ShelterConnect

- Development of a unique public/private partnership
- Cost-effective solutions
- Designed to scale rapidly



Community Representatives

- Paid positions for people who have experienced homelessness
- Matched with volunteers at Datathons
- Valuable context and insights gained from the community



Content Curation

- Data reviewed multiple times per year
- Partnership with experts to create new content
- Matching tools and resources with the need

SF Service Guide

The SFServiceGuide is an online directory of human services in San Francisco that was launched in November 2019. Our goal is to help anyone with access to a smartphone, tablet, or computer find the services they need. The guide's focus is on homelessness and housing services but also covers a variety of other services, from education and legal aid to senior services and re-entry programs.

SFServiceGuide is supported by a grant from the SF Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development and verified for accuracy by our data partner, the Homeless Advocacy Project of the JDC. In 2019 we had over 4000 volunteer hours that went into the development of the SFServiceGuide!

Welcome to the SF Service Guide

Find food, housing, health, and coronavirus resources in San Francisco.

Resource Guides

Get guided help with many of the most common issues people are facing in San Francisco. Updated regularly.



Shelter & Quarantine Updates

[Explore Guide](#)



Family Homelessness

[Explore Guide](#)



Youth Homelessness

[Explore Guide](#)



Adult Homelessness

[Explore Guide](#)



Food resources

[Explore Guide](#)



Hygiene

[Explore Guide](#)



Medical Services

[Explore Guide](#)



Domestic Violence

[Explore Guide](#)



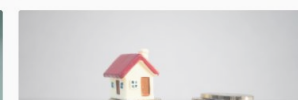
Internet Access

[Explore Guide](#)



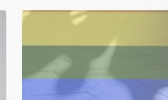
Financial and Job Assistance

[Explore Guide](#)



Rental Assistance

[Explore Guide](#)



LGBTQ Resou

[Explore Guide](#)

365
Organizations

1400+
Services

Shelter Connect

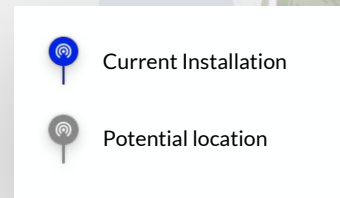
Our ambitious goal is to equip **100% of the shelters in San Francisco with WiFi by 2024!**

In 2019, we went live at 8 additional shelters managed by Larkin Street Youth Services (LSYS), and now ShelterConnect WiFi is available at 12 LSYS shelters overall.

During the year, we continued to focus on identifying strategies to reduce the lifetime program cost for wiring a shelter. The three primary costs are:

- Equipment and licensing
- Installation labor
- Ongoing ISP charges

In Q4 2019, we established a partnership with the City of San Francisco Digital Equity team to deliver 1GB fiber/ISP capability to future ShelterConnect locations for FREE! Our first joint project was the Star Hotel, a 54 room Single Resident Occupancy (SRO) building based in the Mission and managed by DISH. This project went live December 27, 2019.



9

Shelters/SROs connected in 2019
19 total since 2016

160

Residents and 900 daytime users connected in 2019

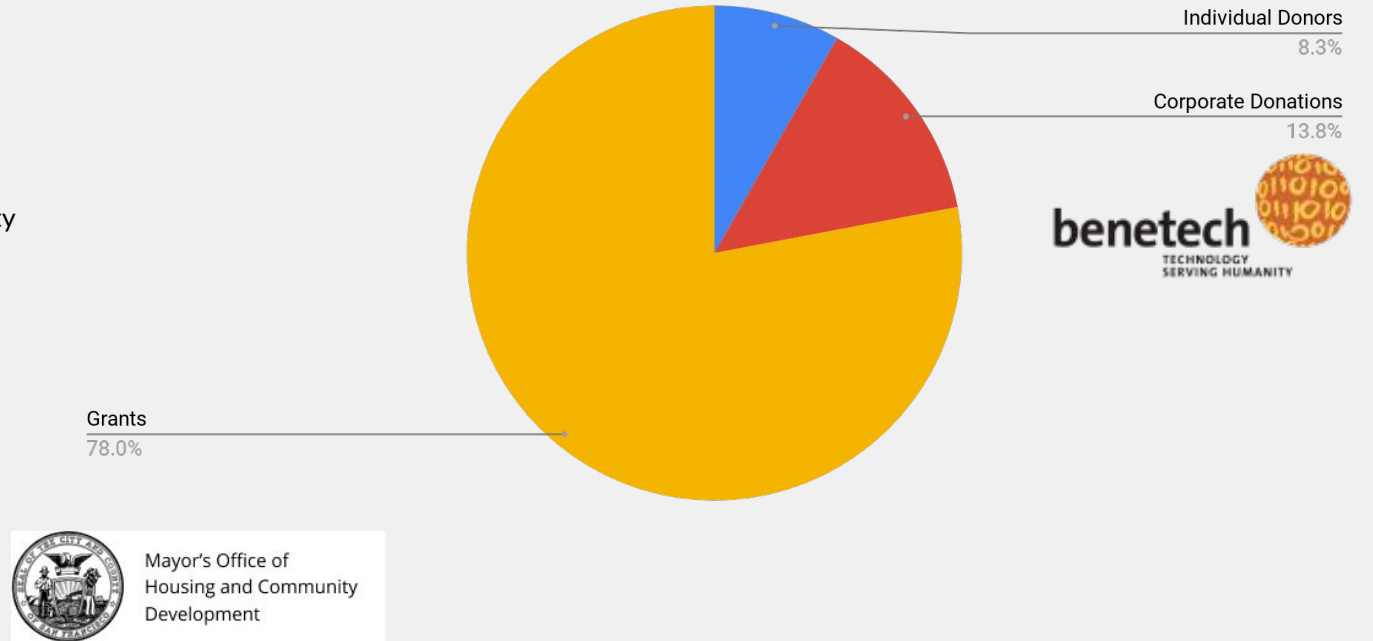
1000+ residents nightly and
4,000+ annually connected overall

Funding Snapshot

ShelterTech raised \$109K in 2019

Our primary sources of funding came from:

- Grants (Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development)
- Corporate Donations (Benetech)



Program Spending

In 2019, our spending was split fairly evenly across our two primary programs:

SFServiceGuide= \$54K

ShelterConnect= \$42K

Additionally, we paid **\$17K** directly to our **Community Reps** for their work on datathons, community outreach and user research.

In 2019, our total expenses were **\$121K**. As an all-volunteer organization, we estimate that over \$2.0 million in staffing costs were saved in 2019! **This means that every dollar donated goes to where it's needed most--to the programs serving individuals-in-need.**

The graph depicts where we spent our valuable volunteer time. Assumptions are based on industry and sector standards in San Francisco of an organization with a similar breadth and depth of impact

Expenses

General

6.2%

Community Representatives

14.1%

ShelterConnect

34.8%

SF Service Guide

44.8%

Volunteer Operations

Leadership

7.0%

Product Dev

17.0%

Volunteer Events

45.0%

Marketing & Research

18.0%

Finance

3.0%

Partner Outreach

10.0%

Strategic Partners

 <p>Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development</p>	<p>Justice & Diversity CENTER OF THE BAR ASSOCIATION OF SAN FRANCISCO</p>	<p>benetech TECHNOLOGY SERVING HUMANITY</p>	<p>LARKIN STREET YOUTH SERVICES</p>	<p>EVICTON DEFENSE COLLABORATIVE</p>	<p>Homeownership SF education and opportunity</p>
 <p>SF FAMILIES</p>	 <p>COMPASS FAMILY SERVICES Housing. Support. Hope.</p>	 <p>BRIDGE</p>	<p>wework</p>	 <p>dish DELIVERING INNOVATION IN SUPPORTIVE HOUSING</p>	 <p>Code for San Francisco</p>
 <p>GSMA™</p>	<p>PagerDuty</p>	 <p>CISCO</p>	 <p>MONKEYBRAINS.NET Local ISP</p>	 <p>PCS PROFESSIONAL COMPUTER SUPPORT</p>	<p>TENDERLOIN TECHNOLOGY LAB TECHNOLOGY FOR ALL</p>



Accelerating Digital Inclusion for People Experiencing Homelessness: A spotlight on San Francisco

March 2020

GSMA

Partner Spotlight

ShelterTech has partnered with the GSMA, the global mobile operators association. The GSMA [Digital Equity Initiative](#) has a mission to accelerate digital solutions for the underserved in high GDP markets. Working together we have developed pioneering research on the status of digital inclusion for the homeless; what it means to establish digital equity and how best to solve the digital challenges they face. We aim to have our solutions apply to not just San Francisco, but more broadly to the Bay Area and beyond.

Explore the [research](#) and watch the video with our CEO, Bill Soward

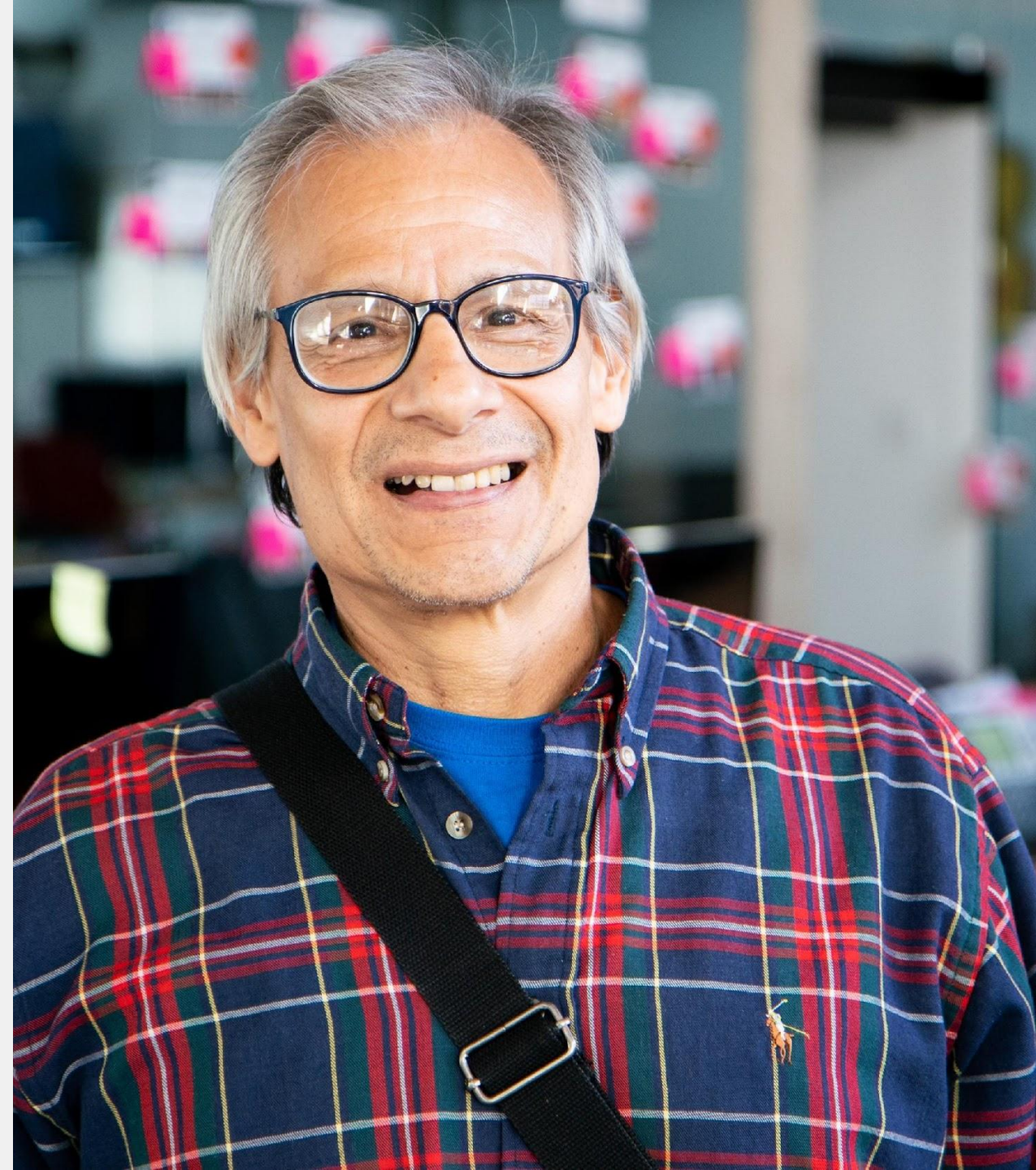


Aaron Mendez

Community Representative Spotlight

"I've been homeless in 4 states over a period of 15 years. It was hard to find resources - water, food, shelter, health care. Having it all in one place is less frustrating.

Now that I'm working with ST, things are way better. I feel hope and enjoy meeting people that care, to help people in need. I put it this way, people don't care what you know until they know that you care. Getting information out there lets them know that there are real people who care about them."



Emmanuel Uwimana

Community Representative Spotlight

“Being homeless is not a choice. It’s part of life, because in life everybody has their ups and downs. Being homeless — people have social stigma to those who are homeless. They think they are the ones who deal with drug activities and other crimes outside, but it’s actually another side of life when you experience things that are not working well in life. It’s not a choice. People have the drive to get out of homelessness. If enough funds and resources are provided to them.

Everything ShelterTech is doing, it’s a great job. The people I used to ask [about] resources, they didn’t have enough knowledge of all resources in the city. When you ask them, they sometimes use Google and would give that information. It was hard to get a website to get information together all in one space. ShelterTech came as a solution to that. Now I’m happy to recommend (it to) any homeless person, giving them all resources in one place.”





Ruochen Huang

Volunteer Spotlight

“I have been a volunteer with ShelterTech for nearly two years and my role is Analytics/Insights Lead.

I work to help transform ShelterTech into a data-informed organization by implementing metrics tracking, KPI dashboards, collaborating with internal teams including Product, Community and Marketing, as well as external partners, including the Mayor’s Office of Housing and Community Development.

My team is committed to raising awareness around Sheltertech’s initiatives, such as the SFServiceGuide and ShelterConnect. In 2020, we look forward to expanding the depth of communication around ShelterTech’s success stories through data and to drive quantitative scholarship around issues of homelessness in San Francisco!”



Laura Barrera-Vera

Volunteer Spotlight

“I moved to San Francisco in 2019 and immediately decided to join ShelterTech as I felt compelled to take action to address the worsening homelessness crisis. As Product Lead, I have focused on managing product development and on improving collaboration across all key teams to ensure we build an impactful product. At ShelterTech, we prioritize data quality over quantity, so ensuring timely and relevant updates has also been one of my top priorities.

Launching SF Service Guide last November was personally satisfying as the people most in need finally have an easy way to access essential services and resources. As part of this project, I have had the opportunity to collaborate with city agencies and community-based organizations who help us better understand the needs of those less fortunate and inspire us every day to make SF Service Guide even better.

As a volunteer, what makes the ShelterTech experience unique are my teammates. I am amazed every day by our volunteers’ dedication, professionalism and determination to build the best products possible while making a difference. I look forward to contributing my skills, knowledge and my passion for social impact while learning from my peer volunteers!”

Goals for 2020

Leadership

Hire key positions- Growth+Impact Officer, Executive Board members, Marketing

People Operations

Define volunteer recruiting+retention metrics
Define metrics for corporate volunteer initiatives

Marketing & Fundraising

Refresh website and update messaging
Increase SFServiceGuide awareness
Build fundraising program that scales to opportunity

Partner Eco-System

Add partners to expand reach of SFServiceGuide
Establish strategic partnerships to increase impact

1000+

Users

Double Unique users of SFServiceGuide

6

Month Cycle Time

All 3,000+ SFServiceGuide data elements
verified at least twice each year

2

New platform partners

Third-parties who leverage our
platform and/or content

2000

Residents covered by end of 2021

Double # shelter residents using ShelterConnect WiFi

5

Corporate Partners

Strategic partners who provide ongoing funding
and volunteers

\$150,000

New funding

Funds WiFi access for additional 1,000 residents

2020 Q1 Update

Major team initiative to respond to Covid-19 crisis

Emergency resources and content added to [SFServiceGuide](#)
New categories include food, hygiene, rental assistance and more
Rapid response; content updated daily
Outbound marketing underway to build awareness

Partnership Momentum

New corporate partnership with PagerDuty, including unrestricted grant, remote datathon and strategic marketing assistance
New ShelterConnect partner, CISCO. They are donating new equipment and licensing that will transform project economics!
Published the Digital Equity Research and video in partnership with GSMA

Building for the future

Added [Jason Cheng](#) to the leadership team as Chief Growth and Impact Officer
Implemented new dashboard to track data curation lifecycle
Upgraded financial processes to include cash flow forecasting and scenario planning

100+

Resources added to
SFServiceGuide in March!

Over and beyond roadmap/ in
response to Covid-19

856

SFServiceGuide Unique Users
30% higher than 2019!

9% new users; average
duration on website ~6
minutes

145

Total volunteer count

99 are currently active

6

Datathons conducted

Call to Action

Volunteer!

sheltertech.org/get-involved

Donate

sheltertech.org/donate

Email Us

info@sheltertech.org

Website

sheltertech.org

Follow us!



[@ShelterTechOrg](https://twitter.com/ShelterTechOrg)



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ShelterTech is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization headquartered in San Francisco, CA