

News FROM HOME



NONE OF US ARE HOME UNTIL ALL OF US ARE HOME

Weaving Us Whole

Photo by Ben Riley



The sculpture "Woven Sanctuary" is gracefully suspended in the entrance of the new Stephen Klein Wellness Center.

Project HOME's vision has never simply been about housing. It has been about healing. All of our work—housing, advocacy for those on the margins, the building of community, the restoration of neighborhoods, and our work on education, recovery, and the arts—has been toward a vision of wholeness in an unwell society.

We believe that solving homelessness hinges on healing, and healing individuals involves much more than shelter. It is providing a place—supporting each of us in a community which reminds us of the gifts which are ours alone to offer. We've learned that bringing people in from the streets also demands that we restore the fabric of fragile, battered neighborhoods and prevent homelessness at the outset.

Perhaps this is why artist Meg Saligman, when commissioned to envision art for our new Stephen Klein Wellness Center, asked neighbors and friends to bring in a fabric or a talisman which was important to them. Resident Doug Sanders brought his painting rag. Neighbor and community leader Lenora Jackson-Evans brought a blanket of family photos. Staff member Lucy Kibe brought a woven basket from her native Kenya, and community health outreach worker Loretta

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Voting for Justice

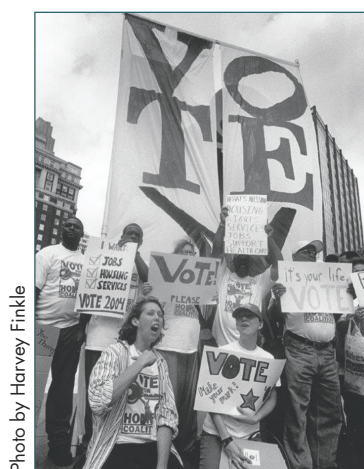


Photo by Harvey Finkle

On May 19, Philadelphians will vote in the Republican and Democratic mayoral primary elections. Nearly two weeks prior, many of the candidates will have addressed voters about their policies around housing and homelessness at a candidates forum

pulled together by the nonpartisan Vote For Homes coalition. The forum takes place Thursday, May 7 at Broad Street Ministry (315 S. Broad Street in Center City), at 6:30 p.m. We expect all candidates to attend.

We've learned that educating both candidates and voters about housing and homelessness in Philadelphia is essential to creating effective solutions. In 1999, the city of Philadelphia faced a mayoral election. Throughout the eight-year tenure of then-outgoing mayor Ed Rendell, homelessness was a critical issue

for the city, with many struggles but also signs of hope. Realizing that we were at a watershed, Project HOME called together allies and partner organizations in an ad hoc coalition we called "Election '99: Leadership To End Homelessness." The coalition reached out to both candidates and voters, stressing the issues critical to persons experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

As a result, the eventual victor, incoming Mayor John Street, formed a special transition team to develop policies on homelessness—the first of its kind. Ensuing partnerships between city government, homeless advocates, nonprofits, and businesses to address homelessness were groundbreaking, and helped make Philadelphia a national model.

That first election-year coalition morphed into Vote For Homes, a voter-education, registration, and mobilization coalition spearheaded by Project HOME. In the last fifteen years, Vote For Homes has registered more than sixteen thousand people, produced guides for voters, hosted candidate forums, and consulted with candidates on policies. Every election day, it empowers people to express their voice at the

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Roots and Branches: Reflections from Sister Mary

On the thirty-fifth anniversary of Archbishop Oscar Romero's death, I accompanied a delegation of leaders including Archbishop Charles Chaput, representatives from the Jewish community, Rev. Agnes Norfleet (pastor of Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church), Mayor Michael Nutter, and others into the sometimes hidden places of our city where I find courage. We visited the subway concourse, where 30-50 people spent their night. We visited food pantries and a men's shelter. We were inspired by bold, vulnerable sharings at a recovery meeting.

Romero, the archbishop in El Salvador in the 1980s, offers a beautiful example of political courage. A political and mild-mannered, Romero appeared to be a "safe" selection for archbishop in war-torn and polarized El Salvador. But as he witnessed a repressive leadership kill innocent people to keep power (including his close friend Catholic priest Rutilio Grande), he had the courage to let his experiences alter his paradigms. He spoke on behalf of the poorest of El Salvador. He became a dissident in the system and in the culture. It cost him his life, but his faith had moved him beyond fear for his own life to the hope of a more just society. Courage helps us choose the right thing in the face of adversity.

If Romero speaks of political courage, the many people I work with every day speak of personal courage. Each day there are women, young people, and men whose lives have been transformed by their experiences. Many have come in from a life on the streets or persisted through programs of recovery. Some struggle with the ups and downs of mental illness. They have survived abuse. They live the courage of the serenity prayer: "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."

Their commitment of courage is based in faith of a higher power—believing possibilities which are not yet realized. To strive for a better future, we have to belong to a recovering community based in truth and peace; and to trust a power much greater than ourselves.

To live our lives truthfully is not easy, and the path is not a straight one. It can take a lifetime of experiences to find our way. May we seek the grace and the courage to do so!

S. Mary Scullion

Photo by Dave Hering



Sister Mary Scullion,
Co-founder and
Executive Director of
Project HOME

Weaving Us Whole (continued from page 1)

Dredden brought a cloth bag holding the shining coins of recovery. Meg fingered them, listened to the stories. "I am always surprised at how people share such intimate, meaningful memories," she reflects. "It was my intent to bring these memories from the homes, the living rooms, bedrooms and closets that are scattered throughout this community to live within this new center—influencing, inspiring, and providing comfort."

When you walk into the center you are greeted by the fruit of their collaborative work, a sculpture called "Woven Sanctuary." Inspired and designed from these community voices, it interweaves water, glass, and light. The walls are covered with images drawn from these cloths, and the doorway says simply: "Dedicated to those who come in need of healing."

This is especially appropriate because the rise of homelessness in this country, so dramatic in the early 1980s, was sparked in part by medical realities and the inadequacies of the healthcare system. (There were dramatic cuts in housing supports at the same time.) Large mental-health facilities (here, the Philadelphia State Hospital at Byberry) were closed with few options. The rise of cheap street drugs fueled addictions (also a medical issue) which added to numbers on our streets. The vision of the Wellness Center—"To heal mind, body, spirit, and community"—states cleanly and simply what Project HOME has been about from the outset.

That healing is both personal and social. At the official opening, Monica Medina McCurdy, Project HOME's Vice President of

Health Services, recounted the history of the corner where the center sits: "Fifty years ago, an altercation here caused this street to erupt in several days of riots—an 'ignition event' during the civil-rights era that resulted in eight blocks of Cecil B. Moore Avenue (then Columbia Avenue), all the way to Broad Street, being destroyed or set on fire. Overnight, this street went from a thriving commercial district with every necessity at hand to a

community which never fully recovered. With the Stephen Klein Wellness Center and other economic activity happening here, we hope to be part of new life."

Neighborhood resident and pillar of the community Helen Brown comments: "The words 'woven sanctuary' are themselves a statement; a sacred place that you can go to. We have a very close-knit neighborhood now."

Long ago, we discovered this truth: we all need healing, and we begin to find it when we draw all people into that vision. On opening day, Monica Medina McCurdy expressed her yearning for the Center to be a place where each person "feels safe, listened to, and respected."

Project HOME has always aspired to be that place. We will only find this healing together, listening to each other, weaving our lives and paths back together.

For a look at the beautiful collaborative art in the Stephen Klein Wellness Center, and the community process behind it, see the amazing video "Woven Sanctuary" at www.projecthome.org/skwc.



Artist Meg Saligman worked with community members to create cloth images—symbols of healing—on the walls of our Wellness Center.

Voting for Justice

(continued from page 1)

polls, and it highlights the plans each leader has to address poverty and housing.

Project HOME's Director of Advocacy and Public Policy Jennine Miller, who has coordinated Vote For Homes since its inception, comments: "Over the years, the Vote For Homes coalition has realized that we must emphasize personal conversation with neighbors and affordable-housing residents to get people to the polls. We use our relational skills to strategically re-engage voters. Volunteers are the critical link to call voters and knock on doors." In a city where voter turnout can be low, re-engaging the populace in elections is essential.

The reality is this: Political discourse around issues of poverty and homelessness creates a citizenry and a city which believes these problems can be solved. When we are able to bring our best experience to propose concrete and realistic policies to solve homelessness, our collaborations bear rich fruit.

"I have begun to see the power people carry to change things." –

ERICKA BROWN

Most fundamentally, Project HOME has learned from its own experience. Just as our most effective work hinges on the creation of a broad, diverse community, we realize that our strongest government hinges on the participation of all its citizens, including those on the margins. Often our poorest citizens are those least experienced in raising their political voices, but any healthy political discourse demands the inclusion of such voices.

Ericka Brown, a Rowan Homes resident active in Project HOME's Advocacy Committee, reflects on her own shift: "Although I have always been an advocate for my family, I was not a citizen advocate. I find this group a powerful vehicle for information as well as how to get people involved. In my community, people do not understand the power of their vote or believe that voting makes a difference. I have begun to see the power people carry to change things."

Heather Barger, a staff member and an organizer with Vote for Homes, comments, "There are many pervasive myths about barriers to voting for people in our community. I love being able to dispel those myths—and to then watch volunteers spread the good news to their friends and neighbors that their vote matters."

Given that the coming months hold the visit of Pope Francis to our city, as well as the presidential

election in 2016, this is an especially significant electoral season for the direction of public policy. Like fifteen years ago, we are at a new point in the struggle; a special time when we can make real progress in making our city more just and compassionate.

Please plan to attend the May 7 forum (6:30 pm at 315 S. Broad). Thank you for adding your voice and your vote for homes!

To learn more about Vote For Homes election year efforts (including reading the Voter's Guide) and to find out how you can get involved, go to www.voteforhomes.org or contact Jennine Miller at 215-232-7272 ext. 3042 or jenninemiller@projecthome.org.

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Want to receive our Enewsletter and advocacy alerts?
Contact michaelgainer@projecthome.org

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www.youtube.com/projecthomephilly

And don't miss the great stuff on the Project HOME Blog
www.projecthome.org/blog

The Path to Wellness

by Loretta Dredde

Loretta Dredde is a resident of Project HOME's Rowan Homes and a community outreach worker at our Stephen Klein Wellness Center. She shared these remarks at the March opening of the center.

Two years ago, I was sick. I was asthmatic. I had high blood pressure and diabetes. I was almost out of all of my medications, and I did not have insurance. The staff of the St. Elizabeth's medical clinic (Project HOME's precursor to the Stephen Klein Wellness Center) made sure I was seen quickly and treated with compassion and dignity. They did not just give me medicine and push me out the door – they helped me get resources I really needed to stay healthy, including nutrition classes and recovery resources. They attended to my whole person.

Today, as a part of the staff of the Wellness Center, I play a part in bringing that transformation to my neighborhood. There was a time in North Philadelphia when there were so many obstacles to getting the care you truly needed—cost, transportation, finding a doctor who would follow up with you. No more. Imagine you have a heart condition. You see a doctor at the Wellness Center. Your doctor gives you a prescription to see a personal trainer at the YMCA, to see a nutritionist, and to go to a stress reduction class—all right on the same block!

Each time I meet with a patient, I see myself two years ago—sick, scared, and not sure where to turn. I am truly grateful to be able to tell them that there are people here who care and resources to help them on their path to wellness. It's a part of my own transformation as well. None of us are well until all of us are well!

YOUNG LEADERS EVENT

**MAY 28, 2015
6:30 PM
MÜTTER MUSEUM
19 S. 22ND ST**

**TICKETS, INFO &
SPONSORSHIPS**
projecthome.org/youngleaders

CONTACT
Stephanie Lin
215-232-4786 x3045
rsvp@projecthome.org

You can be part of the solution to end and prevent chronic street homelessness in Philadelphia!

Enjoy an evening of fine hors d'oeuvres, cocktails, and a silent auction as you network and make new connections with young professionals across the Philadelphia region.

HOME Happenings

◆ **We hope to cloak the world** in justice—or at least Pope Francis and everyone else who attends the World Meeting of Families (WMOF) in Philadelphia this fall. In partnership with Homeboy Industries, the Los Angeles program that creates jobs for former gang members, Project HOME has been licensed by the WMOF to produce official T-shirts and candles for the event, expected to draw over a million visitors to the city. T-shirts feature either our vision statement (“None of us are home until all of us are home”) in Spanish and English, or Pope Francis’s quote “Let the church be a place of mercy and forgiveness where all are welcomed, loved, and forgiven.” To purchase commemorative memorabilia, or to learn more about our Social Enterprise program, go to www.projecthome.org/shop or call 215-232-7272 ext. 3075.



Photo by Lauren Doherty

Pictured at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) are students from the Honickman Learning Center and Comcast Technology Labs College Access program. They toured six colleges last month, including Delaware State University, University of Maryland Eastern Shore, University of Richmond, University of Virginia and VCU. Pictured (left to right) are Dymere Davis, Khaylah Williams, Donyé Wakefield, Semaj Hazzard, Ileah Smith-Rogers, Maiya Smith, Asia Blackshear, and Franklin Neblett.

◆ **On April 13, our biggest art show** of the year opened at the Drexel URBN Center at 3501 Market. The show featured the four artists we have highlighted this year—Gerald Halley, Vincent Sangmeister, Adam Kerin, and Andreas Walsh—as well as eleven other outstanding artists from the Project HOME community. Shown here is art from Andreas Walsh (left) and Gerald Halley (right). Prior to joining our art class, Gerald had not created art for 13 years.



◆ **April 21 marked a milestone** in our partnership with Philadelphia’s electric company, PECO. We successfully completed a fifth year of the PECO Veterans Training and Employment Program, which uses the restorative power of work, education, and community to help formerly homeless veterans re-make their lives. This year, ten persons graduated from the six-month internship program, which in past years

has had a retention rate of more than 75 percent. Eighty-nine percent of our graduates this year will go on to school or to continued employment. We are grateful to PECO, Amerihealth, and all the employer partners, participants, graduates, and staff who make this program so valuable.



Robert Atcosta, shelter guest at SREHUP, follows up with case manager Carmen Green on his housing plan.

Photo by Harvey Finkle

◆ **We finished another** grace-filled season at the Hub of Hope, a winter engagement center in Suburban Station connecting those who experience chronic homelessness to housing, healthcare, and services. In February alone, 670 people visited the Hub, over 84 people received medical evaluation, and 150 were placed in supportive programs. The Hub relies on critical partnerships, including the 22-bed program for vulnerable men run by Student Run Emergency Housing Unit of Philadelphia (SREHUP) out of Arch Street Methodist Church as well as other key partners, like the City of Philadelphia, ASI Management, PernaFrederick Commercial Real Estate, SEPTA, and Public Health Management Corporation. See a full report at www.projecthome.org/hub2015.

I am Project HOME

TAMMIE WINCZUK

Photo by Michael Gainer



In 2011, Tammie Winczuk got a call from her cousin Crystal, who told her there was an opening in the accounting team at Project HOME. She applied immediately. “I love Crystal. Working with her is the second best thing about being here. The first is why we’re all here: giving people homes.”

Tammie understands that number-crunching is a vital component of the Project HOME mission. But she also

is fueled in her work by the personal connection. In January, Tammie took a break from the Accounts Payable department to join almost thirty Project HOME folk on an all-night census of the oft-invisible persons who live in the city’s most visible places: our streets, alleys, and parks. “Nothing is more basic than a home. The bottom line of every invoice I process is helping people.”

The census surveyed people about health and personal history. “I was able to hear their stories and joke a little,” she says, adding: “I don’t believe in being too serious!” Despite her words, her eyes grow grave. “You realize that homelessness could happen to any one of us.”

Tammie reveals the secret truth: Project HOME’s accounting department is actually a barrel of laughs. “People tend to think of accountant-types as all serious, but we have a lot of fun together. If you just focus on the paperwork, you’d go crazy. We have great camaraderie.”

Marianne Schuster, Controller of Project HOME, credits part of that to Tammie. “She truly embodies the spirit of Project HOME, particularly in the caring way that she treats all members of the community. She has a gift for making people smile and has brought a lot of life and laughter to our department. She has removed the stigma of the traditional, boring accounting department!”

With 16 residences and centers, numerous programs, and more than 300 staff members, Project HOME’s accounting department has tons of pressure, which Tammie acknowledges. “We are always super-busy.” That hard work pays off: Project HOME just got its second consecutive four-star rating from Charity Navigator for its financial health, accountability, and transparency.

Tammie has two sons, age 19 and 16. The older just joined the Navy. The younger, still in high school, has chronic health issues. “When I have to be away because he needs support, I can come back and not be overwhelmed because people look out for each other here.”

“What drives me,” Tammie says, “is blue skies and butterflies—making beautiful memories with the people I love. I spend time with my family and friends. We go to the movies, bowl, go skating, or go to museums like the Franklin Institute. Life is here to enjoy, and that’s just what I plan to do.”

Spirit of Generosity

PATRICIA KIND

Last year, when Laura Kind McKenna accepted an award from the Fairmount Park Conservancy in her mother Patricia’s stead, she was completely candid with the audience. “Our mother, Patricia Kind, is an amazing woman, who at eighty-nine is dealing with dementia and the difficulties of aging with strength, grace, and humor. We are sorry she could not be here—but actually she would hate this.”

It is her quiet, personal giving that sets Patricia Kind apart. She has never wanted to accept accolades or any attention for her generosity. Throughout her life, Patricia has been committed to ensuring that her giving has the greatest possible impact on the most vulnerable. She has long been drawn to those on the margins and suffering from mental illness, homelessness and addiction, which inspired her to partner with Project HOME more than twenty years ago. She has given personally as well as through the Patricia Kind Family Foundation and the van Ameringen Foundation.

Most important, she has inspired her family to follow suit. She and her daughters, Laura Kind McKenna and Christina Kind, have visited Project HOME’s Women of Change residence many times. Laura, a nurse who volunteers at the Catholic Worker Free Clinic in Kensington, supports our recently opened Stephen Klein Wellness Center together with her husband,

Marc McKenna, a family-practice physician at Chestnut Hill Hospital. The foundations have also supported adult education and after-school programs at the Honickman Learning Center and Comcast Technology Labs.

“Our mother impressed on all of her children the importance of giving back, particularly to those who live on the margins of society,” shares Laura. “She struggled with life-long mental health issues and has battled dementia for several years. Women of Change, serving the most vulnerable in our community, has been important for the recovery and safety of many women.”



The Kind women together (left to right): Christina Kind, Patricia Kind, Valerie Kind, and Laura Kind McKenna.

Inspired by her leadership, her children continue her good work through the foundations. “My mother has made an incredible impact in the community and has been a fan of Sister Mary Scullion all these years,” said Laura. “In fact, Sister Mary has a hard time not calling me Patricia when we meet!

“We know that we have been incredibly blessed in life, not only materially, but more importantly with an abundance of love, support, and family. Our mom taught us many valuable lessons in life—eat your peas and carrots, have fun, play to win, and always treat everyone with kindness. She also taught us a lot about giving. She made us understand how important it was to give and how to do it thoughtfully and well.”

Project HOME is deeply grateful for the thoughtful giving of Patricia Kind and her family—spanning more than two decades—which has helped so many find hope and HOME.

Our Mission

The mission of the Project HOME community is to empower adults, children, and families to break the cycle of homelessness and poverty, to alleviate the underlying causes of poverty, and to enable all of us to attain our fullest potential as individuals and as members of the broader society.

Our Residences

- 1515 and 1523 Fairmount Avenue
- Hope Haven I/II, 2827-28 Diamond Street
- Connelly House, 1212 Ludlow Street
- Kairos House, 1440 N. Broad Street
- Kate’s Place, 1929 Sansom Street
- James Widener Ray Homes, 2101 W. Venango
- JBJ Soul Homes, 1415 Fairmount Avenue
- Rowan I, 2729-A W. Diamond Street
- Rowan II, 1901 N. Judson Street
- St. Columba, 4133 Chestnut Street
- St. Elizabeth’s Recovery, 1850 N. Croskey St.
- Women of Change, 2042 Arch Street

Support Services & Programs

- Adult Education, Employment & Arts
- Neighborhood Services
- Advocacy and Public Policy
- Honickman Learning Center and Comcast Technology Labs
- Outreach Coordination Center
- Stephen Klein Wellness Center
- Volunteer Program

Businesses

- HOME Spun Resale Boutique, 215-232-6322
- HOME Made Products, 215-232-7272, ext. 3075
- HOME Page Café, 215-320-6191

Administration

215-232-7272

Homeless Outreach Hotline

215-232-1984

Human Resources Hotline

215-232-7219 ext. 5200

www.projecthome.org



NONE OF US ARE HOME UNTIL ALL OF US ARE HOME



Photo by Michael Gainer

“When I dare to be powerful—to use my strength in the service of my vision, then it becomes less important whether I am afraid.”

AUDRE LORDE

In March, we celebrated the grand opening of the Stephen Klein Wellness Center. Cutting the ceremonial ribbon are (from left): Helen Brown, John Middleton, Leigh Middleton, Nedra Ralston, Darrell Clarke, Stephen Klein, Chaka Fattah, Monica Medina McCurdy, Loretta Dredde, Janet Stearns, Brian Hudson, and Michael Johns. Contact our wellness center at www.projecthome.org/skwc, or call 215-320-6187.