

News FROM HOME



NONE OF US ARE HOME UNTIL ALL OF US ARE HOME®

Setting Young Adults Up for Success

If you interrupt young adult homelessness at a pivotal moment, you can change a person's trajectory, forever," explains Project HOME Residential Director, Carolyn Crouch-Robinson. She says that with a huge smile on her face, because she's seen it happen in young adults like Shahida.

Shahida joined Project HOME at age 20 after spending two years without stable housing. She grew up in the foster care system and aged out at

19. She knows what it's like to not have stability or support. But when she moved into one of our newer buildings, Ruth Williams House at the Gene and Marlene Epstein Building while attending St. Joseph's University, that changed. "I have had both emotional support and help with my school and career goals," said Shahida. "Although I am a very determined and self-motivated person, at times I didn't know if I would make it."

"The staff listened to me and encouraged me that I've got this!"

– Shahida, former young adult resident at Project HOME

compared adolescent (age 13 - 17), young adult (age 18 - 34), and adult (age 35 - 78) homelessness, young adults report less time experiencing homelessness but more life stressors. The study says that this is a stage in life where young adults are establishing independence, going to college, getting a job and beginning romantic relationships. Juggling all of these can be tricky, says Carolyn. In addition, nationally, an average of 40% of young adults experiencing homelessness identify LGBTQ – a disproportionate number. She believes that permanent supportive housing for young adults is crucial and if you give that support to someone who has never had it, then you're able to set them up for success.

We've seen so many examples of this; like our resident who reconnected with family he hadn't

(continued on page 3)



Shahida spoke at our 30th anniversary gala event and thanked Jon Bon Jovi for all his support of our Young Adult program.

Shahida is not alone in that. According to a study from the National Institutes of Health which

Students Learn to Fly at Honickman Learning Center & Comcast Technology Labs

By Paul Dunnville, Workforce Manager of Creative Arts

Iam fortunate to have met so many young and talented artists at Project HOME. One person that had a huge impact at the Honickman Learning Center and Comcast Technology Labs (HLCCTL) during his enrollment in the Teen and College Access programs from 2011 – 2015, was Mr. Bernard Conner.

"There were so many avenues that people could take that were productive."

– Bernard Conner

Ten years ago, when he was freshman at Dobbins High School, Bernard helped to create Project HOME's Inner Power Records recording label. As an aspiring rapper, Bernard took full advantage of the opportunities at the HLCCTL, spending nearly every day after school inside the recording studio working on his music.

(continued on page 5)



Photo Courtesy of Bernard Conner

Bernard was responsible for creating Project HOME's first recording label, Inner Power Records, when he was part of the College Access Program between 2011 - 2015.

IN THIS ISSUE

Setting Young Adults Up for Success	1
Students Learn to Fly at Honickman Learning Center & Comcast Technology Labs	1
Roots and Branches	2
I Am Project HOME	3
HOME Happenings	4
Spirit of Generosity	5
Residences and Programs	6

Photo by HughE Dillon

Roots and Branches: Reflections from Sister Mary



With access to a range of services and a spirit of recovery, wellness, and community, these newest members of our community embody the best of our mission and bear witness to the fact that there are solutions to homelessness.

Peg's Place is the twentieth residence we have opened since our beginning in 1989, bringing us up to nearly a thousand units of permanent supportive housing. We celebrate this milestone – which has only been possible with broad and deep partnerships of support.

Peg's Place is named for Margaret "Peg" Drosdick, beloved mother of Jack Drosdick. Jack and his wife Gloria have been committed to the arts and education in the Philadelphia region for many years. In 2018, they connected to Project HOME through the MPOWER partnership. Deeply moved by

the needs in our community, they resolved to make a difference – in the form of Peg's Place, for which their generous commitment was a key piece in the development.

Homelessness continues to be one of the most devastating crises in our nation – and the COVID-19 pandemic has only worsened it. The need for affordable housing, as a way of both solving and preventing homelessness, grows more acute – ironically even as many cities like Philadelphia are experiencing a housing "boom," with prices wildly out of the reach of folks with modest or low incomes.

We continue to be on the frontlines of

"We must share the vision with more people who care about our city and our community."

addressing this crisis. Over the past three decades, we have created a city of affordable housing within the city of Philadelphia – the fruit of tremendous partnerships, shared vision, pooled resources, and undiminished commitment. As we celebrate the opening of Peg's Place, we must renew that commitment. We must expand the partnerships. We must share the vision with more people who care about our city and our community. We must tell the empowering and hopeful stories of transformation that will move more people to action.

The sobering reality of the pandemic has intensified the challenges and obstacles, but people like Jack and Gloria Drosdick show a way. So have thousands of others, like you, who find innumerable ways to be part of the solution.

As more people come in through the doors of Peg's Place to make a new home, we celebrate the thousands of residents who have broken the cycle of chronic homelessness and poverty. But this is about more than the numbers. It is about the moral character of our city and our nation. Are "We the People" a caring community that works to ensure that all of us have a place to live and opportunities to flourish? Do we insist that compassion, justice, and a sense of dignity be woven into our social fabric? If so, we can look forward to many more homecomings.

S. Mary Scullion

Photo by Jay Gorodetzer

Our Peg's Place grand opening welcomed many elected officials, incredible donors, and partners, including Jack and Gloria Drosdick (3rd and 4th from the right respectively) and new Peg's Place resident, Lucretia (holding the red scissors).

This fall, forty adults are completing the long journey home. After years of struggles with homelessness, poverty and behavioral health challenges, they received the keys to beautiful new apartments in Project HOME's latest permanent supportive housing facility, Peg's Place.

Drosdick, beloved mother of Jack Drosdick. Jack and his wife Gloria have been committed to the arts and education in the Philadelphia region for many years. In 2018, they connected to Project HOME through the MPOWER partnership. Deeply moved by

HELP PROJECT HOME MAKE THE HOLIDAYS BRIGHT!

THANKSGIVING WINTER HOLIDAYS

Get Involved

Thanksgiving Meals

Every year, Project HOME provides a Thanksgiving meal to all our residents. While COVID-19 will mean that many Thanksgiving traditions will change, you can still make a difference by making a gift to sponsor a nutritious Thanksgiving meal for our residents.

How You Can Help

\$25 Sponsors a Thanksgiving meal for a Project HOME resident.	\$100 Sponsors a Thanksgiving meal for 4 Project HOME residents.	\$250 Sponsors a Thanksgiving meal for 10 Project HOME residents.
\$500 Sponsors a Thanksgiving meal for up to 20 Project HOME residents.	\$1000 Sponsors a Thanksgiving meal for an entire Project HOME residence of up to 40 residents.	

Gift Card Drive

A gift card, in any amount, will make a difference and can be given to a family, individual, or young adult across Project HOME. We welcome gift cards for Target, Walmart, and Old Navy.

HOME for the Holidays

A special drive to fulfill family wish lists in our residences during the winter holidays. To find out how to help, you can scan the QR code below.

Want to make a difference this holiday season?

Scan this code to learn more →

FOR MORE INFO: John Owens (vcoordinator@projecthome.org)

I Am Project HOME: Communities in Need

By Johann Joseph and Bryson Downing

As teenage summer interns in Project HOME's College Access Program (a college preparatory program), we learned a lot about ourselves and the North Philadelphia community by helping collect in-person survey responses for a Community Needs and Assets Assessment (CNAA) project. This project has forever shifted our assumptions and perspectives about the 19121-ZIP code area where we attend programs at the Honickman Learning Center and Comcast Technology Labs.

"Every person had a story and every story had hope."

We asked questions about safety, healthcare, employment services, education, and job training in 20-minute conversations. Project HOME will use this information to make effective decisions on how to meet the community's needs, particularly in the continued crisis created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Before surveying the neighborhood, we were alarmed by its condition: tarnished housing, trash-littered areas, and increased police presence. However, this is not an accurate representation of the people who live in these areas. Residents shared examples of social inequality, educational disparity, and overall governmental neglect. While walking door to door, mile to mile, and engaging with



Photo Credit: Project HOME

Bryson and Johann (L to R) helped our Helen Brown Community Center do a community needs assessment survey in the 19121 and 19132 ZIP-code areas. It changed their perspective on the community for the better.

those willing to talk, we observed beautiful murals, creative house displays, and captivating gardens - within scattered narrow walkways, jagged streets, and boarded houses. With each completed survey, these contrasts became greater.

Every person had a story and every story had hope. One resident was a victim of gun violence on his own block, yet he strives to better himself and his community to this day by sweeping his block once a

week. Though this may appear trivial, such tasks are what make neighborhoods stronger. Despite their frustration and lack of opportunities, community members show resilience by doing the best they can to change their circumstances; not only for themselves, but for their children too. Everyone can attest to wanting a brighter future for the next generation, so we must act fast to better nurture our communities - because no one is home until we all are.

Setting Young Adults Up for Success

(continued from page 1)



Shahida was able to visit Europe as part of her educational experience during her time at Project HOME.

spoken to since age 14, or the 18 young adults who have each moved into their own independent housing since the program began in 2014; or the young adults who served as featured panelists at the 2020 National Network for Youth Summit. And while this journey for our young adults is not without its challenges, residents like Shahida have the support, encouragement, and determination to keep going.

Through her involvement in our Young Adult Program, she found a love for serving others and decided to major in Public Health at LaSalle University. In the midst of the global pandemic, Shahida also had to deal with the anxiety and stress that presented itself as a first-generation college student with virtually no family support. "The staff listened to me and encouraged me that I've got this!" said Shahida. "And they're right - I have maintained good grades, and I graduated with my degree." Shahida is now working as a contact tracer for a large human services organization in the Philadelphia area and she has moved out of Project HOME into her own apartment.

Our Young Adult Program, established in 2014 with support from the JBJ Soul Foundation, grown with a visionary grant from the Neubauer Family Foundation, and solidified by the generosity of John Alchin, Hal Marryatt, Arthur Kaplan, Duane Perry, Mel Heifetz, the Vert Charitable Trust, and countless others, continues to grow, as does the need for more housing for this age group. We started with 8 residents at JBJ Soul Homes, grew to 30 people in 2017, and we now serve over 70 residents each year and we're not slowing down. In many ways, Carolyn would say that young adult homelessness and support looks no different to the support we provide for our adult residents. Each person benefits from a permanent supportive living environment, good healthcare, a job, and further education. In other words, Housing, Opportunities for Employment, Medical Care, and Education, our over 30-year-old tested model of HOME. But what makes this group special, she says, is that if you catch them at the right time, you can prevent future homelessness and instability. You truly can change a young adult's trajectory, forever.

HOME Happenings

◆ Bringing Philly HOME – All Week Long



From September 23rd to the 29th you helped us Bring Philly HOME this year. A week-long series of events including the grand opening of our 20th residence,

Peg's Place, a race, smaller in-person events, and a very special virtual conversation with our good friends and supporters Dorothea and Jon Bon Jovi allowed us to come together safely to support Project HOME's vital mission. Our Rising Leaders Committee set an ambitious goal of raising \$200,000 and we are so thankful to report gifts have surpassed it by raising \$280,000. Sending a HUGE thanks to all who participated.



We would also like to thank our featured speakers throughout the week, including Scott Palmer, Ya Fav Trashman (Terrill Haigler), and especially our resident speakers. Our thanks to NBC10 and Telemundo's Lucy Bustamante, our closing event's terrific emcee. And finally, our presenting sponsor, PECO.

Watch a snapshot of the week's events by holding your phone's camera over the QR code.

◆ Backpacks for Our Beloved Community



backpack give-away. The event was co-organized by Project HOME resident and employee David Brown, and his incredible friend and neighbor, Kenny Ingram. Congressman Dwight Evans and Project HOME Co-Founder and Executive Director, Sister Mary Scullion were on hand to give out backpacks and connect with our beloved community. We are always grateful to Father Kevin Lawrence and his congregation of St. John's Baptist Church in Manayunk, who every year prepare hundreds of backpacks. Thank you to all who made this event possible again this year!

For a ninth consecutive Labor Day, our James Widener Ray Homes residence in North Philadelphia gave back to the community through their annual back-to-school

◆ Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Update



In our last issue of News from HOME, we welcomed Natalia Cardona Sanchez, our new vice president of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Project HOME. This issue, we're featuring a new post from Natalia as she embarks on her new role and the work that continues to be done to make Project HOME an anti-racist organization. You can find her blog post here: projecthome.org/news

◆ What's Happening for the Holidays with Social Enterprise?



Our Social Enterprise team is gearing up for the holidays by introducing some new mugs with artwork

from our talented residents Julia Galetti and Randall Sykes. They have beautiful holiday gift boxes including, as always, Project HOME's Executive Director and Co-Founder, Sister Mary's Sinfully Delicious Cranberry Sauce. For the latest products that support our mission of ending chronic street homelessness, subscribe to the Social Enterprise newsletter bit.ly/SE_subscribe_pn

◆ Advocate with Project HOME!

Get involved with Project HOME advocacy efforts at www.projecthome.org/action. Visit our website to have your voice heard! You can register to vote in the upcoming Philadelphia District Attorney election or contact your elected officials about the importance of affordable housing in the federal budget.

Did You Know?

Your company can receive up to **90%** of its donation value as a PA tax credit!

Learn More about how to maximize your impact with **EITC!**

Educational Improvement Tax Credit

HOME projecthome.org/tax-credit-programs

Spirit of Generosity: Maguire Foundation

"It all started with Sister Mary and my parents," explains Megan Maguire Nicoletti, President and CEO of the Maguire Foundation. It's a foundation that is dedicated to committing time, talent, and treasure with an investor's approach to support education, arts and humanities, hunger, and homelessness.

James and Frances Maguire connected with Project HOME's Executive Director and Co-Founder, Sister Mary Scullion, about 20 years ago. They were drawn to the "tremendous leadership Sister Mary models every day," said Megan, "and how she looked at the whole person, not just a label."

"A human connection is more powerful than any meal I've ever handed out."

*- Megan Maguire Nicoletti,
President and CEO of Maguire Foundation*

As humans we can sometimes find it all too easy to negatively label ourselves and others. We're "not good enough," we "have issues" or that person is "difficult". Megan, her parents, and her family understand that when you look at the whole person, you can see where you can lend support and how you can influence and affect the outcome of the next generation to come.

Over the years the Maguire family have given to every aspect of our mission at Project HOME. They've supported our affordable housing like Francis House of Peace, Maguire Residence, and Gloria Casarez Residence; they've invested in the educational opportunities we offer our students through scholarships; they've focused on medical care and opportunities for employment. Most importantly they feel if you give someone access to the education they deserve, you can contribute to ending the cycle of poverty.

"The Maguire family have been transformational partners in ending chronic homelessness in Philadelphia through their support of educational opportunities and permanent supportive housing," said Sister Mary. "Their strong family bond and hearts of compassion are forces for good in our community and their leadership and guidance have multiplied the impact of our work in innumerable ways."

The Maguires understand that there is no short-term solution to solving homelessness, it's not just feeding someone a meal. "A human connection is more powerful than any meal I've ever handed out," said Megan, and she's been forever changed by her interactions with our beloved community at Project HOME. It's changed them as a family too, because if you can give together



Photo Credit: Maguire Foundation

Frances and James Maguire have been committed to supporting the work of Project HOME for over two decades.

it becomes embedded in everything you do.

Megan and her family want to keep helping and opening doors where perhaps they've been closed. They recognize it's a marathon, not a sprint, and that slowly homelessness will change in our city thanks to their long-term commitment.

Students Learn to Fly at Honickman Learning Center & Comcast Technology Labs

(continued from page 1)



Bernard has found tremendous success after he left Project HOME and is now mentoring others in his current job.

After graduating from high school, Bernard went on to study music at Community College of Philadelphia. After about a year and a half of study, he decided to enter the workforce. The working world has provided him with a rich education in sales, marketing, communications, and patience. He enjoys the work and seems to have found his niche. In his current role of leading door-to-door marketing campaigns, he's traveled to California, New York, Maryland, and Texas.

Bernard has shown tremendous growth since 2011. In terms of where he is in his career now, he said, "I'm becoming more passionate about developing others...and I really want to help those who want the help." He continues to reflect on his experiences with Project HOME and feels that "the center helped out so many people and there were so many avenues that people could take that were productive."

Bernard continues his forward progression in life and in music, and after a long hiatus, he recently started recording and releasing music again. So, stay tuned.

Information That Matters to You

Receive news and issue updates that matter to you by subscribing to Project HOME's monthly eNewsletter and Advocacy alerts.

Go to bit.ly/emails_sub_pnews or contact michaelgainer@projecthome.org

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And don't miss the great stuff on the Project HOME Blog

projecthome.org/news

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.

Homeless Outreach Hotline

215-232-1984

Administration

215-232-7272

Human Resources Hotline

215-232-7219, ext. 5200

For a full list of our residences go to:

projecthome.org/locations

For a full list of our services & programs go to:

projecthome.org/services

For a full list of our businesses go to:

projecthomemade.org

Meet the Editorial Team

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For the digital and expanded version of this newsletter go to:

projecthome.org/newsletter



www.projecthome.org



Union Bug

Collage by Jay Gorodetzer and Natalia Dabik



“The future belongs to young people with an education and the imagination to create.”

BARACK OBAMA

“[L to R] Summer camp students at the Honickman Learning Center and Comcast Technology Labs receive free books from the Tree House Book Mobile; Andre from the College Access Program (CAP) styling Project HOME’s HOME Spun Boutique on a summer internship; and CAP graduates celebrate with Project HOME Executive Director and Co-Founder, Sister Mary Scullion.

A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania, 800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.