

News FROM HOME



Our Response to COVID-19

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

COVID-19, How We Are Fighting Back

We watched as Wuhan, China was decimated by a new strain of contagious respiratory illness called the coronavirus or COVID-19. The first positive case was reported in the United States on January 21st and by early March, Philadelphia was reacting to the local impact of this virus.

On any given day at Project HOME, our thoughts turn to those who are most vulnerable in our city. During this pandemic, that awareness increased tenfold. And that is why starting the week of March 9th, we put our plan into action.

We created a COVID-19 preparedness task force comprised of key leaders in the Project HOME community and guided by Monica Medina-McCurdy, our Vice President of Healthcare Services. We talked with the City of Philadelphia, our outreach team, staff at the Hub of Hope, our healthcare professionals, and all our teams about how to respond to COVID-19. The

speed with which we responded was lightning fast, and yet we felt we were woefully lagging behind a virus that had every single person in its sights.

"The core of the work of our Outreach staff involves making a physical or emotional connection...that means of connecting was gone because of COVID-19."

For thirty years, Project HOME has been providing services to people who experience chronic homelessness. We have developed nationally recognized programs that have proven that homelessness can be solved. We have also been a leader in Philadelphia in responding to the root causes of homelessness by helping to rebuild low-income neighborhoods and by engaging in political advocacy to bring about positive public policies for low-income and homeless persons. But COVID-19 was challenging every facet of that work.

Residential staff roll up their sleeves

With seventeen residential buildings across the city with 894 residents, program and property managers had their hands full taking care of the needs of each resident. The first order of business was to make sure each building had the resources they needed in this moment. The next task was to get a gift card to all residents so they could stock-up on groceries, especially if they had just lost their job or had any under-lying conditions that meant they should be self-isolating.

"It suddenly became an urgent need to get those who had underlying conditions to safer spaces."

For those who were self-isolating, we created a program called the Grocery LifeLine (see page 5 "Small Ways to Make a Big Difference" for more information on how to be a part of this program) where someone could choose a resident to shop for and have groceries delivered to their building.

A few of our residences have folks living in clusters. It suddenly became an urgent need to get those who had underlying conditions to safer spaces. So, with the support of Independence Health Group, Connie and Sankey Williams, and the Hess Foundation we rented hotel rooms for those who might have been more seriously impacted by the virus.

Outreach physically distance but continue work

The core of the work of our Outreach staff involves making a physical or emotional connection. That might be a handshake, a hug, or whatever is needed in that moment to cement the relationship. When that means of connecting was gone because of COVID-19, our staff had to find ways to do their work while keeping themselves and others safe.

Sometimes this meant wiping down snacks or water bottles as

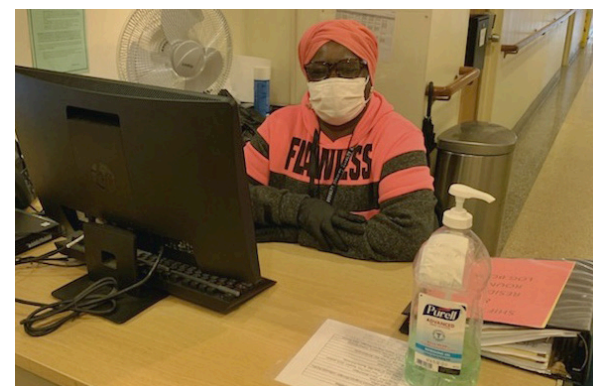


Photo by Matt Beierschmitt

Support and outreach staff member Debbie Jackson has been redeployed to our Sacred Heart Recovery Residence to help cover shifts during COVID-19.

they were being handed out in Kensington and other parts of the city. Other times it would look like a staff member showing up in personal protective equipment to drive someone who might be sick to a quarantine location.

Outreach was one of the departments that was hardest hit during this time and yet they have persevered to continue their work so that the most vulnerable on our streets could have their needs met.

Hub shines a light of hope in the darkness

The very nature of the Hub of Hope in Suburban Station is designed to be a physical gathering space for those experiencing homelessness. Each day hundreds of cups of coffee are usually handed out, showers, laundry and medical services are offered, case managers help with housing or other needs, and relationships are built. The Hub sees about 150 – 200 people



Photo by Emmanuel Sofolawe

Since COVID-19 restrictions were put in place, folks now line up on the corner of Broad Street and JFK Blvd waiting to gain access to the Hub of Hope in Suburban Station.



Photo by Emmanuel Sofolawe

Project HOME outreach and medical staff hit the streets to help those in need during the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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www.projecthome.org

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Roots and Branches: Reflections from Sister Mary

What do you do when you are instructed to “stay home”, but you have no home? How do you maintain community when physical distancing is considered a life-saving precaution? What do you do when such life-saving precautions directly challenge the values of the community you are a part of?

These were among the difficult questions that we weren’t sure we had the answers to when COVID-19 abruptly entered our lives. We were shaken. We were anxious. We were concerned about the wellbeing of our staff, residents, and all the people still calling the streets of Philadelphia home. Our entire way of being suddenly shifted and uncertainty seemed to permeate every place we turned to for guidance.

Yet another question: What do we do?

But as quickly as the questions appeared, one sole answer stood up tall within us: We.

The resilience of. The creativity of. The resolve of. The collective power of We.

An example of this was when a person experiencing homelessness presented with COVID-19 symptoms at the Hub of Hope. Thanks to our wonderful and quick-thinking, medical and social service staff, a space at our Sacred Heart Recovery Residence was immediately identified as somewhere to have them quarantined.

Staff at the Hub prepared paperwork. Meanwhile, Sacred Heart staff were readying the space, and over at 1515

Fairmount Avenue, one of our outreach workers was donning his personal protective equipment to pick up the person and transport them to Sacred Heart. In fact, though the person had to be in isolation, they arrived to a warm meal and welcoming smiles that very same evening.

All of this was carried out carefully, quickly and as always, with heartfelt compassion. Now with family, that person was able to rest and recover at Sacred Heart. They were home. They were in community. They formed new relationships.

The power of We.

Over 100 families and individuals added a resident to their grocery list and delivered much-needed groceries to residents that needed to stay home (for more details on the Grocery LifeLine see page 5). Over \$150,000 was given in gifts ranging from \$5 to \$5,000 through our on-line campaign to help pay for additional COVID 19-related supplies. Over 2,000 masks were sewn and donated for our residents and those we serve at the Hub of Hope, Stephen Klein Wellness Center, and through Outreach services.

Friends, in the midst of this unprecedented time, I saw Beloved Community in action. Although faced with uncertainty, we let our mission ground and guide us. We held steadfast to our belief in the transformational power of building relationships and community and let it overpower our anxieties, fears, and barriers of physical distance. I am still awe-stricken at the care and creativity of our community during this time. I am deeply moved by and grateful for every single person in this beloved community we move forward through this crisis to meet the future.

This is how we navigate through times of crisis. We do it together - because none of us are home, until all of us are home.

S. Mary Scullion



Sister Mary Scullion
of Project HOME.

Photo by Lisa Suszek

COVID-19, How We Are Fighting Back

(continued from page 1)



Staff at the Stephen Klein Wellness Center take daily precautions to keep staff and patients safe.

Photo by Janine Burkhardt

daily, but when Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf advised that no more than two people should gather and at a safe distance of six feet apart, the Hub’s entire model of service delivery had to be rethought.

After regrouping and rethinking the space, new protocols were implemented. Folks were screened outside at the corner of JFK Blvd and Broad Street before entering the Hub. If they exhibited any signs of COVID-19, they were sent to the medical tent to be tested. From there, they were connected with the city so they could be quarantined at one of their sites. Sometimes they were quarantined at Project HOME buildings if space was available, or in hotels.

If they passed the screening, they could enter the Hub, one at a time, and see a Doctor, get a shower, or have whatever need they had in that moment taken care of. The most important thing is that the Hub’s mission of engagement and service has never ceased - and people experiencing homelessness during this crisis, continued to have connection and care.

Medical centers didn’t miss a beat

Project HOME has three medical sites. The Stephen Klein

Wellness Center at 2144 Cecil B. Moore Avenue, a site at Pathways to Housing on the Old York Road, and a satellite office at the Hub of Hope. With the immense strain that COVID-19 brought to all medical facilities across the world and nation, Project HOME’s medical staff braced themselves for a tidal wave of cases.

They reworked their staff plan to take more calls to head-off patients with COVID-19 presenting to avoid risk of infecting staff and other patients. The patients that did present with symptoms were tested, able to self-isolate at home until the results came back, and then treated as needed.

“The Hub’s mission of engagement and service has never ceased - and people experiencing homelessness during this crisis, continued to have connection and care.”

One of the biggest challenges that the Stephen Klein Wellness Center site had was maintaining normalcy for some of the important daily work. Things like the Medication Assisted Treatment that is offered for people recovering from substance-use disorder could not stop. They figured out a way to continue this work by using telemedicine, while addressing the growing needs of a population presenting with COVID-19 symptoms.

On daily situation calls, asks for masks, gloves or other sanitary needs were made of medical and they delivered. But donors also stepped up and delivered by making masks for our medical and outreach staff. If it hadn’t been for the quick thinking of medical staff to try and divert as many positive, treatable cases of COVID-19, the entire 19121 and 19132 neighborhoods could have been decimated by this terrible virus.

Census counting must go on

As the virus was making its way to our shores, our advocacy team had started the important task of making sure that folks

knew about the 2020 United States Census and were counted in it. They had large groups of people knock on doors in North Philly to educate our neighbors. But then COVID-19 arrived, and they had to rethink their strategy, but of course not their commitment to this moment.

With the support of funding partners at Keystone Counts and Philly Counts, they encouraged everyone to stay safe at home, and helped team members transition to work remotely. Instead of door knocking, folks were texting and calling our neighbors and Project HOME residents to support them to fill out the census form and be counted.

Collaborations in time of need

Working together with outside partners is a core part of the work we do at Project HOME, but during COVID-19 those relationships became even more important to meet the needs of those we serve. This is why under the leadership of Broad Street Ministry (they feed many of the people we serve at the Hub of Hope) and the Independence Foundation, we connected with generous donors, and Prevention Point (an organization that helps those with substance-use disorder) in Kensington to help get food to folks experiencing homelessness.

The decision was made to provide over 2,000 meals per day at City Hall and in Kensington. The logistics of carrying something like this out, seemed impossible. And yet, starting April 13th, all of us came together and fed those in need.

Project HOME triumphs over COVID-19

Whether it is staff innovating, donors helping to fill gaps, or entire departments rethinking their operations to keep things moving, we are doing it! In the over three decades that Project HOME has existed, it is no stranger to challenges, but COVID-19 tested everything we built as an organization. We are coming out the other side stronger, a little battle-weary perhaps, but ready to take on the next challenge. With you by our side, together, we can do anything.

*Usually **I Am Project HOME** is dedicated to a single Project HOME employee who displays what it means to embody the mission of Project HOME. During COVID-19, so many of our employees have gone above and beyond. That is why, in this special issue of our newsletter, we're recognizing our mission, and how every single Project HOME staff member has continued to carry it out despite many obstacles. It is also why we're calling it **You Are Project HOME**.*

We strive to create a safe and respectful environment where we support each other in our struggles for self-esteem, recovery, and the confidence to move toward self-actualization. So many in our community are in some type of recovery and trying to ensure that those needs are met during this time, seemed like an insurmountable task. Not for our Project HOME staff! They continue to create safe, supportive spaces to empower all in recovery to continue this important journey.

An integral part of our work is education about the realities of homelessness and poverty and vigorous advocacy on behalf of and with homeless and low-income persons for more just and humane public policies. When the need during a pandemic like this is so great, our staff fight harder and raise their voices louder for the needs of those we serve to ensure that they aren't forgotten, and their needs are met.

All these beliefs and values continue to motivate the incredible staff of Project HOME each and every day. And they will carry out the important and much needed day-to-day work to bring everyone home safely.

We are in this together and we will get through this together; your incredible spirit of generosity makes that possible.

HOME

Happenings



Resident Voices

One of the ways you helped our residents during COVID-19 was to purchase and deliver their groceries. We are so grateful to so many of you who did this (for more information on the Grocery LifeLine, see page 5). We're sharing one of our resident's stories who received the groceries.

Cornelia has lived at JBJ SOUL HOMES for two years. When the coronavirus first hit, she knew she couldn't even attempt to leave her apartment. Cornelia is 67 and has diabetes, that puts her squarely in the high-risk category. When the Grocery LifeLine started, it truly was a lifeline for her. "The groceries were very helpful," said Cornelia. "Whoever did the shopping must have a good heart to do that." Cornelia was so overwhelmed to think that someone she doesn't even know would think of her in a moment like this. Those groceries are being put to good use, and she's taking great care of herself. Like all of us during this time, she has good days and bad days, but she tries to make everyday a good day. Living at Project HOME has taken a huge load off her shoulders, and getting some groceries delivered was like the icing on the cake of what it means to live at Project HOME.

Did You Know?
Your company can receive up to **90%** of it's donation value as a PA tax credit!
Learn More about how to maximize your impact with **EITC!**
Education Improvement Tax Credit

projecthome.org/EITC

Graphic by Emmanuel Sofolawe

Photo by Sungbin Kim



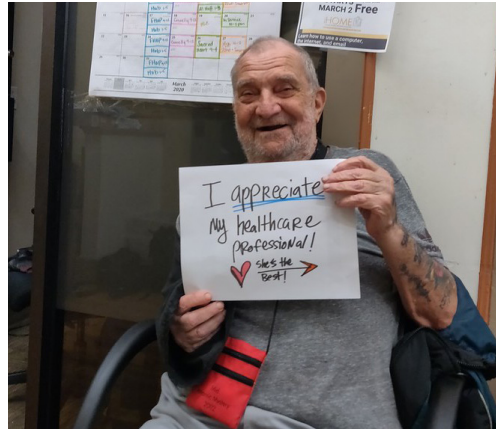
Many of our residences, like this one at 1515 Fairmount Avenue, were unusually quiet during COVID-19.

Photo by Matt Beierschmitt



Ms. T looking after the food pantry at the Helen Brown Community Center. Our food pantry remained well stocked during COVID-19 thanks to your generous food and monetary donations.

Photo by Emmanuel Sofolawe



1515 Fairmount Avenue resident Mr. George recognized our healthcare workers during COVID-19 for National Doctors' Day.

Photo by Emmanuel Sofolawe



Step Up to the Plate was an initiative between Project HOME, Prevention Point, Broad Street Ministry and countless incredible donors to offer 2,000 meals to those on our streets experiencing homelessness and food insecurity at both City Hall and Kensington.

“The stay-at-home order has been hard. I know that the Project HOME community has always supported us and I'm sure people have a lot of time to clean out their closets, so they'll have great books ready to be donated when we get back!**”**



DONATE

As you clear out your homes, it's a perfect time to put your books aside and donate them to Project HOME Books when we're up and running again.



Allen
Bookstore Associate

Learn More

<https://bit.ly/phbooks20>

“It's going to feel great to be back at morning workshop. I have a lot of new ideas for our makers. I'm sure we all do! In view of the pandemic, everyday issues and problems will be nice to get back to.**”**



VISIT US

We would love to have some orders for our staff to make when we're back in business! Please visit our website listed below to purchase a gift or gift card.



Kai
Social Enterprise Resident Associate

Visit us Online

<https://bit.ly/visitphshop>

“I've gotten text messages from almost all of our regulars. This is a great outpouring of support; a real testament to the power of 'We.' I can't wait to get back and see our customers every day!**”**



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To be in the know when HOME Spun is up and running again, you can subscribe to our newsletter. Visit the link listed below.



David
HOME Spun Senior Sales Associate

Subscribe Today


<https://bit.ly/homespunalerts>

Graphic by Emmanuel Sofolawe


Small Ways to Make a Big Difference


Be a Grocery LifeLine for our Residents


One of the ways you can help many of our folks who are at extreme risk right now, is through our new Project HOME Grocery LifeLine program. We are collaborating with Roonga to ensure our vulnerable residents have the essentials. You can help by signing up to become a Grocery LifeLine. This is also an opportunity to build community and to stand in solidarity with the most vulnerable among us. We hope you will join us. It can be done in four simple steps:




Become a LifeLine During COVID-19 In Four Easy Steps

- 

Visit bit.ly/phgroceryll and select a resident's profile.
- 

Purchase (or order for delivery) items from the resident's personalized grocery list.
- 

Clearly label all bags with the resident's name & unit number. Please wipe down all items for safety precautions
- 

Please arrange delivery as soon as possible, between 10a-4p.

For more information contact: email: samanthablatt@projecthome.org or visit: <https://bit.ly/phgroceryll>

Gather Your Unwanted Books and Turn Them into Jobs

One of our social enterprise ventures, Project HOME Books, temporarily has had to stop all sales during COVID-19. But that didn't stop supporter, Jude Robison, from finding ways to help the business. Jude contacted friends and neighbors who were spring cleaning in this housebound moment and asked them to gather their unwanted books. As soon as things got up and running at Project HOME Books, Jude wanted to make sure there was a big donation of books waiting for staff to sort through and add to their inventory. "Those of us with a roof over our heads and food in the pantry are very privileged," said Jude. "I know that Project HOME is caring for the most vulnerable among us, the ones with the least resources to care for themselves at this time." We are so grateful to Jude for thinking of us, and we'll let you know as soon as we reopen!



Eagle Scout, Ethan Toland and his brother Will drop off a much-needed food donation to our 1515 Fairmount Avenue building.

Buying Resident-Made Gifts to Soften the Blow

Supporter Hannah Karlheim learned of Project HOME and our COVID-19 needs through an online publication. When she saw that one of our social enterprise ventures is to sell candles made by our residents, she decided to purchase some. Unfortunately, during COVID-19 this social enterprise business was not operating, but Hannah didn't mind. "I completely understand," she said. "I am happy to wait until you are back. Sending good thoughts to the whole organization." It is the generosity and light that folks like Hannah provide in thinking of placing orders to fulfill later that really helps us through such a dark time.

Jefferson Staff Sprang into Action

Tina DeAngelis, associate professor and director of the doctorate program in occupational therapy at Thomas Jefferson University has been a longtime support of Project HOME. She pays close attention to our website at the best of times, but when COVID-19 struck, she was glued to our communications. She rallied friends and coworkers to bring dinners two days a week for an entire month to both of our safe havens, donated snacks and hygiene bags, and made masks. It was incredible how quickly she sprang into action, but we are so grateful to Tina and her team for stepping up!



Philabundance Executive Director, Glenn Bergman, rolling up his sleeves and preparing bagged lunches for guests at the Hub of Hope.

HOME Made Projects: Make a Mask

We have the perfect craft project while you're stuck at home. We need masks for our residents, patients visiting our medical clinics, and guests at our Hub of Hope. We recognize that our frontline medical workers need to be prioritized, but if you have some craft material and time to spare to make some for those we serve, we would be so grateful! **For more information on how to make masks, you can go to <https://www.projecthome.org/make-masks>.**

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 www.bit.ly/PH_Subscribe or contact michaeltgainer@projecthome.org

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

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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
- Connelly House, 1212 Ludlow Street
- Francis House of Peace, 810 Arch Street
- Gloria Casarez Residence, 1315 N. 8th Street
- Hope Haven I/II, 2827-28 Diamond Street
- James Widener Ray Homes, 2101 W. Venango Street
- JBJ Soul Homes, 1415 Fairmount Avenue
- Kairos House, 1440 N. Broad Street
- Kate's Place, 1929 Sansom Street
- Rowan I, 2729-A W. Diamond Street
- Rowan II, 1901 N. Judson Street
- Ruth Williams House, 2415 N. Broad Street
- Sacred Heart Recovery Residence, 1315 Hunting Park Avenue
- St. Columba, 4133 Chestnut Street
- St. Elizabeth's Recovery, 1850 N. Croskey Street
- Women of Change, 2042 Arch Street

Support Services & Programs

- Adult Education, Employment & Arts
- Neighborhood Services
- Advocacy and Public Policy
- Healthcare Services
- Honickman Learning Center and Comcast Technology Labs
- Hub of Hope
- Outreach Coordination Center
- Personal Recovery Services
- Resident Alumni Program
- Stephen Klein Wellness Center
- Volunteer Program

Businesses

- HOME Spun Resale Boutique, 215-232-6322
- HOME Made Products, 215-232-7272, ext. 3023

Administration

215-232-7272

Homeless Outreach Hotline

215-232-1984

Human Resources Hotline

215-232-7219, ext. 5200

www.projecthome.org

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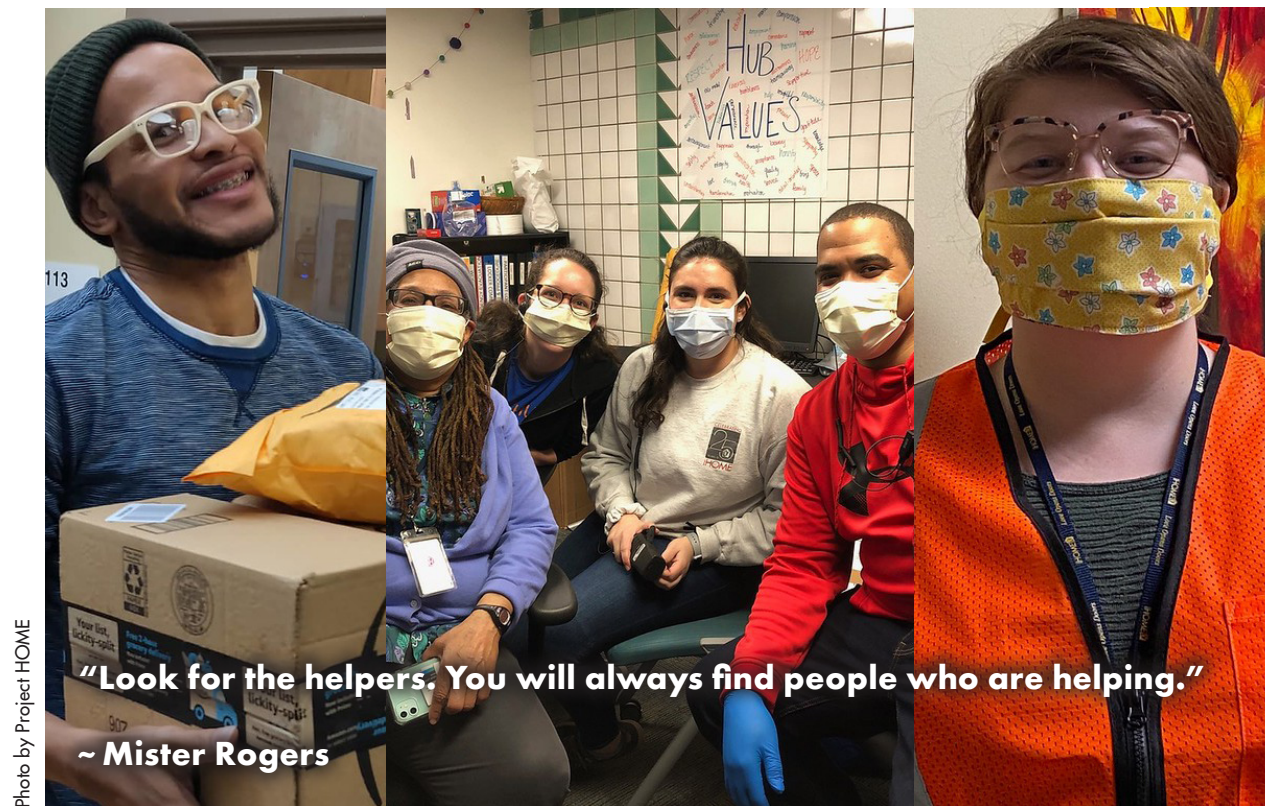


Photo by Project HOME

From left to right, Volunteer and In-Kind Gifts Coordinator, John Owens received the many generous donations you sent during COVID-19; staff at the Hub of Hope donned their masks and smiles throughout the crisis (this image was taken in early March before social distancing practices were put in place); and Outreach staff like Kathleen Kelley put the needs of others first.

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.

