

News FROM HOME



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

Residential Support Ends the Cycle of Homelessness

When we reflect on our lives, they're often marked by individuals that have supported us along the way. Perhaps it's a parent, a friend, or a work mentor. They're the kind of people that you draw inspiration from throughout your life. It's the kind of support that can be crucial.

“The best part is when you see somebody doing better.”

– Victor Jackson, Residential Services Coordinator, Hope Haven

That's the role Project HOME residential staff can play for many of our residents. For some, our staff might be the only positive support they've had in their lives or the first in a long time. And when our staff have that lived experience of homelessness or substance use disorder, they can help our residents in ways that go beyond the daily needs and get to the heart of where that resident is at in that moment.

It's a job that our residential service coordinators, Terry Powell and Victor Jackson, don't take lightly. Terry knows that “I have people's lives in my hands” and Victor always wants to be in a position where if residents “reach out to me, I want to be able to help them.”

IN THIS ISSUE

Residential Support Ends the Cycle of Homelessness	1
Roots and Branches	2
Fighting for the Right to Vote	2
Spirit of Generosity	3
HOME Happenings	4
I Am Project HOME	5
Small Ways to Make a Big Difference	5
Residences and Programs	6

www.projecthome.org



Photo by Victor Jackson

Victor Jackson, a resident support coordinator at Hope Haven, one of our permanent supportive recovery housing residences for men.

Victor and Terry arrived at Project HOME's Hope Haven I and II around the same time. They would talk about this being a transition point in their lives after having experienced homelessness and being in recovery. What they also shared was a single-minded focus on doing whatever it took to get their lives where they wanted them to be. “I wanted a life worth living,” said Terry. Victor came in with the mindset that “you go into recovery with the same tenacity that you go after the drugs,” and he said, “that's why I was able to overcome a lot of the obstacles.”

“I have people's lives in my hands.”

– Terry Powell, Residential Services Coordinator, St. Elizabeth's Recovery Residence

They connected with jobs through our employment services staff and set out on this new journey. While living at Hope Haven, they had the support of residential staff, each other, the medical team, and their peers who became like a family to them. With all this support, they thrived.

Now, both Terry and Victor live outside the Project HOME residential community, but they choose to come back to it every day. Terry works at St. Elizabeth's Recovery Residence and Victor at his old residence, Hope Haven I and II. They offer a range of support to our residents. Some are navigating recovery, some are navigating complicated paperwork to apply for jobs or housing, and some just need a listening ear. That listening has been particularly important this past year as the pandemic has impacted so much of the support work that can

(continued on page 3)



Photo courtesy of Terry Powell

Terry Powell is also a resident support coordinator at St. Elizabeth's Recovery Residence, a home for men and some of our veterans. (Terry is pictured with his wife, Devon)

Roots and Branches: Reflections from Sister Mary

There is incredible work happening across Project HOME every single day. We'd like to highlight our wonderful healthcare team at the Stephen Klein Wellness Center and particularly, Monica Medina-McCurdy, our vice president of healthcare services. She wrote a powerful piece to shine a light on how housing is healthcare, particularly during a global pandemic. We're indebted to Monica and the work of her entire team at Project HOME. We're also grateful to you, for being an integral part of this mission through your time, talent, and treasure. With love and gratitude,

S. Mary Scullion

Significant health disparities due to systemic racism and implicit bias of all stripes have long plagued our healthcare system. We know that marginalized groups, particularly low-income communities of color, are more likely to suffer from a lack of access to quality care. Nowhere are these challenges more profound than in individuals experiencing homelessness. Yet over the last year, COVID-19 has brought these disparities into even sharper focus. We now have an opportunity – and an obligation – to reflect on the root causes of those disparities and pursue meaningful ways of addressing them.

From the earliest days of the pandemic, Project HOME has seen the devastating impacts of COVID-19 on our city's homeless

population first-hand. With shelters and other community sites no longer considered safe, many individuals experiencing homelessness suddenly found themselves with fewer options than ever before. What does a stay-at-home order mean for a person with no home?

Project HOME's healthcare services team saw these challenges at locations like the Hub of Hope and the Stephen Klein Wellness Center. We continue to provide COVID-19 testing, vaccinations, and treatment at these locations, recognizing the hard truth that many who walk out our doors – some who may have COVID-19 – have nowhere to go.

“What does a stay-at-home order mean for a person with no home?”

These challenges brought new urgency to the concept that “housing is healthcare.” What the pandemic has made apparent is that when thousands of people lack safe decent housing in Philadelphia, it is a public health crisis. At Project HOME, we know that meaningful public and private investment in affordable housing can save lives and reduce the strain on our healthcare system.

It's clear the healthcare challenges highlighted by COVID-19 aren't going away anytime soon. That's because they've existed since long before this virus. Yet as we navigate our collective response, there's an opportunity to advance meaningful solutions to these systemic challenges. Recognizing housing is healthcare is a powerful place to start.



Sister Mary Scullion of Project HOME.

Fighting for the Right to Vote

By Will O'Brien



Project HOME has a long history of supporting the right to vote and the need for more affordable housing in the city.

Since our earliest years, Project HOME has actively worked to protect and promote voting rights. Many of the people in our community have been historically marginalized from voting. Time and time again we have had to challenge legal roadblocks and prevailing myths that have kept people from the polls. Of course, situations of homelessness and poverty are themselves enormous

obstacles to exercising this basic right.

We continue to be deeply concerned about the current political debates over voting across our country. Some states are passing laws designed to “protect voter integrity.” Unfortunately, from our years of experience working on the ground, we are well-aware of how the restrictions and requirements in these kinds of laws can disenfranchise low-income and socially marginalized citizens keeping them from the polls.

Our work to secure voting access is more than just a struggle for constitutional rights. It is a struggle for human dignity. In the realm of politics, this means that every person in this society - including those who may be struggling with economic vulnerability and social discrimination - should be able to

exercise the basic right of voting. We will continue our efforts to ensure voting rights for everyone, and we will continue the path that brings all of us home.

Some important facts about voting in Pennsylvania:

- You can vote if you are a U.S. citizen who is at least 18 years old on Election Day, and a resident of Pennsylvania for at least 30 days before the election.
- You can vote when you are homeless; just use the address of a place where you get mail.
- You can vote when released from jail or prison – even with a felony conviction from Pennsylvania or another state.
- You can vote when you are on probation, parole, or house arrest.
- You can vote while in jail awaiting trial.
- You can vote while serving time for a misdemeanor.

For more information on voting rights, go to projecthome.org/vote

Residential Support Ends the Cycle of Homelessness

(continued from page 1)

happen for folks in recovery. “Vic and Terry know what it means to receive and give support,” said Christina Fianza, director of residential services and Terry and Victor’s manager. “The challenge they face as staff is seeing residents struggling in their recovery, knowing they have offered all the resources and encouragement around making smart choices, and having to accept that some people aren’t there yet. It is that resident’s choice, no matter how much Terry and Vic want something different for them.”

“The challenge they face as staff is seeing residents struggling in their recovery, knowing they have offered all the resources and encouragement around making smart choices.”

– Christina Fianza, Director of Residential Services

Both Terry and Victor would agree the last year has been tough for them and their residents. But providing the right kind of support at the right moment can be life changing and life saving for our residents and rewarding for our staff. “The best part is when you see somebody doing better,” said Victor, “you see that you actually made an impact on helping somebody.” Terry would say his need to care for others started at home, but Project HOME brought it back full circle, “they gave me hope, they believed in me, they gave me respect.”

Spirit of Generosity: Studio Incamminati

Luis has been drawing since he was a little boy, but he never took any classes. That is until he moved into Project HOME’s Maguire Residence last year and learned about art classes with Studio Incamminati. “The professors said that I drew really well,” explains Luis, who is positively beaming at the idea of someone enjoying his work. “They’re proud of me.”

You might think that art classes couldn’t possibly continue in a pandemic, but the Studio Incamminati teachers wouldn’t let something like that get in the way. “Studio Incamminati’s partnership has been amazing,” said Barb Hadley, vice president of employment and education. “They have continued to support Project HOME artists throughout the pandemic, with the dedicated teachers dropping off art supplies to individual residents and conducting online classes.”

The Project HOME Art Program in collaboration with Studio Incamminati began nearly a decade ago. It was created to provide a foundational art workshop to individuals recovering from the trauma of homelessness. As participants learn principles of drawing, they also develop practical, social, and technical skills. Both organizations benefit from the enriching cultural exchange. More than drawing is happening and many students, like Luis, mention the meditative quality of drawing, for



Photo by Katherine Scholle

Luis feels so proud of his drawing work with Studio Incamminati and what he’s been able to learn over the last year.

him “it is peace and concentration.”

Studio Incamminati teaches our residents (see page 6 for images of some of our artists over the years) a 10-week course through a combination of Bargue copying classes (which means drawing the subject exactly) and still life programs which hones the student’s knowledge of shapes, shading and drawing. An interesting silver-lining of lockdown in the pandemic meant that teachers have been able to work with students one-on-one. This created a safer environment for our residents to be vulnerable, an emotion that so often comes with personal expression. “One of the easiest rewards that I hadn’t been expecting... was the intimacy of those calls,” explained teacher Michela Mansuino. “We were connected in a way that we weren’t in a classroom.”

The program is made possible because of the generosity of Studio Incamminati board member Richard Rossello, owner of Avery Galleries in Bryn Mawr, and New York City. The Rossellos have supported a multi-year collaboration between Project HOME and Studio Incamminati. We are so grateful to the Rosellos and Studio Incamminati for this essential bond that has been created between residents, art, and expression. We would also like to celebrate Studio Incamminati moving to their new gallery space on the 7th floor of the Bok Building at 1901 S. 9th Street. We wish them nothing but success and so appreciate their partnership.

A colorful graphic with a light blue background. At the top, it says "SAVE THE DATE" in large, bold, white letters with a yellow outline. Below that is a red banner with "BRING PHILLY HOME" in white. Underneath the banner, it says "SEPTEMBER 23-29, 2021". The graphic features stylized buildings in red and yellow, a green biplane on the left, a yellow sun in the center, and a blue dome on the right. There are also small red hearts scattered throughout. At the bottom, it says "For more information, visit http://bit.ly/PH_BPH2021-pn".

◆ Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Update



A year ago, Project HOME made a real commitment to becoming an anti-racist organization. This is an ongoing, complex, and difficult process that requires constant vigilance and challenges us to grow and develop further. Helping us to grow will be our new vice president of diversity, equity, and inclusion, Natalia Cardona-Sanchez. Originally from Guatemala, Natalia is a social justice activist, and a diversity, equity, and inclusion specialist with over twenty years in the non-profit sector. We're so excited to welcome her HOME. To

read more about Natalia go to projecthome.org/news



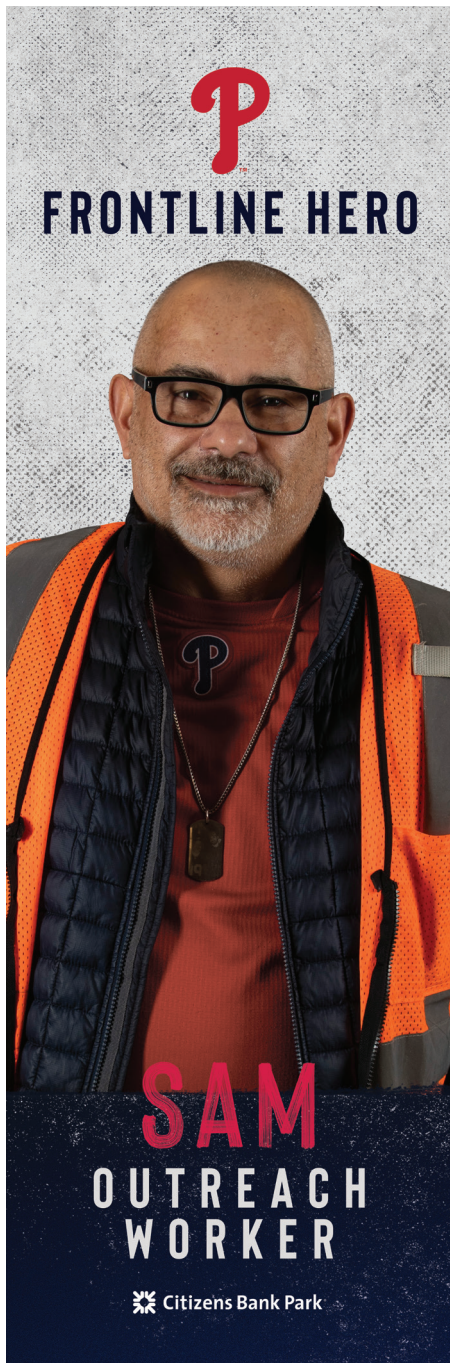
community and mission. For more updates on volunteer opportunities, please visit our website at projecthome.org/volunteer or email: vcoordinator@projecthome.org

◆ Bearded Ladies Cabaret



In May, the Bearded Ladies Cabaret partnered with Project HOME's Gloria Casarez Residence residents to put on a glitterfully fun cabaret performance. The Bearded Ladies is an experimental

cabaret group devoted to exploring all the possibilities of intimate homemade theater through beautiful songs, tricked-out costume changes, drag, and virtuosic prop construction. The event also showcased the Bearded Ladies Cabaret's Beardmobile, a 15-foot roving, multi-use cabaret truck that delivers socially distanced live performances. It featured young adult resident, JuJu, from Project HOME and other members of our Gloria Casarez Residence. To learn more about the Bearded Ladies Cabaret go to beardedladiescabaret.com



◆ Hero Outreach Worker Sam Santiago

The Phillies honored 41 extraordinary frontline heroes and Project HOME's veteran outreach worker Sam Santiago was one of them. Sam was selected from nearly 500 submissions of folks who stepped up to help the city and the community during the pandemic. "This is a well-deserved honor for Sam and all of Outreach," said Carol Thomas, Director of Homeless Services. "I'm proud of Sam and our whole team for giving back in such a selfless mission-focused way." You will find Sam's banner on the poles that flank Citizens Bank Park.

◆ A HOME Coming Week for Volunteers

In April, Project HOME celebrated National Volunteer Week by re-engaging our incredible volunteers after a long hiatus caused by the pandemic. With six full days of engagement, we were able to theme each day to an aspect of HOME (Housing, Opportunities for employment, Medical care, and Education). We are so grateful to you and our entire community for investing time and talent in volunteer opportunities to support our

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

I Am Project HOME: Candice Crawford and Claude Robinson

By Carolyn Crouch-Robinson, Residential Director, Project HOME



Staff and residents from James Ray Widener Homes and Ruth Williams House had a memorable visit to the African American Museum in Washington D.C. in 2020.

In November 2019, I had the honor of speaking in-depth with two residential services program managers, Candice Crawford from James Widener Ray Homes and Claude Robinson, from Ruth Williams House at the Gene and Marlene Epstein building. We were on a very special bus trip bringing residents and staff to the African American Museum in Washington D.C.

Claude and Candice wanted to do something different to help residents have a new experience outside of Philadelphia. They were so encouraged

by what residents shared about their experience that day. Candice got to know new residents at James Widener Ray Homes, including one who, when applying to move into Project HOME, was labeled as severely mentally ill, combative, and aggressive. She saw a totally different side of him on that trip as he excitedly chatted with her throughout the day. Having been the hiring manager and supervisor for Candice and Claude at different times, I had the privilege of getting to know their leadership styles. Candice is an open book. She believes in leading

with transparency, is non-judgmental, and has a good rapport with the residents she serves. Her days are filled with coaching, advising, and encouraging each resident to make decisions for themselves. If they get off track, she is there to support them. (For more on residential staff see front page, “Residential Support Ends the Cycle of Homelessness”)

Claude is an empathic and dedicated leader and his own biggest critic. One of the ways he’s invested in his growth is through reflecting on his handling of challenges. He has made real strides in trying to feel what residents and staff experience in the difficulties they face. His daily motto is “be the best me I can be every day.”

Claude and Candice are so committed to helping others that it’s no surprise that they both connected with ease to the mission of Project HOME. It is through their leadership at their sites and in the Project HOME community that we see our core values at work. The idea that “we believe in the transformational power of building relationships and community as the ultimate answer to the degradation of homelessness and poverty.” Candice and Claude live out this value every day of their lives, and the Project HOME community is better for it.

In Loving Memory

One of our first Trustees, Joe Miller, passed away recently. He and his wife Susan generously supported Project HOME since its inception. They started our first youth scholarship program in North Philadelphia along with Helen Brown, Claire Reichlin, and Chris Whaley. We remember Joe with deep gratitude.

Small Ways to Make a Big Difference: Omoi Zakka



Omoi Zakka’s proprietor, Liz Sieber, learned about Project HOME’s retail collection in the Philadelphia Inquirer. “As soon as I sampled the Library candle, I knew it would be the perfect

thing to share with my customers and promote the Project HOME mission.” Our partnership has continued for almost two years, through two busy holiday seasons and one global pandemic.

Based in Old City, Liz says that her customers are moved to purchase items by Project HOME because of the mission and the unique, high quality products. “People recognize the name and are familiar with the services and community engagement projects,” said Liz. “On top of supporting the Project HOME mission, customers have had a great response to the products.”

When asked why it’s meaningful to support a social enterprise with the goal of ending homelessness and poverty, Liz replied, “like Project HOME, we

believe that all persons are entitled to employment, and we love contributing to the goal of selling more candles to create jobs.” For more information on this partnership go to: bit.ly/omoizakka

Also, our Social Enterprise team recently launched The Fairmount candle, with a scent that evokes bright beginnings. Named for the street and neighborhood where the candles are made, when you light The Fairmount candle, you can be reminded of the hope, love, and care that Project HOME is rooted in. To check out the innovative work being done in Project HOME’s small businesses, subscribe to the Social Enterprises newsletter bit.ly/SE_subscribe_pn

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



Collage by Emmanuel Sofolawe

Some of the Project HOME residents who have taken Studio Incamminati’s art program over the years (for more on this relationship see page 3).

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.

www.projecthome.org



Union Bug