



Interfaith Hospitality Network of the Main Line

Embrace. Inspire. Restore.

A Self Sufficiency Program for Homeless Families

Newsletter, Fall 2010

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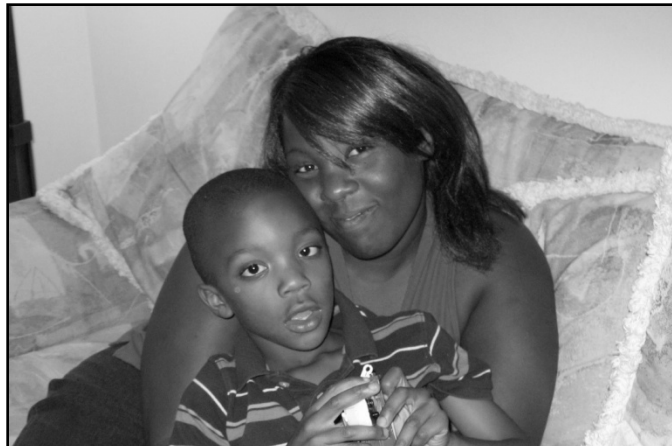
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Transitional Housing

A new program at IHN – Main Line

This year IHN – Main Line began piloting a Transitional Housing Program through a partnership with the Salvation Army. This program helps participants obtain and remain in permanent housing for one year, increase their skills and income, and work toward achieving greater self-determination. You may remember Nakia and her charming three boys from our

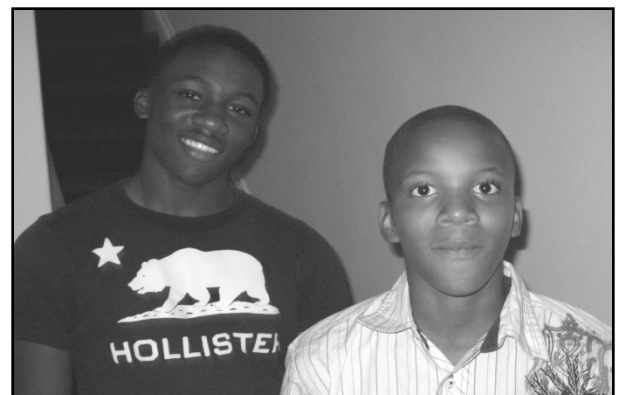


Nakia with her son Jaylon

IHN program. In August she and her children moved into their own apartment and began participating in our new Transitional Housing Program. While in the program Nakia is required to work and pay 30% of her income towards rent. The program subsidizes the remaining rent. This gives her the opportunity to save 30% of her income, a great achievement for a formally homeless family.

Cassandra, our IHN – Main Line Case Manager, guides Nakia through her goals as she plans how she will become permanently self-sufficient within her year in our program. Nakia is taking full advantage of her time while in our program. She has already started courses at Gwynedd Mercy College, receiving an “A” in her first course. By next summer she will have completed her associate’s degree in business. Although employed, she is actively

looking for a better paying job that will utilize her skills. Through her work with Cassandra and attendance at life skills classes she is learning to budget, save, and permanently improve her life. We are very proud of Nakia and her efforts!



Nakia’s sons Jequan and Jamere

Save the Date: IHN – Main Line Spring Fundraiser - April 3, 2011

Message from the Board Chairperson:

The economic news continues to confuse and worry us, but here at IHN, we are the “little engine that could”. In good economic times and bad, there are families falling through the cracks, and we are here to help. If you are reading this, you were kind enough to open this newsletter and take a moment to see what we are up to. Like every other nonprofit, we are struggling to find shrinking grant money and asking for donations to help us meet our costs. We have dreams of operating our own transitional housing unit but our most urgent need is a new van to transport our families. Our van has served its purpose over the years but is now begging for retirement. For our size nonprofit, manned primarily by volunteers, this kind of purchase is a big nut. Please help us cover this cost, if you can, and continue to support our efforts to help families find their way back to self sufficiency.

Thanks and best wishes for a wonderful holiday season,

Karen Kutcher Wilson
Board Chair

Help us Acquire a New Van

One of the essential features to our program is van. Without it we would not be able to transport our families between the Learning Skills Center in Norristown and the congregations on the Main Line. We use this van twice a day, every day, to transport our families. Our current van is seven years old and has over 132,000 miles on it. It has many bumps and bruises and much wear and tear and is beginning to drain our funds with all its repair bills. We are currently looking to replace it with a new 2011 15 passenger van within the next six months. Of course, to do this we need to raise about \$30,000. If you are interested in contributing to the new van so that we can transport our families safely between the Learning Skills Center and the congregations please feel free to make a donation to IHN – Main Line.

Main Line Unitarian Church Becomes the 12th Host Congregation for IHN – Main Line

In January 2010 the Main Line Unitarian Church hosted its first week of IHN – Main Line families. Under the coordination of Sally Fritzson and Bob Batt the Unitarian Church continues to host our families. We are pleased to have them on board and know that when our families stay at their congregation they feel welcomed and less stressed. It is great to have them in our Network! A special thank you to Rich Fritzson for making this happen.

The Holidays

The holidays are a busy and stressful time for most families and this is even more so for homeless families. It also gives us a special chance to help the families in our program. This year we are accepting gift cards (from Walmart, Target, Toys R Us, etc.) in lieu of presents for the families in our program. The gift cards will give our families a sense of empowerment and control in their lives. The parents will be able to purchase their own gifts for their children and make sure that they not only have what they need but what they want.

A special thank you to all the private foundations that supported the Interfaith Hospitality Network of the Main Line last year.

Ally Bank
Helen D. Groome Beatty Trust
Beneficial Savings Bank
Claneil Foundation
Connelly Foundation
The Emergency Aid of Pennsylvania Foundation. Inc.
Fourjay Foundation
Genuardi's (Employees) Fund

Genuardi Family Foundation
GT Foundation
Montgomery County Medical Society Foundation
Morgan Stanley Foundation
The Grace S. & W. Linton Nelson Foundation
Leo and Peggy Pierce Family Foundation
Saturday Club
Wachovia Wells Fargo Foundation

Support Congregations

We would like to thank all the support congregations in our Network. These support congregations provide the additional volunteers, meals, contributions, and hospitality that make our Network work. Thank you to:

Ardmore Presbyterian Church
Berwyn United Methodist Church
Christ Church Ithan
First Baptist Church in Wayne
Haverford Friends Meeting
Lower Merion Baptist Church
Mt. Calvary Baptist Church
Radnor Friends Meeting

Second Baptist Church in Wayne
St. George's Episcopal Church
St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Wayne
St. Paul's Lutheran Evangelical Church
Trinity Church in Gulph Mills
United Church of Christ at Valley Forge
United Methodist Church in Wayne
Zion Baptist Church in Ardmore

IHN – Main Line is always looking for new host and support congregations. If your congregation is interested in helping IHN – Main Line with our important mission, contact Sue at 610-277-0977.

Liz Chesick Nominated for Award



Elizabeth Chesick a current Coordinator and Board Member of IHN – Main Line was recently recognized by the Main Line Media News when she was nominated for their 11th annual Volunteer of the Year award. She was honored at a ceremony held at the Montrose Mansion at the Villanova Conference Center on June 23, 2010. Liz was credited with over 10 years of service with IHN – Main Line. Over the years she has served as a Coordinator, Board Member and the Secretary of the Board of Directors. She has stepped up time and again to meet the needs of this organization and the families we serve. Great job Liz!

Community Partnerships

Genesis Housing Corporation: We partner with the Genesis Housing Corporation to provide credit counseling for our families. An experienced Genesis' credit counselor meets with our families to evaluate their credit reports and FICO scores. This allows our families to understand their debt and prioritize the debt they need to pay off in the future, especially the debt they need to pay off before they can move into an apartment.

Literacy Council of Norristown: We view education as the essential factor in helping our families improve their lives and avoid becoming homeless in the future. We have partnered with the Literacy Council of Norristown to provide tutors for the adults in our program who have not received a high school diploma. The Literacy Council of Norristown evaluates each adult student and a volunteer tutors that individual specifically to take the GED exam. The goal is for each student to take the General Education (GED) exam and earn a GED Certificate allowing him or her higher paying employment opportunities. The GED Certificate also makes them eligible for advanced educational opportunities, such as community, technical, or traditional college programs. These all lead to a better paying job and thus, to avoiding homelessness in the future.

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Together we can make a lasting difference by breaking the cycle of homelessness.

Our Mission

The mission of the Interfaith Hospitality Network of the Main Line is to *provide a caring and positive environment for homeless families and their children while they design and implement a plan to break the cycle of homelessness in their lives. Using the energy of over 2,500 community volunteers we are dedicated to families who seek to be accountable, resilient, and strive for a better tomorrow for their families.*

How you can make a real difference in the life of a homeless family in need:

Volunteer your time: by making a meal, helping to turn a congregational space into a home for our families, helping children with home work, or spending time with a homeless family.

Contact Sue at 610-277-0977 to learn more about how you can volunteer.

Donate: your tax deductible contribution will go a long way towards helping our families reach self-sufficiency.

Donate by mail: Send your tax deductible check or money order to: IHN – Main Line
1449 DeKalb Street
Norristown, PA 19401

Donate on-line: Visit www.IHNcares.org and click on the Make a Donation link.

Find us at: [Facebook.com/InterfaithHospitalityNetworkoftheMainLine](https://www.facebook.com/InterfaithHospitalityNetworkoftheMainLine)