



Interfaith Hospitality Network of the Main Line

Embrace. Inspire. Restore.

A Self-Sufficiency Program for Homeless Families

Newsletter, Spring 2014

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Norristown, PA 19401

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www.IHNcares.org

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Opening Hearts and Opening Doors

Once again IHN – Main Line volunteers and supporters gathered for our 5th annual spring fundraiser, Opening Hearts and Opening Doors, on April 13, 2014 and a good time was had by all. We want to thank Appleford in Villanova for providing a beautiful venue for this event. Everyone relaxed to the music by the Redeemer Ramblers on Appleford's lovely terrace as they enjoyed their dinner, met up with old friends, and made new ones. The event was capped off by the loveliness and warmth of the spring day.

The dinner raised over \$35,000 for IHN – Main Line's self-sufficiency programs. We appreciate everyone who participated in the event by providing sponsorships, contributing to IHN, and of course, coming to the event.



Nancy Groff and Elizabeth Vale



Topper Roth, Maureen Osborne, and Sally and Rich Fritzson

Carolyn Hammond remarked, "A very congenial gathering, on a beautiful day, for a worthy cause." It was great to see so many people gather together to support our program and work towards ending homelessness.

Thanks goes out to the fundraising committee and Board of Directors for making the benefit a success. Without all our dedicated volunteers and committed congregations we would not be able to help the families with children we serve.



The Redeemer Ramblers

Photographer: Warren Ayres

A Special Thank You to the Sponsors of our Fundraiser

Program Level Sponsors

K Ten Kids Foundation Inc.
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Steve and Kim Sherlock
St. David's Episcopal Church
Tony and Elizabeth Vale
Jeff and Karen Wilson

More Photos from the event



George Vosburgh and Barbara Hobbs



Joe Betz, Barbara Noone, & Elizabeth Chesick



Bob Hobbs, Betsy Crowell, & Rodger McKinney

Photographer: Warren Ayres

Make a secure PayPal donation to IHN – Main Line through our website www.IHNCares.org by clicking on the Donate button.

Message from the Board Chairperson

Our 5th Annual *Opening Hearts & Opening Doors* fundraiser and celebration was blessed with a summer-like day, after a very long winter! What a joy to be outside - albeit under an open tent. We are so grateful to those who supported the event as Sponsors, to The Redeemer Ramblers who donated their time and talent to provide music for us, to those who attended and to those who made donations. What a grand statement of support for our mission of caring for families with children as they build a new life of self-sufficiency.



I work with an engaged Board who I know join me in thanking each and every coordinator and host-week volunteer for their efforts and commitment. How fortunate the families are to have their loving care and hospitality during this very challenging time in their lives. The Board is also grateful for the stewardship of Sue, our Executive Director and Grant Writer, and Sonya, our Case Manager, as they skillfully navigate the complex web of social services that serve the families under our care.

May we go forth with joy in our shared ministry.

Susan W. Ayres, Board Chair

Your Way Home

IHN – Main Line is partnering with the new Montgomery County Your Way Home (YWH) initiative. This initiative involves the use of a centralized intake call center for everyone in Montgomery County seeking assistance for housing or homeless issues. Beginning January 1, 2014 all families and individuals seeking shelter were routed through the Your Way Home Call Center, at which time the Call Center conducted a short needs assessment and made an appropriate referral. This is currently how IHN – Main Line receives all the referrals for our Network.

An additional change occurred in February 2014. This change was the creation of three Montgomery County Housing Resource Centers (HRC). The one that serves the IHN – Main Line families is based at Carson Valley/Children's Aid right down the street from our Day Center. At the HRCs families and individuals seeking assistance with any housing concerns meet with a Housing Stability Coach and receive a thorough social service assessment. This assessment helps the Coaches determine the appropriate housing program for each family/individual.

What does this mean for IHN – Main Line and our families? We receive some County grant money that is contingent on our using these new resources, so it does mean some changes for us. First, we now are only accepting referrals through the YWH Call Center and we are only accepting Montgomery County residents into our Network program. Second, all the families and single women we serve are eligible for services from the HRCs because they are homeless. Also, since they are in our program they are automatically eligible for the Montgomery County Rapid Rehousing Program. This is great news for our families; with this new program potentially 100% of our families will leave our program and move into permanent housing. They will receive assistance finding an affordable home and they will receive not only the initial down payment of first month/last month/security deposit, but additional help with rental assistance through the third month and possibly up to 24 months. This will provide a great start for our families!

To learn more about Your Way Home Montgomery County follow this [link](#).

Family Updates



Genevieve

We have been lucky to know Genevieve and provide her with help at a low point in her life, but now she is moving on. Genevieve started out in our Network program and earned a spot in our third floor transitional unit. While there she worked as a sales associate in a nearby beauty supply store and reconnected with her daughter. She is moving on to a place of her own in Philadelphia where she will be closer to her clients. She works with them as an Esthetician. We wish her the best as she embarks on this next step in her life.

Denise

Denise is a single woman who entered our program with employment. She works as a companion to the elderly. You may have missed seeing her because she had an overnight position on the weekends. She worked hard in our program to obtain additional employment and her hours grew. IHN – Main Line provided her with rental assistance as she moved into her own place in Delaware County. She appreciates all the help the volunteers and staff gave her while in the program and especially the chance to make it on her own.

Aarika

Although Aarika had an abrupt departure from our program we are still in contact with her. She was a lovely person to have in the program, but she went beyond the traditional three months. We extended her stay in our Network so that she could take advantage of the new County Rapid Rehousing Program. Through this program she was able to find housing in Norristown. Additionally, through the job coaching she received from our case manager she was also able to find employment nearby in nursing home dining room. She has settled into her new home with her daughter. She is doing well and we are very proud of her.

Caitlin

Caitlin entered our program with her two sons ahead of the game. She had a job she really liked at Whole Foods. She was miraculously able to keep that job while she was here even during this horrible winter. She woke up early, took her kids to day care, and then went to work during some of the worst weather we have ever seen. Our hats go off to her. With a little push she finally left our nest and landed in her own apartment in Norristown.

***Just as a side note. Caitlin was not able to get subsidized day care for her children right away because she was already working. She went on the waiting list for subsidized day care through CCIS. We were lucky enough to have a grant from the Volpe & Koenig Ipromise Charitable Giving Fund and were able to pay for her day care while she was in our program. This allowed her to save money she would otherwise have had to use to pay for day care, giving her a head start in her new place. Caitlin is also receiving Montgomery County Rapid Rehousing money to help her pay for her new apartment.

Make a secure PayPal donation to IHN – Main Line through our website www.IHNcares.org by clicking on the Donate button.

Best Wishes to Sonya on her new job!



We wish Sonya all the best on her new adventure. Sonya Reynolds has been our case manager for the last three years. She is the person who has mentored, guided, and instructed our families as they go through our Network program. As their job coach she has assisted each family as they developed their resume and references; she has practiced interview skills with them; and she has helped them search and apply for employment. Through her efforts the majority of our families were able to find employment. She has also helped our families secure necessary documents, such as birth certificates and social security cards. Additionally, she directed them to appropriate healthcare and mental health providers. She has been their first point of contact and has been available to help them with all kinds of issues.

Sonya is moving on to a full time job at a welfare to work program. In fact she will be working right across the street from our Day Center at the Human Services Center. She actually may work with some of our current and future families.

Sonya's last day is May 2 and I know you join me in thanking her for all she has done for IHN – Main Line and wish her well with her new job!

As you do your spring cleaning keep IHN – Main Line in mind. Our wish list includes: household items, kitchen items, and cleaning supplies. Additionally the families at the day center can always use laundry detergent, toiletries, trash bags, and cleaning supplies.

Who's Who at IHN – Main Line

We are very lucky to have a number of special people at IHN – Main Line that provide some of our services, such as: parenting skills class, budget counseling, therapy, etc. They include:

Dawn Willette: Dawn has been our parenting skills teacher for thirteen years and continues to teach her class each week. The families love her. She has the challenge of providing our families with education and information on such things as discipline and developmental milestones to help the moms in our program relate to and parent their children more effectively.

Darla DeMorrow: Darla teaches an organizational skills class for our families. She provides them with knowledge and support as they learn what documents are important to keep and how to best organize them.

Amy Deahl-Greenlaw: Amy provides a nutrition class for our families. She provides our families with tons of information, references, and advice on how to prepare healthy meals even on a tight budget.

Joe Lipton: Joe is our new budget counselor. He meets individually with each family in our program and helps them create a workable budget.

Debbie Woolf: Debbie provides individual therapy to the adults in our program. She provides them with the extra support they need during this very stressful time in their lives.

More News From Graduate Families

Tiffany

We see Tiffany quite a bit at the Day Center and out on the street because she is living nearby. She was in our program last May with her little boy and little girl. She is living in a housing program that helps out with her rent and she is working in customer service. She is also taking classes to earn her certification as a nursing assistant. She is certainly working hard to make a better life for her family.

Shawntell

Shawntell, who was in our program last summer, continues to do well. She continues to work at a restaurant in King of Prussia and share an apartment with her sister. Her son just turned five years old and she is seeking out a charter school for him. She seems more mature and making good decisions. We are very proud of her.

Valerie

Valerie and her two boys were in our program a year ago. We hear from her on a regular basis. She is expecting a third child *very soon* and is living in Norristown with her children's father. She was able to take advantage of some County Rapid Rehousing money and we expect that she will be stable for some time with her new baby. As always she is upbeat and optimistic.

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

Volunteer your time: make a meal, turn a congregational space into a home for our families, help children with homework, or spend time with a homeless family. Contact Sue at 610-277-0977 to learn more about how you can volunteer.

Make a Donation: 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

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