

House of Hope
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House of Hope Newsletter

812 Merrimack St, Lowell MA 01854

(978) 458-2870

www.houseofhopelowell.org

December 2019

Dear Friends,

Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanza ... all winter celebrations of light and love. The American novelist Edith Wharton said, "There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle, or the mirror that reflects it." This quote resonates with me because, as we celebrate the winter holidays, I recall the many lights, the many candles that have made House of Hope (HOH) brighter and stronger this year. Sometimes, HOH gets to be the candle as we cook food, provide shelter, locate apartments, play with children, clean living areas, build and acquire new buildings, upgrade our older buildings, take a mother to school, or any of the countless ways that HOH's amazing staff serve our 58 families in shelter and 39 families in our apartments. Other times we get to be the mirror reflecting to homeless families the light of our community. Throughout the dark winter, but especially at Christmas, we are blessed beyond description as every child in our care is symbolically "adopted" and receives from strangers the few gifts they most want for Christmas. We also see the adults in shelter being supported in a similar way and HOH families in our apartments are also often provided with baskets of food and cleaning materials and gift cards.

This community light is bright and seems to get brighter each year which is crucial because both the numbers of homeless families and their needs increase, too. HOH is indeed blessed with a community of supporters that includes board members, employees, volunteers, donors, contributors and friends who enable us to achieve our ambitious mission. During these dark days of winter, I am humbled to acknowledge the many, many lights that make HOH a unique and vital organization and to thank you for your loving generosity. Together we are spreading light. Best Wishes for a holiday season of love, hope and health.

Sincerely, *Deb Chausse*, Executive Director



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



After Kathy's husband worked with House of Hope on a golf tournament, Kathy Richard emailed House of Hope to see how she could get involved. When we first met Kathy we knew the kids would love her, and they do. Kathy started off volunteering with the children in the playroom 6-8pm one night a week and could often be found helping older children with math, baking playdough cakes, or attending doll tea parties. When we were looking for volunteers for the Hope Chest, Kathy offered her services and so she was our first volunteer there. Kathy now volunteers two hours a week with our Hope Chest interns. During this time, Kathy helps prepare for interviews, fine tunes resumes and formulates cover letters. Kathy is a fantastic volunteer. We feel incredibly lucky to have Kathy on the volunteer team, and are endlessly grateful for her commitment to House of Hope. Kathy has undoubtedly had a positive impact on the lives of the House of Hope families!

THANK YOU, LAURIE GOULD

Laurie Gould joined our Board of Directors in 2008 and, over the past 10 years, has served in several capacities, including Board President, Vice-President, and Finance Committee Member. Now, Laurie is retiring from our Board. We hate to say goodbye because the families we serve have benefitted from her strong, informed and effective leadership for over a decade. Laurie has been one of the stabilizing forces who has guided us through housing development and enduring growth. We wish Laurie all the best and look forward to her continuing as board emeritus status.



On The Move!

By Chad Foley

Every family placed at House of Hope is assigned to a Housing Advocate with a goal of attaining sustainable housing for the family. For every family placed into housing, their Housing Advocate continues to provide

stabilization services throughout the first year of tenancy. Stabilization services help clients with implementing their financial goals, lease compliance, education and employment goals, and support the health and well-being of the entire family. Our goal is to ensure a positive, successful transition out of homelessness. For families that move into a property owned by House of Hope Housing, stabilization services are provided throughout the tenancy.

Through the great generosity of our community, House of Hope was able to provide support to all of the families who live in our housing properties for this Thanksgiving holiday. Each family received a \$40.00 gift card to Market Basket to help with groceries; a total of 40 gift cards were donated by George's Automotive, LAER Realty Partners and Alcorn & Owens Law Office in Memory of George Alcorn.

Also, once again, the Manolis Family Foundation generously donated 19 turkey baskets which we distributed to families in our stabilization programs. The turkey baskets included all of the fixings needed for Thanksgiving dinner including the turkey, stuffing, vegetables, soda and more! The families all expressed great gratitude for this support from their surrounding community around the holidays!



HOH WINTER NEEDS LIST



Bleach
Paper towels
Granola bars
Umbrellas

Toilet paper
Brown lunch bags
Maple syrup
Boxed tissues

Gallon Ziploc bags
Magic erasers
Brownie & cookie mixes
Pancake mix (add water)
Fluff

Quart Ziploc bags
White rice
Hot chocolate
Frosting
Napkins

AA/AAA/D batteries
Ketchup/mayo
Small bags chips
Small bags pretzels
Jelly

Fabuloso
Vegetable oil
Coffee
Olive oil

Gift Cards for teens and parents to Walmart/Target/Market Basket/CVS/RiteAid/ Barnes & Noble/Dollar Tree/
Five Below/ Dunkin Donuts/ McDonald's/ Gas Stations



For online shoppers, please go to House of Hope's two easy Amazon Wish Lists: here's the Christmas 2019 list at <http://a.co/dzWhmAr> and the everyday shelter needs list at <http://a.co/duicM79>. These gifts can be shipped directly to the shelter!

For more information please email Edna at edna.gustafson@houseofhopelowell.org or call 978-458-2870. Check out our "Needs List" post every month on Facebook too!

Harvest of Hope Celebrates 2019!



Photos with Special Thanks to The Sun and Dacey Yougas

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS: Dan O'Connor, President; Kate Tyndall, Vice-President;
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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Deborah Chausse

EMERITUS: Laurie Gould, Nels Palm, Patricia Sullivan Talty, Esq.

DID YOU KNOW THAT



House of Hope elves have been planning for Christmas since September, that's when we start gathering information on the children from their parents. We strive to give each child at least three wishes and a new outfit. House of Hope has donors giving in the following ways: Adopt a Child, Giving Trees, Toy Drives, Amazon Wish Lists, and good old fashioned toy "drop offs."



On average, House of Hope has helped 225-250 kids each year. We anticipate that with your help, we will serve over 250 children this holiday season!



MEET OUR KITCHEN INTERN: YOLANDA

Yolanda started the culinary Learn2Work internship in October. In just three short months, she has learned countless recipes, including for her favorite calzones and pizza, as well as tacos, hamburgers, and chicken every way. Yolanda is not just responsible for helping with the cooking. As part of the kitchen team, she is also required to serve lunch, help out on trips to the food bank, and clean the kitchen. Yolanda's children are extremely proud of her and love being able to eat the food every night that she has helped to prepare. Since starting in the kitchen, Yolanda has also begun working at Dunkin Donuts, where she has put to use her positive attitude and attention to detail, quickly becoming an exemplary crew member who clearly takes pride in her work. Yolanda looks forward to continuing to gain responsibility in her role at Dunkin Donuts and she is excited to make calzones in her own home when she secures housing in the near future for her family.

KITCHEN VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



House of Hope is looking for volunteers to serve the meals created by our in-house chefs and Learn2Work interns. Our current need is for the dinner shift from 4:30 - 6:30 PM. Shifts during the week as well as on the weekends are available. Kitchen volunteers must be 18 years or older. If you are interested in assisting with dinner service for our residents, or if you would like additional information, please contact Julia at julia.balerna@houseofhopelowell.org.

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We are coming into a busy time of year for the Hope Chest with people needing warm winter clothing and items for Christmas. Presently we are in need of gently used clothing donations in sizes 2T upwards, and children's gently used winter boots. Donations will be gratefully accepted at 520 Fletcher



street. If you are interested in volunteering with the Hope Chest please reach out to jennifer.grant@houseofhopelowell.org. Don't forget to stop in to our Hope Chest store which is located at 397 Market Street in Downtown Lowell!