

House of Hope, Inc.
812 Merrimack Street
Lowell, MA. 01854

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House of Hope Newsletter

812 Merrimack Street, Lowell MA 01854

(978) 458-2870

www.HouseOfHopeLowell.org

Spring/Summer 2022

BE FLEXIBLE!



One early summer morning many years ago (2001) I was standing in the vacant lot behind House of Hope on Salem Street imagining a small apartment building that would become a home for many homeless families. With no warning, I was overcome with anxiety as a voice in my head said "You could never achieve that." My lifelong response to fear has always been to pray for courage. So, I bent my head and asked God to guide me as House of Hope embraced this vision. God's response was immediate and amusing as I looked down and right before me was an old, dirty and rather large rubber Gumby doll. Along with the doll, I perceived the message, "Be flexible and it will be okay." Gumby has had a place of honor in my office ever since and the message has become my mantra. By 2005, the House of Hope team had built an 11-unit apartment building. 28 units in 3 new buildings have since followed.

In March of 2020, COVID-19 appeared - it was new and not fully understood, but it was dangerous. This too was a frightening time in my professional career as it was my responsibility to ensure as much safety for employees and families as possible. I often glanced at Gumby and asked God to keep House of Hope flexible and safe. Each day, I saw an incredible outpouring of courage and commitment from my staff

and the organization's Board of Directors; everyone embracing our mission and serving homeless families who needed us even more now. My team was, and continues to be, an inspiration to me. They have not missed a beat in responding to COVID-19 and as a result we have provided uninterrupted service for up to 58 families in shelter and 39 families in permanent housing. No one person could have achieved what we have; service, hope and courage is a collective effort.

Shelter work is hard. Leaning into and absorbing a family's pain and heartache is exhausting. But doing this work during a worldwide health crisis is beyond hard - it is grueling. And yet, that is exactly what the House of Hope staff have done and continue to do every day. They are extraordinary people and I am grateful to them.

And now, with the arrival of summer, maybe we will all enjoy a season of relative safety as we try to slow down and relax - just a little.

Friends of House of Hope, I wish this for you, as well, and I thank you for the many ways, big and small, that you have helped us become who we are - a strong, loving and flexible organization in service to families in crisis throughout our community.

Sincerely, *Deb Chausse*

**You are invited to the
33rd Annual Teal Invitational
Golf Tournament!**
Monday, July 25, 2022 8:30AM
Cost \$135

**Four Oaks Country Club
Dracut, MA.
To Sponsor a Hole,
Donate a Prize or
Purchase a Foursome,
email
marctea@comcast.net
Before June 25, 2022**



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT: GAINING GROUND

Since 2013, House of Hope has partnered with the Gaining Ground Farm for our fruits and vegetables every season. Gaining Ground is a non-profit that grows food for hunger relief on Concord land and donates it to over fifteen local hunger relief organizations. We are thankful to be one of those partners! Our Chef, Paul Dubuque, picks up the produce every other week—HOH receives about \$1,000 of food at market value each month from March to November.

Chef Paul says, "This week's harvest includes arugula, bok choy, carrots, cucumbers, green garlic, kale, bunches of lettuce, peas and zucchini. It is top quality—any chef would be very excited to have this produce. I've been a chef for 30 years, and even though it's not a restaurant setting, we put a lot of heart and soul into the food we serve. It's almost all fresh, from-scratch food."

According to Allison Goodwin, Program Manager at Gaining Ground, "Paul is a genius when it comes to preparing delicious food and being flexible and creative with fresh, seasonal produce. It is truly an honor to work with House of Hope." The rising cost of food makes this support even more special. Right now with COVID and pricing problems, this partnership is saving us so much money on produce. The only farm HOH works with is Gaining Ground.

Allison says, "Thank you for all that you do to help improve access to healthy, delicious food for the folks you serve. We're grateful for the important work you do and are thrilled to be partnering with you to bring fresh, organic produce to people in the Lowell community who need it."



EDUCATIONAL GUIDANCE



Emily, Marlene and Esther are sisters who were excited to wear their patriotic shirts which were purchased with gift certificates from our generous donors! Emily performed in a Memorial Day patriotic celebration at her school; she memorized and practiced the National Anthem and a song about the states and capitals of America.

Emily was coached by our Educational Guides who are helping the children in shelter with their schooling. When the pandemic forced schools to shift to remote learning for students, HOH created discrete spaces at each shelter for children to participate in classes online, putting desks at the end of corridors or in quiet hallways to provide privacy. We also hired Education Guides—funded by grants and private donations—to provide after-hours tutoring and one-on-one sessions for children struggling with learning challenges. Our education guides are continuing to help children K-12 with virtual learning, tutoring, and educational development during the 2021-2022 school year. HOH has been thrilled to provide this support to our children who most often fall behind their peers due to the transitions and stress of homelessness. The grant is coming to an end in June. HOH is so thankful to have had the opportunity to help aid our children in their educational development.

EGGSCCELLENT COMPANY



THANK YOU!

We cannot thank Digital Federal Credit Union enough for all of the support that DCU has provided to House of Hope. Thanks for being an awesome partner!

Patricia Gaivin has been making beautiful Easter baskets for our children in shelter every year since 2011. That's over 400 Easter Baskets!!

With friends like this, who needs the Easter Bunny? Together, we make all the difference!

- Edna Gustafson, Operations Manager



NOW HIRING!

We are currently hiring:

- ♦ Residential Support Staff; 1st shift, 2nd shift & 3rd shift full time
- ♦ Part time Community services assistant
- ♦ Part time Housekeeper
- ♦ Full time Maintenance/Tech

All these jobs are listed on Indeed with job descriptions. If you have questions, please send an email to Julie.Lemire@HouseofHopeLowell.org.

HOH NEEDS LIST

Reusable Water Bottles
Baby bottles
Toddler Sippy cups
Twin sheets

Diapers size 5 & 6
Pull-ups
Juice boxes
Full sheets

Children's Shorts & T-shirts
Adults Shorts & T-shirts
Ladies & Men's deodorants
Individually wrapped snacks

Full size bottles hair conditioner
Ladies & Men's Shave cream
Hair brushes

For online shoppers, please go to House of Hope's easy Amazon Wish List at <https://a.co/gKPsTp9> and WALMART LIST at <https://www.walmart.com/registry/RR/63e1c381-794f-4f1f-8991-7c84944abe7f>. Please ship items directly to HOH at 520 Fletcher St, Lowell Ma 01854. If you wish to receive a thank you letter, please include your name and mailing address on the packing slip so we can thank you!



We schedule donation drop offs on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays between 10am-2pm at 520 Fletcher Street For questions or to book a drop off for donations, please email Edna at edna.gustafson@HouseofHopeLowell.org or call 978-677-2018.