

House of Hope
812 Merrimack St.
Lowell, MA.
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812 Merrimack St, Lowell MA 01854 (978) 458-2870 www.houseofhopelowell.org Fall/Winter 2025

Dear House of Hope Community,

It is the season of gratitude and goodwill. A time to reflect on the year, what we have accomplished, and what we still have to learn as we approach the New Year. A time to thank those who stood with us so we did not fall and those who carried their own burdens but chose to help others in need. This year, we served over 400 people, secured housing for 76 families, and are providing support services to 85 families in the community and 39 families in our own permanent supportive housing. It takes a village to work with our population and everyone plays a key role. The staff at House of Hope are the best in the business and want our families to succeed. Our Hope Chest thrift store closed in the late summer due to budget cuts. We just reopened one day a week as the need is so great in the community and we thank you for your support.

As we enter into the colder months, we want to acknowledge the wonderful donors and community support we have received with winter clothing needs. It's the little things that make all the difference: a jacket that has a working zipper, wearing a warm pair of gloves at the bus stop on a chilly morning, having a nice winter hat to wear on the way to an appointment or interview. House of Hope recognizes that Holidays are hard, for some it's been a year of loss, fear, pain and unpleasant memories. Our role as service providers is to be a line of comfort for those in need—that when one door closes ours is open. Our mission has been, and always will be, to serve all families with dignity and respect. This past year, we have seen and felt recent cuts of state and federal funding. We have answered the door when a mom and young child have nowhere to go, we have taken the calls when someone doesn't know where to start and needs help getting shelter and food. The gift you give to us is your support. These families need us more than ever. Children **must have** somewhere safe to call home. I invite you to come for a tour, see what we are doing, ask the questions and be part of the solution.

From my family to yours, I wish you a wonderful holiday season. *Julie Lemire, Executive Director*

An Unforgettable Thank You

We would like to introduce you to Joshua Poitras. If you attended the Harvest, you were lucky to hear this from Joshua, as he introduced himself and his mother to us all.

Good evening everyone,

It's an honor to be here tonight and to have the chance to share a little bit of my story with you.

When I was a child, my mother found herself newly single and struggling to provide for her kids. At that time, House of Hope opened its doors to us. We stayed there for less than a year, but that short period made a lifelong impact.

I still remember the small things—signing in and out, carrying on with the activities of childhood, even catching chicken pox there. But beyond those moments, what mattered most was what I didn't fully understand at the time: that we had been given an opportunity. A safe place to sleep. A roof overhead. Food on the table. The stability my mother needed so she could take the next steps forward.

With the support of House of Hope, my mother was able to secure Section 8 housing, and from there, we began to build a more stable life. Looking back, I realize that moment taught me something lasting—when you are given an opportunity, you can build on it, and you can create something greater.

That lesson has guided me throughout my life. I graduated from the Lowell public school system, Lowell High School, and went on to earn both a bachelor's and a master's degree from UMass Lowell. Today, I serve my community every four days as a fire lieutenant for the City of Lowell. I've also been able to build a career in real estate—earning top producer status for several years and building a portfolio of 37 rental units.

Most importantly, my mother and I now live together in a home by a lake—something neither of us could have imagined when I was a child walking into House of Hope for the first time.

I don't share this to boast. I share it because it all began with the opportunity House of Hope gave us. That roof, that warmth, that full belly—it was enough to let us face the challenges ahead and take advantage of the next opportunity when it came along.

And that's what I want you to remember tonight. Your generosity—your donations—are not just dollars. They are nights of sleep for a child who needs rest. They are meals that ease the weight of hunger. They are the foundation for someone's next opportunity.

So I ask you tonight: please give, so that another family can take that first step toward stability and hope. The opportunity you provide may be exactly what carries them through their challenges, just as it carried my family through ours.

Thank you. House of Hope!



Joshua and his mother, Miriam Poitras



This is Jacob LaPointe and Kylie Rolston from the LaPointe Foundation who have been working hard to make our families have a very special "moving bag" when they are moving out to their new home!

MAKING EACH NEW START SPECIAL!



Say hello to our wonderful house-keeping intern!

Elizabeth has been a great asset to the department. Outside of the internship, she recently secured a job and has moved into her apartment!



HOH WINTER NEEDS LIST



Cereal
Maple syrup
Aerosol Disinfectant
Napkins
Men's razors, shave cream, deodorant
Women's razors, shave cream, deodorant
New Twin/Full sheet sets
Juice Bottles/ Juice Boxes

Individually wrapped Snacks
Paper towels / Toilet paper
Packaged socks & underwear—Men/Women
Full size bottles Shampoo/ Conditioner/ Body wash

Diapers sizes 2,3,4,5 & 6
Winter Gloves— Kids & Adults

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

For online shoppers, please go to House of Hope's Christmas Amazon Wish List: <https://a.co/dln1SLv>, the Walmart Wish List: <https://www.walmart.com/registry/RR/7165d48c-fc5a-49a8-900a-015222a72e44>, and the Target Wish List: <https://www.target.com/gift-registry/gift/houseofhope-1>. So we can properly thank all of our generous donors, PLEASE include your name and address as a note on the online orders!



Please email Edna at edna.gustafson@houseofhopelowell.org or call 978-677-2018 for more information. All holiday donations should be shipped to or dropped off at 520 Fletcher St, Lowell, MA 01854.



The 2025 Harvest of Hope Benefit



It was a very special Harvest of Hope at the Vesper Country Club on October 9th! - Because, in tough times, HOPE matters! This year, all of the funds went to House of Hope to offset federal and state budget cuts. We are so thankful to our 54 sponsors and our fabulous community of support!

OUR BELOVED MARIANNE

By Casi Rich, Director of Shelter Operations

This year, we honor an extraordinary milestone at House of Hope: the retirement of Marianne Staid, who began her journey with us on August 2, 2004. Even though I only had the privilege of working with her for about a year, it was immediately clear why she became such an essential and irreplaceable presence here.

Marianne brought something to House of Hope that can't be taught, trained, or duplicated. Her presence was grounding, comforting, nurturing, and, in many ways, miraculous. From the moment someone stepped into her office, they felt safe. Hundreds of children played with toys in that room. So many staff members sat across from her and cried, vented, or found solace when life felt overwhelming. She supported families and staff through life's biggest moments: births, losses, and all the emotional terrain in between.

During the chaos of COVID, she was there. If you called her in the middle of the night, she came. When staff needed support, she showed up without hesitation. Her dedication was unwavering, her kindness endless, and her impact immeasurable.

There is truly no replacing someone like Marianne. Her contributions shaped House of Hope in lasting, meaningful ways, and the legacy she leaves behind is profound. We thank her from the bottom of our hearts for every act of love, every moment of support, and every bit of comfort she poured into this community. Marianne, you will be deeply missed.

Thank you for everything you gave to House of Hope.



Marianne with longtime friend and co-worker, Carmen Pirela



Marianne with HOH Executive Director, Julie Lemire

HOUSE OF HOPE'S SANTA



It has been 6 years since Scott Audy put himself on the House of Hope map—in a BIG WAY! He has been doing a Toy Drive for us and it has not only been successful, it has grown every year! We are talking hundreds of gifts!! Scott was raised right in the Lowell projects so he knew what it was like to feel a financial struggle, and despite his success, he has never forgotten his roots. So every year, he works hard and harder to make Christmas special for the

children in Lowell and particularly, those children at House of Hope! Scott's success is due to his ability to generate support from local businesses and local families for the Toy Drive. He has many, many elves right here in Lowell—to each and everyone of them—THANK YOU! Christmas morning at House of Hope will be special again this year, thanks to our Special Santa!



Thank you!



One of the real joys of the Holiday Season is the opportunity to say "Thank You" and to wish you all the very best for the New Year!



Hal Holiday Entertainment presents

HALF WAY TO HARVEST / CONCERT FOR A CAUSE!!

A night of music for the House of Hope Lowell.

SATURDAY
APRIL 11, 2026

7:00-11:30PM

Warp&Weft 197 Market St Lowell Ma.

