

News FROM HOME



NONE OF US ARE HOME UNTIL ALL OF US ARE HOME®

All of Us Together



Photo by Emmanuel Solofawe

Kim Price shares her story at an Inspirational Meeting. Kim is a Project HOME resident and a certified peer specialist who facilitates support groups for women.

Project HOME was born in the winter of 1989, when a crew of good-hearted volunteers with practically no resources opened a temporary shelter for some of the most fragile and vulnerable men living on the streets. What unfolded over the next few months defied the usual script. “Really, it was the guys who helped keep that place running,” remembers Joan McConnon, our co-founder and Associate Executive Director. “We learned early on that it wasn’t ‘us’ taking care of ‘them,’ but all of us together forming a community who worked together to make it happen.”

Almost three decades later, Project HOME has grown into a large and highly professional nonprofit organization, spread out over nineteen residences and sites. The ethos of “all of us working together” still holds. In recent years, we have witnessed a blossoming of resident empowerment and leadership.

We treasure our highly skilled and committed staff who on a daily basis keep our organization strong and effective. But our residents and former residents often bring unique gifts – raw

and harsh experiences, deep empathy and understanding, a fierce and hard-earned hope that our lives can change. They model perseverance and determination which can be the catalysts for transformation – both personal and societal. In fact, a good number of residents do become staff.

We are always seeking to create a climate in which every member of our community is able to offer his or her gifts to help us achieve our mission. We are especially committed to ensuring that residents’ voices are heard, and that their passion, insight, and skills can be put to work. Several residents sit on our Board of Trustees and are members of Board committees. A group of residents are part of a core team in our current strategic planning process. In recent years, numerous residents have become certified peer specialists and are able to add invaluable support to fellow residents making progress in their lives.

Examples of resident empowerment are numerous and continue to grow. Residents take on leadership roles in our Advocacy Committee, our Arts Program, and our Speakers Bureau. Residents are on the organizing committee for the annual Homeless Memorial Day gathering in December. Residents attend zoning hearings that impact Project HOME’s residential developments. Numerous residents

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Making It Happen



Photo by Colleen Downey

Project HOME resident Wanda Connelly speaks at the June 5 Home Matters Day at the state capitol in Harrisburg.

When Wanda Connelly moved into 1515 Fairmount Avenue two years ago, she had no idea what awaited her. With the encouragement of other residents, she decided to check out some of the programs available to Project HOME residents – art, advocacy, volunteering, Speakers Bureau.

In a short time, Wanda has emerged as an important leader in our community. She seems to be everywhere. She works several hours a week at our Hub of Hope in Suburban Station, offering her support to guests who are trying to break the cycle of homelessness. She is a passionate member of our Advocacy Committee – and last month, she spoke at a press conference in the state Capitol in Harrisburg on the urgent need for affordable housing.

In 2017, as part of our organization-wide mission nurture initiative, Wanda spearheaded a Women’s Health Group for residents and staff. Tapping into available resources, including staff at our Stephen Klein Wellness Center, she organized a series of informative and well-attended health workshops, with sessions on breast cancer awareness, diabetes, and mental health.

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Roots and Branches: Reflections from Sister Mary

Every Tuesday morning at our 1515 Fairmount Avenue site, we hold an Inspirational Meeting. One of our residents, David Brown, is up early to set up the room for 50-plus people, while resident Michael Oliveri regularly prepares a lovely spread of coffee, juice, and snacks. Residents and staff from many of our sites, as well as volunteers, friends, and guests, gather for a time of story-sharing, reflections on our community values, celebration of successes and accomplishments, and community-building. We take twenty minutes to re-ground ourselves in our mission and remind ourselves who we are as a community. We remember the struggles and gifts that we share as individuals and that we bring to this daily work. It is through this community that often, as our friend Fr. Greg Boyle says, “we are returned to ourselves.”

Most people who know about Project HOME are probably well aware of the first part of our mission statement: “to empower adults, children, and families to break the cycle of homelessness and poverty, [and] to alleviate the underlying causes of poverty.” What might be less known or understood is the next part of that statement: “and to enable all of us to attain our fullest potential as individuals and as members of the broader society.”

All of us. This is one of the strengths of our community. It is true of everyone in our community who shares gifts with each other – our staff, donors, volunteers – but in a special way, our residents embody this aspirational

value each day (see “All of Us Together” on page 1). Whether it’s their participation on the Resident Advisory Board, volunteering at our Hub of Hope, working to develop a help line for persons in recovery, or sharing their stories at – and helping organize – Inspirational Meetings, we witness how persons who have lived through profound struggle claim their power and use it to enhance the common life of all of us.

On Tuesday mornings, we gather – all of us – to support each other in attaining our fullest potential. We remember how much we need each other – and celebrate how much stronger we are together. And we dare to hope we are also supporting our society to attain its fullest potential – by embracing the diverse gifts of every person, especially those who often live on the margins.

You can join us at an Inspirational Meeting every Tuesday morning at 9:30 or watch videos on the Project HOME YouTube channel ([youtube.com/user/projectHOMEphilly](https://www.youtube.com/user/projectHOMEphilly)). Also, follow our Facebook page ([facebook.com/projectHOME](https://www.facebook.com/projectHOME)) where we will announce occasional live broadcasts of the meetings.



Sister Mary Scullion,
Co-founder and Executive
Director of Project HOME

Photo by Dave Hering

All of Us Together

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volunteer or work at our Hub of Hope drop-in center in Suburban Station. For years, residents have been quietly running a “Double Trouble” 12-step weekly support group for persons in recovery from both addiction and mental illness.

An important area of resident leadership is our organization-wide Mission Nurture Initiative. Residents and staff work together to bring to fruition ideas and proposals to foster continued grounding in our core values even as we grow and expand. Residents help us identify the key components of a “beloved community” and help envision what that can look like in Project HOME. Some residents are developing plans for a series of “recovery cafes” that will help foster recovery and community among staff and residents. One resident-led team developed a vision for welcoming and orienting incoming residents, including a Welcome HOME basket and a guide book to local resources and tips for success. (See the article below, “Making It Happen,” for more examples of resident leadership.)

“In recent years, we have witnessed a blossoming of resident empowerment and leadership.”

The Resident Advisory Board (RAB), convened by staff person by Karen Orrick (see “I Am Project HOME” on page 5), has been instrumental in fostering empowerment and leadership among residents. Open to all Project HOME residents as well as resident alumni, the RAB is tasked with key roles in our community: They advise our Executive Leadership and our Board of Trustees on a range of organizational and community issues, reviewing proposed policies, making recommendations, or

assessing parts of our mission that need attention. In all, they play a strategic role in how Project HOME lives out our vision: “None of us are home until all of us are home.”

RAB members also ensure that resident concerns are heard and acted on. One important function of the RAB is developing Tenant Councils for each of our residences. These councils work to ensure that site-specific property issues –repairs, accessibility, and such – are resolved; they also develop community-building activities and events at the site.

One of the highlights of the year for many residents is the annual RAB leadership retreat, a weekend of sharing and community building with the goal of supporting and empowering each other as well as learning practical leadership skills.

Chris Williams, who lives at our Connelly House residence, co-chairs the RAB. He has played many roles at Project HOME, including Speakers Bureau, employment in our Facilities Management department, tenant council, and is currently volunteering on the strategic plan. “One of the ways Project HOME values the dignity of residents is by providing respectful, open spaces where we can share our opinions and talents.” He also talks about the importance of “natural” leadership. “I take a genuine interest in people’s well-being. I choose to be involved in the lives of other residents and serve them when I can, even in small ways.”

By contributing their skills, energy, and leadership, residents and resident alumni demonstrate that we can only achieve our mission when it is truly “all of us together.” More importantly, those who have known life at the harshest margins of our society can invite all of us to an authentic experience of human community.

Making It Happen

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Juanita Jones speaks at a workshop on employment for fellow women residents.

Wanda is but one example of Project HOME residents taking initiative, working in tandem with staff and others, and making things happen that might not have happened without their leadership. (See the accompanying article, “All of Us Together.”)

Last spring, residents Juanita Jones and Lykeshia Coles participated in a panel discussion at our Rowan Homes residence. It was geared toward Project HOME’s women residents, particularly mothers and persons in recovery, and shed light on issues and obstacles in getting back to work or being employed for the first time. Lykeshia and Juanita, who are both in recovery and are currently employed at Project HOME, shared their personal stories and the wisdom they have learned along the way – as did other staff and former residents. With a combination of practical recommendations and powerful inspiration they modeled just in their life stories, Lykeisha and Juanita stirred hope and energy in the residents who attended. “I want to encourage them to know that there will be obstacles, but to stay strong, stay focused, stay determined,” said Juanita. “With love and support, you can do anything.”

“It was great to see our ideas come together and to be part of something that has a real impact on other residents.”

Kai Oceans has been with Project HOME for two years, but in that time has made himself a friendly, creative, and inspiring presence. Long involved as a participant and a resident leader in our Arts Program, Kai has more recently shared his gifts as an important part of our Social Enterprise Team. Early this year, Kai and the rest of the Team held a brainstorming session with a group of supporters and volunteers to pick new products and a new direction for our HOME Made gifts line. Kai’s ideas were tremendously fruitful, especially in developing the vision for HOME Warming gift baskets and how those baskets would convey our mission. Once our new products began to arrive, Kai used his graphic design and photography talent to help with advertising and promotion.

Kai says it was a wonderful feeling when the first fully wrapped Welcome HOME baskets were ready for sale.

“It was great to see our ideas come together,” he says, “and to be part of something that has a real impact on residents, showing off their art and creating more jobs.”

In his first year, Kai says, “I dove into everything at Project HOME and soaked it all up.” Now he is finding his niche and figuring out his path. “I try my best to make people feel good, to be a positive force.”

After over twenty years on the streets, David Brown moved into our James Widener Ray Homes when it opened in 2013. Tall and stately in his elegant Muslim over-garment, he is a pervasive presence throughout Project HOME, lending a helping hand at almost all our public events and encouraging fellow residents. One of our most effective ambassadors, he frequently speaks to visiting students, civic and religious groups, and potential donors.

After moving into Ray Homes, David and fellow resident Kenneth Ingram saw the many needs in the surrounding community. Over time, they developed a program for neighbors, reaching out to at-risk youth, providing garden plots, encouraging small businesses, and holding regular cook-outs. By creating a positive atmosphere as well as being personal role models for the kids, they are doing their part to turn the neighborhood around – and their efforts have caught the attention of Congressman Dwight Evans, among others, who has personally come to see their work.

Initiative, leadership, action: All these efforts will have ripple effects that we can’t even imagine now.



Kai Oceans holds a HOME Warming Basket that he helped design and promote.

Welcome a loved one HOME with beautiful new HOME Warming gifts!



We have gift baskets, coasters, mugs, tea towels, key chains and more!

All gifts feature resident artwork.

You can purchase online at projecthome.org/store or in person at the HOME Spun Boutique 1523 Fairmount Avenue



Photo by Samantha Kasperstein

Photo by Michelle Strong

HOME Happenings

◆ **More great services** are being born at Project HOME's Stephen Klein Wellness Center. The Center is now offering full-term prenatal care for patients. In addition to assistance in getting insurance quickly, pregnant women who come to the Center will have access to connections to community resources, such as home visiting programs, crib and car seat programs, doula referrals, breastfeeding support, newborn and pediatric care, and postpartum family planning. They can also take advantage of the Center's integrated behavioral health services, onsite dental services, and onsite pharmacy. We are thrilled to be able to expand these services (which had previously been only up to 28 weeks of pregnancy) so that members of this economically struggling community will have the best possible opportunity to stabilize their lives and families.

◆ **We were saddened** by the recent passing of Dr. D. Walter Cohen, a friend and supporter who had served faithfully for many years on our Board of Trustees, as well as on our Development and Healthcare Committees. Dr. Cohen was an icon in the field of dentistry, as a former dean of the University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine, as well as former chancellor of both the Drexel University College of Medicine and the Medical College of Pennsylvania. He was known for his great kindness, mentoring others, and his positive disposition coupled with a great sense of humor. We are grateful for the gifts he brought to the Project HOME community.



Long-time Project HOME Trustee
Dr. D. Walter Cohen

◆ **Congratulations to our** friend Mel Heifetz who was honored with the 2018 Philadelphia Award for his many years as a leader in the LGBTQ community promoting equality and justice. Mel's work has inspired us in his passionate commitment to human dignity, and been pivotal in our development of housing and programs specifically geared toward LGBTQ youth experiencing or at risk of homelessness. His leadership was pivotal in developing our newest housing, Gloria Casarez Residence (see "Spirit of Generosity" on page 5). This particular award has a special meaning for Project HOME: Our co-founder and Executive Director Sister Mary Scullion won the Philadelphia Award in 1991.



Photo by Kerry McInhyre Photography LLC

Members of the Rising Leaders Committee who hosted Bring Philly HOME

◆ **Over 400 young leaders** came together on May 31 to be part of the solution to homelessness. Our 2018 Bring Philly HOME surpassed our expectations in so many ways—widening our circle of supporters and raising nearly \$140,000. Thanks to our Rising Leaders Committee, who planned the event and who continue to demonstrate tremendous compassion and commitment, under the leadership of Caitlin Ferry and Susan Miller. Want to join the group? Learn more about the Committee by visiting projecthome.org/risingleaderscommittee.

◆ **Two of Project HOME's** artists, Yolanda Porter and Juanita Jones, have been hired to facilitate art classes at two of our residences, Francis House of Peace and Ruth Williams House at the Gene & Marlene Epstein Building, through the Professional Teaching Artist Program. They will lead classes twice a week at each site, and will work under the guidance of Professional Teaching Artist Ife Nii Owoo. This great opportunity to both expand our Art Program and employ two residents was made possible thanks the generosity of an anonymous donor.



Photo by Harvey Finkle

Attendees take in the work at the April 12 Opening Reception for "Artists For All Seasons." The exhibit, co-hosted by Drexel University, and championed by the leadership and generosity of Bonnie and Jay Eisner, featured art work by several Project HOME artists, including Casundra Pressley, who is on the left.

I Am Project HOME

KAREN ORRICK



Photo by Emmanuel Sofolawe

Resident Wanda Connelly probably summed up Karen Orrick as well as anyone can. After participating in a half-day retreat for community members that Karen organized, Wanda said: “She’s the only person I know who can get people dancing to Michael Jackson at 9:00 in the morning!”

In her seven years at Project HOME, Karen has played a variety of roles, from managing our Hub of Hope drop-in center, to helping develop policies in our Strategic Initiatives Department,

to supporting the Community Advisory Board for the Stephen Klein Wellness Center shortly after its opening, to helping organize the quarterly city-wide point-in-time counts of persons sleeping on the streets.

In her current role, which includes coordinating an organization-wide mission nurture initiative and facilitating the Resident Advisory Board (See “All of Us Together” on page 1), Karen is able to express her deepest passion: building a community of people from all walks of life.

“Connecting—actually connecting—across difference is hard work,” Karen says, but she believes it is the heart of Project HOME’s mission. “Learning to form mutual relationships when we come together from very different worlds, examining messages we’ve received about each other, sharing our stories, learning to be human with each other among our differences, that’s the force we need to end homelessness and transform our society.”

Karen approaches her work at Project HOME through an anti-oppression lens, which is core to her life vocation. “I try to see how larger forces of oppression, such as race and class, play out in our community, and how we can counteract them in our daily work and interactions.”

But that doesn’t mean it is all seriousness dealing with urgent and heavy issues. “I have a strong belief in the power of play,” Karen says. She is renowned for injecting a meeting or gathering with connecting exercises that could include game-playing, singing, or body movement. They are all part of a toolkit of facilitation strategies she uses to find different ways for people to connect. She also believes it is important to unleash people’s imagination and creativity to further the Project HOME mission. Several members of the Resident Advisory Board affectionately tag her “the camp counselor.”

With her amazing blend of organizing and relational skills, Karen brings a vital and inimitable energy to the Project HOME community – and the occasional 9:00 am Michael Jackson dance party.

Spirit of Generosity ARTHUR KAPLAN AND DUANE PERRY

Arthur Kaplan and Duane Perry had a lot in common when they first met. Not only were they both passionate about LGBTQ rights, fair housing, and equity for individuals in poverty, they each had done meaningful work with Project HOME. Duane first met Sister Mary Scullion before she co-founded Project HOME. She was working at the Women of Hope residence, and Duane was working with the Colt Coalition in North Philadelphia, a community development corporation helping low-income people in Philadelphia to secure affordable housing and connect to services. Arthur met Sister Mary 25 years ago when his law firm, Fine, Kaplan and Black, RPC, was co-counsel for Project HOME in its landmark federal court decision asserting fair housing rights.

Now working together, Arthur and Duane are breaking ground with Project HOME yet again. “We first brought the idea of building supportive housing for LGBTQ young adults to Sister Mary in July of 2014,” said Duane. “We were aware of the disproportionate number of LGBTQ youth who were homeless and we believed we could do something about it.”

“We also met with leaders at The Attic, Mazzone Center, and William Way LGBT Community Center,” shared Arthur, “and, with the leadership of Mel Heifetz, we

were able to speak with Mayor Nutter, Mayor Kenney, Senator Casey, Congressman Evans, and Governor Wolf. The result of that outreach was \$3.5 million in City funding and \$3 million in funding by the Commonwealth. Without that funding, this project wouldn’t have been possible.”

Arthur, Duane, and Mel added many other leaders to their ranks, including John Alchin and Hal Marryatt. Together, they donated, advocated, networked, fought to secure the site – and persevered. On December 6, 2017, Project HOME broke ground on Gloria Casarez Residence, the first LGBTQ-friendly young adult permanent supportive housing in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This 30-unit building is named for Gloria Casarez, the city’s first director of the Mayor’s Office of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Affairs, who passed away in 2014 after a long battle with cancer.

“We want to expand a safety-net of services to the point that there will be housing, education, and jobs for all homeless youth,” said Duane. “The resilience of these kids is what impressed us the most. We met young people who managed to finish high school and complete Job Corps, all despite being homeless. On top of that, they took the initiative to be first in line for Project HOME housing,” he added.

Project HOME began its Young Adult Program through a transformational gift from the Neubauer Family Foundation. Beginning with an eight-unit pilot program at the JBJ Soul Homes in 2014, the program now has 53 young adults enrolled.

“These kids are our future,” said Arthur. “We want to level the playing field so that these kids have the same opportunities that many of us take for granted.”

Project HOME is deeply grateful for Arthur’s and Duane’s leadership over the past 30 years. Their initiative, generosity, and spirit of collaboration continue to create groundbreaking opportunities for all.



Long-time Project HOME friends and supporters Duane Perry and Arthur Kaplan

1515 Fairmount Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19130

Our Mission

The mission of the Project HOME community is to empower adults, children, and families to break the cycle of homelessness and poverty, to alleviate the underlying causes of poverty, and to enable all of us to attain our fullest potential as individuals and as members of the broader society.

Our Residences

- 1515 and 1523 Fairmount Avenue
- Hope Haven I/II, 2827-28 Diamond Street
- Connelly House, 1212 Ludlow Street
- Francis House of Peace, 810 Arch Street
- Kairos House, 1440 N. Broad Street
- Kate's Place, 1929 Sansom Street
- James Widener Ray Homes, 2101 W. Venango
- JBJ Soul Homes, 1415 Fairmount Avenue
- Rowan I, 2729-A W. Diamond Street
- Rowan II, 1901 N. Judson Street
- Ruth Williams House, 2415 N. Broad St.
- St. Columba, 4133 Chestnut Street
- St. Elizabeth's Recovery, 1850 N. Croskey St.
- Women of Change, 2042 Arch Street

Support Services & Programs

- Adult Education, Employment & Arts
- Neighborhood Services
- Advocacy and Public Policy
- Healthcare Services
- Honickman Learning Center and Comcast Technology Labs
- Hub of Hope
- Outreach Coordination Center
- Personal Recovery Services
- Resident Alumni Program
- Volunteer Program

Businesses

- HOME Spun Resale Boutique, 215-232-6322
- HOME Made Products, 215-232-7272, ext. 3023

Administration

215-232-7272

Homeless Outreach Hotline

215-232-1984

Human Resources Hotline

215-232-7219, ext. 5200

www.projecthome.org



Union
Bug

NONE OF US ARE HOME UNTIL ALL OF US ARE HOME®



Photo by Kerry McIntyre Photography LLC

Project HOME resident Bonita Pritchette shares her story at the May 31 Bring Philly HOME benefit.

A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania, 800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.