

I am Project HOME

SCARLETT McCAHILL



When Project HOME decided to launch a new Social Enterprise program, it was clear that it would require a special jolt of energy. Scarlett McCahill was the person for the job.

You don't have to spend much time with Scarlett before you feel her energy and her infectious enthusiasm. She is passionately committed to the mission of the program – and that passion comes out in countless ways, whether it's long drives to pick up wax for candle workshops, supervision meetings with staff, or working one-on-one with residents to encourage them as they ply new-found skills.

In only a few years with Project HOME, Scarlett has contributed to several of our programs. Starting as a volunteer literacy tutor at our Ray Homes

residence in 2012, she joined staff originally doing voter mobilization with our Advocacy and Public Policy department. During the winter of 2013, she helped out at our Hub of Hope drop-in center, coordinating medical services. When that year's Hub closed, Scarlett was tapped to start up our new Social Enterprise program.

"It's an adventure," she says of her work with Social Enterprise. Scarlett dives into the adventure with amazing enthusiasm. As manager of the program, she supports the five small businesses, which ranges from the business end of working to maximize sales to the personnel end of supporting residents as they participate in the program. Her fellow staff members admire her ability to manage the countless minute details of the new and multi-faceted program, while at the same time extending tremendous grace, patience, and understanding to both residents and co-workers.

While she understands the practical goals of the program, Scarlett also sees the Social Enterprise program as a "learning and growing environment." She feels a particular strength she brings to that environment is knowing how to gently push people – both residents and staff – out of their comfort zone, challenging them to reach and to grow.

She especially loves when she sees that growth happen. "It's exciting to see self-discovery happen in our program – when people realize they have capacities and skills in themselves that they never knew about or haven't seen in a long, long time."

Scarlett deeply believes that Project HOME can't be satisfied with merely doing a good job. "The services we provide need to be truly great. Sometimes we hit that mark, and sometimes we fall short. But to me, always striving toward what's great is important. That's the benchmark I hold for myself and for everyone in the Project HOME community."

Meet me there, the place that knows...

(from "The Gathering Poem" – an Irish poem by various poets)

For over ten years now, the Wilt Chamberlain Memorial Auditorium at the Honickman Learning Center and Comcast Technology Labs (HLCCTL) has provided a gathering place for the Project HOME community and the wider Diamond Street neighborhood in North Philadelphia. When there is a reason to celebrate – we gather. When we need strength – we gather. When we need to solve a problem, when we need to strategize and plan – we gather there.

From receiving a nourishing snack every day, to proudly sharing their artwork, music, and films in quarterly teen exhibitions – the children and teens in the afterschool programs use the Chamberlain Auditorium every day. It is a place for the adult students to celebrate receiving their GEDs, gather for poetry readings, and attend job fairs. When the neighborhood has needed to meet to address concerns, this beautiful space has provided a safe haven, offering a calm, well-maintained environment for assembly. The walls are graced with the portraits of students taken by photographer Mary Ellen Mark – the bright young faces filled with courage, stories, and promise.

The auditorium was named for the late basketball legend Wilt Chamberlain by his sister, Barbara Chamberlain Lewis, who has generously supported the programs of the HLCCTL, with the help of trustees Stephen Cozen and Billy Cunningham, through the Wilt Chamberlain Memorial Fund. Wilt was a proud Philadelphian and believed that with educational opportunities, anyone can reach their



2014 participants of the John and Sheila Connors Youth Employment Program gather to celebrate the completion of a successful summer.

fullest potential. Project HOME is grateful for the ongoing, gracious support of the Chamberlain family and friends – particularly the recent major gift from the Wilt Chamberlain Memorial Fund in support of the programs at the HLCCTL.



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
- 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
- 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
- Health Care Services
- Honickman Learning Center and Comcast Technology Labs
- Outreach Coordination Center
- Volunteer Program

Businesses

- HOME Spun Resale Boutique, 215-232-6322
- HOME Made Products, 215-232-7272, ext. 3075
- HOME Page Café, 215-320-6191

Administration

215-232-7272

Homeless Outreach Hotline

215-232-1984

Human Resources Hotline

215-232-7219 ext. 5200

www.projecthome.org



NONE OF US ARE HOME UNTIL ALL OF US ARE HOME



Hope for the future: Graduates of this year's College Access Program, most of whom are heading to college or other post-secondary education. Since the Honickman Learning Center and Comcast Technology Labs opened, over 70 of our youth have gone to college or other post-secondary education.

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.

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Philadelphia, Pa
Permit No. 01219



Hope, Struggle, and Transformation



Earl Banks is one of many stories of transformation at Project HOME – from a homeless, addicted veteran to a peer counsellor and employment specialist helping other vets get off the streets and find jobs. Learn more of his story at www.youtube.com/user/projectHOMEphilly.

Last month, a group of residents, alumni, staff, and friends of Project HOME gathered at our Kate's Place residence for Café 25, one in a series of nights of storytelling that are being held throughout 2014 to mark our 25th Anniversary year. Several residents shared their personal stories, and the stories were powerful, indeed.

While they came from different backgrounds and situations, their stories echoed with some common threads – family struggles, abuse, addiction, physical and mental health crises, homelessness, prison, despair, suicide attempts. It was almost overwhelming to hear such a cascade of human suffering and struggle.

But the stories had other common threads – each person had come through. Each story teller spoke of turning points and key persons who were catalysts for change. They recounted journeys of recovery and coming to health. Each person bore witness to the kindness of strangers and the grace of God. And they all spoke of homecoming – coming into a place at Project HOME, finding a supportive community, regaining a sense of dignity and worth. They are now working, volunteering, giving back, advocating, finding creative outlets for music and art. They speak openly and urgently of the need for understanding and compassion.

(continued on page 2)

A Year of Economic Growth



Some of Social Enterprise's gifted candle makers: Residents Valerie Thomas, Hank Smith, Jim Milice, and Loren Green

The U.S. economy is still in the doldrums, and the job market is frustratingly stingy for millions of Americans needing work and income. For those on the bottom rung of the economic ladder, prospects are slim. But Project HOME has sought innovative solutions to create work opportunities for our residents – and our own mini-economy is flourishing.

A year ago, we launched a new initiative, our Social Enterprise Program. Building on the success of our

HOME Page Café at the Parkway Branch of the Free Library, which started in 2008, the Social Enterprise Program now comprises a group of five small businesses designed to employ residents in a supportive environment. Each enterprise provides an opportunity for residents to access self-esteem and empowerment through an encouraging community, skill-building, and earned income.

In addition to the Café, in September 2013 we opened the HOME Spun Resale Boutique as a retail business that sells new and like-new high-quality designer men's and women's apparel at affordable prices. At the same time, we launched the new HOME Made gift line, in which residents earn income making and selling hand-made products, such as candles, jewelry, cards, and soap. We have also incorporated our Art Program into Social Enterprise, so that the amazing beauty created by our resident artists also provides outlets for income.

"We didn't know what to expect," says Social Enterprise program manager Scarlett McCahill, reflecting on the launch of the program a year ago. But the program has far exceeded expectations. Almost 90 residents have participated in Social Enterprise, tapping new-

(continued on page 3)

IN THIS ISSUE

Hope, Struggle, and Transformation	1
A Year of Economic Growth	1
Roots and Branches	2
Pain	3
HOME Happenings	4
I am Project HOME	5
Meet me there...	5
Mission/Residences/Services and Programs	6

www.projecthome.org

Roots and Branches: Reflections from Sister Mary



Photo by Rodney Alenza

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

As the season turns and the summer has given way to the fall, I am reminded once again of a profound truth: The only thing that life promises us is that everything will change – our relationships; our personal circumstances as well as the bigger world around us; even our perspectives and understandings.

But we are not powerless through these changes. In fact, it is quite the opposite: The more empowered we are, the more we can take a concrete and creative role in the changes happening, so that our situation and even our own lives are positively transformed.

Over the past 25 years, the community of Project HOME has witnessed much change – in our city, in the broader society, in the people who have come and gone, in the nonprofit field. But it has not just been passive change that we have simply watched. All of you have witnessed and actively participated in the transformation of lives, of neighborhoods, and even of our social fabric. Many of you have performed countless acts of kindness and generosity which have opened doors for people to not only come in off the streets but to have a home. You have offered your professional and relational skills of healing and

wellness. You have assisted adults in getting their GEDs and their college diplomas. You have offered the unemployed a chance to work and gain experience through internships. You have taught children to read and write and help build hope and opportunities for thousands. Through these experiences, relationships, and partnerships, we are all different. We are stronger both as persons and as a community.

There is a reason we have chosen Transformation as one of the core themes of this very special anniversary year. In addressing homelessness, neighborhoods are being rebuilt. Through research and understanding, we are finding ways to prevent homelessness through reaching out more to our youth and caring for those who are aging. We have made so much progress that we can envision that day when all will have a place to call home.

We invite you to continue to be a part of this transformation. Rooted in an unshakable commitment to human dignity and in an empowered community, we can and will work to help midwife a lasting transformation toward social and economic justice.

A. Mary Scullion

Hope, Struggle, and Transformation (continued from page 1)

We live in an age marked by cynicism. It feels like our political system is utterly dysfunctional, and the economic promise of the American Dream is sputtering and failing. Our social problems seem intractable, our social rhetoric is poisoned, our culture is marred by shallow materialism and superficial values.

For twenty-five years at Project HOME, we have known a very different truth. And that is why one of the themes we are lifting up during this 25th Anniversary year is Transformation.

“The deepest truth we touch at Project HOME is that ultimately all of us experience transformation.”

to what is possible when persons make choices to change their lives, and when we bring together vision, know-how, and resources to solve daunting problems. They embody the power of hope – and in doing so, they are offering our society an invaluable gift.

Transformation is not limited to personal stories. A block that was once pockmarked by blighted houses is now fully renovated and inhabited. An unsightly vacant lot is now a gleaming new four-story residence. A neighborhood weighed down by poverty sees a generation of young people going to college and building new futures. A city that was once paralyzed by growing numbers of persons chronically homeless in Center City is now boldly talking about ending street homelessness.

Nor is transformation simply something we see in those persons and communities who have borne the weight of great social and public woundedness. The deepest truth we touch at Project HOME is that ultimately all of us experience transformation. Staff members, volunteers, donors, trustees – all of us need transformation, and all of us are in touch with that transformative reality by being part of the community of Project HOME. We need to be freed from the shackles of all kinds of addiction, of false values, of cynicism and apathy. We experience being transformed to a deeper and richer understanding of what it means to be human, as we share our brokenness and our gifts. We are transformed to a new vision of our connectedness in a human community that is not stratified or eviscerated by the various forms of social segregation that normally keep us apart.

The stories that were shared at the recent Café 25 point to a profound mystery: By entering into the truthfulness of our common struggles, we come to a powerful and binding sense of hope, and that hope is the seed of transformation which might otherwise not be possible.

At Café 25, Vince Angelico of Kate’s Place, in sharing his story, insisted that the struggles he went through could befall anyone. “But we don’t need to let the past define us. There is hope for everyone.” And when we hear stories like Vince’s, hope arises in us – hope for transformation of ourselves and of our world.

Share Our Stories: If you want to share a story of transformation – your own, or one you’ve witnessed – please share it with us. Go to <https://projecthome.org/share-your-story> and write your story.

A Year of Economic Growth (continued from page 1)

found skills and self-worth in addition to income. We have engaged more than 100 volunteers and technical advisors, who have supported us in a range of ways, from artisans helping in the workshops to business consultants and marketers. Among our important partners has been Drexel University,

“At Project HOME, we believe in and work for an economy where there is a place for everyone.”

through its Lebow College of Business and its Westphal School of Design and Merchandising.

It hasn’t been without its growing pains. We have had to develop greater business acumen, including quality control, efficiency in production, managing stock, as well as working together as a team of staff, residents, and volunteers. In the spring, the resident workshops were able to fulfill an order for 3,000 candles for Project HOME’s 25th Anniversary gala. Through that success, we feel we are positioned for important growth by managing large-scale custom orders for special events. (Let us know if you have any interest or leads!)

One particularly exciting development in our rookie year was the evolution of resident leadership. It was not uncommon at the beginning for residents to come into social enterprise with much uncertainty and timidity about their capacity. But over time, many of them have not only manifested great skills, they have taken over quality control measures and engaged in peer-to-peer coaching with other

residents. We have created a new position, HOME Made Workshop Leader, which is rotated monthly among resident participants.

Kate’s Place resident Orlando Cumming has been involved in candle making, and sees the value of the Social Enterprise program. He sees the program as a stepping stone, both for himself and others. “It helps people develop skills, learn to work with others, and eventually get jobs.” In fact, Orlando himself has been accepted this fall to move into our Employment Services Internship Program.

Going into its seventh year at the Parkway Branch of the Free Library, the HOME Page Café continues to thrive and grow. The past year has seen new offerings, including ice cream, healthier and more locally sourced menu options, and expanded catering. (Be sure and think of using the HOME Page Café for your catering needs!) Meanwhile, the Library Restroom Attendant program, which was started as a partnership between Project HOME and the Free Library in 2005, currently employs nine of our residents at the same Parkway branch.

Our HOME Spun Resale Boutique recently celebrated its first birthday with a big bash and a fashion show. And there was much to celebrate – sales were successful in the first year, and resident employees were growing in their skills and confidence. HOME Spun is primed for growth, with an eye to greater online presence, including marketing through eBay and Etsy.

Already, the staff is gearing up for the holiday season, including rolling out another batch of the much sought-after “Sister Mary’s Sinfully Delicious Cranberry Sauce,” which sold out quickly last year. And they are considering new possibilities for growth and new challenges in the future. The goal will always be to create good jobs and income opportunities for residents in ways that are financially solvent.

At Project HOME, we believe in and work for an economy where there is a place for everyone. With your support, we are creating places in the economy for many people who for too long have been economic refugees in a society that deems some of its citizens disposable. When you see one of the beautiful candles created by a resident in our HOME Made workshops, you know that the light of a new society is shining.

Grateful thanks to Social Enterprise funders the Otto Haas Charitable Trust, Klehr Harrison Harvey Branzburg LLP, Bank of America, Pam Estadt and Ira Lubert. To learn more about our small businesses, check out our website at www.projecthome.org/our-work/social-enterprises. Please support our efforts by purchasing our products online or onsite, and using our catering services!

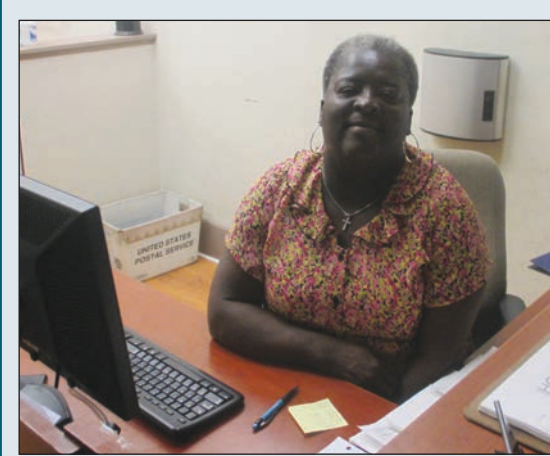


Photo by Will O'Brien

Pain

By Gwendolyn Young-El

Hey, Look, Listen, I’m here
 Can’t you see me?
 I’m screaming out loud
 Can’t you hear me?
 I’m human just like you
 Can’t you feel me?
 Sometimes when I’m on top of the world
 Can’t you accept that and let me be
 Sometimes when I’m so down and out
 Can’t you find some hope for me?
 When I become so afraid
 Can’t you just pray for me?
 When I can’t handle the thoughts of being alone
 Can’t you walk with me?
 I’m still someone with hopes, dreams and desire
 Can’t you just talk with me?
 When I’m feeling so discouraged
 Can you help encourage me?
 If what I ask you is too much for you
 Can’t you just admit that and not take
 advantage of me?
 I’m changing inside
 Please don’t hinder me
 I have a right, a choice
 You just listen to me.
 Finally through all the pain
 I’m finding a way to be free
 Finally learning how to keep you from hurting me
 I’ve chosen a path that works for me
 One that’s giving me some serenity
 When anxiety, panic, and depression
 come over me
 I pray and ask God for Grace and Mercy
 I won’t give up, I’ve taken a stand
 But I need a little help
 Will you lend me your hand?

Gwendolyn Young-El has been a member of the Project HOME community for over ten years, and has worked at several of our sites – especially with our Outreach Coordination Center.

HOME Happenings

◆ **Lots of transformation** is happening at our St. Elizabeth’s Wellness Center. Our health services are rapidly expanding to better serve our North Philadelphia community. For the first time we are now able to offer health services to children, including vaccines, school physicals, and behavioral health services. Thanks to a new van, we are able to expand our outreach services, transport patients, and even provide mobile medical services. We are also now accepting patients with Keystone First insurance, Medicaid insurance, Medicare, or who are uninsured. As always, our focus will remain to provide the highest level of care to each and every person who comes into our door, regardless of ability to pay. The major transformation, though, is the move this coming winter into the brand-new Stephen Klein Wellness Center – more details in the next issue of *News from HOME!*



Jon Bon Jovi joins with the Project HOME Community Choir at the April 22 gala to celebrate our 25th anniversary.

◆ **We were thrilled** with the news that our friend and partner Jon Bon Jovi was named the recipient of the 2014 Marian Anderson Award, an annual honor given by Philadelphia for renowned artists who contribute to the community. In addition to his tremendous support of Project HOME through the JBJ Soul Foundation, Jon has supported numerous organizations that work on issues of housing, health care, and hunger throughout the nation. Upon the announcement of the award, our Executive Director Sister Mary Scullion said, “There is no more worthy recipient of this prestigious award. Jon’s generosity is only surpassed by his vision and leadership.”

◆ **Nine Project HOME residents** joined Rembrandt and Picasso in having their works on display at the Philadelphia Museum of Art a few weeks ago. We participated for the second year in the Museum’s annual “Bridges” program, which is designed to use the visual arts

to build a bridge that helps individuals who are overcoming adversity improve their quality of life. In preparation for the exhibit, our residents went on two guided tours of impressionist works at the Museum, then did their own interpretations of the impressionists’ use of light. This year’s “Bridges” exhibit ran from August 27 to September 28.

◆ **It’s election season**, and Project HOME is once again spearheading the *Vote For Homes!* coalition in its effort to raise critical issues for economically struggling Pennsylvanians. The coalition has published a Voters Guide for the gubernatorial race. You can read the candidates’ responses to questions about affordable housing, living-wage jobs, and services at www.votesforhomes.org. If you want to help mobilize low-income and homeless Philadelphians to get to the polls on Election Day, contact Jennine Miller, Director of Advocacy and Public Policy, at 215-232-7272, ext. 3042, or jenninemiller@projecthome.org.

◆ **Do you want to know** everything Project HOME has been up to? We are pleased to announce the release of our Fiscal Year 2014 Annual Report. You will find the entire report on our recently redesigned website, enabling you to access a full array of infographics, video, images, and stories, in addition to up-to-date financial and organizational information. Visit <http://bit.ly/FY2014Report> to access the 2014 Annual Report. Thank you for taking the time to review this and for all that you have done to make this a wonderful year!



Photo by Jay Gondezler

With hundreds of supporters gathered, Project HOME broke ground for its newest development, 94 affordable homes at 810 Arch Street. This new residence, a partnership with the Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation, is the fourth project of the Middleton Initiative, a strategic initiative made possible by the transformational leadership gift from Leigh and John Middleton. Above, Project HOME staff are joined by dignitaries and political officials in ceremoniously breaking ground for 810, which is slated to open in 2015.