



Friends to friends

Friends Association for Care and Protection of Children

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Dear Friends,

- In 2010, it was estimated that **1 in 45** children experienced homelessness every year; by 2013, that number had risen to **1 in 30**.
- Children who are homeless are **twice** as likely to go hungry as are children who are not homeless.
- Homeless children have **three times** the rate of emotional and behavioral problems.
- **25% or more** of homeless children have witnessed violence.

We are working to change these statistics for children in Chester County; and, this we can do with sustainable and ongoing support of our mission. What a difference a few dollars make! Preventing and ending the homelessness of struggling families in Chester County takes all of us working together and giving what we can.

We work every day to help families:

- Get back to work (or find better employment)
- Learn skills to budget their money
- Improve parenting skills
- Learn to be great tenants and community members
- Change their lives for the better

Please join us by becoming a 'Sustainer of Hope.' For less than a dollar a day you can help families transition to a better, independent life within our community. Thank you!



Catherine Friedman, Executive Director, with Elijah at Family Art Night

Catherine

Catherine Friedman, Executive Director

*Data from the National Center on Family Homelessness

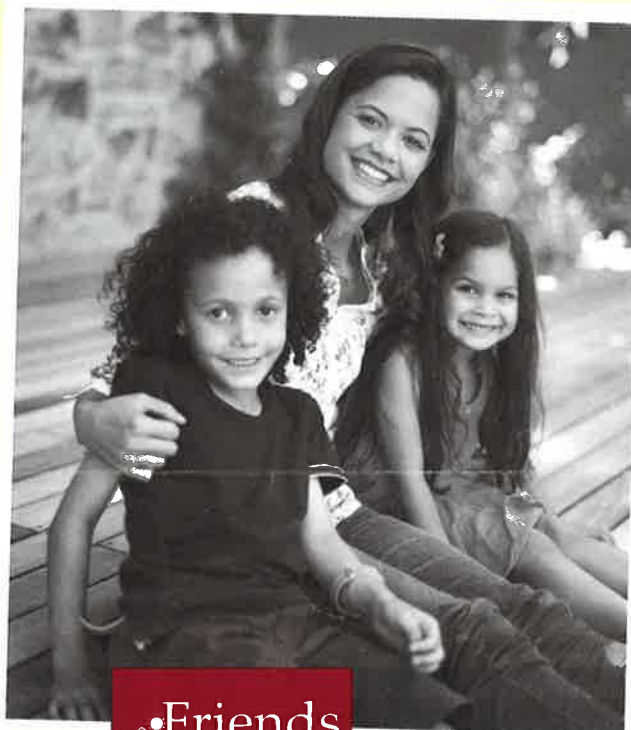
Reaching Out to Emma

Emma Rogers was in distress. She is a single mother with two children and had been laid off from her job. She could not move back into her mother's apartment because it would jeopardize the lease and then both families could be homeless. So, she needed shelter immediately.

When Emma called ConnectPoints, Chester County's housing crisis call center, there was no space available in the family shelters. She was then connected with Brenda Moore, Friends Association's Outreach Case Manager. Brenda quickly travelled to Coatesville to meet with Emma and her children. When a vacancy at Friends Association became available, Brenda gathered up donated household items for the family. By evening, the apartment was ready and the children were tucked in their own beds.

The next day, our Shelter Manager and Emma worked on a very specific action plan to help stabilize the family. Emma's experience as a CNA (certified nursing assistant) was an important asset. Working with Pennsylvania's Career Link, Emma sent out cover letters to employers and practiced her job interview skills.

Friends Association used resources from the **Glenda K. Brion Emergency Family Needs Fund** (created in September) to help Emma with car repair costs. Reliable transportation for a successful job search and gaining any new employment was essential. Emma was also referred to Bridge of Hope, Inc. for housing assistance and extensive mentoring when the shelter period had ended.



Friends ASSOCIATION

- Emergency Family Shelter
- Homeless Prevention Program
- Outreach Case Management for Homeless Families

The community wrapped its arms around this family by making sure help was available from Friends Association, ConnectPoints, the emergency needs fund, Bridge of Hope, and Career

Link. Emma's high motivation to improve her circumstances made a huge difference. She is now working full time as a CNA at a continuing care community. The family now has a two bedroom apartment and Emma is in close, frequent contact with her mentor.

Friends Association. Emma Rodgers. Emma's children. Bridge of Hope. Together, reaching out *and* lifting up. ☀



2014 Friend of the Community award was presented to Rose and Fran Marinelli and to John Braceland, former Board president.



A Dad and His Daughter: Together, and Moving to a Better Place

David and his daughter Jane were a family in desperate circumstances when they were referred to Friends Association. Jane was born with a developmental disorder and David's wife had left them during Jane's youth. The family had lived in southern Chester County until David lost his job due to disabling health issues. Once David lost his job, Jane's meager social security disability income became the family's sole source of income.

Unable to work, David and Jane managed to stay in their home for almost a year, but only by taking difficult measures: selling their car and withdrawing all retirement savings. After losing the house, their new home became a small motel room attached to a bar. Even this situation wasn't financially manageable. Fortunately, David contacted ConnectPoints and was connected with Friends Association within days of becoming homeless.

He and Jane were placed in an apartment at Friends Association's emergency family shelter. Working with a Friends Association's case manager, they finally had the stability and support needed to plan for a brighter future.

David was assisted in filing for disability benefits to establish more income; and Jane was referred to a program for behavioral health and community services. Most important, Rob Henry, Shelter Manager of Friends Association, enrolled the family in a housing program for long-term affordable housing which includes services to ensure they remain stable.

A Festive Evening Supporting Friends Association WEST CHESTER CHARITY BALL 2014

We are so appreciative and grateful to our generous sponsors and attendees who helped us raise over \$160,000 to help homeless and near-homeless families in our community. The Charity Ball included beautiful music, fine food and drink, live and silent auctions, portrait photography, a temporary tattoo artist as well as dancing to live music. Many attendees contributed during the live auction segment to "Fund for Friends" to provide housing, food, and emergency transportation for homeless families. Thank you, all!

We rely on generous contributions from donors like you to provide shelter and support to homeless, or near-homeless families. Save the date! Next year's West Chester Charity Ball will be **December 5, 2015**. ☀



The portraits were at West Chester Golf & Country Club on December 6, 2014. Photos by Gifford Photography.



Join Us on Thursday, April 30th: Open House, Emergency Family Shelter

On Thursday, April 30, from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., we will have an Open House at the family shelter apartment building at 128 E. Chestnut Street, West Chester, PA. We cordially welcome our benefactors, friends and members of the Chester County community. This is also an opportunity to meet our new Emergency Family Shelter Manager, Rob Henry, who joined us in January. He brings previous experience in finding housing solutions for the disabled into this role. Rob is a West Chester University alumnus, and resides in West Chester and looks forward to meeting all who attend the open house. Refreshments will be served. Please RSVP by April 27 to j.luke@friendsassoc.org. ☀



In February, 2015, with the help of staff and volunteers, the family moved to permanent housing in southern Chester County. They are, in so many ways, in a better place. ☀

Moving furniture into permanent housing: Emergency Family Shelter Manager, Rob Henry and volunteer, Bill Gordon of West Chester, PA.



Ricoh Americas Corporation volunteers at Emergency Family Shelter



Wawa, Inc. volunteers at Friends Association offices

4,189
VOLUNTEER HOURS IN 2014
711
VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers: Businesses Connect and Make a Difference

FRIENDS ASSOCIATION THANKS YOU!

How do you define a “dynamic” volunteer program at a non-profit agency? Well, at Friends Association that’s about 700 volunteers (many from corporate volunteer programs) in the past 18 months! Through the outreach and organizational capabilities of Volunteer Coordinator, Robin Meixner, Friends Association, has cultivated relationships with area corporations.

Nonprofit organizations are interested in efficiencies to conserve budgets, and volunteers are a welcome solution. In return for this help, companies benefit, too, with satisfied and more productive employees; a better bottom line; and, an improved standing in the community.

Corporate volunteers have come forward in many ways, including helping to maintain the six apartments of the family shelter, both inside and outside; transportation of materials, or client families to appointments; tutoring or mentoring; or participating in enrichment activities for children and parent(s) in Friends Association’s programs. One volunteer even set up a successful peer-to-peer fundraiser in her company.

Besides the ‘pay it forward’ benefits received by Friends Association and the families of Friends Association, businesses benefit, too, in these ways: engaged, happier employees; higher morale, more satisfied team members; and, more productive workers. Volunteers, at the core, want to participate in “moving the needle”—and they do. Corporate volunteer programs are, inarguably, the ultimate ‘win-win’ for everyone. ●

Recent Business Volunteers:

- Acme Markets, Inc.
- PECO
- Univest Bank & Trust
- Akcelerant, Inc.
- National Penn Bank
- TE Connectivity
- Susquehanna Bank
- Ricoh Corporation
- Janssen Pharmaceuticals
- Vanguard Investments
- QVC, Inc.
- CPI
- Wawa
- and more!

New Fund Makes a Quick Impact: Glenda K. Brion Emergency Family Needs Fund

Julie and her daughter (not pictured) who are in Friends Association’s Homeless Prevention program, are on the road to success. Nova Adams, Homeless Programs Supervisor, has been working with Julie since last year. A sudden and unexpected car repair is a stressor, a budget buster and can result in less hours worked—or a job termination. Thanks to generous donors to a recently formed fund, the Glenda K. Brion Emergency Family Needs Fund, Nova Adams used this resource to arrange Julie’s car repair. Within days, Julie, a CNA (certified nurse assistant) was back at work; able to drive her daughter to activities and appointments; and, back on budget for next month’s rent. Julie is now on the road to stability. She was the first mom to benefit from this resource. Because of this new fund, parents who may need an assist at a critical time, will stay on the path to housing stability and financial independence. ●



Julie, a Friends Association Homeless Prevention Program participant with Nova Adams, Housing Programs Supervisor

**Yes, you can help
prevent and end
family homelessness
in our community!**

**By contributing online
- or -
Enclosing your gift**

**See our wish list
at www.friendsassoc.org**



**Working to Prevent
and End Family Homelessness**

Powerful Choice: Recurring Donations

Do you want to be there for the families we help that are facing homelessness? Do you want to provide meaningful help in a budget-friendly manner? Less than a dollar a day makes quite an impact at Friends Association as a:

Sustainer of Hope

\$25
EACH MONTH will help connect the families we serve to resources that improve their income.

\$50
EACH MONTH will keep a family from ever becoming homeless.

Higher monthly contributions can support families utilities expenses (paid by Friends Association) in the shelter apartment; or for a fixed-term rental subsidy to secure housing or prevent eviction.

Visit www.friendsassoc.org, scroll to bottom and click on "Sustainer of Hope." Another easy way: e-mail j.luke@friendsassoc.org, subject line "Sustainer" and key in monthly donation amount. (You will receive an email from us to charge your credit card). We are available by phone at **610-431-3598, ext. 205**. If you have any questions, call the above number; and, thank you for your support of our work to prevent and end family homelessness in our community. ●

WELCOME ADDITIONS TO THE FRIENDS ASSOCIATION BOARD

We are fortunate to have three new board members recently voted onto the Board of Trustees:



Ilene Sussman,
Assistant VP,
Relationship Manager,
Susquehanna Bank,
Hershey's Mill



Matthew Holliday,
Chief of Staff
for State
Representative
Dan Truitt



Nicholas Chiros,
Senior Credit
Manager,
Airgas, Inc.
(retired)

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

John Spangler, *President*
Maureen McBride, *Vice President*
Cindy Bortner, *Secretary*
Dennis Wallace, *Treasurer*
Brian Boreman
*Nicholas Chiros
Barbara Diorio
*Matthew Holliday
Leslie Broderick Lavender
Carolyn Marconi
Mary Ann Nagel
Jacob Singer
Julie Sommese
Serita Spadoni
*Ilene Sussman
Rick Weber

**Welcome to our new Board Members!*

STAFF MEMBERS

Catherine Friedman, *Executive Director*
Nova Adams, MSA, *Housing Programs Supervisor*
Pat Broadt, *Business Manager*
Rob Henry, *Emergency Family Shelter Manager*
Jack Luke, *Director of Development*
Robin Meixner, *Volunteer Coordinator*
Brenda Moore, *Outreach Case Manager*
Marie Paxson, *Administrative Assistant*