

EMPOWERING FAMILIES. ENDING THE CYCLE.



FRIENDS ASSOCIATION

Because Everyone Deserves a Home

2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT





FRIENDS ASSOCIATION

Because Everyone Deserves a Home

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT AND CEO

Dear Friends and Partners,

When Alicia sent me an invitation to her housewarming party, my heart absolutely sang. This is exactly why we do the work we do at Friends Association.

Not so long ago, Alicia faced overwhelming challenges. Incarceration, homelessness, and unemployment threatened her family's stability, all while she was battling cancer. Despite these hardships, she never lost faith in the possibility of a brighter future for her and her children. When her path crossed with Friends Association, everything changed. Today, her journey stands as powerful proof that difficult circumstances are temporary, and her story will inspire others facing similar struggles to persevere.

Today, Alicia has stable housing, full-time employment, and owns her own home where she's raising her two children with dignity and hope. Her housewarming wasn't just a celebration, it was a testament to the power of community support and the resilience of the human spirit.

Building for the Future

This past year has been transformative. As you read through this report you will see the impact our programs have had in our fight to end family homelessness and to break the cycle for future generations.

Thanks to our passionate, dedicated team and our supporters, we provided emergency housing for 21 families, strengthened our case management program and expanded our legal services into additional local courts to help with eviction prevention.

Most exciting of all, we began working toward an incredible milestone that will become a reality in early 2026. We are moving our offices to a building that is being renovated to house both office space and family units, **adding 10 additional emergency housing spaces** to serve even more families in crisis.

Every step of our growth has been strategic, focused, and deliberate. We're not just expanding, we're deepening our impact and refining our approach to ensure every family receives the excellence they deserve.

Looking Ahead with Gratitude

As we prepare to welcome more families into our expanded facility and programs, I'm filled with anticipation for the stories yet to be written. Your continued partnership makes all the difference. Whether through financial support, volunteer hours, or simply believing in our mission, you are helping us create more housewarming parties, more stable childhoods, and more reasons to celebrate the incredible resilience of the human spirit.



With deep gratitude and boundless hope for what's ahead,

Joyce Chester
CEO, Keyholder



A MESSAGE FROM OUR OUTGOING BOARD CHAIR

Dear Friends,

As I conclude my term as Chair of the Board for Friends Association, I am filled with gratitude for the opportunity to serve this incredible organization and to witness firsthand the dedication, compassion, and vision that drive our mission forward each day. Over the past year, we have navigated challenges, celebrated milestones, and deepened our impact on the fight against family homelessness thanks to the unwavering commitment of our staff, volunteers, and supporters.

It has been a true honor to work alongside such a passionate community, and I am confident that the organization is poised for even greater success. While my term as Chair has ended, I will continue as a member of the Board of Directors and continue to support the efforts of the staff and our programs.

I am delighted to introduce Bill McGrath as the incoming Board Chair. For nearly a decade, Bill and his wife Ann have been working to help Friends Association achieve its goals and expand its services into all of Chester County. He brings both deep experience and a steadfast belief in our mission and is well suited to work alongside our CEO to propel Friends forward. With his leadership, the commitment from the whole Board of Directors and staff, and your continued support, I know our future and the future of those we serve will be bright.



In gratitude,

Yolanda Van de Krol

Yolanda Van de Krol
Outgoing Chair, Board of Directors



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

William T. McGrath, President
Holly Humphrey, Vice President

Troy Vogt, Treasurer
Michael Hazley, Secretary

Peter Darlington
Reverend Andrew Esqueda
Jeffrey Garrett
Holly Humphrey
Steve E. Jarmon
Matthew Korenoski

Jim McFadden
Frank Monterosso
Stephen Nicolai
Raef Lee
Yolanda Van de Krol
(Immediate past president)



OUR MISSION

Friends Association prevents homelessness by transforming lives, empowering families, and strengthening our community. We believe everyone deserves a home.

OUR VISION

Friends Association will lead the community in preventing homelessness for families by providing the support they need to become self-sufficient and thrive in a safe, stable home.

OUR STORY

For over 200 years, Friends Association has provided services that focus on the care and protection of children and young people. Over the years, the specific programs have changed to meet the needs of the communities they serve. In the 1980s we opened our first emergency shelter for families facing homelessness with the intent of keeping the whole family together, thereby minimizing the trauma of the situation for children and the adults as well.

Today, Friends Association is so much more than just a family shelter. Through our **Housing First** approach, we help families move swiftly into safe, stabilized homes, sparing them the stress and upheaval of multiple temporary stays. Our work is **Trauma-Informed**, recognizing that poverty and homelessness deeply affect both parents and children. And, with our **2-Generation Solutions**, we walk alongside the whole family, supporting parents and nurturing children to build resilience, restore confidence, and break the cycles of poverty and homelessness for good.

Every interaction, program, and even the design of our Family Center is shaped by compassion and understanding. Those we serve find stability, healing, and hope ... because we believe everyone deserves a home.



Mission in Action



1,081

Number of
Individuals served



425

Number of
Households served



593

Children aged
0-18 served

PROGRAM STORIES

EVICTION PREVENTION CARE RESOLUTION PROGRAM

Danny came to Friends through our eviction prevention program. She was behind on rent, struggling to find work, and feeling defeated as she tried to make ends meet. She was given just 21 days to leave her current apartment and relocate to someplace new. After less than a week of working with a Friends case manager, Danny quickly showed how goal-driven and proactive she could be when supported and motivated. Today, Danny is working full-time, has received a raise, and remains stably housed. She consistently pays her rent and other bills each month. Watching Danny grow from a vulnerable individual uncertain about where she would live to a person maintaining both housing and job stability has been a true pleasure.

The Eviction Prevention Case Resolution Program is a powerful tool for preventing homelessness and has been recognized by the Pennsylvania Housing Alliance for its effectiveness. Our teams of attorneys, court coordinators, and housing navigators negotiate with landlords, represent tenants at court, provide rental assistance, and where necessary, help tenants locate to new, more affordable housing.

IMPACT

- **291 Households were assisted** through our EPCR program
- **66% of cases had favorable outcomes** for the tenants
- **100% Children stayed with their families** as we assisted with housing solutions

FAMILY CENTER EMERGENCY HOUSING

For pre-teens and teens, moving into a shelter brings not only change but also fears about how their friends will react. That was true for “Anne’s” daughters, ages 11 and 13, when they first arrived at the Family Center. Initially quiet and unsure, both girls have since flourished and gained confidence. They now actively participate in workshops for Family Center residents and help with arts and crafts for younger children. One daughter is involved in the community through basketball and gymnastics, while the other is preparing to take a certified babysitter’s training to start earning money. Their growth has given Anne peace of mind and the space to focus on building long-term housing stability.



The Family Center is the only low-barrier family shelter in Chester County that provides housing for entire families in private apartments. This model allows families to remain together without requiring fathers or adolescent boys to be sheltered separately. In response to identified family needs, we developed new weekly life-skills and education workshops to strengthen independence and support long-term stability. Families residing at the family center work directly with Friends Association case managers to connect with resources, access benefits, and begin the process of securing permanent, stable housing.

IMPACT

- **21 Families were safely housed** together through our Family Center
- **95% Transitioned to stable housing**
- **100% Children stayed with their families** as we assisted with housing solutions

NOTE: In 2026 Friends Association will open an additional Family Center that will provide another 10 units for families in need.



PROGRAM STORIES continued

HOUSING STABILITY CASE MANAGEMENT

Angel and her family were referred to the Housing Stability Case Management team in April of 2025. Angel, a grandmother with custody of her 13-year-old grandson, is unable to work but receives Social Security benefits as her only income. She has battled homelessness for many years and was living in a county-funded hotel when referred to our program. Our team helped her secure a Non-Elderly Disabled (NED) voucher, allowing her to obtain adequate and affordable housing. Angel and her grandson now live in a two-bedroom apartment in her desired location. Our next challenge was furnishing the home. We submitted a referral to Community Warehouse, and soon the new apartment felt complete. Our team continues to support her with life-skills development, budgeting, and short-term goals as she works toward graduating from the program.

The Housing Stability Case Management Program supports families who are currently experiencing homelessness or housing instability. The program continues to grow, offering comprehensive support to all members of a household, including advocacy, education, resource coordination, and life-skills training. Friends Association's HSCM team has expanded collaboration with partner agencies, increasing access to resources and fostering greater independence for families.

IMPACT

- **85 Families received the education and tools they needed** to achieve sustainable housing through our Housing Stability Case Management program
- **100% Remained housed for at least 12 months** while in our program
- **100% Children stayed with their families** as we assisted with housing solutions

JUSTICE IMPACT HOUSING STABILITY CASE MANAGEMENT (NIA)

Jennifer worked with our Justice Impact Case Management program for just over a year. She is a mother of five who faced homelessness after incarceration. Once back in the community, she transitioned to Friends Association's NIA House. While there, Jen found employment, engaged in treatment, and worked toward stable housing and reconnecting with her children. In October of last year, Jen moved out of NIA House into a room-for-rent situation that offered her a six-month lease. During that time, she successfully completed treatment and thrived in her workplace, all while staying closely connected to her children. In July of 2025, Jen secured a two-bedroom unit, where two of her children now live with her full-time. She continues to work full-time, recently received a raise, and was named Employee of the Month. During our final visit, she shared the joy of having all her children spend the night together under her roof as a family.

The Justice-Impacted Housing Stability Case Management (NIA) program supports families who have been affected by the justice system within the past six years and are currently experiencing homelessness or housing instability. The Friends Association team provides housing location assistance, landlord negotiation, rental assistance, and weekly home visits that decrease over time as families stabilize. Case managers also offer resources, referrals, and life skills support while collaborating closely with probation, parole, domestic violence services, and other community partners to promote long-term housing stability.

IMPACT

- **28 families and 54 children were served** in the Justice Impacted-Housing Stability Case Management (NIA) program.
- **86% of the families** located and **maintained stable housing**.

YOUR PART IN OUR STORIES

VOLUNTEERS

“ An hour or two is not a lot of time, but it makes a big difference. I love seeing the empty space transform into a home. I love that ‘neighbors’ walk into a place that has love put into it, gives families hope, and allows them to look to the future. I take a lot of pride in that.”

- Trisha, Turnover Team volunteer

Woven throughout the stories of hope at Friends Association is the help of our volunteers. Whether serving on our Board of Directors, painting and cleaning, preparing meals, tending to flower beds, or providing birthday cakes for the children at the Family Center, our volunteers bring care and compassion to every corner of our work. Their dedication helps families begin new chapters in their stories filled with possibility, and we are profoundly grateful for the part they play in our shared story.

39 Volunteers

191 Number of hours

SUPPORTERS

“ Growing up in Chester County, I’ve always felt immense admiration and pride for our local communities. Since graduating from West Chester University and working in the Borough, I’ve had the opportunity to meet individuals who work tirelessly to support families during times of homelessness and displacement. The Friends Association, led by hardworking and selfless people, creates actionable change every day. Becoming a monthly donor allows me to invest directly in my neighbors and in our shared future.”

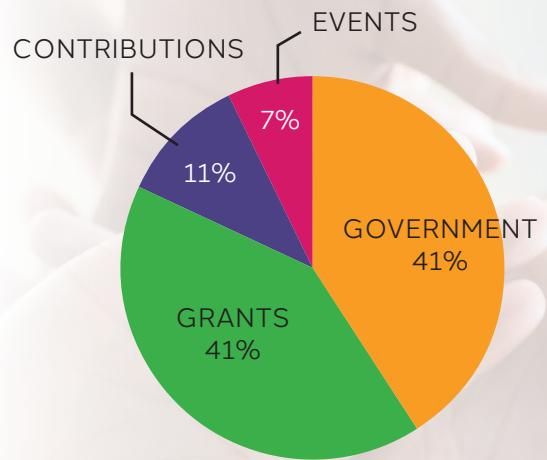
- Lauren, Keyholder Monthly Donor

It is only through the generosity and compassion of our supporters that Friends Association has such powerful stories to share. Every gift, whether from a foundation, business, civic or faith community, or individual donors helps families find safety, rebuild their lives, and create brighter futures. Together, you are part of every success story ... the relief of a parent unlocking the door to a new home, the joy of a child sleeping safely at night, and the steady rebuilding of lives once at risk. Your partnership makes this impact possible, every single day. You are the foundation of our stories.



Financial

REVENUE



Foundations / Grants
Grants \$1,045,847

Individual Contributions
Contributions \$251,649
In-kind Contributions \$27,100
Total \$278,750

Events
Fund-raising events, net of Costs \$166,975

Government
Chester County Department of Community Development \$1,031,365

SUM OF REVENUE \$2,522,935



The Story of our New Logo

Our new logo beautifully captures the heart of Friends Association's mission and spirit. The image of three figures inside a home represents family in its many forms; parents and children, grandparents and grandchildren, or any loved ones who support one another. The tagline, *"Empowering Families. Ending the Cycle."* reflects both what we do and why we do it: helping families achieve lasting stability and break the cycle of homelessness. The bright, joyful colors celebrate the moment when a family finds sustainable housing which is a milestone filled with hope, strength, and new beginnings ... *"Because every family deserves a home."*

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

To Make a Donation:

- Online: visit friendsassoc.org
- Mail checks made out to Friends Association to:
Friends Association, P.O. Box 489,
West Chester PA 19380

Follow us on:

-  FriendsAssoc
-  friends.cares
-  friends-association-wc

To Volunteer:

- Call (610) 431-3598