



Building a more compassionate community one person at a time

THE BEACON

Fall/Winter 2021

A Semi-Annual Publication of Bethesda House Schenectady, Inc.

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Welcome to the 2021 Fall/Winter edition of Bethesda House's *The Beacon*



As I look at the growth of Bethesda House since our inception in 1992, I am extremely proud of what we have been able to achieve. I am even more excited about our outlook for an equally promising future.

I am proud to acknowledge the growth and success of the agency as a result of the close collaboration between

the organization's leadership, committees, stakeholders, our local government, and area providers. This collective support enables us to continue to launch new strategies and establish new partnerships. As a result, we are able to ensure the homeless and disadvantaged in our community have a safe and stable place to access and a place that residents can call home.

The last nineteen months have held many inspiring moments. Each day we open our doors and welcome the homeless, vulnerable, and poor individuals in our community. We recommit to constant learning, improvement, and intentional growth as individuals and as an organization.

The maintenance of strength through difficult times is a reliable sign that we are doing things right. I am confident the coming year will be the best year yet for Bethesda House.

Changing the world starts at home. Healing, growth, and transformation start inside you and me, and extends out to make a difference in the world around us. Thank you for your belief in our mission and the confidence that, as an agency, we help to make positive changes in the lives of the poor.

Many Blessings for a Wonderful Holiday Season

Kimarie A. Sheppard

DID YOU KNOW...

That Bethesda House, never closed our doors for services. During the pandemic we continued to offer basic living, case management, housing, social work, psychiatric nurse practitioner, and referral services to the vulnerable and homeless in Schenectady County?



That over
5,334
unique individuals
were served during
2020-2021?



That over
17,000
food pantry meals
were provided?



That during 2020-2021
the Agency's Street
Outreach Case
Management served
520
individuals?



That Case Managers
provided over
6,000
emergency and
permanent housing
services?



That Bethesda House's
Soup Kitchen staff
served over
21,000
meals?



That during 2020 -2021 the Agency's
Social Work staff had an
average monthly caseload of
60 singles with over
5,000
contacts/interactions each month?

Building a Better Schenectady Together

By Caroline Codd

Let's face it, setbacks are part of the process when we're trying to build something great, to create something that hasn't existed before. Unexpected challenges are frustrating and discouraging in the moment, but when we look back we realize they were all part of the process. Timing is everything.

Cara House has been a dream of ours at Bethesda House for years. And while we've experienced our fair share of setbacks, we are so grateful to still be on track for its grand opening next summer. And we're realizing the timing for completion could not be more crucial to the housing and homeless services for Schenectady County.

Cara House is designed to offer additional supportive and emergency housing for our community's most vulnerable, with a focus on those who have been recently released from incarceration. Our goal has always been to provide long term solutions and holistic care, to advocate for those who are struggling with homelessness, mental illness and poverty so they may live in the world as best they can. We have over 25 years of practice in this and yet this year we are witnessing a myriad of cases more complex than we have seen before.

We're primarily seeing these complex cases with our emergency shelter guests. Initially during the pandemic, our shelter census remained relatively low, in part due to the protection of the eviction moratorium. In September, some of the pandemic benefits expired, such as the unemployment compensation and the Federal Eviction Moratorium. New York State has implemented its own moratorium, however, residents must provide a hardship declaration in order to qualify. The new law also permits landlords and homeowners in certain localities to opt out of the program and provide their own rental assistance program, which residents must apply for. For those who are already struggling to stay afloat, and managing chronic conditions and mental health issues, this extra hurdle and paperwork can be insurmountable. If they do not have access to social services or are not well enough to seek them out, they can swiftly lose their housing and the stability that comes with it.

Unhoused persons who have severe mental illness will often find themselves in the ER, however due to staff shortages and COVID impacts, we are seeing faster discharges or people being turned away quickly due to





a lack of crisis evaluation capacity. They are returned to the streets or to shelters where they re-enter the cycle of homelessness and isolation. At Bethesda House, we have relationships with the hospitals and county services in hopes of intercepting these individuals so they can

receive appropriate care. But the system is strained from all ends. Inpatient services are limited and outpatient services are still mostly virtual. The population we serve has difficulty keeping these appointments and the lack of face to face interaction has made an already elusive and confusing system all the less tangible.

All these compounded factors have resulted in an influx of cases at Bethesda House that require much more than supportive social services. We are seeing an increase of individuals who have complex medical needs, including oxygen administration and wheelchair assistance, and individuals with developmental disabilities. Some of these guests are elderly and suffering from cognitive decline. They are coming to our emergency shelter for a bed but really need long-term assisted living care.

While these increased pressures have created new challenges, the staff at Bethesda House has taken each one with resiliency and determination to prevent anyone from falling through the cracks. We stand by our belief in the inherent dignity of every person who comes through our doors and will always look for solutions to build a better system and better care for those in need.

That's why the timing of Cara House couldn't be more important. Cara House will now include medical respite beds for those who need medical oversight during their shelter stay, while we search for a more permanent assisted living situation. Having support for those who are wheelchair dependent, needing nursing care, wound care, and mental health care will improve our already close collaboration with Ellis Hospital while filling a need that has been there for years. Previously, social services would have to place individuals with special needs in motel rooms which do not provide any additional services or support. With respite beds, those rooms will have

access to social workers, nurses, food resources, and case managers. This is a first for Bethesda House and for Schenectady County.

So even though it has taken time for Cara House to actualize, we know it has become an ever-evolving solution to the ever-evolving challenges of homelessness, especially in this pandemic era. We are working closer than ever with our county partners in medical, public and social services to meet these challenges head on and to create preventative measures for those most at risk of homelessness in Schenectady. The setbacks we've seen have become opportunities for us to grow and rise to the occasion, to act creatively and compassionately and stay true to our mission.

As always, we are forever grateful to you, our supporters, for continuing to stand by us as we navigate these changes and dare to dream of a better way, to create something that was not there before. We will always meet the challenge and know we're supported by a community that values the inherent dignity of every human, as we fervently do. We are building a better Schenectady County together -- even in these trying times.

This is a home we all share. Its foundation is strong. Its potential is clear. Cara House is testament to that and we are looking forward to expanding the services we know offer relief, sanctuary and second chances. We are looking forward to growth in the New Year and for years to come. To a better Schenectady for all.



Online Resource

<https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-hochul-signs-new-moratorium-covid-related-residential-and-commercial-evictions-law#:~:text=Early%20this%20morning%2C%20Governor%20Kathy,effect%20until%20January%2015%2C%202022.&text=These%20steps%20will%20alleviate%20the,no%20fault%20of%20their%20own.%22>

It's Always Been Housing First

By Caroline Codd

From New York to Seattle, cities all across the country are grappling with how to address and assist their homeless and impoverished populations. As COVID's economic fallout continues for the most vulnerable, the need has never been more dire to provide adequate housing, economic opportunity and social safety nets for these populations. Compounded by a record housing shortage, costs have skyrocketed for renters and those looking to buy. Affordable housing is a rare commodity in this country.

At Bethesda House, we have seen these trends on the rise for years and have witnessed firsthand how COVID only exacerbated what was already in motion. For over 29 years we have known the first step to alleviating poverty and preventing homelessness is affordable housing, which is why we opened our Lighthouse apartments in 2002 and State Street apartments in 2010. It's why we have also kept Cara House in our focus, which will provide permanent supportive housing and emergency shelter housing when it opens in 2022. We are so grateful for the leadership and citizens of Schenectady City and County who recognize this need and see it as a must-have for a safer, more sustainable community. For some counties, those in need of emergency, transitional and permanent supportive housing may only have one place to go.

Bethesda House knows Housing First works and will continue to advocate for more affordable housing options as we look to reduce homelessness in Schenectady.

We're glad to see the lack of affordable housing crisis gaining attention and approval on the national stage, as the Biden Administration plans to offer financial aid and incentives to cities across the country that have struggled to find solutions to their homelessness challenges. The House America initiative aims to rehouse at least 100,000 people and build 20,000 more affordable housing units using federal funding from the American Rescue Plan. While these goals might seem lofty to some, we know long-term solutions are going to create more stability, opportunities and safety over quick-fixes. By setting aside funding for affordable housing, easing restrictive zoning policies and promoting policies that value housing as a right not a privilege, we can begin to tackle the rising homeless rates in our country and provide those who have fallen on hard times with relief.

That has always been and will continue to be our goal at Bethesda House. Now that the strategies we have been implementing since the start are gaining recognition, we are hopeful we can build a better Schenectady County and a better country for those in need.

Online Resource

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-09-20/biden-and-hud-launch-moonshot-bid-to-beat-homelessness>



We are Building Cara House and You Can Help

BUY A PAVER CAMPAIGN:

Your eternal support to end homelessness

You can buy a personalized paver for the Cara House garden and entranceway to help us create the new Bethesda House residence, Cara House. Once you selected the size of the brick to purchase, you will enter what you would like to have engraved on the order form.

Pavers will be placed near the building entrance or garden area.

We want to create an inviting, warm and beautiful welcome for our residents, guests and staff. Your special message will be part of Cara House for decades to show your support for caregivers and people in need.

Paver Sizes & Prices

4" x 8" Brick Paver	\$100	3 Lines of Text, 20 Characters Total
8" x 8" Brick Paver	\$250	5 Lines of Text, 20 Characters Total, Clipart Available
12" x 12" Paver	\$1,500	7 Lines of Text, 20 Characters Total Can include a Custom Business Logo, Personal Logo or Clipart (call us for details)

Please go to our website at www.bethesdaahs.org to place your order.

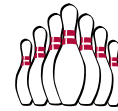
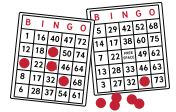


Save the Dates!!!

Bethesda House's 2022 Fundraisers are scheduled!

February 3, 2022

Virtual Bingo Night



May 6, 2022

Bowling for Bethesda

August 11, 2022

Cheers - Live Band at Wolf Hollow



October 20, 2022

Water's Edge at the Lighthouse:
Dinner and Trivia

Details for each event will be posted on our website:
www.bethesdaahs.org

View our website for photos of the
summer and fall fundraisers.



Giving from the heart, often to those you will never know, and expecting nothing in return except the gratification that you have touched the life of another, is the true meaning of unselfishness.

All gifts regardless of size or purpose have one thing in common, they speak volumes about the life of the donor. That voice continues to speak and be heard long after they no longer have a voice of their own. Each gift becomes a living thing, growing and reaching far beyond anything the donor could have imagined.

**In 2022
Bethesda House
will celebrate**

**30
years**

providing services to the
homeless and poor in
Schenectady County.

Holiday Ask, Asking Humbly

By Caroline Codd

In this last year and a half, we've learned how important it is to keep our loved ones close, to invest in our communities, to invest in ourselves and to dare to dream for a better world. We've learned to take action and to rest when needed. We've learned just how valuable our time is.

At Bethesda House, we know how valuable your time is and know that getting back to pre-pandemic "regularly scheduled programming" still feels so far away. Too much has changed. We've changed. We fully respect that it takes one's own personal calculated risk to put themselves out into the world these days, which is why when we ask for volunteers this holiday season, we ask humbly.

Our guest numbers have only increased this last year while our volunteer numbers have declined. We have always said our volunteers are the backbone of this agency and this rings true now more than ever.

Whether you can spare a couple hours or a few days, any help this

holiday season would go a long way. We can assure our facilities are all entirely COVID-compliant. We haven't had to shut down once due to COVID cases among guests or staff. We love seeing old faces and new to help ring in this season of joy and giving.

Again, when we ask, we ask humbly. We know how valuable your time is, especially for those who opted to spend the holidays away from family last year to stay safe. We know this pandemic is far from over and respect anyone's decision to stay home. But if you are willing and able, we would love to welcome you into our family this holiday season. If you are interested in volunteering, please reach

out to adminasst@bethesdaohs.org for opportunities and information. As always, we are forever grateful for any way you can give to Bethesda House as we work to provide a safe and hospitable haven for our community's most vulnerable. God Bless and Happy Holidays.



BETHESDA HOUSE HOLIDAY WISH APPEAL



It's time for Bethesda House's Wish Appeal! Each year we compile a list of gifts for friends and supporters in the community who wish to donate. Bethesda House gratefully acknowledges the generous gifts we receive that help us support the needs of so many. The items on our Wish List reflect our day-to-day needs. Donations are accepted Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:00 - 4:00 or by calling Bethesda House (518-374-7873) to make arrangements.

Day to Day

Food

- Non-perishable items

Kitchen

- Spices, coffee and tea

Seasonal Clothing

- Gently used items for men/women
- Coats, warm clothes, gloves, hats
- Practical shoes
- New underwear & socks

Hygiene Products

- Regular and hotel size shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste, soap, razors, toothbrushes and feminine hygiene products

Linens

- Sheets, towels, washcloths
- Blankets

Seasonal

- Home Depot/Lowes Gift Card

Adopt Our Food Pantry

A \$50 donation gives us \$200 in food products from the Regional Food Bank.
A \$100 donation gives us \$500 in food products from the Regional Food Bank.

Adopt An Apartment

Visit www.bethesdaohs.org for details.

Gifts that Keep on Giving

Deferred gifts to Bethesda House can have a lasting effect on our future strength & sustainability. Please give serious consideration to:

- A bequest to Bethesda House
- A donation of a life insurance policy
- A gift of appreciated asset (stock, property)



Bethesda House of Schenectady, Inc.
Friends of Bethesda House/Profile Update/Gift

Name _____

Organization _____

Address _____

Daytime Phone _____

Fax _____

E-Mail _____

Enclosed is my contribution of \$ _____
(Please make checks payable to Bethesda House)

Credit Card: MC Visa AMEX Discover

No: _____

Exp. Date: _____ Sec. Code: _____

Signature: _____

Are you a GE Employee/Retiree? ____Yes ____No
(Bethesda House is a GE Match Recipient)

Would you like to learn more about volunteer opportunities at Bethesda House? ____Yes ____No

Visit our website www.bethesdaohs.org to make a donation using square



Friends up to \$100

Ball, Danny
Baranowski, Caryn
Brown, Alvin
Brugeman, Rachel
Campbell, Jenalyn
Carley, Laura
Carley, McKenna
Casolo, Catherine
Christoffel, Thomas
Clark, John
Coluzza, John
Darios, Kristen
Dunn, Nicholas
Engram, Jessica
Eslick, Noah
Evans, LEMONIA
Farina, Joseph
Farrell, Ann M
Ferri, Thomas
Flynn, Dorothy & Charles
France, Michael
Grom, Walter & Anna-Maria
Healy, Dick and Joan
Hemmendinger, David & Kort, Gail
Herman, Leonard
Hobbs, Ray'chel
Huggard, Charlene
Hunt, Madysen
Hurley, Tara
Johnson, Marie
Kava, Janine & Carney, Robert
Kazmierczak, Christine
Kent, Beth
Koniowka, Lisa
Lord, Katie
Lotano, Sharon
Mann, Richard & Joanne
McArdle, Teresa L
McDuffie, Krici
McKee, Douglas & Rita
McLane, Suzette
McPhail, Kimberly
Messina, Carol
Milano, Barbara
Northrup, Barbara

Panico, Robert & Anita
Payne, Danny
Purcell, James & Sandra
Rockmacher, Stephanie
Scanlan, Peter
Schampier, Cheryl
Sheppard, Molly
Slayko, Adrienne
Smith, Janice
Terwilliger, Linora
Triant, Jessica
VanPatten, Richard & Rosemarie
Viele, Randy
Volk, Anna
Weiss, Thomas
Wessells, Daniele
Wildgrube, Jean
Williams-Bond, Renee
Zarecki, Mark and Jessica

Sponsor up to \$499

Baig, Kamran
Barnaby, Sherry
Barney, Keith & Pat
Bell Brook Holding Inc.
Birbal, Annand
Bouton, Susan
Bubb, Ian G
Burdick, Lucille Y.
Chabot, Rachael
Chouffi, Audrey
Christman, Anne
Clark Financial Planning
Clark, Andrew & Melissa
Conwell, Robert
Coppola, Joanne
Curro, Stephen
Denisoff, Gail
Duesterdick, Paul & Tracey
Eastern Parkway United Methodist Church
Eslick, Jennifer
Fessel, Linda
First Reformed Church Of Scotia
Flood, Sharon
Fogg, Kevin & Jennifer
Fraternal Order Of Eagles Bell Jar
Gibelius, Nancy

Gosda, David & Patricia
Hallenstein, Alex & Betty
Hannafor: Bags 4 My Cause
Harrigan, Michael
Hebert, Clifford & Janet
Isabella, Mary F
Jennes, Peter & Wendy
Knapp, Richard M
Lane Press
Lauria, Mary
Lobo, Melvyn
Long, Rev. Robert
Macivor Brunner, Shari
MacNeal, Ellen
Mausert, Richard & Kathleen
Minakawa, Leina
Nelson, Dolores & Paul
Network For Good
O'Connor, Dennis & Wendy
Philbrick, Richard
Rizzo, Victoria
Roeser, Randall & Patricia
Sapovits, John
Schultz, Ellen
Seacord, John & Cynthia
Sheppard, Peter & Suzanne
Sisters of St. Joseph
Spencer, Chris
Stadium Gals
Stecher, Melinda
Stecher, Thomas & Helen
Stewarts Foundation
Stroble, Terry
Teresco, M J
Terwilliger, Cathy
Thatcher, Crystal
The Woodzell Family Gift Fund
Tobiessen, Jon & Nancy
Vaccaro, Nancy
Vivier, Barbara
Zimmerman, Ronald F

Patron up to \$999

Coker, Margaret
Coppola, Sharran A
Emmanuel Friedens Church
Gauci, Michael

Grant, James & Lynn
Guido, Annette
Lahon, Darryl
Mohawk Honda
Mortimore, Erica
Rivers Casino
Roach, Karen
Sheppard, John
Sheppard, Kimarie
SRG Architects
Thompson, Dorothy
Wood, Andrew & Anne

Citizen up to \$3,999

Benenson, Raymond & June
Dunkerley, Gary & Kathleen
Hassfurter, Jacquelyn
Khan, Genghis & Nahla
Lynwood Reformed Church
Pagano, Stephen & Judith
Porter, Don & Lois
Raushi, Thaddeus & Sylvia
Rooney, Kathleen
Sapone, John & Karen
Singh, Harbans
St. Kateri Tekakwitha Parish
The Coins Foundation
Werner, Richard & Eunice
Williams, Susan M

Advocate up to 13,500

First Reformed Church Of Schenectady
McCormick, Kevin

Cara House Foundation Grants & Donors

Dunkerley, Gary & Kathleen
Golub Family Foundation, Inc.
Guido, Annette
Lane Press
McCormick, Kevin
Sapone, John & Karen
Sheppard, John
Sheppard, Kimarie
The Carlilian Foundation
Werner, Richard & Eunice
Wright Family Foundation

Bethesda House is grateful to the individuals, congregations, businesses, and private foundations who donated from \$1 to \$13,000. Your generosity allows us to continue helping others by providing for basic needs in an environment that encourages and supports positive change.

We thank you and look forward to another successful year. Every donor is important to us. Our goal is to list each person or organization as the donor wishes. If your name does not appear as you would like it to, please contact the agency's Administration Assistant at either adminasst@bethesda.org or (518) 374-7873, ext. 116 so we may correct our records.

A very special Thank you to donors contributing through United Way, we are grateful that you chose to direct your donor dollars to Bethesda House of Schenectady, Inc. Thank you to donors who participate in the GE Match.

Thank you to donors who participate in Amazon Smiles, Clynk and other Hannafor fundraising initiatives.

Your gifts of spirit and generosity are deeply appreciated.

In-Kind Donors:

AllTowne Fresh	Our Redeemer Lutheran
Quick Response	Panera
Find Your Fabulosity	Price Chopper
CDPHP	Rivers Casino & Resort
Hannafor	Sharran A. Coppola
First Reformed Church of Schenectady	St. George Episcopal Church
Lynwood Reformed Church	St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
Bruegger's Bagels	St. George's of Clifton Park
Burnt Hills United Methodists Church	St. Kateri Tekakwitha
Capital Roots	St. Joseph's Catholic Church
Congregation of Agudat Achim	Scotia-Glenville
Eastern Parkway Methodist Church	Temple Gates of Heaven
Friendship Baptist Church	The Ladies Philotochos Society of
Immanuel Lutheran	St. George Greek Orthodox Church
Ladies of Charity Schenectady Vicarate	Union College
Niskayuna Boy Scout Troop 34 –	Unitarian Universalist Society
Scouting for Food	Burnt Hills – Ballston Lake
Lane Press of Albany	Women's Club

Honorarium/Memorial Name:

Marianne Sheppard	Mary Christoffel	Clarie Racicot	George Moffett	Mark Bonitatibus
June Schemerhorn	Robert Christoffel	Barbara Koster	June Schemerhorn	Linda Jateau

Bethesda House

Is an interfaith ministry to the homeless, disabled and economically disadvantaged citizens of Schenectady County, building a just, hospitable and inclusive community one person at a time by affirming the dignity and addressing the needs of each guest entering this House of Mercy.

Board of Directors

Cathy Terwilliger
President

Margaret Coker
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Karen Roach
Secretary

Andrew Clark
Michael Diffley
Dr. Gary Dunkerley
Richard Parsons
Abby Rockmacher
Kathleen Rooney
John Sapone
Jennifer Eslick

Bethesda House Administration

Kimarie A. Sheppard
Executive Director

Leina Minakawa
Director of Clinical, Case
Management, and Essential
Services

Crystal Thatcher
Director of Residential Services



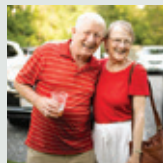
Design and Printing by Lane Press of Albany

Photography by Jessica Gravelin

FUNDRAISING

Fundraisers are the catalysts of change

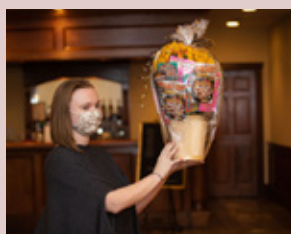
Fundraising helps a nonprofit to work towards a common goal, it motivates project and program planning, and it promotes program growth and development. Fundraising makes a difference! Bethesda House's Development Committee has regular meetings to plan our annual events to ensure they are successful, meaningful, and fun.



Cheers for Bethesda – August 12th.

We are deeply thankful to Wolf Hollow for hosting our Live Band Summer Fundraiser.

Our summer fundraiser events are designed to be light, fun, musical, and low cost to put on. August 12th brought together many friends, family, and co-workers. The band, North Side Sound was wonderful and by the end of the night, people were dancing.



Light Up Bethesda House

On October 21, 2021, Bethesda House's 11th Annual Fall Fundraiser was in full action! How exciting it was to see so many friends and supporters, many of whom have been part of the Agency for over 29 years.

We had a night full of raffles, TRIVIA, prizes, and FUN!

JD, derekd@mohawkhonda.com, led the TRIVIA festivities. Great conversation, laughter ringing throughout the room and an abundance of positive energy as the competition heightened.

Thank you to our Event Sponsors: Jacquelyn Hassfurter, COINS Foundation, Susan Williams, Mohawk Honda, SRG Architects, Gary & Kathleen Dunkerley, Kathleen Rooney, Stewarts Shops, Margaret Coker, Michael Harrigan and the Stadium Gals. **Thank you to our Table Sponsors:** Samuel & Dorothy Thompson, Kevin McCormick, Michael Gauci, Andrew & Anne Wood, and Karen Roach. **Thank you to our Honorary Committee members:** Keith & Pat Barney, Susan Bouton, Rachael Chabot, Andrew & Melissa Clark, Sharran A. Coppola, Stephen Curro, Gary & Kathleen Dunkerley, Annette Guido, Alex & Betty Hallenstein, Mary Isabella, Reverend Robert Long, Ellen MacNeal, Leina Minakawa, Randall & Patricia Roeser, John & Karen Sapone, Ellen Schultz, John & Cynthia Seacord, John Sheppard, Kimarie Sheppard, Terry Stroble, M J Teresco, Cathy Terwilliger, Crystal Thatcher, Nancy Vaccaro, Barbara Vivier, Paula Waselauskis, Richard & Eunice Werner, Andrew & Anne Wood, and Ronald Zimmerman.

Mark your calendars for October 2022 for our 12th Annual Event! In 2022, we have a lot to celebrate, 30 years of providing services to the homeless and vulnerable citizens in Schenectady County and the grand opening of our new residential facility, Cara House!