

Winter Newsletter 2020

Faces of Hearth

THE DIFFERENCE YOU'RE MAKING FOR SENIORS IN NEED



PLUS

The latest updates on your impact during the COVID-19 Pandemic

"YOU KEPT MY HOPE ALIVE"

How your gifts helped Ritchie find a home of his own





YOU KEPT MY HOPE ALIVE

RITCHIE - OUTREACH CLIENT

In June of 2014 I first found out that I was about to become homeless. At the time, living in Indiana and not wanting to face an extremely cold winter there, I relocated to Boston. Little did I know that I would spend the next four years living in and out of shelters around Boston, including two and a half years living in Boston's Southampton Street Shelter with 500 other men.

"You were instrumental in keeping my hopes alive that I would get a place!"

Through my case manager at the shelter, I first

learned about Hearth. For the first time in along time, I experienced hope that my homeless journey may be coming to an end.

After receiving help from Hearth case managers to replace vital records, secure financial assistance and being walked through the application process to secure an apartment, I finally learned that I had secured stable housing in late 2018. I never could have accomplished this without God and your support you provided during this time!

Since moving in, I've continued to receive steady support from Hearth from getting furniture and home goods for my apartment to helping connect me to resources in my neighborhood to help make sure I stay housed, especially now with the pandemic.

Since the pandemic began, I've lost six friends to COVID. It's truly been an eye opening reality! Without your support along the way in finding secure affordable housing, I don't know where I'd be today!

WHY I SUPPORT HEARTH

MARILYN MILLER

I am devoted to Hearth and its mission to end elder homelessness. I am thankful for its dedicated, compassionate staff, leadership, and board. The bottom line is that we fail as a country, as a society, and as individuals when our elders don't have homes. This is a societal problem that receives far too little attention. How can we allow this outrageous situation to continue?

My initial contact with Hearth came through golf. In the late 1990s, I had just joined the women's league at Boston's Franklin Park, and didn't know many members. As I waited on the tee, a grey-haired woman in a rakish beret arrived and began hugging everyone. That was my introduction to founder Anna Bissonnette and her trademark hugs. Through Anna, I became acquainted with Hearth. My initial volunteer efforts started small, focusing on the annual charity golf tournament, but my involvement grew from there to where I am now on Hearth's Board of Directors and have been a proud donor for over 20 years!

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues and aging baby boomers join the ranks of homeless older adults, your support, just like mine is more important than ever.



Will you call, please?

Unfortunately, for every story like Ritchie's, there are hundreds of others of older adults still living the twilight of their lives on the streets or in shelters around Boston.

We'd love to hear more about your commitment to ending elder homelessness.

617-369-1555

I ALMOST LOST EVERYTHING

"M" - HOMELESS PREVENTION CLIENT

Covid-19 completely changed everyone's life. Not only with the health part, but financially also. Lots of people lost their jobs or had their hours cut and are still on the verge of becoming homeless. As a result of the pandemic, my hours of work were severely cut, but I never lost faith to keep going. With not as much money coming in each month, I almost lost my apartment by being evicted. I was sure that I was going to lose my home and become homeless, but I never gave up hope. After a while of not knowing what to do, I received a call from Hearth. You were able to help me with my search for a new apartment and help me with rental assistance. You helped me just in time to prevent me from becoming homeless! I'm beyond grateful for your help!

What you can do today to help

- Make a donation to help prevent others like "M" from becoming homeless due to the pandemic.
- Sign up to virtually volunteer and enrich the lives of our formerly homeless elderly residents. www.hearth-home.org/virtual-volunteering
- Make a housewarming box for a recently housed elder. www.hearth-home.org/housewarmingbox

Thank you!

A MOST CHALLENGING YEAR

KEVIN MCCALL - BOARD CHAIR

For all of us, 2020 was a year of challenge. Through the Covid pandemic, racial unrest, economic recession, and political division, we learned a lot about resilience, commitment, and empathy. Are we truly resilient? Do we have the necessary commitment to our mission and values? Where do we register on the empathy meter? For Hearth, the challenge was amplified many fold as we cared for an older population with many "underlying conditions" (a term we heard over and over and over again beginning last Spring) making our residents among the most vulnerable of the vulnerable.

Yet Hearth, this small but extremely capable and nimble organization, rose to the challenge of keeping our residents healthy. When the staff pivoted many day-to-day operations to meet the newly emerging needs of our residents, they exhibited the reactivity needed

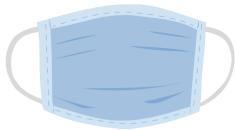
to, among other things, secure PPE, revise work schedules, and accommodate their own challenges of managing work and family during the lockdowns. Resilient? Definitely. Through it all, the team not only put in the extra hours but also identified new ways to get the job done forced upon them by the pandemic. Committed? 1000%. And, at the height of the surges and attendant isolation, Hearth staff and Board spent time and money attending to the mental health of our communities of residents without missing the similar needs of our team. Empathic? You bet

I could not be prouder of Hearth's response to the pandemic and all the obstacles it rained down on us all. Tough times either break organizations or motivate them to show their best. Hearth has risen to the challenge and demonstrated what true resilience, commitment, and empathy are.

I can confidently assure those who support Hearth that you are on a great team serving a needy and deserving population incredibly well. Thank you.

THE IMPACT OF YOUR GENEROUSITY

HOW YOU'VE HELPED SINCE THE START OF THE PANDEMIC



You provided over **2000** face masks and other forms of PPE



You provided almost **\$290,000** of emergency support



You helped **27** homeless elders find permanent affordable housing



You helped fulfill **166** requests for food and other essential supplies



You helped prevent **20** at-risk elders from becoming homeless



You donated close to **2000** food items to help stock our emergency pantry



Create A Legacy

When you remember **Hearth with a Legacy gift**, you sustain the fight to end elder homelessness for generations to come.

Have you already included **Hearth** or are interested in including **Hearth** in your estate plan?

Let us know!

Contact **Chief Advancement Officer, Dana Green:**
dgreen@hearth-home.org
617-369-1555

LIKE A BULLET WITHOUT A NAME ON IT

ONE STAFF MEMBER'S JOURNEY THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

KELLY MCCALL - PERSONAL CARE HOMEMAKER

March 25, 2020 I first received a fax from my doctor stating that I was at a high risk due my asthma and diabetes. I was told that I need to stay home until further notice from the CDC. After several weeks of treating what my doctors thought was a flare up in my asthma, I was recommended to take a COVID-19 test at Brigham and Women's Respiratory Clinic.

The next morning I received the call letting me know that I had tested positive. I was speechless as I tried to figure out where I could have caught it. I was then told that I would need to quarantine for 14 days...or so I thought. After completing my initial 14 day quarantine, and then consulting my doctors,

they recommended that I continue to quarantine due to my high factors. All in all, I would spend the next 46 days in quarantine! While some of the tell tale symptoms of COVID have subsided, seven months later, I still have times when I experience shortness of breath, chills in my back and extreme tiredness. I consider myself lucky though, my sister suffered a stroke due to COVID and is now partially paralyzed.

I was finally able to return to work in July, but it was almost like I was coming back to a new job. Everything had changed! It wasn't just a tough adjustment for me though, many residents I work with have had a hard time adjusting to new norms of no communal meals, no visitors, limited or no gatherings and regular mask use.

This virus has been like a bullet without a name on it, it spares no one if you come in contact with it. I pray that people will start taking it more seriously and do what needs to be done. Then maybe, everyone, including me and all the residents at **Hearth** will be able to find our new normal.

ADOPT-A-ROOM

*BE THE DIFFERENCE IN THE LIFE OF
A FORMERLY HOMELESS ELDER*

FOR 19 OF HEARTH AT FOUR CORNERS' NEW RESIDENTS, COMPLETION OF THIS PROJECT WILL END THEIR CYCLE OF HOMELESSNESS.

Many of these new residents will be moving in with few to no possessions and almost no means of purchasing home essentials for themselves.

We need YOUR help to ensure these homeless elders are guaranteed a fully furnished apartment on move in day

To learn more and sign up to Adopt-A-Room, please visit: hearth-home.org/adoptaroom



HOUSEWARMING BOXES



Support an older adult transitioning off the streets or out of a shelter into an apartment of their own by making a Housewarming Box.

Boxes include supplies that will help formerly homeless seniors make a fresh start and transform their new apartments into a place that feels like home.

When you make a Housewarming Box filled with much needed supplies, you are also helping to give newly housed seniors the ability to make rent payments and purchase groceries by freeing up valuable funds that they would have otherwise had to devote to purchasing new items for their apartment.

Not only will you provide essentials but more importantly, HOPE and ENCOURAGEMENT!

To learn more and sign up to make a box, please visit: hearth-home.org/housewarmingbox