

## UPDATE: WORKFORCE AND LIFE DEVELOPMENT

This year, Friends of Guest House launched the Workforce and Life Development Program. The program offers a wide variety of classes that incorporate a balance of workforce development, life skills and recreation. Classes include resume writing, interviewing skills, healthy relationships, financial literacy, career exploration and legal education.

Graduates will obtain career-focused employment with a livable wage to support themselves and their families. For those returning from incarceration, achieving financial security through long-term, sustainable employment is a proven cornerstone of reentry success.

We are working with employers to give our women jobs, internships or shadowing opportunities. Our employer partners include: Your Dog's Best Friends, AlphaGraphics Old Town and Grand Hyatt Place DC.

## FROM KARI'S DESK

Positive growth and progressive thought always lead us in new directions at Guest House. This fall, we are undertaking several exciting projects in our quest to serve more women and their families. Thanks to the Philip L. Graham Fund and the Peter & Mary Levin Family Foundation, we are revamping our website and social media channels as well as greatly strengthening outreach through internet marketing. Please stay tuned: we think you'll like what you see, and we ask you to share our work with your friends, too!

We are wrapping up a strategic planning process, thanks to ACT for Alexandria and its generous donor-advised funds. Lots of new challenges and solutions are on the table. One of the most important is still expansion—for example, we need more beds for our Residential Program, whose wait list now averages 300 women at any given time.

Adding a new dimension to strategic planning, we are also undergoing a strategic-alignment process, facilitated pro bono by the Compass organization. Thank you, Compass!



We'll have much to report in the near future. Meanwhile, thanks for walking by our side. You help make this good work possible!

With gratitude,  
*Kari Carloway*  
executive director



Residents in the "Surviving to Thriving" class.



Giving Circle of HOPE provided the grant money for FoGH to pilot the Workforce and Life Development Program.

## ENTER TO WIN A NEW CAR

Thanks to Jack Taylor's Alexandria Toyota, we are raffling off a



brand new 2016 Scion iA. The drawing will be held Saturday, October 21, 2017, at the Friends of Guest House office in Alexandria. Tickets are \$100 each. Only 399 tickets will be sold and the winner does not need to be present to win.

We'd like to thank the Del Ray Farmer's Market for giving us opportunities to sell tickets on two Saturday mornings—in the process, making many new friends as well!

We also thank Beth El Hebrew Congregation in Alexandria for allowing us to sell tickets at its Mother's Day Brunch. It was a pleasure to meet all of you!







Volunteers accompany residents on various community outings.

## RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM EXTENDS

In an important expansion, clients in our Residential Program can now stay for up to six months—as opposed to the previous maximum of three. The longer stay gives clients the opportunity to take more personal development classes, pursue workforce development skills, explore career opportunities and save money in preparation for their transition to independent living in the Aftercare Program.



Thanks to our many community partners that provide outstanding services to our residents. Back on My Feet is one such partner. Back on My Feet volunteers meet interested Residential clients for early morning (5:45 a.m.) walks or runs, three days a week. In addition, clients can participate in local 5K races with the Back on My Feet Team (currently, several are on the team). Getting outside to move is a great way for everyone to start the day! Thank you, Back on My Feet and Back on My Feet volunteers.

Interested in an ongoing volunteer opportunity? Email us at [volunteer@friendsofguesthouse.org](mailto:volunteer@friendsofguesthouse.org)

## AFTERCARE PROGRAM: "WOMEN THRIVE IN THE COMMUNITY"

The Friends of Guest House Aftercare Program, like the Residential Program, has seen a lot of changes this year. It is truly a blessing to watch our women thrive in the community.

Our biggest addition is our flagship Second Chance Community. We secured a beautiful home in the West End section of Alexandria, which provides safe, affordable housing

for aftercare clients. The Second Chance Community gives more women the opportunity to stay in Northern



Virginia and continue to rebuild their lives. We plan to establish more such communities in the near future, so great is the need.

We'd like to thank all the local businesses that provide resources to our Aftercare clients. For example, Mara Benner, owner of Four Directions Wellness, offers holistic healing services to several of our clients through the Reiki Certification Program.

Community support—coupled with affordable housing, stable incomes and healthcare—allow Aftercare women to truly change their lives. All that hard work of change is recognized at our annual Aftercare Graduation. This year's graduation will be on Saturday, October 21.

## BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Neil Gillespie joined the Friends of Guest House Board of Directors in 2015 and was elected Chair the following year. When he first learned about Guest House from Board member Pat Collins, he was impressed! As Chair, his goals for Guest House include: (1) expanding to accommodate and support the nearly 400 women who apply annually for the 52 beds available in the residential program, and (2) increasing awareness of Guest House and its best practices for female re-entry.

Neil retired from Booz Allen Hamilton as Senior Partner after 29 years specializing in the defense sector. In 2009, the Society of Women Engineers presented to Neil the Harvey Chipp Award for "diversity demonstrated by a business leader"; he was Booz Allen's first recipient of that award.

Neil currently also serves on the Boards of Carpenter's Shelter and The Men's Home, the latter serving recovering alcoholics.

Neil graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1977 with a degree in Oceanography. He served as a Surface Warfare Officer from 1977 to 1982 and was in the Naval Reserves from 1982 to 1997, when he retired as a commander.



Friends of Guest House clients experience Reiki with the Four Directions Wellness Reiki Certification Program participants.



Reentry leaders Dallice Joyner, Kari Galloway, and Catherine Read welcome the audience.



Supporters gather to hear panelists' stories.



Panelists Danyelle, Jenny, Terry and Kaamilya with moderator Catherine Read.



Residents are able to draw on transportation funds to get to needed appointments and services.

## OUR CLIENTS: "BETTER THAN BEFORE" AT BUSBOYS AND POETS

"Better than Before" was hosted on Tuesday, September 12, at Busboys and Poets in Shirlington. The event was a moderated discussion on the unique challenges women face reentering the community from incarceration. More than 85 people attended.



Sheila reads her original poem, "You Don't Know Me."

The four panelists, current and former Friends of Guest House clients, shared their experiences: the trying circumstances that contributed to their involvement in the criminal justice system. Stacey Picard, Director and Story Coach at The Urban Stories Project, worked with each panelist to prepare for the event. In addition to the panel, there was a poetry reading by two Guest House clients. According to the Vera Institute, 86% of incarcerated women have experienced sexual violence, 77% have experienced partner violence and 60% have experienced caregiver violence. The women who spoke at Busboys and Poets put poignant, human faces on those numbers—and considering the graphic, personal nature of the material, they showed great bravery, too.

Thank you, Busboys and Poets, for hosting us and providing such an incredible venue!

Thanks to Catherine Read of [www.readthinkact.com](http://www.readthinkact.com), who moderated the panel. And thanks to the many individuals who made contributions at the event.

The Friends of Guest House Speaker's Bureau, through events like "Better than Before," shares the personal side of female incarceration and community reentry. If you are interested in hosting a speaker at an upcoming event, email us at [info@friendsofguesthouse.org](mailto:info@friendsofguesthouse.org).

## DONOR SPOTLIGHT: KRIS KEYDEL

Jobs, affordable housing, training, childcare, healthcare and other essential services are spread out all over Northern Virginia; and it's a big region. To reach them, our women often take several buses and make multiple transfers on Metro, which are not only time consuming but very expensive for reentering women getting back on their feet.

Recognizing the problem, Kris Keydel made a generous donation of \$5,000 to our Transportation Fund. Today, Guest House clients can draw on the Fund for Metro and bus fare as well as group transportation as needed and emergency transportation when public transit is impractical.



# SPRING2ACTION DONORS FUND GUEST HOUSE REPAIRS

On April 5, 2017, Friends of Guest House participated in Spring2ACTION: ACT for Alexandria's annual online fundraiser. Generous donors contributed more than \$32,000! Those funds were to help replace the siding and make other structural repairs to our nearly 100-year-old house. "Alexandria truly is an extraordinary city," said Executive Director Kari Galloway, "and we are so grateful to be a part of this community and part of ACT's family of grantees!"

At this writing, we have completed siding repairs and replacements. The House, an "iconic" yellow for so many years, is now a cool and comforting gray. Porch repairs are scheduled to be completed this fall.

Special thanks the following donors: the Mason Hirst Foundation at \$13,000, the Rita Susswein Gottesman Fund at \$1,000, the Christopher Brown and Mimi Conger Fund at \$1,000 and the Ross Family Fund at \$500.



*After much needed repairs and renovations to the Guest House.*



*The Guest House in need of repairs.*



*Signs of much needed repair at the Guest House.*

## TAKING FEMALE MASS INCARCERATION HEAD ON

According to "Mass Incarceration and its Impacts are Devastating to Women," a blog post from the Vera Institute by Charmaine Davis, "The pathways through which women enter the justice system are different from those of men. Women entering prisons and jails are much more likely to have experienced poverty, intimate partner violence, sexual abuse, or other forms of victimization..."

Guest House is committed to providing services tailored to the unique needs of women returning to the community. Guest House provides direct services and referrals to address the root causes of female incarceration.

For example, all residents participate in the "Seeking Safety" group. "Seeking Safety" addresses both trauma and addiction and provides clients with safe coping skills and tools. These skills and tools, coupled with many additional tailored support services, give Friends of Guest House program graduates the ability to successfully return to their communities. As a result, program graduates have a recidivism rate of less than 10%, well below the national average of 70%.



*Every day Guest House receives several letters from currently incarcerated women inquiring about our programs.*

## NEW APPLICATIONS EVERY DAY

The need for the Residential Program at Friends of Guest House is overwhelming. Every day, we receive an average of seven applications from potential clients and up to 20 inquiries from current inmates as well as friends and relatives of inmates who want to help their loved ones transition from incarceration to the community. Your support allows us to serve more women and continue to expand our programs!

## GET INVOLVED WITH GUEST HOUSE

Volunteers, mentors and donors are always appreciated. Donations can be made via our website: [www.FriendsofGuestHouse.org](http://www.FriendsofGuestHouse.org) or by using the enclosed remittance envelope. Donations to Friends of Guest House—a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization (Federal tax ID #51-0201327)—are deductible to the full extent of the law.



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