

SPRING 2020 NEWSLETTER

KEEPING OUR CLIENTS SAFE, THANKS TO YOU

FIRST, HOW ARE YOU? We're thinking of you and hope this finds you safe and well.

As a "friend" of Guest House, you are likely wondering how things are going here. We're taking it one day at a time, adjusting our operations as circumstances evolve, and prioritizing the health and safety of the women we serve.

We couldn't do this without you. Friends of Guest House remains open, providing all of its regular services and adding needed services. We've had to make changes to the way we work, but the work continues. **The women at Guest House need its promise now, more than ever.**

Our clients are particularly vulnerable to the negative effects of COVID-19 and will rely heavily on Friends of Guest House in the coming week and months. We will be here for them now, and when this is all over. **Will you help us?**



Friends of Guest House clients, familiar with uncertainty and a lifetime of resiliency, are persevering during the COVID-19 crisis thanks to the support of Guest House, the community, and supporters like you.

THREE WAYS TO HELP



Spring2ACTION

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 2020 IS SPRING2ACTION. Our goal is to raise \$70,000 to support Northern Virginia's reentering women in this time of great need. We have \$34,000 in matching grants from the following generous donors: Mason-Hirst Foundation, Neil Gillespie, Rita Susswein Gottesman Fund, Martha and Scott Harris Fund, Davis-Kenimer Fund, and the Ross Family Fund.

Every dollar you give (up to \$34,000) becomes TWO. Early giving starts 4/3 and runs through 4/15. Donate here: bit.ly/FoGHspring2action (link is case sensitive).



Amazon Wishlist

Thanks to wonderful supporters like you, our clients have felt the support of the community during this challenging time. To everyone who sent coloring books, word searches and puzzles—you're amazing. Check out our Amazon wish list for other needed and useful items: bit.ly/foghamazon



No-cost ways to help

Friends, we know this is likely a tough time for you, too. Looking for a no cost way to help?

- Record an audio or video message on your cell phone and email to Marisa (marisa@friendsofguesthouse.org). She'll share it with our clients to they know you are thinking of them
- Write a note to our clients to let them know they aren't alone, and the community still cares about them. Mail to:
 - » Friends of Guest House Clients, 1 East Luray Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22301
 - » Friends of Guest House Clients, 120 S Payne Street, Alexandria, VA 22314



Clients use virtual platforms to participate in Friends of Guest House programming, meet with their case managers and communicate with their families during the COVID-19 crisis.

RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM KEEPS ITS DOORS OPEN

- COVID-19 tries to stop our vital programming
- Staff, clients, and supporters like you work together to ensure programming continues

Our Residential Program continues to provide a safe home to our clients. We're following all recommendations from the CDC and Alexandria Health Department to ensure the health and safety of our clients and staff. We are also committed to continuing to provide critical services for women who are transitioning from incarceration back into the community.

There are peaks and valleys for our clients, which is understandable given the circumstances. One thing that is challenging for our clients is the similarity to

incarceration. But supporters like you, who've sent items from our wish list, ordered dinner for our clients from local restaurants, and made donations to keep our doors open, help to improve morale.



Program Director, Dan Mallon, hosts his Resource Acquisition class with clients via Zoom.

WORKFORCE AND LIFE DEVELOPMENT LAUNCHES VIRTUAL CLASSES

- Virtual classes hosted daily
- New career initiative begins for clients with long-time employment partner, UPIC Health

WITH HELP FROM SUPPORTERS LIKE YOU, we're working hard to keep a sense of structure and consistency in the midst of so much turmoil. Our Workforce and Life Development Program adapts daily to evolving circumstances and to meet our clients' needs.

Class facilitators are holding classes virtually and staff members have filled gaps in the schedule when able. In order to host virtual classes, we've made some investments in technology including hardware and upgraded internet capabilities.

We've also been able to launch a new initiative with our long-time partner, UPIC Health. UPIC generally teaches an 8-week job readiness course to our clients to prepare them to reenter the workforce in client-facing roles, including the healthcare sector. Due to increased demand for their services, the timeline of the course was accelerated to two weeks, with sessions occurring twice per day. At the culmination of the course, Friends of Guest House clients will be eligible for part-time positions as patient navigators with UPIC Health, working remotely to field in-bound calls for clients seeking healthcare services.

"I wish I could be interviewing for jobs right now and am feeling a little stuck, but I know this is the right place for me. I am safe here and the staff is very good to me."

Candace



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