



Fourth of July BBQ

For the second year in a row, the Hospitality Center hosted a BBQ to celebrate the 4th of July. About 75 clients, staff and neighbors were treated to a feast of hamburgers, hotdogs, chicken, ribs, homemade potato salad, garlic green beans and fruit, followed by dessert, compliments of Mister Softee. Our grill master, Sidney Williams, provided and kept everyone well fed.

the meat



FOLLOW US ON

Instagram

@norristown.hospitality.center

A portion of the cost of printing this newsletter was donated by **Negril Printing Company** in Norristown. Thank You!

Get updates on upcoming events and a behind the scenes look at donors, volunteers, staff, and clients!

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
Norristown Ministries, Inc.
330 Church Street, 1st floor
Norristown, PA 19401

Norristown Ministries Inc. Hospitality Center

Empowering those experiencing Homelessness and Poverty

SUMMER 2018

Norristown Ministries Inc. Hospitality Center • 530 Church Street • 1st floor • Norristown, PA 19401 • 610-277-1321 • hospitalitycenter.org



A Note from the Executive Director

One shared universal truth is that a person or a group of people is only as strong as the foundation that they are standing on. Without a strong foundation it is impossible to build anything that will last.

A huge part of this year's investment was about solidifying the foundation namely, strengthening the infrastructure. What began as a shower room renovation soon took on a life of its own to involve the floor and the kitchen. I was so encouraged/gratified to see the community's support in completing the project.

A sound infrastructure is a necessity for implementing programs to create impact. I am excited to announce to you that we are initiating new programs at the Center this fall. From being a Center that provides basic needs and social services, we will now explore options to create meaningful programs that are geared towards workforce development. The Center is moving forward with intention!

We will be offering - "The Getting Ahead in a Just Gettin'-By World" Workshop, developed by Aha! Process and Bridges Out of Poverty constructs. Getting Ahead is unique in that it deals with the realities of individual choices, community conditions, exploitation, and the political/economic systems that contribute to poverty and helps participants envision living their lives differently.

This will be followed by our work program which will start in January next year. We are excited to partner with businesses in the community in training and assisting people in getting back to work. The salient features of this program will be, providing a week long work readiness training, connecting participants with employers in the community and following them for a year by providing ongoing support to remove barriers to obtaining and maintaining employment.

We are very excited to launch these programs at the Hospitality Center and invite you to create impact in our community through your support.

Thank you
Sunanda

Sunanda Charles, MSW
Executive Director

The Hospitality Center was created from true and simple love for people. It is a home during the day for anyone who otherwise would be left hungry, weary, or living on the streets.

Our Mission

"Motivated by God's love, the center provides basic needs and social services to empower those experiencing homelessness and poverty."



Partner With Us

- Make a monetary gift to the Center
- Designate your United Way contribution to the Hospitality Center (United Way Southeastern PA #06283, United Way Tri-State #036-649)
- Have your Amazon purchases benefit the Hospitality Center by using [amazonsmile.com](https://www.amazon.com.smile/) and setting Norristown Ministries Inc. as your chosen charity
- Volunteer: 610-277-1321, x108 or volunteer@hospitalitycenter.org
- Donate needed items
- Continue to pray for the work of the Hospitality Center

5th Annual Sole Harvest 5k

Join us for the **5th annual Sole Harvest Race on Saturday, October 13th at 9am at the Norristown Farm Park!** All proceeds go directly to keeping our doors open and our programs running. Race day includes breakfast by Chick-fil-a, basket raffles and free giveaways. After the race, head over to Elmwood Park Zoo, as all race registrants receive free entrance to the zoo on race day. Register online or by mail for either the 5K run or 1 mile walk. More information can be found at www.hospitalitycenter.org/soleharvest5K



Renovations and Restructuring

At the end of January we temporarily relocated next door to St. John's Episcopal Church while we renovated the floors, showers and kitchen at the center. It turned out to be a larger project than expected with at least 25 volunteers working for 4 months to complete the flooring and the kitchen renovations. We want to thank St. John's Episcopal Church as well as our volunteers from the Lions Club of Oaks, Fairview Village Church, our regular volunteers and Board members who made these renovations possible. We acknowledge the financial support of the Health Spark Foundation, Fairview Village Church, the Messiah Methodist Church, St. John's Episcopal Church and Mr. Dave Akers.

In an effort to streamline our services we reached out to our community partners to see where our services overlapped. After a considerable amount of research and discussion with the Board, other agencies and our clients, it was decided that we would no longer operate on Saturdays. We have ensured that there are other resources available for our clients on the days we are closed.



Gale joined the Center staff at the beginning of April 2018. For the last 6 years, she served overseas with an international faith based non-profit in Santiago de Compostela, Spain. With both fundraising and volunteer management experience, the role of Development Coordinator feels like a natural fit. She is excited to be serving those who may normally be overlooked or marginalized. In her free time she freelances as a video editor, cuddles with her adorable baby nephews and hangs out with her dog, Jim.

Partnering with Other Non-profits to Help Ex-Offenders

Did you know that 6 out of 10 inmates return to prison after being released? Many lack the resources and support to move forward and have trouble reintegrating back into the community. Out of the 709 people who received social services last year, 413 were new and 50 of them had recently been released from prison. The center was able to facilitate their re-entry into the community. This year we have the opportunity to partner with 2 different organizations, Liberty Ministries and Hope Worx Inc, who specialize in education and reintegration of ex-offenders. Partnering with these two wonderful organizations allows us to better equip our clients to be successful and productive in society.



Volunteer Spotlight- Jonathan Mueller

Jonathan is 20 years old and started volunteering with us May 2017 along with his mother Laurie in our mailroom. He has since started serving one morning a week by himself and we have seen him grow immensely during his time with us. His attention to detail keeps our mailroom organized and structured. In January, when we moved to our temporary space, Jonathan helped to ensure the mailroom was moved and set up correctly. Many times, he has joined his mom to come after mail hours to sort and clean out old mail or cover a fellow mailroom volunteer's shift. This month Jonathan will be leaving us to start at Kutztown University. He was accepted into their Autism Support Program and will be studying Video Production. We are so excited to see where the Lord leads and uses him in this next chapter!



Client Testimonials (The names of the clients have been changed for anonymity.)



Meet John. John has been a client since 2001. John lost his apartment and became homeless after the loss of his job and some issues with addiction. He came to Norristown and spent many months out on the streets before the staff at the Hospitality Center got him connected to the men's shelter at the Salvation Army and the welfare office, where he received food stamps and medical care. Even after getting into a shelter, he continued to come to the Center every day, because he stated, "This is where I feel safe and supported." In May, John came in to the Center with a smile on his face and keys to his new apartment. Often you will see John cleaning up the Center or taking out the trash. John has been an invaluable part of the kitchen renovation as well as the new office space next to it. Working alongside one of our contractors, John has helped install the cabinets, fix and replace the ceiling tiles, hang the new doors, paint and put in trim. Always willing to lend a helping hand, John has truly given back more to the Center than he has ever received.

Gary's Story - Gary came to the center in April 2018 because he lost his job due to the company closing operations. He worked hard to find day labor work and was employed intermittently as he discovered opportunities. Gary was homeless and spent many days and evenings sleeping in the woods. With the help of many available resources, we were able to obtain a tent for him, clothing and food. Gary utilized our food pantry and was able to cook meals at his camp location. In July, he was facing knee surgery and our Case Manager Donna was able to give him spiritual support at the hospital and provide a Septa card to keep his many follow up appointments. Gary was able to obtain housing and is now living in an apartment. Gary came into the center recently and said, "You have no idea how much you have done for me". Gary's story is unique because in helping Gary, we were able to see his motivation to move to a better life and to have the skills to deal with many obstacles. When Gary is in full recovery from his operation, he feels a strong passion to volunteer and share his story from darkness to light because of the staff and resources that the Norristown Ministries Hospitality Center provides on any day. Gary is now facing a possibility of more surgery and we will continue to support him and aid in any resources that will make his recovery optimal. Gary is facing this new bump in the road with optimism and hope because he has learned the many resources and support available to meet his daily needs.