

Wellspring House, Inc.
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Gloucester, Massachusetts 01930

www.wellspringhouse.org

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The Newsletter of Wellspring House, Inc., Gloucester, Massachusetts
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UPCOMING EVENTS *Mark your calendars! Save the Date!*

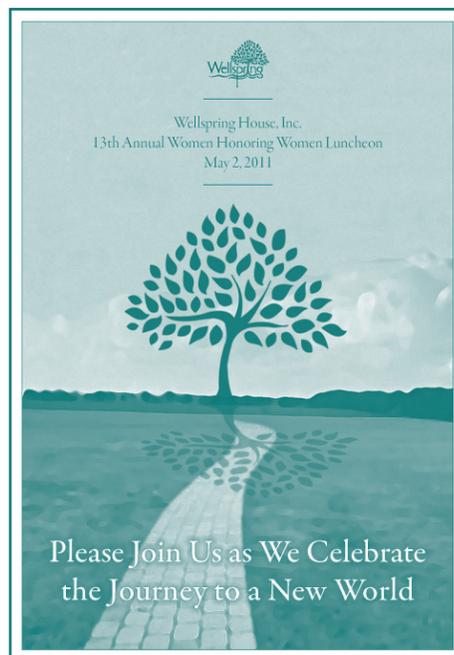
Wellspring's 13th Annual Women Honoring Women Luncheon is set to take place on **Monday, May 2** at the Crown Plaza North Shore in Danvers. We are pleased to announce Elisabeth Griffith PhD., an award-winning author, historian and educator, as our keynote speaker. Elisabeth's biography of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, *In Her Own Right*, was named as "one of the best books of the century" by the editors of *The New York Times Book Review* and "one of the five best books on women's history" by the *Wall Street Journal* in 2009. Elisabeth was a consultant for the Ken Burns' PBS Biography Series, "Not for Ourselves Alone: Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony" which was inspired by her book.

We are also delighted for the opportunity to honor Pam Hawes, an educator from Brookwood School, who has been instrumental in partnering the two organizations together, and Leslee Shlopak, former chair of Wellspring's board of directors and community philan-

thropist. Both Leslee and Pam have contributed significantly to our work and mission. Please mark your calendar and plan to join us as we celebrate our program participant's successes as they embrace the journey of navigating out of poverty and homelessness into a life of self-sustenance.



For more information about how you can participate in this year's Women Honoring Women Luncheon please visit our website at www.wellspringhouse.org



EVENT COMMITTEE

Co-chairs	Jenny Knowles
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...	Christine Lundberg, Board
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Dyane Cotreau	Leslee Shlopak
Eliza Cowan	Elaine Souza
Caroline Hovey, Board Chair	Darcey Yerkes

Please visit our website: www.wellspringhouse.org



It's never too late to change...

THE MYTH OF DESPAIR AND HOPELESSNESS SAYS WE ARE POWERLESS AND NOTHING EVER CHANGES. One of the great joys of being at Wellspring is that everyday we get to witness the truth – the unlimited creative power of our spirits that can remake our lives at any moment. Every day there is opportunity for creation, renewal, and redemption. Experience and past failures are learned from, and a new story about ourselves and our community is written.

- Homes
- Jobs
- Education

Our work helps the homeless get homes, the unemployed jobs, and education that can make dreams a reality. This work is really a journey that has the ability to liberate the human spirit. And we must be awake to create a new reality and realize our dreams. Poverty is not just a lack of basic necessities required to sustain our physical bodies.

SUPPORT WELLSPRING'S ANNUAL FUND

As we refine and reshape our education programs to better serve our participants, we ask that you consider making a gift to our Annual Fund to help us with this important work. Bringing the knowledge and skills necessary to pursue a higher education experience to our participants dramatically increases the odds that they will move beyond the cycle of poverty. Help us to make this possibility a reality by making a gift today.

To donate online visit us at: <http://www.wellspringhouse.org/>

Checks should be sent to Wellspring House, 302 Essex Avenue, Gloucester MA

The most crippling poverty is found in the myth of hopelessness and a sense of worthlessness. Together we create a new reality.

WELLSPRING NEVER GIVES UP ON ANYONE...

The power of our work together is undeniable. Over and over we hear from our participants a sense of gratitude not only for those who have worked with them directly, but recognition of the many who have made the work possible through their financial support and in-kind donations. That you have come together with us to help make life better for a stranger is deeply moving and a source of hope for all. It reveals the reality of our deep connections to each other, seen and unseen.

BRING 'EM HOME....

A radical re-structuring of the shelter system in Massachusetts has been proposed. The core of the proposal shifts resources to helping families stay in or find housing in their communities, and away from emergency shelter. Wellspring supports this Housing First approach and also advocates for changes in the proposal which would protect families dealing with disabilities and illness.

Wellspring also strongly supports changes in public policies that would help families to move off assistance and



Kay O'Rourke, Wellspring's Executive Director

increase their ability to work. A slight increase in a family's income can result in being penalized with the severe and immediate loss of critical benefits like healthcare, food, and daycare. Known as the "cliff effect" our current public policies act as a disincentive for families to increase their incomes as they often cannot bridge the income gap fast enough to offset the

loss in benefits. Without changes in the public policies, the Housing First initiative will not be successful in the long term. Please talk to your state and federal representatives about the need for comprehensive public policies that will help families to Bridge the Gap. ■

Kay O'Rourke
Executive Director

WELLSPRING'S WORK IS:

**PASSION
PURPOSE
PATHS OUT OF POVERTY**

"Since 1981, Wellspring House has provided adult education and job training, mentoring programs, housing advocacy and emergency shelter to help individuals and families on Cape Ann and the North Shore move out of poverty and live more fulfilling lives."

WELLSPRING FOSTERS A RELATIONSHIP WITH VETERANS MEMORIAL SCHOOL

In an effort to better serve members of the Cape Ann community, Wellspring's executive director, Kay O'Rourke, has begun a conversation with Gloucester's Veterans Memorial Elementary School, about partnering together to help address the many issues and challenges that can be found in a school system. It is difficult to maintain the integrity of the learning process with such scarcity of supplies and inevitably it is the children who suffer. Wellspring House and Brookwood School have enjoyed a strong relationship for nearly 15 years. During which time they have worked teamed up on a number of projects. This year, Brookwood has graciously agreed to gift the new and gently used books from its BookBash to Wellspring. The books received from the event will be used by Wellspring's shelter guests and will also be shared with Veterans Memorial School as we begin to work collaboratively with them to strengthen the programs and increase the resources available to the students and their families. ■



Cheryllann Parker (right), the principal of Veterans Memorial Elementary School and the school's adjustment counselor, Diana Fullerton, welcome the gift of new and gently used books which will help to boost the resources available to their students.

WELLSPRING HOUSE – BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2010-2011

Kay O'Rourke, President & Executive Director	Betsy Brown	Ruth Pino
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GIGGLES FOR WELLSPRING



Wellspring extends its sincere thanks to Trisha and Steven Castraberti for graciously hosting the 2nd Annual Giggles for Wellspring event on Thursday, January 20th at their restaurant, Prince Pizzeria, in Saugus, MA. Ticket sales, donations and both live and silent auction bids raised a significant amount of unrestricted revenue for Wellspring House. 100% of the proceeds will be used to support Wellspring's programs. The evening's talented comedians were a humorous and effective way of drawing attention to Wellspring's important work and securing the support needed to continue serving the families in our community. A big thank you to all who participated in Giggles for Wellspring.

"ALI" Graduation

On February 14, 2011 Wellspring held its most recent graduation for the participants of the Adult Learning Initiative (ALI). Below is a photo taken to commemorate the day as well as a note of appreciation written by a student:

Dear ALI Staff,

Well, it seems we've come to the end. There are a few things I would like to express.

I have had losses in my life. For a very long time they defined who I am, where I have dared to stand. These experiences have complicated my views and heightened my shortcomings. These binds have used up my thoughts and gained too much power, leaving me always wanting.

I found myself in a position of opportunity. I have felt an impact. The ALI program, the people involved have given freely to me. I have gained knowledge. I found an understanding surpassing "safe" without constraints.

I have formed a relationship with people I admire. To each of you I warmly say Thank you, and acknowledge that my views have changed. Thanks to your guidance and support, genuinely given.

Extended Thanks,
Anonymous



Gathered together are some of the members of Wellspring's Adult Learning Initiative Class of February 2011.

Yissania Sanchez



Yissania Sanchez is a graduate of Wellspring's Fall 2010-2011 **MediClerk Class**. While a student in the MediClerk program, Yissania began working in the medical field as an intern in at the Union Hospital emergency room. After successfully completing the program, Yissania was hired as a unit secretary at North Shore Medical Center.

MediClerk – QUICK FACTS:

- MediClerk graduated 90% of its students in the past year.
- The program has an impressive 82% job placement rate.
- The average starting wage post graduation is \$14 an hour, which is \$6 above minimum wage.
- Graduates have been hired by North Shore Medical Center, the North Shore Physicians Group, Bay Ridge Hospital, Partners Healthcare, Boston Medical Center and the Independent Living Center.

WELLSPRING WELCOMES FAMILY STABILIZATION CASE MANAGER

This past September, **Rachel Loose** joined Wellspring's staff as our full-time housing stabilization case manager. In this capacity, Rachel works closely with the families who have come through our shelter and are transitioning from homelessness to situations of permanent housing. Most of these families receive some form of eviction prevention assistance, like flex funds, which make it possible for them to afford their current apartments. Because such support is not a permanent solution families must learn how they will cope when their mandated period of assistance comes to an end. Rachel's primary focus in working with families is teaching them how to set and achieve realistic goals that will ultimately result in creating stability in terms of their housing, employment and general well-being.



Rachel Loose, Wellspring's Housing Stabilization Officer.

mental health issues, gaps in education and gaining access to marketable job skills. In these instances, Rachel provides guidance and offers concrete recommendations to help families address all that comes along with having a low income including getting children into daycare, transportation needs and communication access for non-english speakers. In addition, Rachel identifies where families can find healthy social support systems and other local resources. On a regular basis, Rachel checks in to assess where they stand with their responsibilities and the goals they've set for themselves.

Successfully fulfilling the goals set before them, like setting up meetings with career centers to explore employment possibilities, allows parents to feel ownership and a sense of responsibility in the progression from helplessness to empowerment. Rachel's focus on equipping families with this skill-set

does a great deal to increase the potential for an individual to move beyond the cycle of poverty. This is quintessentially what Wellspring aims to achieve in all its work. ■

Families in the tenuous state between homelessness and sustainable housing often find themselves grappling with how best to manage the status of their income, their health and the health of their children. Families face obstacles like unemployment,

WELLSPRING WISH LIST

- 10-12 cup Coffee Pot with automatic shut off
- Commercial Size Coffee Pot (40+ cups)
- Pillows
- Towels
- Twin sheet sets
- Twin Comforters
- Newborn Diapers Size 5
- (3) Pack 'N Plays
- (3) strollers
- Volunteers are needed for the Spring Clean Up being held on Saturday, May 14th at 9:00 a.m. at Wellspring House.



Sarah Campbell, director of shelter services, with baby Connor helps families maintain stability while transitioning from Wellspring's shelter to more permanent housing.

For more information about our programs, please visit our website: www.wellspringhouse.org