# Wellspring

Wellspring House, Inc. 302 Essex Avenue Gloucester, Massachusetts 01930

www.wellspringhouse.org

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# Wellspring

The Newsletter of Wellspring House, Inc., Gloucester, Massachusetts VOL. 31, NO.2 FALL 2012

# **How Your Beauty is Saving the World**

In this season of gratitude I am reminded that it is your giving to Wellspring that is making the world a better place. Homes . Jobs. Education. The practical stuff of life wrapped up in a lot of love. This newsletter has stories from students, volunteers, donors – they are all love



(av O'Rourke

letters to you. Thank you for making a profound difference in the lives of so many - last year we served over 1,600 people.

It has been said that, "The world will be saved by Beauty." At Wellspring we are struck by Beauty in its many guises. There are new babies, the student who obtained a job with benefits, and the homeless family who moved into their first real home. There is the volunteer who drove a shelter guest to Boston and stayed to support

In a few weeks our annual appeal will go out. We need your help. The countless acts, the infinite beauty is made possible with your financial gift. Families are counting on us, and we are counting on you. The gift is in the giving. You have the power to make the world a better place. Thank you for all that you do.

#### Wellspring Connection Editor: Romy Gardner; Contributors: Kaitlin Badolato, Trish Castraberti, Kay O'Rourke, Debbi Silva and Katie Taormina; Concert photos: Underwood Photography Layout and design: Debbie Hird. Printed on recycled paper by Daily Printing.

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

Mark your calendars for Wellspring's upcoming events!

#### November 13, 2012

Annual Meeting 5:00 p.m. Ribbon Cutting for Children's Playspace 5:30 p.m. Volunteer & Donor **Recognition Reception** 6:30 p.m. Annual Meeting

#### Saturday, December 8 & Sunday, December 9, 2012

16th Annual Holiday Store Wellspring House 302 Essex Avenue Gloucester, MA

#### Monday, May 6, 2013

15th Annual Women Honoring Women Luncheon 6C 11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. DoubleTree Inn 50 Ferncroft Road, Danvers, MA Keynote speaker: Karen Keating Ansara



Undersecretary for Housing and Development, Aaron Gornstein, visited Wellspring in September, Commenting about the meeting, shelter director Sarah Campbell said, "It was helpful for us to be able to talk about our ground-level experiences, and for us to in turn, understand his goals to eliminate family homelessness well into the future

#### **ENERGIZING THE EDUCATION CENTER**

The Fall class of the Adult Learning Initiative (ALI) is in full swing and teachers and students are enjoying state-of-the-art technology in a rejuvenated education center. Our updated technology enables us to present a curriculum that can appeal to the many different learning styles present in any classroom. A new "SmartBoard" displays materials and learning software in an appealing visual format and the built-in internet access makes it easy to show videos and audio clips that enhance the learning experience. Laptop computers make it easy for students to access materials and become computer savvy. New desks capable of rolling give increased flexibility to the classroom space so the large group can break down into small groups or tutors can meet one-on-one with students.

Wellspring's adult education is effective because of our ability to make learning accessible to students with different learning styles. Technology and computer skills can be used to open up new worlds. We are grateful to Beth and Linzee Coolidge for their generosity and financial gift that funded the technology upgrade that enables our students to be successful.



her while her toddler was having surgery. There is the financial gift that powers the technology to make learning easier in our education center. Countless acts of kindness and practical help, infinite beauty.

Kay O'Rourke President & Executive Director

#### UPDATE

#### FROM MEDICLERK AND ALI **GRADUATE, DEBBI SILVA**

In her own words, Debbi Silva shares her experiences as a Wellspring student. Since graduating, Debbi has remained part of the Wellspring family by volunteering at the shelter. She has helped the shelter feel more like a home by hand-sewing and installing curtains for the families and children that reside there.

#### Hello,

I've been busy with a new job and working on the stitching job for the family shelter. However. tonight I've found a few minutes to



share my thoughts on the ALI and MediClerk programs. If it were not for these two programs and all the knowledge that I learned from them, I would (once again) be in yet another low wage, dead end job.

I took the ALI program twice. I took the Math, English, Basic Computer, and Career Development classes. Each class had so much to offer, but I really needed to learn as much as possible about the computer. I made that my mission. I think I drove my computer teacher Christine out of her mind with my constant questions. I studied every night and I started liking the computer a lot more as I understood the



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#### **Debbi Silva** continued from page 1

things I could do with it (besides playing games). When the first session of ALI came to an end I knew that there was so much more that Christine could teach me and that is why I repeated the program.

The next session, I worked on perfecting my resume and learning as much as I could on the computer. I mostly focused on my keyboarding. At the end of the second session, I had enough confidence in myself to a pply for the competitive MediClerk program and I was accepted!

The MediClerk program is designed to prepare students to work in the medical field and it was very intense. In the course I learned about medical billing and medical terminology. If I had not completed the ALI program, I would have been totally lost. I was determined to get as much as I could out of every class.

Once again, I drove my computer teacher (Margo) nuts with all my questions but it didn't bother me. I was on a mission...a mission to learn. I was rarely absent and worked very hard in my classes, particularly my keyboarding class. I will always be grateful to my teacher, Steve, because he taught me different keyboarding techniques and praised me when I started to improve my accuracy and typing speed. Also, while in the MediClerk program, I perfected my resume and learned valuable interview "do's and don't's." Guest speakers and recent MediClerk graduates helped prepare us for interviews and gave pointers on job searching. At graduation, I gave the commencement speech. I was nervous at first but in the end I believe my speech came out pretty good!

After graduation, I was unsuccessful in hearing back from the jobs that I had submitted resumes to. I was disappointed. One day, I decided to walk into a local business. It was not hiring but I handed my resume to the owner in hopes that he would consider me for future employment. The next day, he called and two days after that, I was an employed woman. Three days later, my wage was adjusted and I was making a better paycheck than I've made in years! My boss told me that he was impressed with my recent computer courses and that made him find me a position in his company.

I would highly recommend these two programs to anyone that is looking to improve themselves and trying to better their chances of getting a job that not only brings in good wages, but a job that makes you feel proud of yourself. Thank you Wellspring House.

Debbi Silva

A very grateful graduate,

# Wellspring's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Benefit Concert



2012 Benefit Concert Committee



Heidi Winslow, Claire Spofford, Louisa Attenborough, and Rebecca Booma.

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Christine Lundberg, with program participants Charles Hampton, Angelique Rodriguez, and Lily Fritz.



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Benefi

Kay O'Rourke with concert performers, Joan Osborne (left) and Paula Cole (right).

### WELLSPRING'S HOLIDAY STORE: IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT THE TOYS...

I'm grateful for the opportunity to be a part of Wellspring House. In many ways, I feel like I've received way more than I could possibly give. Wellspring is so much to so many people, but to me my heart belongs to the Holiday Store and I'll explain why. For many years I donated toys to the store because someone asked me to. A few years ago I was asked to help organize the store. I couldn't believe the amount of toys and the number of people who were in need. In our own back yard? In our bucolic North Shore? Yes.

This year we expect to help over 500 children from 225 families on Cape Ann. Participants sign up in advance to attend this annual event. Executive Director Kay O'Rourke explains, "We started the store sixteen years ago because we saw parents skimping on rent and utility payments in order to make sure their kids could have Christmas. Then come January these families were often in trouble with their housing because they really didn't have the economic means to catch up on the missed payments. The Holiday Store ensures that the family can celebrate the holiday together without becoming homeless later."

On December 8th and 9th, we will transform 302 Essex Avenue into a REAL toy store, complete with holiday music, a blazing fireplace, homemade dinner and personal shoppers. Each participant signs in (by appointment) and meets with a "personal shopper" to shop for their children. Parents purchase three gifts for each child. They are allowed a small, medium and large gift for each child and are charged \$2.00 per child. Many of our participants save the money to make this happen, a great source of pride and empowerment. I enjoyed greeting a woman at the door and asking her how old her children are. "You have a 6 year old daughter, I have the perfect place to start looking — let's go". We walk through the store together, hopeful, to choose the perfect gifts.

Every family receives a book for each child, wrapping paper, a Christmas ornament and a take home meal. After the shopping, we sit in the kitchen and enjoy a homemade dinner together. Some of the best conversations I can recall are in that kitchen over a bowl of spaghetti. I listened to women who have had some bad times and had lost all hope. I knew in my heart that if I could get them to believe in themselves, even a little bit, it could be a game-changer. I remember sitting with a woman last year who told me she was "too stupid" to enroll in our MediClerk program. I told her

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The AMG Foundation, a concert sponsor, is represented by (I-r) Jennifer Kelly, Jay Horgen, Jeff and Leslie Murphy and Leslie Carrabis.

## Wellspring's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Benefit Concert





Paula Cole on the piano.



Concert guests, Mary Marengi and Dawn Bellamo.



Paula Cole and Joan Osborne perform together. Osborne (left) and Paula Cole (right). Mary Ellen Janeiro, Khris Kendrick and Mary Scofield.

the past does not equal the future and that she seemed very smart to me. She had tears in her eyes and told me that no one had ever called her smart before. Really? After a little coaxing, she did make a commitment to come back and let us help her. It's about empowerment. It's about having the opportunity. It's about showing them that Wellspring's doors are open and there are people here who are committed to helping you – 100%. It's about us getting together as a community in the spirit of what is right and what is just. It's about teaching our children that we are all good people and that everyone deserves to be treated with kindness and respect.

Please help us with our Holiday Store by donating toys, holding a toy drive, stocking the shelves or becoming a personal shopper. It's a great opportunity to bring your children (age 7+) in to volunteer with you. Please call Katie at Wellspring 978-281-3558 x301 to be a part of this amazing weekend. The Holiday Store takes place Saturday and Sunday, December 8th and 9th.

Trisha Castraberti (Wellspring House Board member)



#### **OUR VISION**

Wellspring is guided by the vision of a society where all are welcomed and everyone has the opportunity to live a full and positive life. Believing that each life touches every other life, we work toward this vision of caring for the earth and her people by sharing our resources in a spirit of hospitality.

#### **OUR MISSION**

Wellspring House empowers individuals and families to live more secure lives through basic needs assistance, education and job training.

#### **OUR WORK**

- Wellspring's work touched the lives of 1,633 individuals this past year.
- 153 students enrolled in our three education programs; Adult Learning Initiative, MediClerk and English Language Program.
- The needs of 283 families in crisis were met through our homeless prevention work. ......
- 48 families were counseled on an ongoing basis by our housing stabilization case manager
- 505 children and 226 families were served through Wellspring's Holiday Store



Nikkil and Syesha pick up their new backpacks. Wellspring received over 50 backpacks and supplies donated by St. Paul's Church of Hamilton, Bingham McCutchen LLP and other individuals.

#### LOVE IN ACTION Your gift = Empowered Families and Community



#### Thank you for your help.

Below is a list of individuals, corporations, foundations and community groups who generously supported Wellspring House during FY2012 (7/1/2011-6/30/2012). We are indeed grateful to these donors as this continued support makes our work possible. Our sincere thanks for the significant impact you have made in the lives of our families and neighbors.

We have worked hard to make this list accurate. Please inform us of any omissions or mistakes by calling 978-281-3558 x 302.

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