

Wellspring connection



The Newsletter of Wellspring House, Inc., Gloucester, Massachusetts
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From Survival to Thriving...You Make That Difference

Resilience – how to keep on keeping on when it feels like the deck is stacked against you; when the winter feels too long; when the biting loneliness or failure or depression is unrelenting. We encounter people struggling with these feelings and reality every single day. The common feeling of the 100 homeless families we are working with at the motel in Danvers is desperation. “Get me out of here!” one woman named Marie cried. I heard this cry almost 5 weeks ago. I would like to tell you Marie has moved out. But she hasn’t. With \$400/month cash assistance from the state, she doesn’t make enough to move her family of 3 children out. Recently, through Wellspring’s efforts, someone donated an old car to this family. Now it is possible for Marie to look for a job.

The car is a very practical help. What matters just as much is the compassion connection between Marie’s family and the couple that donated the car. Marie was heartened by these strangers’ generosity and concern. They stepped up and helped Marie break through the sense of isolation and hopelessness she had been feeling. Marie and her children have

been living in the motel for a year. They are survivors—they must be resilient to live in a motel. A year of living in one small room with a microwave. A year with no play space for the kids. A year with no public transportation.

The post-recession reality is that the state does not see any let up in the demand for shelter. There are plans to expand the formal shelter system from 2,000 families to 4,400 families. If this plan is funded, that will lower the number of families placed in motels in the short-term. The reality is that even when Marie gets a job the average market rate rent for a two bedroom is \$1,200/month. A full-time \$10/hour job is an income of \$1,600 per month. That math doesn’t work for low-income families. We need more housing that is affordable for folks making low wages.

Marie will go to work. But a low wage job will not pay for a market rate rent.

A HOME is the first step in moving from surviving to thriving. Thriving is about the liberation of the human spirit.

From Survival to Thriving continues on page 3

RALPH BATES: WELLSPRING’S VALENTINE

It was late 2012 when local philanthropist, Ralph Bates first paid a visit to Wellspring House. He was on a mission to check out operations and to vet the organization. “I like to see where it goes,” said Ralph, referring to the generosity he has lavished on charities since 2006.

He also likes to keep his efforts local. Ralph has donated almost three million dollars to non-profits in Beverly and Gloucester. A common thread among them is the shared goal of providing shelter and preventing homelessness.

Following his 2012 visit, Ralph donated \$100,000 to Wellspring House. In November 2013, he set an unprecedented giving challenge. For every dollar donated to Wellspring’s Annual Fund, Ralph has pledged two dollars.

His continued generosity has an enormous impact on the success of Wellspring’s programs.

In 2013, Wellspring’s Adult Education Initiative (ALI), served 34 adults from surrounding commu-

nities. Many of its graduates go on pass the GED, and apply for college.

In some cases a little push from Wellspring is all a program participant needs to set the gears in motion toward a new life. Within six months of graduating from ALI, Megan Paxton passed the GED and earned a Bob Rogers Scholarship. She is now fulfilling her life’s ambition to go to college. As a student at North Shore Community College, she has returned to Wellspring House

to volunteer her time as thanks.

ALI thrives because of the generosity of Ralph Bates and donors like YOU who met his challenge.

And the offer still stands. For each dollar you give to Wellspring House, Ralph Bates will give two dollars.

The Wellspring Family sends its warmest thanks to Ralph Bates for being our special Valentine!

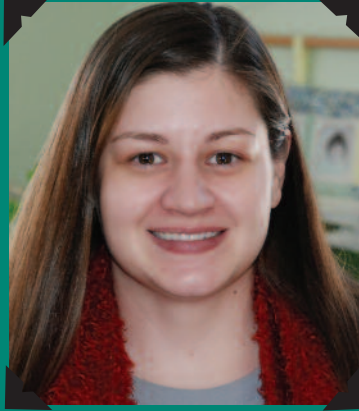


Wellspring House celebrated Valentine’s Day with a tribute to philanthropist and benefactor, Ralph Bates of Manchester. Ralph has pledged to donate \$2 for every \$1 received in donations to Wellspring’s Annual Fund. Pictured from Left: Volunteer, Lisa Bennett; student, Celeste Demko; Career and Education Advisor, Mary Scofield; philanthropist, Ralph Bates; and students, Claudia de La Cruz Medina and Stephanie Garcia

Wellspring Family News



Stephanie Garcia performed a reading at her graduation from Wellspring's ALI program in March.



Wellspring ALI graduate and college student, Megan Paxton was awarded the Bob Rogers Scholarship. Well done, Megan!

Amy Lee and Paula Cole Benefit Concert at the Shalin Liu Performance Center



Grammy winner Amy Lee, Wellspring's Executive Director, Kay O'Rourke, Grammy winning singer and Wellspring Board Member, Paula Cole, and Wellspring Board Chair, Caroline Hovey.

WORLD MASTERS CHAMPION KEYNOTES WOMEN HONORING WOMEN LUNCHEON – MAY 5TH

Wellspring's 16th Annual Women Honoring Women Luncheon takes place on Monday, May 5, 2014. The keynote speaker will be author, philanthropic consultant and World Masters Champion sculler, Sara Hall.

Ms. Hall's book "Drawn to the Rhythm" is the story of how she developed the strength to transform her life by listening to her own voice and expressing her passion through competitive rowing. Ms. Hall has appeared on Oprah and other nationally-syndicated television and radio programs. She is an eight-time World Masters Champion in sculling (rowing) and has three adult children.

She founded New Philanthropy Advisors (NPA) in 2007 to meet the needs of women donors who wanted to make a difference through values based philanthropy that reflected their personal sense of mission. ■

For tickets to the Luncheon visit www.wellspringhouse.org or call 978-281-3558, extension 301.

Do What You Can Do – That's All That Is Needed...

J. Jill has donated hundreds of items of professional women's clothing to Wellspring House through their Gently Used clothing drive. Appropriate dress is a crucial part of maintaining professionalism in the workplace. Accumulating a work wardrobe can get pricey for a woman just starting out in a job or getting back on her feet. Many thanks to J. Jill for helping Wellspring's students get off on a well-dressed foot for their entry into the workplace!



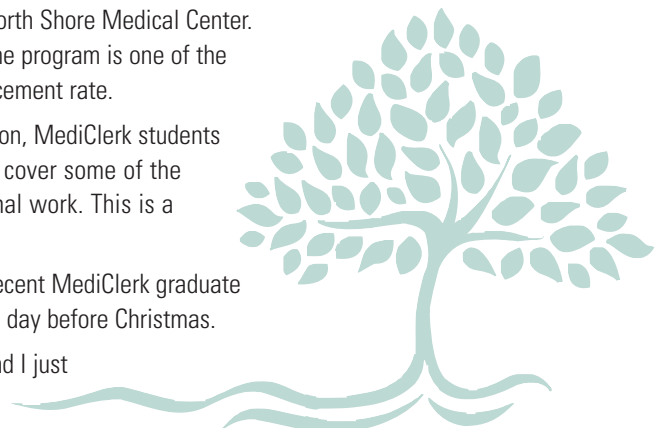
Job Training - A Bright Future

Wellspring's MediClerk program has entered into its 11th year of partnership with North Shore Medical Center. MediClerk trains low income people to become medical administrative assistants. The program is one of the best training programs in the state, with a 90% completion rate and an 86% job placement rate.

Wellspring is now seeking accreditation for the MediClerk Program. With accreditation, MediClerk students would gain access to Federal Pell Grants. These educational grants would help to cover some of the program costs, and will allow Wellspring to expand our job training and educational work. This is a 2–3 year process.

Earlier this month, Jack Billings, Wellspring's Director of Education, bumped into a recent MediClerk graduate at the mall. A single mother of two, she was swinging shopping bags like a child the day before Christmas.

Through tears of joy she offered, "I start my new job in a doctor's office tomorrow and I just bought myself some new clothes! I could not have done it without Wellspring!"



Sharing the Joy – It's For The Kids

During the season of giving, we all share the vision of sparkling lights, a bounty of toys for kids, and family gatherings. For families living on the brink of poverty, the vision leads to financial danger when heating bills add up and rent gets behind. When rent is late, homelessness is not far behind.

This is where Wellspring's Annual Holiday Store plays a key role in homelessness prevention. In December, Wellspring makes way for mountains of toys donated for Cape Ann's most at-risk families.

Area schools, churches, community groups, private companies, police and fire departments all rally together. These heroes of our community organize toy drives and collect funds. Among them were Gloucester Firefighters Dean DeCoste, Josh Severance, Wellington Machado and Nick Ouellette. The firemen volunteered their time, setting up Ladder #2 at area supermarkets for the collection. With donated funds, the men shopped to supplement the bounty of toys.



Students from Landmark School help to unload gifts from Gloucester's Fire Department toy drive, led by Firemen Dean Costa and Josh Severance in front of their delivery truck, GFD Ladder #2.

Cape Ann's families who are struggling schedule appointments to shop for their children. Just two dollars buys three brand new toys and a free book per child.

Thanks to YOU, 693 children from 356 families received holiday gifts. Thank you for making the world better. ■

Katie O'Leary: A Rising Star

With her friendly demeanor, sharp wit and warm sense of humor, Katie O'Leary emanates an air of helpful hospitality. No matter how bad things are, she gives you the sense that everything will be okay. It is a resilience that comes from having been there.

Katie had the strength to get herself out of an abusive relationship and escape with her four children. After she had worked for nine years for the same company, putting in 60 hour weeks, she was laid-off in 2009.

Faced with no income and a family to support all on her own, Katie filed for unemployment. It was at the unemployment office where she came across a flier for Wellspring's Adult Learning Initiative (ALI) program. She enrolled the same day.

After completing ALI, Katie went on to enroll in the Women in Transition Program at North Shore Community College. She is a One Family Scholar, recipient of the Annette's Climb

Scholarship, and Wellspring's Bob Rogers grant program. She's made the Dean's List four times.

She is now close to completing her Associates Degree and has been accepted to and will enroll at Merrimack College for the Fall 2014 semester.

On top of six classes and a full-time job, Katie is also an intern with Wellspring. At the motel in Danvers where Wellspring works with 100 homeless families, Katie conducts triage. She assigns case workers, assists guests with housing applications, and keeps track of their progress using a specialized database.

She has created a resource guide to help guests find the services and assistance they need. And she coordinates children's activities with community groups, drawing from her expertise as a mom.

Beyond her internship duties, Katie O'Leary has something to offer that is priceless to those seeking her guidance: Hope.

nurtures her children. *Please contact your legislators and ask them to support housing subsidies for the homeless.* Your kindness, compassion and generosity strengthen our families resilience and helps them to keep moving forward, no matter what. Thank you.

Kay O'Rourke,
President & Executive Director

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From Survival to Thriving *continued from page 1*

Thriving happens when we find expression for our gifts and passions. For those that are able, education and job training can be important steps on that journey.

Today, Marie needs a housing subsidy that will allow her family to move back into the community and establish a life that

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Mark your calendars for Wellspring's upcoming events!

Saturday, May 3

Hamilton-Wenham Mothers' Club Fast Chicks 5K

9:15 am

Patten Park, Hamilton

fastchicks5k.org



Monday, May 5

Wellspring's 16th Annual Women Honoring Women Luncheon

11:30 am – 2:00 pm

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel,
50 Ferncroft Road, Danvers

Sunday, June 29

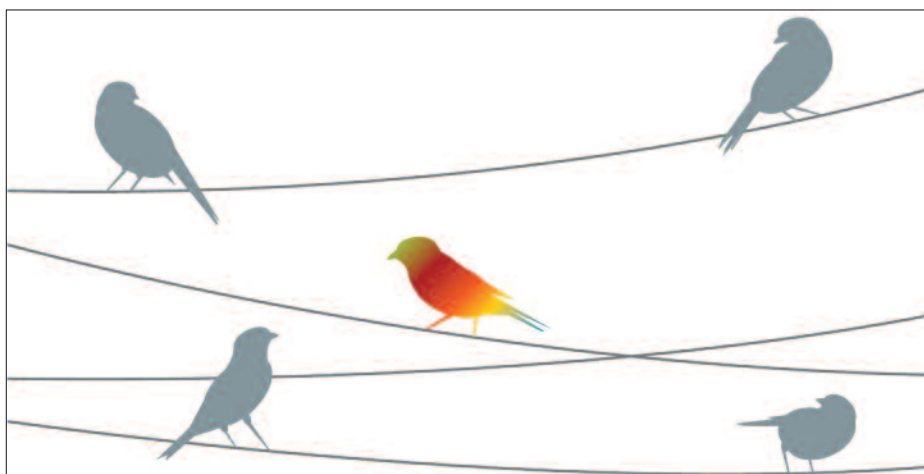
"The Gift"

2-4 pm Reception

Exhibition runs from June 29 to July 26.

North Shore Arts Association
11 Pirates Lane, Gloucester

Exhibition and Sale of Works by Betty
Lou Schlemm *for the benefit of* Cape
Ann Animal Aid, The Open Door &
Wellspring House.



Women Honoring Women Luncheon

May 5, 2014

WE ARE CALLED TO GREATNESS

