

Wellspring connection



The Newsletter of Wellspring House, Inc., Gloucester, Massachusetts
VOL. 34, NO. 1 SPRING 2015

How Does Change Happen?

Dear Friends,

At the end of June I will be leaving Wellspring after 8 years as executive director. After feeling restless for a year I awoke one morning with a clear message — “Your work here is almost done.” I will be taking time off to travel (Ireland calls) and reflect. I trust the next thing for me will unfold. The Board of Trustees is actively searching for Wellspring’s next leader.

When I first came to Wellspring as a young woman 33 years ago I remember asking, “How does change happen?” And not too far behind was the question, “How do I make a difference?” Our suffering, chaotic world cries out for compassion and action.

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to do is to respond to
what your heart/mind
invites you to do.*

Here’s what I know for sure. All anyone is ever asked to do is to respond to what your heart/mind invites you to do. Do what you can. Do what feels right to you. Follow the simple directions.

What I have been privileged to witness is that when everybody brings their bit of light, in whatever form that may be (volunteer, donation, prayer, kindness, any gift made with goodwill), the darkness disappears. You make the world better with every compassionate thought. You make the world better with every kind gesture. You can never really know exactly how your goodness has rippled out and changed everything. But you will know the satisfaction of following the simple directions — it feels good to help. Eventually, all the bits of light



Kay O'Rourke

become a blaze. Beneath all the suffering and angst of our troubled world, all is well and our souls are safe.

Wellspring’s work goes on and as a community is moving with strength and enthusiasm into the future. Two new education programs are being announced and will add to the likelihood that our students will unleash their potential and live life more fully. Every day 103 homeless families are taking steps towards a home and hope. Thank you for being the light. Thank you for making the world better. Thank you for inspiring the deep gratitude I feel for you and will carry with me where ever I go.

Love,
Kay O'Rourke
President & Executive Director

ELL Classes

Wellspring’s English Language Learning classes continue to be offered at the Sawyer Free Library in Downtown Gloucester. Wellspring has recently partnered with Gloucester Housing Authority to offer an English class on site at the Veterans’ Way Residents Services Center. Special thanks to volunteer, Michele Harrison, who is preparing and teaching the class of 8 students.



MAKE A BETTER WORLD

With your help we can make a better world. Please consider making a gift. Your donation is needed to help support
HOMES • JOBS • EDUCATION
for struggling families.

To make a gift visit
www.wellspringhouse.org

Or send your donation to:
Wellspring House
302 Essex Avenue
Gloucester, MA 01930

New Education Programs Fill in Gaps

ALMOST EVERYONE WHO WALKS THROUGH OUR DOORS NEEDS HELP figuring out how to get closer to a living wage job. It's projected that two thirds of the jobs of the future will require some type of post-secondary education or training: 2 or 4 year degrees, certificates, specialized job training. Today going to college or a job training program requires a sophisticated thought process and lots of information.

As we have followed people graduating from our education programs and pursuing their next steps it became clear that the sophisticated kind of counseling that people need was not readily accessible. It is especially important for low-income families to make smart choices and use their financial aid wisely.

To meet this need Wellspring is launching the **Wellspring Education Resource Center (WERC)**. Adult learners can get help recognizing their strengths and passions and matching them to a potential living wage job that will utilize their talents. Each learner will get help creating a Personal Pathway to Success — a plan which will identify the right school or training program, the right degree or certificate, how it will be financed and a semester by semester plan for coursework and timeline for completion. There will also be a mentoring component. A team of volunteer mentors will be available to students to help them navigate through any obstacles they

encounter as they enter into the new, often daunting, college systems.

We are currently beta testing the process and tools with 15 adult learners and will formally launch WERC in July. If you know of someone who is interested in participating they can call Patrick or Laura, our Career Counseling and Placement Mentors at (978) 281-3558 x304.

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In May we are piloting the **Adult Learning Initiative 2 (ALI 2)** program. This is a follow-up program to our existing ALI 1 adult education class. Although people are passing their high school equivalency exams they are receiving conditional acceptances from colleges. These students are not yet working at a college level in math and English and they are enrolled in intermediate courses at the colleges. These courses are not credit bearing and are paid for with a student's financial aid. The failure and dropout rates are high. Wellspring has designed an ALI 2 math and English curriculum that will help students acquire the skills and competencies needed to demonstrate college level achievement. This will help students avoid the remedial courses and preserve their financial aid so it can be directed towards a degree or certificate. The courses will be offered in the evening. *For more information call Laura Pedone at (978) 281-3558 x310.*



Birgitta Davis (left), Winter 2015 ALI graduate, gets help with her resume from volunteer tutor Laura Groff.



Laura Pedone, ALI Career Counseling and Placement Mentor, works with Meng Eang on setting goals. Meng is part of a beta testing group for our new WERC program.

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Women Honoring Women

The Wellspring Award is given annually at Wellspring's Women Honoring Women Luncheon to honor women whose lives and work realize Wellspring's vision of a just society by helping to meet basic human needs and participating in social change. Please join us as we honor Paula Cole, Patricia Fae Ho, and Caroline Hovey. Paula Cole will do a special musical performance. For more information please go to wellspringhouse.org. We expect to sell out so reserve your seat today.

PAULA COLE

Paula uses her voice, her writing and her smarts to express the journey of the Self; the struggles and victories of a woman's journey. This Grammy Award winner's career has spanned over two decades. Through it all, making the best music possible has been her steady purpose. Her endurance, courage and honest storytelling transform all who recognize and discover their own truth in the magic her music weaves. Paula generously shares her gifts, and the Wellspring community has been inspired and lifted up by her support as a member of the Board of Trustees and benefit concerts.



PATRICIA FAE HO

An educator and advocate, Patricia has served in significant leadership positions with nonprofit organizations for over 30 years. She leads with a passionate voice and addresses issues of equity and access to education for women and girls. She is currently the national president of the American Association of University Women (AAUW). Patricia has also served as the past chair of the Essex County Commission on the Status of Women, past president of Health Quarters, and on the boards of Peabody Essex Museum, HAWC, LWV and the Museum of Science, Women in Science Committee.



CAROLINE HOVEY

Caroline is passionately committed to ensuring access to education that has found expression in her board service over the years at Wellspring, St. Lawrence University, The Madeira School and Brookwood School. Caroline served on Wellspring's Board of Trustees for 8 ½ years and was chair for 4 of those years. As chair she skillfully helped Wellspring



navigate through the recession and guided the development of the current strategic plan and investment in our education programs. Caroline continues to serve as a Wellspring community volunteer and her gracious presence and wisdom embodies the spirit of hospitality that is the foundation of our common work.

The 17th annual Women Honoring Women Luncheon is on Monday, May 4th. For more information please go to wellspringhouse.org. We expect to sell out so reserve your seat today!



A MAD POEM

By: Yanira Ortiz,

Winter 2015 Adult Learning Initiative graduate

My Head fills with inexplicable thoughts,
They invade every avenue of my brain,
Like ships that traverse to many ports,
They come and go while I remain,
Locked in some time warp of space,
Sometimes no expression on my face.

Dark and gloomy aliens ravage my head,
I play host to all who trespass my mind,
They have no meaning they are not lead,
They inhabit every area they can find,
Not even the usual comfort of sleep,
Prevent me having to weep.
Why oh why do I submit to their will,
Can I not withstand their force,
When my mind is not blank and still,
I find it filled with such remorse,
I yearn for peace and tranquil rest,
But I wonder if I can stand the test.

These devils feed on my weary thoughts,
I alone can summon my strength,
I must regain my sanity of sorts,
Finally after such great length,
I can muster some commanding might,
To rid me from this lack of light.
Back I come from this twilight hell,
Back I come to enjoy the day,
To the life where love lets me stay,
Back to all that I left behind,
Back to the sanity I regain my mind.



Yanira Ortiz at recent Winter ALI graduation

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UPCOMING EVENTS



Wellspring House
Invites you to the 17th Annual
**WOMEN HONORING WOMEN
LUNCHEON**

**Monday, May 4, 2015
11:30 am - 2:00 pm**

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel
50 Ferncroft Road, Danvers, MA

Honorees
**PAULA COLE
PATRICIA FAE HO
CAROLINE HOVEY**

Special music appearance
by singer-songwriter, Paula Cole



YOU MAKE A BETTER WORLD

Please consider donating to Wellspring House. Look for our Annual Appeal in the mail or donate online at wellspringhouse.org 