



Happenings at Dawn's Place



Spring 2019, a season of new life and hope, is not disappointing us. Everywhere we look, Earth is breaking through the winter-hardened soil with crocus and daffodil's tender shoots.

Soon glorious colors and sweet-smelling flowers will greet our senses and lift our hearts for a welcome break after gloomy, cold days of winter.

Dawn's Place, too, is abounding with new life—offering a brighter future to women in critical need. Throughout the last ten years, Dawn's Place has worked to improve the lives of women trapped by or at risk for Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSE). In the Spring of 2009, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) brought five Hispanic women to Dawn's Place. Our first residents were frightened, unable to speak or understand English and unsure of what would happen to them next. What happened next for them and the many other residents are amazing stories of incredible women who came to Dawn's Place committed to their healing and new life. So, in this season of hope and new life we are looking forward to celebrating the 10th anniversary of Dawn's Place. See the flyer announcing Dawn's Place 10th Anniversary Gala in the Upcoming Events column.

Over these 10 years, Dawn's Place has been the recipient of generous monetary donations, gift cards, paper products, household items, and personal products. We are grateful for the generosity, concern and goodness of so many people, organizations, and foundations. Know that your responses foster life.

We hope that you will find that our Newsletter is a great example of something fresh and new. It is filled with sensational examples of renewed life: articles from Mary DeFusco, a public defender, Shea Rhodes, director of Villanova Law School Institute to Address Commercial Sexual Exploitation and an exciting Upcoming Events column. It is our hope that by providing this bi-monthly Newsletter, we will keep you informed about and connected to Dawn's Place and related developments.

-Sister Kathleen Coll SSJ, Executive Director of Dawn's Place

[Visit our website to learn more about Dawn's Place](#)

Upcoming Events



There will be delightful dancing, an awesome auction, delicious dinner, a bountiful bar, and of course, the guests will be par excellence! In a special guest appearance, 1812 Production Company's own "Patsy from South Philadelphia" will give us the latest low-down on the important issues from her stoop on Schrunck Avenue.

[Click here to buy tickets!](#)

Legislative and Advocacy Updates

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has been working on significant legislative reform to tackle human trafficking over the last four years.

In September 2014, the legislature passed a law that many anti-trafficking advocates know as "Act 105," 18 Pa.C.S. § 3001. et. seq. The law gives prosecutors clearly defined elements for charging trafficking crimes, provides tools for law enforcement to investigate those crimes, and creates new remedies for survivors. Since that law passed, there have been nearly one hundred state prosecutions initiated against human traffickers - in rural, suburban, and urban counties alike - resulting in forty convictions.

After several years of dedicated advocacy, stakeholders also celebrated the passage of Act 130 of 2018, Safe Harbor for Sexually Exploited Children, in October of last year. This type of law, already implemented in over thirty states in the country, is designed to recognize there is no such thing as a child prostitute, by providing criminal immunity or statutory diversion to minors engaging in commercial sex.

With this critical protection in place, lawmakers are now looking to build on the legislative momentum we've generated thus far to strengthen existing laws. This session, Representative Seth M. Grove (R-196) and Senator Kristin Phillips-Hill (R-28) introduced their companion bills HB12 and SB60, together known as the Buyer Beware Act. This

legislation proposes several amendments to our Crimes Code – within the Human Trafficking chapter and to our prostitution statute. This dualistic approach acknowledges that human trafficking is a demand-driven industry. Any public policy or legislative proposal designed to combat human trafficking is incomplete without a focus on deterring consumption of sexual or labor servitude.

There are several other important provisions in the legislation, as well. In this column, we will continue to report on our collective advocacy efforts and provide updates on these bills and any others that may be subsequently introduced. We are hopeful that this important legislation will be enacted quickly. Stay tuned!

-Shea M. Rhodes, Esquire

Dawn's Place Board Member

Director and Co-Founder of Villanova Law Institute to Address Commercial and Sexual Exploitation



Healing Stories

I had the great pleasure of running into one of our graduates one morning last week at Suburban Station here in Center City. She looked so happy and healthy that I almost didn't recognize her. She introduced me to her husband who was walking with her. They are about to get a new home next month and were both radiating excitement about this new chapter in their lives.

As I hugged her and walked away to my office, I reflected upon my memories of my first encounter with her in the women's prison. I remembered that she looked so sad, thin, and broken that I really questioned whether all the loving care in the world could help her. Looking back, I had my answer.

Thanks to the caring of all of our generous donors and volunteers, and our hard working and dedicated staff, one life was restored, and at least two lives were helped along to health and happiness.

What a great way to start my day! I am so grateful for all of you!

-Mary DeFusco, Esquire

Dawn's Place Board Member

Director of Training, Defender Association of Philadelphia



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