



Happenings at Dawn's Place



Dear Friends of Dawn's Place,

I am delighted to share a few exciting developments and initiatives in process at Dawn's Place.

Update on the Residents of Dawn's Place

Two of our women residents completed the Dawn's Place program and moved into the Transitional House in March. One of them, after recently securing housing, moved to North Carolina where she had the possibility of employment. We were happy to receive a card from her in which she expressed her gratitude to Dawn's Place "for everything and being there when I really needed . . . encouragement." The second woman remains in the Transitional House while she works full time and waits to find housing.

Nationalities Service Center recommended a Polish woman whom we have accepted. Like so many others, but yet uniquely hers, her experiences of being trafficked are horrendous. Our dedicated tutor, Mary Ellen Marzullo, is working with her on basic reading, writing and math skills.

Update on Staff

On April 8, 2019, Dawn's Place welcomed our new Trauma Therapist, Mary Shay, LSW. She sees our current residents for individual therapy, and has been assessing prospective residents. Mary also conducts two classes for our women: Mindfulness and TREM (Trauma Recovery and Empowerment Model).

Our newest initiative at Dawn's Place is an outreach program. Ann Marie Jones, our Peer Mentor, attends Dawn's Court once a month to meet with potential residents. (Dawn's Court is a problem-solving court designed for women with repeat prostitution offenses who are under close court supervision.) On most Tuesday afternoons, she also conducts outreach on Kensington Avenue. As Ann Marie expresses her efforts: "to extend hope to those who feel hopeless."

We are deeply grateful for our many supporters like you who join us in our mission of hope and healing. Thank you.

-Sister Kathleen Coll SSJ, Executive Director of 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

We have recently celebrated several legislative advancements to address human trafficking here in Pennsylvania (Act 130 of 2018 and HB 12/SB 60). Likewise, the federal government is continuing to find innovative ways to target traffickers and support survivors by introducing and enacting new laws.

For instance, H.R. 295/S. 952, "End Banking for Human Traffickers Act of 2019" was reintroduced this session by Representative Bill Keating (D-MA) and Representative Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA). The bipartisan bill has the potential to curb sexual exploitation by using a collaborative approach to target traffickers through the monitoring of financial transactions.

The bill proposes that federal banking regulators work with law enforcement and financial institutions to combat human trafficking. The bill is grounded in recognition of the fact that in our modern era, traffickers are moving away from using cash in the pursuit of more sophisticated banking practices; therefore, banks, money transfers (like PayPal and

Venmo), and credit cards are all used by traffickers to collect and manage the profits generated by exploiting people for commercial sex. Indeed, Human trafficking generates billions of dollars in illegal revenue annually. This legislation, if enacted, would interfere with traffickers' access to financial funds and banking institutions in a concerted effort to hinder their illicit activity.

In addition, this bill package effectively broadens the responsibilities of key government officials and agencies related to the financial and banking industry, including the Secretary of the Treasury and the Office of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence, with respect to combatting human trafficking in the United States and responding to human trafficking in foreign countries. If passed, the "End Banking for Human Traffickers Act of 2019" would provide the government with more tools to hold human traffickers accountable and disrupt the industry. We encourage constituents to contact Rep. Fitzpatrick to express their support of this legislation.

Many provisions of the banking bill propose to amend the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA), the seminal federal law that addresses human trafficking in the United States. Last year, the TVPA was re-authorized for the sixth time since it was enacted in 2000. The 2017-18 TVPA reauthorizing amendments demonstrate a focus on reducing demand with targeted, collaborative investigation approaches and on addressing the psychological impacts of trauma on trafficking victims. Among other things, there is also an emphasis on prevention training in social service programs and schools.

*-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

Spring is in full bloom in Philadelphia and at Dawn's Place. Seeing the beautiful and colorful flowers emerge on our grounds, where there was only dirt just a bit ago, puts me in mind of the transformations that occur inside Dawn's Place as well.

I'm thinking about Sandra.* The first time I met Sandra was on a frigid December night, well over two years ago, when I took a volunteer shift at the house. I rang the doorbell, and it was opened by a woman with wild hair and unkempt clothing. Sandra's big brown eyes narrowed at me suspiciously when I explained that I was volunteering to spend the evening hours at the house with her and the other women. Later that evening, Sister, who was still in the house, explained that Sandra was struggling with severe mental health issues, as a result of a history of horrific sexual and physical abuse.

As that evening wore on, the mental health issues became increasingly obvious. Except for a brief period when Jeopardy was on, Sandra became increasingly paranoid and restless. She thought that the other women in the house were conspiring against her. At one point, she called out to police, who were outside involved in a traffic stop, that she did not feel safe. To all of this, Sister responded with kindness and an incredible amount of patience. Despite the fact that I was there, and that she had already worked a full day,

Sister refused to leave until after the night shift arrived. Like all of the Dawn's Place staff, Sister took personal responsibility in assuring the sense of safety and well-being of our women.

Nonetheless, before Sister and I left that night, I told her that I did not believe that Sandra could remain at Dawn's Place - her mental illness was too severe. Sister sighed. She agreed with me, but believed that Dawn's Place was the last best hope for Sandra.

Fast forward two years. I came to Dawn's Place on an errand, and a well-groomed and smiling young woman answered the door. I didn't recognize Sandra, so she shyly reminded me of our mutual Jeopardy watching. Sandra positively glowed as she told me that she was about to graduate Dawn's Place. For the first time ever, she is now able to live independently!

Sandra would be the first to tell us that her emotional and mental stability was built slowly and painstakingly with hours upon hours of trauma therapy, patience, attention, and kindness.

Just as flowers need hours of sun, rain, and bees, to thrive and burst out of the dirt and mud, our women need the care of all of us: staff, donors, and volunteers to make something beautiful out of their lives.

Such is the power of love.

*Not her real name

*-Mary DeFusco, Esquire
Dawn's Place President of the Board
Director of Training, Defender Association of Philadelphia*



[215-849-2396] [info@ahomefordawn.org]

[www.ahomefordawn.org]

Follow Us

