Spotlight On Volunteers: “It Takes A Village To Sustain A Mission”

Little things make the difference in people’s lives. How often was your day made better because of the friendly smile of your morning barista or a hand-drawn note left for you by your child on the kitchen table? For Mission clients, these little things are often provided by one of the many volunteers who grace us with their time and talent. Their efforts encourage our clients to not just survive but to thrive.

Susan Ruckman and the Women’s Ministry of Mount Calvary Chapel Mercer County have made a tremendous impact by hosting evening activities with the clients of the Mission’s women’s shelter. Games, homemade adult coloring, and live acoustic music are just a few of the interesting elements that Mount Calvary Chapel’s “God’s Girls” have brought to the women at the Mission. It’s a wonderful evening that is structured to make the women feel the hope of a new start. They also bring fresh baked goods and donations of women’s toiletries and clothing. Their volunteer service contributes to the self-healing and emotional support needed for these women to move forward as they work with our staff in rebuilding their lives.

With high traffic volume due to the number of clients served on a daily basis, it’s quite a challenge to maintain the health, safety and aesthetics of the Mission. Although the Mission in-house staff works extremely hard and does an excellent job, it is an on-going struggle to maintain an aging physical complex. We recognize that a fresh coat of paint can make all the difference in the world. For this reason, we were elated when Heather Ciciola, Chair of the Mercer /Burlington Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, recently brought an enthusiastic group of social workers to the Mission to give the emergency shelter recreational space a fresh coat of bright shiny yellow paint.

While the Mission staff and social workers work hard to make sure that educational resources are available to all clients in the form of GED preparation, basic literacy tutoring, parenting classes, and computer/word processing skills, volunteer services in these areas are invaluable. Rochelle Stern, Community Outreach Librarian from the Trenton Public Library is currently collaborating with the shelter staff and has formed the Creative Expressions Group within the Mission Shelter. They meet a few times a
week to explore various aspects of poetry and inventive writing (To the right, please see a poem written by a client during one of the sessions). On Sundays, Princeton Seminary student, Mattheis Lorimor comes to the Mission for a few hours to help clients work on reading skills and completing work applications. He initially came with the intention of volunteering for just a few weeks hosting small groups of inspirational discussions. “It all started by my just wanting to volunteer a bit but I enjoyed the groups so much and I hope to soon include one or two other volunteers from my church or the seminary.” Mattheis is also aiming to develop a strong reading and discussion group that meets every Sunday. “I’m really here to help with any [clients] that may need a hand.” Volunteering also comes from those that the Mission serves.

A few of the shelter residents are so grateful for the services provided by the Mission that they pay it forward by helping with various tasks during our day to day operations. Brian D. makes sure that he is ready to prepare the Mission Dining Hall for lunch every day. He meets the Shelter staff to bring in the food and also makes sure there is plenty of ice for cold water. “This is the least I can do for the place that makes me feel safe. This is the best place for me while I figure out what’s next.”

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The James Kerney Foundation Funds New Roof for Mission Hastedt Building

The roof of the Hastedt building, the central hub of the Mission, was in desperate need of repair. Built in the Spring of 1972, the one-story building contains 27 residential rooms, the Mission’s main kitchen from which meals for all of our programs are prepared, the central dining hall, bathrooms, meeting rooms and the resident lounges.

Since the Mission over the past few years has had to use a substantial amount of funds from its reserves to cover the cost of operating the Emergency Shelter, we are having to look increasingly towards outside funding for capital projects. Once again the Mission turned to one of its most stalwart long-term financial supporters, the James Kerney Foundation. “On a number of occasions over the years, the Kerney Foundation has stepped to the plate and provided crucial capital funding to the Mission. I don’t know what we would do without them,” indicated Barrett Young, the Mission’s Chief Operating Officer.

The James Kerney Foundation was founded in Trenton in 1934 to honor and memorialize the life of James Kerney distinguished author, philanthropist, jurist, long-time editor and publisher of The Times. James Kerney was a trusted friend and advisor to Governor and President Woodrow Wilson. When he was appointed to the Supreme Court of New Jersey, The New York Times editorialized...
The James Kerney Foundation... (cont’d from page 2)

James Kerney with the following comment: “His lawyer associates can tell him what the law is and Jim Kerney can tell them what life is.”

A $40,000 grant from the Kerney Foundation enables us to award a contract for the roof repair for the Hastedt building. The roof work will be completed by August of 2016. See photos of repair in progress.

Church & Dwight Baseball Game

Thank you to our community supporters at Church & Dwight who kindly donated box seats at a Trenton Thunder game to the staff and residents of the Mission. Attending a sports outing may seem small to some, but for our clients it is an opportunity to experience one of life’s simple pleasures. The generosity of foundations such as Church & Dwight affords the Mission the ability to provide some normalcy to our clients’ daily lives and is invaluable to building the long-term success mindset that the Mission strives to assist our clients in developing. “Church & Dwight’s support of the Mission is tremendous,” says CEO Mary Gay Abbott-Young.

The 12th Annual Adam Shanks Golf Tournament

Now in its 12th year, the annual golf event is much more than a fundraiser for the Rescue Mission – it celebrates our community partners and allows them to directly witness the ongoing efforts they support. Through interacting with and being hosted by the residents of the Rescue Mission, our dedicated supporters experience the progress being made at the Mission on a more personal level and actually see how important they are to the lives being rebuilt. This year, the tournament was hosted by Borden Perlman Salisbury & Kelly, HVC Bank a Division of Northfield Bank, Hutchinson Industries, Peapack-Gladstone Bank, Pascal and Ellen Sheridan and the Shanks family.

As per tradition, the miniature golf tournament took place indoors within the Rescue Mission facility. Two 9-hole golf courses were designed and constructed by the Mission’s residents and spans the space of the 3rd floor of the warehouse. As every year brings new milestones, the golf holes present the opportunity to reflect new developments and achievements. Featured on the 2016 course was the Guinness World Record hole, representing the Mission setting a world record for largest number of clothing items collected for donation. Another new hole was the custom made scale model of Perry Street supportive housing, the 15 studio apartment building established to assist residents in becoming self-sufficient. Per tradition, handmade trophies were given to first, second and third place winners as well as the most honest players. Proceeds from the event support the Rescue Mission’s work to remove barriers that prevent individuals from being self-sufficient and leading healthy lives. Thanks to all of the loyal supporters and sponsors, The Rescue Mission raised over $40,000 for its continuum of programs for the homeless, the hungry, the transient, and the addicted.
Showcasing Mission Entrepreneurs

Along with the traditional raffled prizes and silent auction items that are always a part of the golf tournament activities, this year featured a very talented resident named Curtis who continues to develop a business model he began in the PREP program. PREP, Penn Restorative Entrepreneurship Program, is provided for residents through our partnership with the University of Pennsylvania. The focus is on preparing a business plan and obtaining management skills that will no doubt, heighten the chances for a successful future. In these sessions, Curtis worked to develop a brand of clothing titled 4GVN which enforces his belief in second chances. “Being in recovery is living a second chance. It’s a chance to start over, to make things right, to forgive and be forgiven,” says Curtis. A portion of the profits made from selling the shirts are donated to the continuance of addiction treatment service and research. The Mission was happy to debut the shirts and unique designs of support and recovery at the 12th Annual Golf Tournament.

For information on how you can purchase a t-shirt email: wehaveallbeen4gvn@gmail.com

I WANT TO SUPPORT THE MISSION

Here’s another opportunity to give if you did not respond to our year-end annual appeal.

We need your help.

☐ $35  ☐ $50  ☐ $100  ☐ $500  ☐ $1,000  ☐ Other $ _______

Name/Organization: _____________________________________________________________

Address: _____________________________________________________________________

City:__________________________________________  State:________ Zip:____________________

Email:_________________________________________  Telephone:__________________________

Please send check and coupon to: Rescue Mission of Trenton, P.O. Box 790, Trenton, NJ 08605-0790
Keeping Jersey Fresh- TASK Capital City Farm and the Rescue Mission to Receive 2016 Smart Growth Award from New Jersey Future

For its work on the Capital City Farm, The Rescue Mission of Trenton was one of the annual recipients of the New Jersey Future’s Smart Growth Award. Capital City Farm is more than just a project, but a vital source of fresh food for community residents, especially those in the greatest financial need. It’s no secret that access to fresh fruits and vegetables can be a challenge in urban areas. A sign shaped like the Trenton Makes bridge that was salvaged and re-lettered to read “Capital City Farm” welcomes visitors to the farm that not only provides healthy “veggies”, but educational and employment opportunities for the city’s residents. The two-acre lot on Escher Street next to the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen was converted into an urban farm in 2014 and now supplies the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen with fresh vegetables. It all started in 2011 when some innovative and forward thinking Trenton Area Soup Kitchen (TASK) volunteers figured that the weed-filled part of the property could surely be a space that was utilized for something more beneficial.

D & R Land Trust was contacted by the volunteers since they are known for making great advancements in the preservation and restoration of land for the benefit of a community. After a visioning process, the idea of the urban farm began to take shape. The land for the farm was purchased by the City of Trenton with funding from Mercer County’s Open Space Fund. During the fall of 2015, in the “demonstration phase” of the garden, produce was donated to six households in East Trenton. This community farm is continuing to make progress with the help of many local partners including the Rescue Mission of Trenton. Other collaborators include the East Trenton Collaborative, Isles, the Escher Street SRO, Helping Arms, the Watson Institute, Designing the We, the City of Trenton, and Mercer County.

2016 marks the 15th anniversary of the Smart Growth Awards. New Jersey Future’s Chairman Peter S. Reinhart and fellow board members mission is to secure economic opportunity, community vitality and quality of life for all New Jerseyans. For the past 15 years, New Jersey Future has highlighted the work of organizations that are exemplifying “smart growth” throughout the state. In 2016 alone, the farm will produce 9,000 pounds of produce or more and is being distributed within Trenton. Plans for more produce distribution and community engagement are still underway.

Training and Maintaining Healthy Habits

A point of focus for the Rescue Mission family is also learning and maintaining healthy lifestyles. Meredith LoBuono, Outpatient Counselor Manager for the Mission, enlisted her personal trainer Michael Staton of WOW! (Work Out World) to come to the Mission to discuss nutrition and daily exercise routines with clients. The Rescue Mission also has a workout room on site so Stanton took the men through the steps of how to work out properly and avoid injury as well. Although the Mission serves three healthy meals a day to residents, the trainer helped them to calculate personalized nutritional programs based on their height and weight. Individualized tips on stretching, aerobic training and “Meal Awareness” were distributed to each participant. With all of the daily classes and sessions that the clients receive, it is through services like these that aid in growth and the path to healthy independent living. We thank Michael for donating his time to impart knowledge that is too often unavailable to those who need it. These sessions are greatly appreciated!
In Memory of Mission Friends:

✔ John Long, a graduate of The Mission’s Vince’s Place, sadly passed away this March. John was a dedicated resident during his time here and continued to be an advocate and dedicated supporter upon his move back to his home state of Michigan. He was known around the mission for his efforts to restore the snack bar. He also often had something special cooking in the crock pot that his fellow residents looked forward to. John always had a smile on his face and good stories to tell. He loved to discuss fishing and was very happy when he was able to go home to Michigan. John’s memory will be treasured by the Mission family that loved him dearly.

✔ Robert J. Del Tufo, former U.S. Attorney and state Attorney General, passed away this March. He was known as one of New Jersey’s top law enforcement officials who accomplished a lot for the criminal justice system. A one-time candidate for governor, Del Tufo’s career spanned from his tenure as an Assistant County Prosecutor to working at the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority, the U.S. Attorney’s office, the State Commission of Investigation and later New Jersey’s Attorney General. Addressing homelessness in New Jersey was also one of his passions and the Mercer Alliance to End Homelessness on June 3, 2016 donated a meal to the clients of the Rescue Mission of Trenton in his honor.

✔ Battle Against Hunger Bike Tour - Committed to ensuring that every person is well-nourished, the BAH’s annual 200 mile fundraising bike tour has raised over $900,000 over the past 12 years. As a grateful recipient of a large portion those funds, we encourage all our supporters to get involved in this great event. With one-day rides of 35 and 63 miles, as well as the epic 200 miler (not to mention multiple volunteer opportunities and a kid’s ride), there truly is something for everyone. Please help us to support this phenomenal organization! For more information please see battleagainsthunger.org.