

HomeFront

THE WOMEN'S HOME

Volume 8, Issue 4

Fall 2013

Evolving Clinical Program Provides Targeted Treatment

In early 2013, The Women's Home reviewed a 2012 report that assessed our program in light of emerging best practices and local trends in employment and permanent housing. In response to what was learned, we implemented some exciting changes in the program structure at The Home. The WholeLifeSM model and goals of the program will, of course, remain intact. We will continue to assist women in becoming emotionally stable, maintaining sobriety, and gaining employment and permanent housing. However, the methodology utilized to meet these goals has been modified to address the identified best practices in treatment and local trends in employment and housing.

THE "FOUR TENT POLES" OF OUR TREATMENT AND TRANSITIONAL PROGRAM

The clinical program at The Women's Home is guided by four (4) overarching principles – or the "Four Tent Poles" as we like to call them. These principles work together to provide an individualized program targeted to the specific needs of each client. Please take a moment to read about our evolving program, and feel free to give us a call at any time for more information.

Client-Centered

From each woman's admission date to her graduation from The Home, the entire approach to treatment is client-centered. This means that each resident participates in a dynamic and individualized program. Our approach is not "one size fits all". Each person is unique, and so is their treatment plan. The length of treatment is also assessed individually based on the level of client need, and can range from 6 to 18 months. Treatment plans are regularly assessed throughout their stay, allowing for a responsive program that evolves as goals are accomplished and new challenges arise.

Recovery-Oriented

The vast majority (over 95%) of our clients are "dual diagnosed", meaning they have both mental health

and substance dependence diagnoses. Because sobriety and recovery are so important in the treatment of mental health issues, all of our group and individual therapy draws on recovery themes. For example, if a client is learning how to create a budget in a Life Skills group, she will be challenged to think about ways in which financial stress can lead to relapse, and how a budget can help to prevent such an occurrence. Being a recovery-oriented program benefits ALL of our clients whether or not they have a chemical dependency issue. Recovery is essentially about strengthening all of the areas of wellness addressed in our WholeLife model. Each of us is engaged in the process of being more whole. It is important to us, as well as our clients, to understand that we are all on the same journey, and we are all prone to our own version of "relapse" – be it drugs, depression, spending, food, etc. Recovery is part of the process of being human, and being attentive to each area of wellness will strengthen our ability to live happy and healthy lives in the world.

Gender-Specific

Because our target population in the treatment and transitional program is women, we are extremely attentive to their particular needs and experiences, including the ways in which cultural norms and social expectations impact identity and recovery. Emotions themselves are universal, but the ways in which they are triggered and expressed are often heavily influenced by gender. So, for instance, if we talk about anger we also address the perception the client holds about how she is "supposed" to handle this emotion, along with the ways in which messages are communicated by our environment (family, media, etc.). This approach allows a client to reclaim for herself what it means to be a woman, and to find new freedom moving forward.



Trauma-Informed

Many of the women in our program have PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) due to some form of trauma – primarily in the form of sexual and physical assault and abuse. As a result, they enter the program with a number of behaviors that negatively impact their ability to succeed in the community. Being trauma-informed allows us to better understand certain stress responses and interpersonal challenges, and helps us to better address the underlying needs that might be missed if we simply viewed it as "bad behavior".

As a result of the program modifications outlined above, we are seeing some very encouraging trends. There is movement upward in hourly wages for our graduates from \$8.50 to \$12.19 an hour, and with ten of our current clients earning an average of \$18.59 an hour, we believe this positive trend will continue. We are also seeing a positive trend in our permanent housing statistics from 75% to 78% of our graduates obtaining and maintaining permanent housing. At The Women's Home we are always growing, learning, and evolving to better serve our clients. With your help, we are continuing to improve upon our already impressive outcomes by helping women in crisis regain their self-esteem and dignity, and empowering them to return to society as productive, self-sufficient women.

i am most PROUD OF...

At The Women's Home's recent Graduation/Awards ceremony in late October, we asked our clients to complete a sentence for us. These are just a few of the beautiful and inspiring responses we received.

"...the mother I have become. My son, who is 7, will now have the mom he deserves."

"...being able to see myself as a person with value...I have hope and finally have a sense of accomplishment."

"...MY 19 MONTHS OF SOBRIETY."

"...the fact that I can look my children in the eye and feel no shame."

"...applying what I have learned at The Women's Home to everything in my life and regaining my self-confidence and self-worth."

"...having a second chance to be the person I always wanted to be."



THE WOMEN'S HOME STEPS UP ONCE AGAIN

At The Women's Home, our past and present are rooted in the programs offered through our 6-to-18-month residential treatment and transitional program. Through the generosity of our supporters, we have had the opportunity to change the lives of thousands of women in our community.

As you are probably aware, most of the women in our care have experienced homelessness. We are committed to providing them all with top notch treatment and access to opportunities in the future. We are also committed to proactively tackling homelessness in our city. An important ingredient in doing so is understanding what comes before the streets. In other words, how do we identify and help PREVENT homelessness in the first place, and how do we approach this seemingly overwhelming issue? First, we must all be willing to look at the truth and address the issues that lead to homelessness. At the same time, we must provide real change for those already homeless, and work to prevent others from facing the same fate.



children. As a result of these new findings, The Women's Home made a decision to open up our units at JCGP to women *and* their families. This was a positive step in helping to address the issue, but because JCGP is made up of one-bedroom apartments, the number of total residents per unit was limited to two persons.

JCGP had proven even more successful than anticipated – we were changing lives by giving women a home they could be proud of *and* afford. However, the one-bedroom units did not accommodate larger families. With the Spring Branch community now fully embracing JCGP and the positive impact it has brought their way, we made a decision to look into the option of building a new supportive housing complex with 2 and 3-bedroom units. It was time to do some “needs” research of our own, and make some capital expansion decisions based on the findings.

“I am thrilled that The Home will be stepping up once again to serve more women, and now those that are important in their lives as well. The significant waiting list at Jane Cizik Garden Place is additional proof that the need for supportive and affordable housing is great and we are ready and willing to meet that need.”

PAULA PAUST, TWH EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Thanks to a generous \$25,000 donation from the **William J. and Dorothy K. O'Neill Foundation**, that very “gaps analysis” and “feasibility” study was conducted and the results showed a great need for more supportive housing for families. An additional need came through in the research as well...the community would benefit tremendously from a Support Services Center – one that would not only serve our residents, but the community at large (see sidebar for specific findings and next steps).

GAPS ANALYSIS STUDY REVEALS COMMUNITY NEEDS

This past spring, Jeff Stys of Strategic Decision Associates was contracted by The Women's Home to assist in examining the need for additional supportive housing in the Spring Branch area near Jane Cizik Garden Place (JCGP). Stys, who spent over 10 years with the United Way of Greater Houston, and has worked with other local organizations including the Department of Homeland Security, The Alliance of Community Assistance Ministries, and the Galveston Recovery Fund, was also commissioned to identify any “gaps in social services provided”.

Stys' comprehensive research included (among other things) independent meetings to solicit the perspectives of social service providers, congregations, political leaders, business leaders, and tenants at JCGP. His team also collected data from Spring Branch ISD, Coalition for the Homeless, United Way of Greater Houston, as well as other independent sources to understand the depth of need and the demographics of the immediate neighborhood and the greater Houston community.

After all the data was collected and reviewed, Stys provided The Women's Home with a report which concluded that there were indeed needs not being met in the community. It was recommended that The Home could play a role in providing programs and services to help meet those needs. Based on findings, two conclusions were outlined in his report. They are as follows:

CONCLUSION ONE

Develop a Support Services Center focused on:

- Adult Education / Workforce Development
- After-School / Summer Programs for School-Aged Children
- Healthcare / Behavioral Health / Prevention Education

The Women's Home should partner with some of the many qualified and available non-profit service providers in Houston for the delivery of services outside our current scope. The Home should provide the physical space and management of a center designed with the flexibility to maximize the impact of currently unmet needs for both our tenants and other families in the immediate community.

CONCLUSION TWO

Develop a permanent supportive housing complex for families, which provides not only safe, affordable housing, but also the option to take advantage of on-site case management, financial classes, computer training, AA and NA groups, and much more. With the construction of an additional supportive housing community, The Home would continue to expand services to women and their families. These additional permanent supportive housing units offer a solution to those who seek a safe, sober community where families can reach their unique potential. This model is emerging nationwide as one of the most effective ways to create positive, permanent change for families facing homelessness. Like JCGP, any new apartments would have an integrated model that includes services to chronically homeless, homeless, and low-income families.

The powerful combination of housing and services has demonstrated positive individual outcomes (reduced episodes of homelessness) and cost savings from lower usage of medical and correctional facilities.

Jeff Stys continues to provide us with recommendations on facility management and program models, identifying and contacting potential partners/collaborators, and identifying earned revenue and funding potential for both the apartments and the service center. This second phase of research will be completed by the end of 2013.

WOMEN AND FAMILIES IN NEED OF HOUSING

In 2012, a startling statistic on the face of homelessness was emerging. *The latest research was showing that the fastest growing homeless population in the U.S. was single women with*





The Women's Home's reNew and reDux Fashion Show Features a Catwalk Full of High-End Designs and a Pop-Up Boutique Packed With Discounted Designer Items

Fashion for a great cause AND high-end designs for purchase at incredibly discounted prices? That's what The Women's Home's reNux and reDux Fashion Show offered up on August 21st at our annual fashion event in the stunning Grand Foyer of the Wortham Center. It was fashion with a twist; fashion with a soul; the chicest way ever to give back.

Produced by the nationally recognized, Lenny Matuszewski and team, the runway was filled with volunteers from the community modeling designer clothing and accessories. All pieces were donated by Houston socialites and high-end retailers to The Cottage Shop (the thrift store owned by The Women's Home) which serves The Home's residents and brings in almost 15% of total revenue for the organization. Hair and makeup for models was once again provided by dedicated supporter of The Home and SoK Salon on Kirby owner, Alden Clark, and his fabulous team.

This year's show featured fall and winter pieces from Chanel, Escada, Chloé, Marc Jacobs, Dolce & Gabbana, Prada, and much more. As always, the event included the ever-popular "pop-up boutique" where runway pieces and many more designer items were sold at deep discounts. The Women's Home also collaborated for the first time with Fashion Group International of Houston, Inc. – part of a global, nonprofit professional organization with over 5,000 members in the fashion industry. Prior to the event, FGI held a hugely successful clothing drive that not only brought in fabulous items for the show, but also helped The Home to unite our cause with the local fashion industry.

This year's event was our most spectacular and successful yet. All proceeds from reNew and reDux assist The Women's Home in continuing to provide our WholeLifeSM model of care to women in crisis. We would like to thank all involved in making this year's event one to remember!



Special Thanks to our reNew and reDux Sponsors

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Famous Author, Augusten Burroughs, Inspires Crowd at The Women's Home's LESTER & SUE SMITH LUNCHEON

On October 18th at the beautiful Houstonian Hotel, residents from The Women's Home – women who were on the streets just a few months before – joined a group of The Home's biggest supporters, along with some of our newest friends at this fall's Lester & Sue Smith Luncheon Series.

The Luncheon's emcee, KHOU Channel 2's Ryan Korsgard, first introduced Laura Fowler, this year's WholeLifeSM Award Winner and a recent graduate of The Women's Home. Laura – who went from a life of addiction on the streets to recently receiving the "Woman of Distinction" award from her employer, HEB – shook off the nerves to deliver words so inspiring she received a standing ovation from the tear-filled crowd.

"This will be my first and last speech," Laura laughed, alluding to her fear of public speaking.

"I have good and bad news for you, Laura," Korsgard countered after Fowler's powerful words. "The good news is, you did a fabulous job. The bad news is, I don't think this will be your last speech!"

With the crowd of 200+ already inspired, keynote speaker and #1 New York Times Bestseller, Augusten Burroughs took the mic and delivered a string of Burrough-isms so real

and raw that attendees were left with a renewed appreciation for who they are and what they can accomplish. The author of "Running With Scissors", "Dry", and his latest "This is How: Surviving What You Think You Can't" did not disappoint his biggest or his newest fans. After speaking, Burroughs opened up the floor for questions. This segment was so popular, it eventually had to be cut off due to time.

"How do you mend a broken heart," one guest asked.

"You don't," Burroughs replied. "You don't deny it. You live in it and feel it, until you don't anymore. And then hopefully, someday sooner rather than later, that broken heart is full again."

Thanks to the generosity of many, over 60 current residents of The Home were given the opportunity to attend through ticket sponsorships. With beautiful clothing chosen at The Cottage Shop, the residents dined in the lovely setting, listened to the speakers' inspiring words, and marveled at how far they had come.

"In this room, there are people with two dollars to their names and people with 20 million dollars in the bank," said Burroughs. "You would be amazed at how very few differences there are between the two."

*"No Matter What...
If You Wake Up...
If You're Alive, There
are Possibilities."*

AUGUSTEN BURROUGHS



BHP Billiton Chooses The Women's Home for United Way "Day of Caring" Project

Each year, companies participating in the United Way campaign choose an organization as the recipient of their "Day of Caring" project. This special day allows donors to see, first-hand, how their generosity and volunteerism benefit their agency of choice. Over the years, The Women's Home has been chosen as the "Day of Caring" recipient by many wonderful local companies. We appreciate each and every one of the volunteers who have donated their time and heart to help us out at The Home. As a result of their hard work many improvements have been made to our facilities, such as the construction of a beautiful gazebo, aesthetic improvements to the interior and exterior of The Cottage Shop, and various landscaping projects.

Volunteers from BHP Billiton Breathe New Life into Transitional Homes

This year was a special one for twelve of the women living in our "transitional homes". The wonderful employees at BHP Billiton chose The Women's Home for their "Day of Caring" project, and over 120 volunteers from the global resources company spent two days (October 7-8) transforming two of our transitional homes. Maybe we should start calling it DAYS of Caring!

Under the supervision of team leaders, Gina Dutcher, Kelly McKinzie, and Roger Molaison, BHP volunteers purchased all needed supplies (paint, brushes, rollers, etc.), prepped the apartments, and went to work applying a fresh coat of paint throughout. The result was transformational and when the

residents returned they were greeted with a gleaming, fresh, and warmly renewed space. Our clients are so grateful for a place to live, but they're also extremely grateful that strangers are willing to take time out of their busy lives to make theirs better. We hope all of the volunteers at BHP Billiton know how much their hard work really means. You truly made a difference.

"It is a core value for all of us at BHP Billiton to give back to the communities where we live and work," said Steve Pastor, President, Conventional Assets for BHP Billiton. "Helping with The Women's Home renovation project gave our colleagues the opportunity to support an organization that provides essential services to women in our Houston community and we are happy to have made a difference."

If your company or group is interested in volunteering at The Women's Home, contact Chau Nguyen, our Manager of Community Involvement, at 713-328-1950 or cnguyen@thewomenshome.org. We have loads of other fun projects to fit the skills and schedules of all willing to donate their time!



The Cottage Shop Needs You: Consider Giving Back Today Via Volunteerism or Donations

Completing the Philanthropic Circle: The Cottage Shop Combines Teaching, Giving and Great Shopping!

On any given day, you can walk into The Women's Home's thrift store - The Cottage Shop - and walk out with a great find. From high-end boutique items like St. John Knits and Michael Kors shoes to mainstream clothing, housewares, jewelry, purses and much more, the discounts are deep and the ever-changing merchandise is one of the best kept secrets in Montrose. But if you take a closer look, you'll see that the shop is much more than fabulous merchandise at great prices. It is a second chance...a training ground for a new, exciting world...an opportunity for self-sufficiency, self-confidence, marketable job skills, and financial freedom. At The Cottage Shop, the women in our treatment and transitional program receive much-needed clothing to wear, along with the invaluable vocational training necessary to move toward a successful life after The Women's Home.

The Cottage Shop would not be the well-oiled, organized, and evolving machine it is without the dedicated skills of Cottage Shop Manager, Wendy Cook, and her right-hand ladies and Assistant Shop Managers, Katrina Brown and Amber Phillips. All three tirelessly work with our Clinical staff to create work schedules and provide the on-the-job training that ties together the skills learned in vocational counseling and classes.

Second Chances

At The Women's Home, we like to describe The Cottage Shop as a BIG CIRCLE. There is the circle of giving, of course, which includes all of our donated items recycled for a new life. These items do not sit hiding in closets or clogging up landfills. After donation, they are lovingly sorted by volunteers or the residents of The Home. They are then brought out to the floor, where they are purchased and loved by a brand new owner.

The big circle also applies to the women in our Treatment and Transitional program. At The Cottage Shop, they learn valuable vocational skills like customer service, merchandising, data entry, donation processing, and accounting. In addition, they learn the value of professionalism and working together as a team. In short, they learn how to gain and retain work outside of The Home.

One Resident's Journey

For Leah, life before The Women's Home was a mess. She had no stability and was in and out of jail due to her addiction. In December of 2012, she reached out for help and was referred to a rehabilitation program where she soon learned about The Women's Home. When she arrived,

Leah felt she had nothing left and she felt broken. Through the WholeLifeSM program at The Home, she is turning her life around.

"I have been able to work through things I never thought possible," said Leah. "I have just over 9 months of sobriety, and this wouldn't have been possible without The Women's Home. This program changed my life."

For Leah, one of the most beneficial elements of the program has been her on-the-job training at The Cottage Shop.

"I absolutely love working at The Cottage Shop! I feel it has helped me to rebuild the confidence I lost," said Leah. "I have something I am held accountable for and I am gaining the skills necessary for the upcoming job search process."

In addition to training, Leah is also extremely grateful for the program that provides her with vouchers for clothing and other items she could only have dreamed of owning less than six months ago.

"When I arrived at The Women's Home, I had very little," said Leah. "That's not the case today! The voucher program is such a blessing. Most of us have not been able to spend money on ourselves in a very long time, so to come in and immediately be able to get what you need from the shop is amazing. It made me feel like I was home. We never go without. When we need something it's there, and if it's not, they find it. It's through this program that I am starting to feel like the woman I am trying to become."

The voucher program at The Cottage Shop provides new residents with \$25 towards clothing (and free undergarments) upon arrival. Considering that many items at the shop are \$3 or less, that's quite a treat. Additional vouchers are received at 30 days, 60 days, 90 days, 6 months, and a year. Vouchers can also be earned through regular work hours, extra work hours, and good behavior. All in all, the ladies put together some pretty fabulous wardrobes and even bring clothing back in for donation themselves from time to time.

The Cottage Shop is an integral part of the programming at The Women's Home and, in addition, sales from the shop bring in almost 15% of total revenue for The Home. So please remember, the more you donate, the more merchandise we have the opportunity to sell, resulting in more funds going back into The Home to help women in need. It truly is a BIG BEAUTIFUL CIRCLE.



Without the kind people of this community The Cottage Shop would not exist. All items for sale in the shop are donated by individuals and local retail partners, and our fabulous volunteers help us to prepare everything for purchase. Please see below the volunteer and donation needs, and give us a call if you would like to be a part of furthering the mission of The Women's Home.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The Cottage Shop is looking for volunteer groups of 3-7 people on Thursdays and Fridays (mornings or afternoons). Any and all are welcome - and men are much appreciated as well! Volunteers are needed for the following (and more):

- Donation Processing
- Organization
- Light Assembly
- Testing of Electronic Devices

DONATION NEEDS

Donated items are accepted Monday-Saturday from 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. at the designated drop-off point near the entrance to The Cottage Shop at 811 Westheimer.

- Clothing
- Shoes
- Undergarments
- Medical Equipment (i.e. portable toilets, crutches, walkers, nebulizers)
- Dishes, Silverware
- Plastic Storage Tubs
- Seasonal Holiday Items
- Artwork
- Raincoats, Umbrellas

ITEMS THAT CAN NOT BE ACCEPTED

- Mattresses
- Sofa Beds
- Comforters
- Pillows
- Recliners
- Cribs
- High Chairs
- Safety Helmets

From Hopeless to Victorious – TWH Graduate, Laura Fowler, Soaks Up Her Second Chance

complete stranger as an adolescent, and at the age of 16, she would begin to ease her inner pain and grief with alcohol.

“As far back as I can remember, I had no identity of my own, no values, no fire,” said Laura. “I was lost.”

In 1993, Laura enlisted in the Navy, married a sailor, and gave birth to two beautiful daughters. The marriage, fueled by Laura’s ever-present alcoholism, was toxic. Fully entrenched in her addiction, she was eventually arrested for driving under the influence and two counts of child endangerment. The marriage soon ended in divorce and Laura continued her downward spiral until that day in March of 2010 when she was found blacked-out in the country club bathroom.

Thanks to the kindness of the responding police officer, Laura was not arrested but was released to her sister and encouraged to find help. Her decision to do so was not immediate. Convinced she could “handle it on her own”, she refused pleas from loved ones at an intervention and signed over guardianship of her daughters to her family. Bridges were burned and Laura soon found herself out on the streets with no place to call home. Broken and alone, she began attending AA meetings in late March of 2010, and as fate would have it, she ended up on the couch of a graduate of The Women’s Home who encouraged her to reach out to The Home.

Laura is prepared to deal with them in a positive and healthy manner. She is connected spiritually, something that is extremely important to Laura, and with encouragement from The Women’s Home, she no longer suffers with depression and receives the support she needs through the Veterans Hospital. She is committed to her sobriety and has chosen to work the 12 Steps a second time with a new sponsor.

“The Women’s Home provided me with valuable information in my Relapse Prevention class and that has helped me tremendously since graduation.”

The vocational training at The Home, including help with writing resumes, preparing for interviews, job search and job applications, and of course on-the-job-training at The Cottage Shop all helped Laura to secure a cashier’s position at H-E-B in October of 2011. Five months later, she was promoted to Assistant Service Manager and assigned as the Veterans Reception Coordinator. She was named Partner of the Month in February of 2013 and one month later she was nominated for and was the recipient of H-E-B’s Woman of Distinction Award for 2013. She is a Safety Champion, Diversity Champion, and is working to present an H-E-B commercial idea to Scott McLennan. Whew! We’re tired just thinking about it. But wait, there’s more! Laura entered the company’s “fully fit” challenge and lost 20 pounds AND quit smoking after

“On November 1, 2010, I entered the doors of The Women’s Home for the first time, and at the age of 40, I began to pave an exciting new path in life.”

“The night before I called, I wrote a letter to God,” said Laura. “On November 1, 2010, I entered the doors of The Women’s Home for the first time, and at the age of 40, I began to pave an exciting new path in life.”

Early in her stay, Laura chose to fully embrace The Home’s WholeLifeSM program and worked hard to rebuild her life in all six areas of wellness: the Emotional/Mental, Financial, Physical, Social, Spiritual, and Vocational. With vision toward a better future for herself and her family, Laura’s enthusiasm carried her through some difficult days in recovery, and as she opened herself up in counseling and in her Grief group, she was finally able to mourn her mother’s death.

“Before The Women’s Home, I couldn’t even say her name,” said Laura. “The pain was just too deep. Now I can remember the good times and speak about my mother without breaking down.”

Today, Laura is not just surviving...she is thriving! As we all know, there are day-to-day challenges in life, but with the tools learned in her time at The Home,

20 years. Laura was recently accepted into H-E-B’s Partnership Leadership Series and as expected, she completed the course with flying colors. She is now taking the steps necessary to apply for SORM (the School of Retail Management). We are so proud, we could just burst!

Of the utmost importance to Laura is improving her relationship with her family, especially her two daughters, Reagan and Leslie.

“My hope is that the relationship with my daughters will keep growing into something beautiful, until they feel they can trust their mother 100% - without any doubt or hesitation,” said Laura. “The relationships I believed to be unsalvageable are mending before my eyes. I am also sharing my life with an amazing man who adds beauty to my life every day. All I can say is if I had never entered the doors of The Women’s Home, I don’t believe I would have ended up where I am now – full of and surrounded by hope, love, and possibilities.”

Sarah Nesbitt Receives 2013 Life Member Achievement Award

On Friday, October 18, Sarah Nesbitt was honored by her peers in The Women’s Home Partnership for her more than two decades of incredible contributions as a volunteer at The Women’s Home. At the reception, held at The Houstonian before The Home’s fall luncheon, Sarah was surrounded by dear friends as she humbly received the 2013 Life Member Achievement Award.

Over the years, Sarah has offered her heart and soul to many projects. She was the creative leader behind the popular merchandising group, HomeWorks (which sold handmade one-of-a-kind crafts) and through her efforts, tens of thousands of dollars was raised. She also served on the Board of Directors and two capital campaign steering committees, and her special gift for

design was always appreciated at holiday decorating projects. Sarah even designed a beautiful space for our spiritual mentors to spend time with residents in our Life Learning Center. The truth is, hardly a week went by that Sarah’s humble hands weren’t busy making something beautiful and dear for her beloved Home.

Many of Sarah’s fellow volunteers were excited to honor their friend for her years of service and many achievements, and to sit down to reminisce about past memories and catch up on the new. Sarah is a treasured supporter of The Home and we hope to see her again very soon!



If you saw Laura Fowler’s healthy, beautiful face today, witnessed her passion for her thriving career, or listened to her words spoken so eloquently to a crowded room, you would likely be surprised to learn of the trials she has faced, the heartache and great loss she has suffered, or the dark abyss in which she once resided. Laura’s story is one of victory and redemption. But it wasn’t so long ago that her friends and family, and even Laura herself, felt hopeless and defeated. It wasn’t so long ago that Laura was found blacked out in the women’s bathroom at a country club – the culmination of similar events that had become all too familiar to those that cared for her most. The reality was, after almost two decades of alcohol abuse and battles with depression, Laura’s life *seemed* irreparable.

Looking back at Laura’s childhood, her spiral into alcoholism might not seem so surprising.

“I do remember I was a happy girl,” said Laura. “I felt deep in my heart my mother loved me very much, but my mother also lived an unsettling life with an addiction to alcohol. Her life was full of quiet and hidden turmoil.”

When Laura was two, her biological father could no longer take the partying and he left the family. At the age of nine, Laura would suffer another blow – the most devastating of her young life. Her mother, at 29 years old, was hit and killed by a train in an alcohol-related accident.

“I would no longer feel my mother’s kisses or hugs, and I would no longer hear her laughter,” said Laura.

After her mother’s death, Laura and her younger sister were adopted by her maternal grandmother, a woman who did the best she could despite many challenges. Unfortunately, Laura was molested by a



Joan Amoroso, Carol Lee Robertson, Sarah Nesbitt

Garden Renovations Add Peaceful Beauty to Montrose Campus

Research shows that access to the outdoors has a positive effect on a person’s mental, physical, and spiritual health. Due to the debilitating nature of homelessness, mental illness, and addiction, many of the women we serve have neglected their health for extended periods of time.

At The Women’s Home we try to surround our clients with multiple and comprehensive paths to wellness. Through our WholeLifeSM model of care we address the emotional, financial, physical, social, spiritual, and vocational areas of wellness. Even something as simple as the environment you reside in makes a significant difference. The beauty of the gardens at our Treatment and Transitional Housing site assists in improving our clients’ stress responses and thus are vital to their overall rehabilitation.

This year, through generous grants from The Garden Club of Houston and the River Oaks Garden Club, The Women’s Home was able to renovate the garden spaces at our Montrose campus and add two beautiful benches in the Serenity Garden outside the Chapel. New benches and trash receptacles were also installed at the outside break area at 607 Westheimer.

Extra special thanks to Mrs. Adele H. Pieper for spearheading the project and providing loads of TLC to our gardens!



“X the Stigma” Campaign Battles Shame

In the early part of 2013, The Women’s Home began to ramp up social media efforts. Largely aimed at advocating for the women in our programs and others like them in the community, we chose to include content that helped to dispel myths associated with substance abuse, mental illness, homelessness, etc. The occasional posts quickly grew in popularity and we soon realized that this “campaign” of sorts was gaining momentum. Our goal to help erase the shame and stigma surrounding these issues was reaching many, and it was working. It was time to lay out an organized plan and give our little “engine that could” a name!

At the beginning of this summer, ‘X the Stigma’ was born, and if you follow us on Facebook and/or Twitter, you’ve seen the #xthestigma tag at the end of each related post. Not only have we received loads of positive feedback from you, our supporters, but The Women’s Home and the ‘X the Stigma’ campaign have recently been featured in television newscasts on all four of the local TV news networks: KPRC Channel 2, KHOU Channel 11, KTRK Channel 13, and KRIV Channel 26! Appearing in these live interview segments were The

Home’s Executive Director, Paula Paust and Director of Resource Development, Marcia Tapp, along with some of our recent graduates. These resilient and flourishing women eloquently spoke about their experiences overcoming shame and stigma and how their lives were turned around with the help of The Women’s Home.

If you are not following us on social media, please consider doing so. There is power in numbers, and the more people we have sharing our mission to reduce shame and provide supportive services and housing, the more lives we can positively impact. Together, we can continue to advocate for change.



Interested in ‘X the Stigma’?

Below are just a few examples of our social media posts that have appeared on Facebook and Twitter in recent months:

Mental illnesses are more common than cancer, diabetes, or heart disease. (U.S. Surgeon General’s Report) #xthestigma

One of the biggest barriers to getting help is the stigma of drug addiction. Better public education and a broader sense of acceptance of addiction as a treatable disease (like diabetes or heart disease) is key to changing minds and changing lives. #xthestigma

People with mental illness can and do recover. Studies show that most people with mental illnesses get better, and many recover completely. (Source: SAMHSA) #xthestigma

Did you know that 40% of Texas households experiencing homelessness include at least one child? Access to safe supportive housing is very important to these children and their families.

Together, we can make a difference. #xthestigma

Upcoming Events

Building a WholeLife WholeLifeSM Education Series

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

The Houston Arboretum

The Women's Home 2014 Crawfish Boil

HOSTED BY THE WOMEN'S HOME'S
YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

Saturday, March 29, 2014

West Alabama Ice House

The Women's Home Invitational Men's and Women's Golf Tournament

Monday, April 7, 2014

Champions Golf Club

reNew and reDux Fashion Show

August 20, 2014

The Wortham Center – Grand Foyer

Staff Editor: Nikki Wynn, Communications Manager
Photographers: Jenny Antill, Roswitha Vogler, Marshall Truehill
Design by Squidz Ink Design



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BANK OF AMERICA AWARDS THE WOMEN'S HOME WITH \$200,000 NEIGHBORHOOD BUILDERS AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING GRANT

The Women's Home is excited to announce that we have been selected by Bank of America as a 2013 Neighborhood Builder, in honor of our dedication to the economic and social health of Houston. This award provides \$200,000 in flexible funding to our organization (\$100,000 in 2013 and \$100,000 in 2014) as well as strategic leadership training.

We are so thrilled to be a part of the Neighborhood Builders® program and to be recognized as a high-performing nonprofit making a significant impact in the community. Through this capstone initiative, Bank of America works to achieve greater impact through funding and training on issues critical to the economic health and vitality of local communities, specifically community development, workforce development/education, and critical needs.

“We recognize the important role The Women's Home plays in serving our most vulnerable residents and ensuring that they have access to supportive, long-term residential care. We know this leadership training and funding will help them meet their mission of moving more women from the streets and jail and towards financial, social and emotional stability.”

Kim Ruth, Houston market and
Texas state president, Bank of America

The awarding of this grant to The Women's Home is a great honor and we would like to thank Bank of America for recognizing our commitment to those we serve and for being such a generous supporter of positive work in the community.



Leadership Circle Plays Integral Role in The Women's Home Mission

Founded in 2011, our Leadership Circle is a special group of donors who have committed to provide an annual contribution to The Women's Home, ranging from \$1,000 to \$10,000. Their steadfast dedication to our mission provides women who have lost everything with a “home” where they can heal and restore their lives.

“Joe and I feel that participation in Leadership Circle is a way to work within our community to ensure continuity of the outstanding program and services provided by The Women's Home.”

Joe Redden & Karen Kash Redden

Members of the Leadership Circle set a powerful example with their generosity. If you are interested in more information on this annual giving program, contact our Director of Resource Development, Marcia Tapp at 713-328-1975 or mtapp@thewomenshome.org.