

## Giving Whole Lives a Strong Foundation... *Providing a Home*

Safe, affordable and supportive housing is the foundation for building a whole, fulfilling life. Every day thousands of Houstonians struggle to afford basic needs such as food, clothing and housing. Supportive housing facilities such as **Jane Cizik Garden Place** of The Women's Home respond to these basic needs by helping vulnerable individuals turn their lives around.

**Jane Cizik Garden Place** has 87 single-bedroom apartments, two full-time case managers and many amenities, including an on-site gym, computer lab, meditation room and courtyard garden. The complex is a national model demonstrating the success and positive impact that supportive housing can have not only on individuals, but on whole communities.

**Jane Cizik Garden Place** focuses on providing individuals who have limited incomes a safe, sober independent living environment. Since opening in 2010, it has become a home that provides residents the ability to live with dignity. Most of the residents at the complex stay an average of two and a half years. This length of stay indicates both the stability and the upward mobility of our tenants.

One unique feature of the complex are the ten units set aside for individuals with a history of repeated homelessness. These tenants are moved straight from emergency shelters to their own furnished apartment. This best practice of providing housing first, followed by individualized wraparound services, is an evidenced-based approach that shows great success at permanently ending cycles of homelessness.

The term "wraparound services" refers to the practice of meeting the basic needs of food, medical care and behavioral health services for an individual. In later evaluating what other care and training she may need to maintain a healthy life, each tenant works on accessing community services by developing an individual service plan that is coordinated through our case managers.

Supportive housing facilities such as **Jane Cizik Garden Place** help those struggling with poverty and homelessness to end the cycle of unstable housing. The following are stories from several of our current residents. These brief snapshots show the amazing progress these residents have made in their time at **Jane Cizik Garden Place**.

**MARY** has lived here for three years. She came to the complex with a history of homelessness after being unemployed for 10 years. Working closely with case management, she eagerly sought out referral resources for mental health and substance abuse challenges, and basic medical and dental care. She also joined various apartment groups that helped her with socialization skills and reentry into the larger community. Mary is now fully engaged in community life. She attends a local congregation for spiritual support, has a part-time job and is participating in free training opportunities with a goal of full-time employment.

**BARBARA** has lived here for three years. She moved in following completion of a treatment program. Before entering treatment, she had separated from her husband of many years, was estranged from her adult children and had lost her professional position. In the stability provided by the complex's safe and serene surroundings, she began the process of rebuilding her life. Because she had strong transferable skills, case management was able to guide Barbara to other employment that she would find fulfilling. Now she has a position making \$5 more an hour than the position she held when she moved in. She has reconnected with her children, and she and her husband are in professional counseling together, supported by a local congregation.

**GEORGIA** has lived here for four years. Arriving after a period of homelessness lasting two years, she was depressed and anxious about the future. She had a new job making \$10 an hour. Even with the many resources we are able to provide (monthly trips to food pantries, an on-site emergency food stock and referrals to many free/affordable services), her first year was a struggle. With regular support from case management and participation in a United Way Thrive program, however, she began to progress. Georgia continued to grow in her position with the same firm and now makes \$25 an hour. Her goal is to eventually save enough money to purchase a small home and become a homeowner after receiving community education to help with this transition.

**SALLY** has lived here for a year now, coming to the complex directly from the Salvation Army after completing the Mission of Yahweh treatment program. She lives in one of the units for those with a history of homelessness, having been unemployed for several years. After going through community workforce training, she gained a temporary administrative position with a company. This later became a part-time job, and today Sally is a permanent full-time employee with them.

**IRMA** came here in 2012 and has become known for her friendly disposition - she is loved by her neighbors. Her English is minimal, but she is eager to attend adult English as a second language courses to improve her skills. She now works full-time assembling air-conditioning units and is engaged to a fiancé whose kind disposition matches her own. The couple are having a house built and are waiting for the sale to close in February.



## WHY HOUSING? WHY JANE CIZIK GARDEN PLACE?

I am often asked if housing is in keeping with the work of The Women's Home. Since 1957, The Home has been committed to its mission of enabling women to move from crisis to self-sufficiency. In 2005, Jane Cizik Garden Place, our (permanent) supportive housing program, represented the next best step in fulfilling our mission.

At The Women's Home, crisis has

many faces. Crisis may mean seeing women enter our doors who have a mental illness or substance abuse disorder that has not been treated. Crisis is about lacking a home or a job, or simply living one paycheck away from eviction. Crisis is about not being able to care for your children's or family's medical needs. Crisis is about trying to start over after being released from jail with no resources or direction.

Our mission has always been about assisting women overcome crisis, whatever form it takes for them. Our goals are about ensuring women achieve mental stability and sobriety, obtain and maintain income, secure safe housing, and reunite and build strong families.

For us, fulfilling our mission has meant addressing the needs of women using the best practices of our time. Because so many of the women who came to us have struggled with mental illness and substance abuse, The Home developed a treatment program to help in that struggle. This has evolved into a client-centered, trauma-informed

and recovery-oriented model. These evidence-based practices are now being taught to master-level interns from our local universities at both our treatment and our transitional campuses.

A number of years ago, we found that our residents' recovery was being put in jeopardy because they could not find housing that was safe and affordable. At the same time, we were learning from national best practices that providing permanent housing first, along with supportive services, is an effective approach to addressing homelessness. Evidence indicates that individuals who are provided a stable home in a safe community have a much improved chance of mental stability, which in turn means employment and self-sufficiency.

Our solution was to build Jane Cizik Garden Place. It offers a home to women who struggle with substance abuse, who have experienced homelessness and who live one paycheck away from being homeless. Not only that, it offers them a community where they can continue to grow. On page one, you can read about

the successes of our women at Jane Cizik Garden Place.

Today we know that women with children are the fastest-growing homeless population. And we know that when families are rapidly re-housed, children experience less trauma and more success in school. These are the women and families who are in crisis today. Meeting this need for housing therefore is a next best step in fulfilling our mission.

The Women's Home has a long history of developing supportive communities. We are ready for this task! In future newsletters, you will read more about our plans to build an apartment community for women and their children. To ensure their success, we will include a WholeLife Service Center that will offer an array of support to the new community's members.

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Irene Liberatos  
and Michael Westergren  
Melinda and  
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“Let your friends, colleagues and family know about the good that you see; it will help them see it too.”

- HANOCH McCARTY



THE WOMEN'S HOME ANNUAL GALA AT  
**DOWNTOWN  
 ABBEY**

Last year on November 14, The Corinthian in downtown Houston took on the elegance of early 20th-century Yorkshire aristocracy for our annual gala. Glittering chandeliers and elegant tables set with lace brought the theme of "An Evening at Downton Abbey" to life.

Guests dined and danced the night away to the Richard Brown Orchestra, which performed instrumental classics worthy of the grand duchess as well as lively renditions of contemporary favorites.

Dominique Sachse as mistress of ceremonies and Paul Schenfeld as auctioneer guided the evening, which began with The Women's Home Executive Director Paula Paust's heartfelt opening story. Afterward, guests enjoyed fine dining, fun posing at the photo booth, a live and silent auction, and dancing.

Trini Mendenhall was the evening's guest of honor for her lifetime of philanthropy and volunteer service in our community. Trini generously donated two Fabulous Fiesta private party packages to our live auction, where the winners and seven friends will enjoy an evening of Trini's famous homemade enchiladas alongside Trini's cohosts Cindy Burns, Harriet Hart and Martha Turner. Other items in the silent auction included two Texas flag paintings by local artist Taft McWhorter and a golf getaway to the Kohalaiki resort in Hawaii.

The evening was more than a night in the grandeur of Yorkshire. Thanks to our generous attendees, it was an event that raised \$365,000 in integral funds for our residents' needs.

Many thanks to all involved in making this year's gala a success. Without you, our work would not be possible.



**Gala Underwriters**

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*Targa Resources Corporation*  
*Trini Mendenhall*

**Marquess & Marchioness**  
*Cindy Burns, Harriet Hart, Martha F. Turner*  
*Caroline Fant, Lynn Mathre, Sue Payne*  
*John P. McGovern Foundation*

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*Cora Sue and Harry Mach*  
*Julie Mahler*  
*Karen and Evan Marti*  
*Charlie Thomas*  
*Laura and Michael Wiley*



# The Impact of Integrated Healthcare

Looking at primary care, mental health and substance abuse treatment as interlocking components of a patient's overall health plan is the keystone of integrated healthcare. Programs that focus on integrated healthcare have shown positive results not only in improving patients' physical and mental wellbeing and reducing their risk of relapse, but also in reducing communities' healthcare expenses.

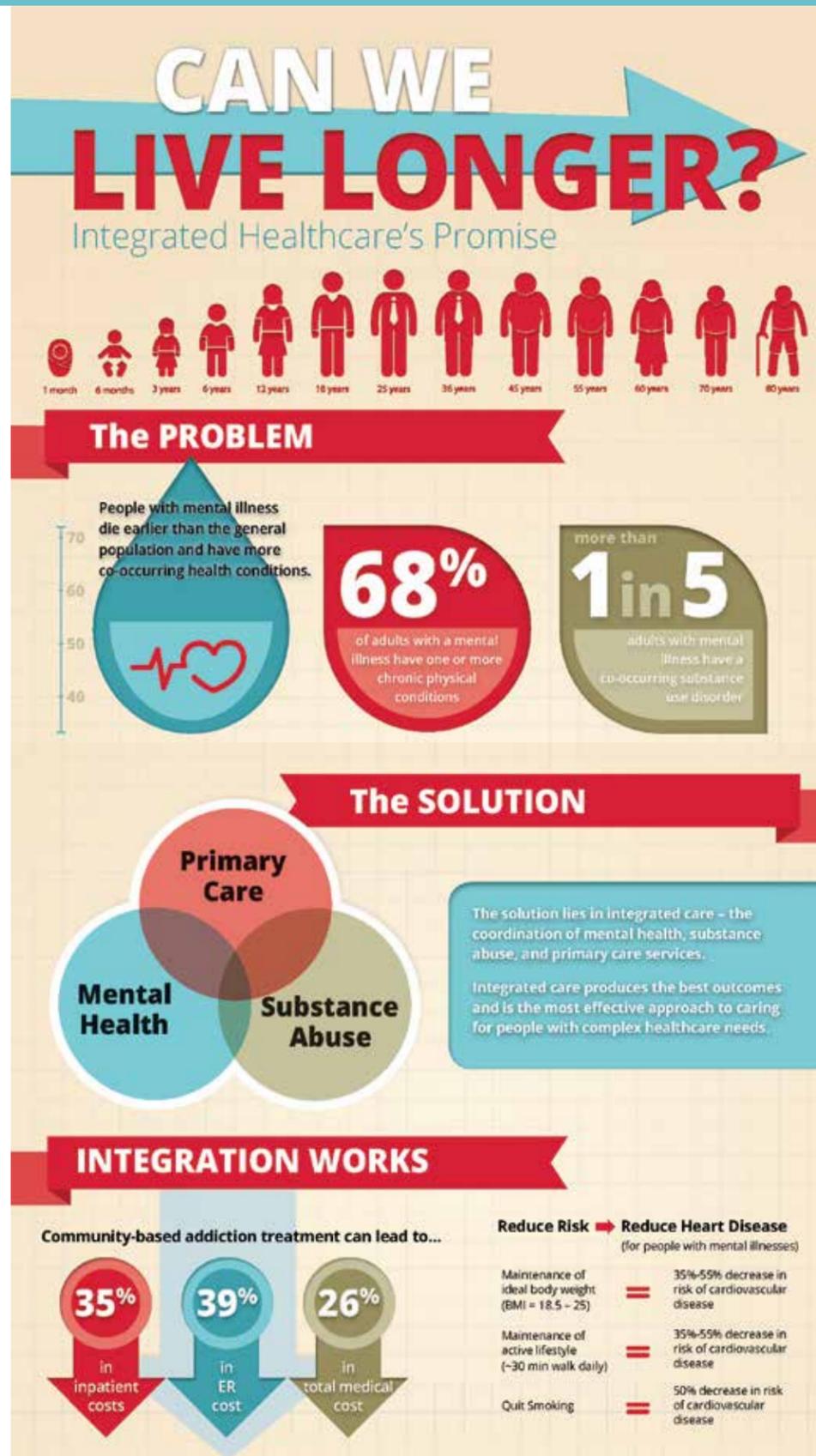
Accessible integrated healthcare recognizes how mental illness can increase individual's likelihood of developing other chronic ailments due to a lack of affordable treatment. Studies have shown vulnerable populations such as those in poverty and the homeless are a higher risk for substance abuse as a form of self-medication. Preventative care that treats the whole person helps improve the quality of life of those facing chronic mental and physical illness and enables them to return to independent constructive lives.

As a part of our WholeLife™ program, The Women's Home knows the impact a resident's physical wellbeing and mental health can have on each other. This is why our treatment and transitional housing program provides psychiatric care as well as physical wellness in addition to our counseling and other mental health services. Our psychiatric care services are provided by the

Baylor College of Medicine through a fourth year psychiatric resident who conducts psychiatric evaluations, provides group and individual therapy sessions and medication consultations with residents. The psychiatric resident works with our residents' physician to coordinate proper care. Additionally a Baylor Psychiatry Professor works with staff and participates in weekly treatment planning.

Residents upon entering our treatment program also receive a full physical, tuberculosis testing, counseling and doctor referrals for any needs from a licensed nurse practitioner who is a Clinical Instructor at UT-Houston School of Nursing. The clinical instructor also provides educational classes on physical wellness to residents, helping them learn ways to support and manage their health in their daily routines.

By caring for our residents' physical health alongside their mental health and treating their substance abuse, we give them the opportunity to have a longer better quality of life.



## Physical Wellness Needs

*The Women's Home is in need of the following items in order to provide our residents with the best physical wellness support possible:*

### PHYSICAL WELLNESS

- Walking shoes (gift cards)
- Workout clothing (gift cards)
- Knee braces
- Ankle wraps and foot wraps
- Weight gloves
- Clip-on lights for night visibility
- Strength resistance bands
- Three kitchen blenders
- Walking step counters
- Fitness trackers
- Reusable water bottles
- Sweatbands
- Blood pressure machine
- Sugar/glucose reader
- Yoga mats
- Yoga socks
- Punching bag

- Punching gloves/hand wraps
- Nature walk videos
- Fitness videos

### SPECIAL HYGIENE

- Athlete's foot ointment
- Bengay and Aspercreme
- Heating pads
- Ice packs
- Gold Bond powder
- Sunscreen
- Sports bandages
- Sport tampons
- Feminine pads
- Feminine itch cream/wipes
- Razors
- Shaving cream

### OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDS

- Motrin
- Aleve
- Ibuprofen
- Iron supplements
- Multivitamins
- Advil
- Pamprin
- Midol
- Neosporin
- Breathe Right nose strips
- Vick's VapoRub
- Claritin/ Benadryl/ Zyrtec

### BASIC HYGIENE

- Deodorant
- Body wash
- Toothpaste
- Floss
- Chapstick
- Non-alcohol mouth wash
- Lotion/Vaseline
- Pumice stone

- Toenail clippers
- Eye drops
- Feminine body spray
- Cream of Nature Brand Shampoo and Conditioner
- Hair oil (coconut oil, shea butter, VO5)
- Hair mousse
- New Era or Isoplus Holding Spray
- Cream of Nature Hair Dye
- Blue Magic Hair Grease
- Foam Hair Rollers
- Rubber hair bands
- Lotta Body Setting Lotion
- Bobby pins
- Ampro Hair gel (brown)
- Cream of Nature Brand or Bone Straight Brand Hair relaxers

*If you have physical wellness items for donation, please contact Community Involvement Manager Chau Nguyen: [cnguyen@thewomenshome.org](mailto:cnguyen@thewomenshome.org) or 713.328.1950.*

# Teaching Technology

As part of our vocational training program, The Women's Home, with the help of community volunteers, provides computer education classes to our residents to help strengthen their resumes. Two such volunteers are John Maag and Kemp Maer, whose wives connected them with our program. They have taught Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel and PowerPoint to our residents for over 15 years.

John began teaching Microsoft Word to our residents at his wife's suggestion. She had heard about the program from one of our spiritual volunteers who shared a bible study class with her. Though John had no previous teaching experience, he did have a proficiency with computers and a willingness to try.

Over the years of teaching, he found that watching as residents who begin the program "graduate" with a new sense of confidence in themselves and in their computer skills became a continuous reward. "I tell the ladies the sign-in sheet is my paycheck," he says. "My paycheck is also to see that 'aha' moment in their eyes. That's what's rewarding - to see somebody get it."

John notes that over time he's seen the community spirit of The Home's residents grow stronger. Though residents can test out of the computer classes, he encourages those with Word proficiency to stay in class to help those who struggle with the program. Now more than ever, the residents work to help build each other up.

Kemp began teaching with The Home at the urging of his first computer student, his wife, then

a clinical intern at The Home. She pointed out that his patience and years of computer experience at Exxon might make him a good teacher. He began teaching Word alongside John, as well as Excel and PowerPoint, before the two agreed that John would handle Word while Kemp would focus on the other classes. "I was relieved," Kemp says, "because I found it hard to teach Word, but fun to teach PowerPoint and Excel."

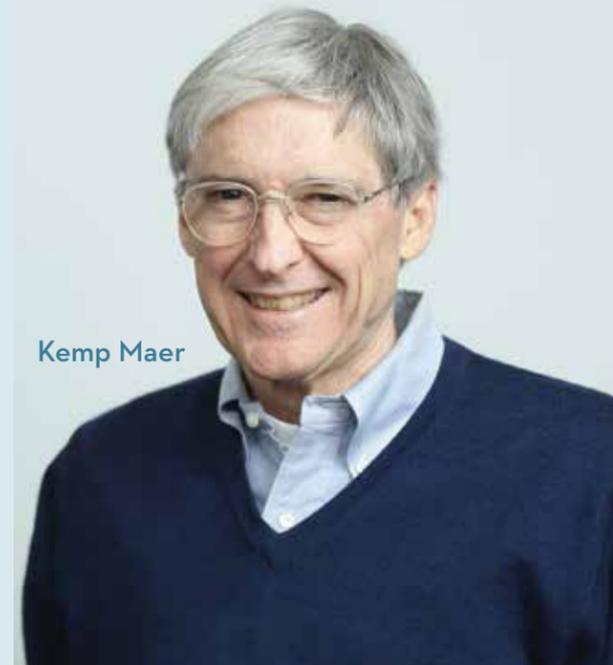
Kemp liked working with the programs, especially Excel, for how much time they can save in collecting and organizing data. In his classes, he aims to give our residents a way to make future job tasks easier. If they need additional training for a job, he tries to give them a head start in understanding the programs.

His efforts have yielded success. Several years ago, Kemp ran into a onetime student where she worked at the West University Public Works Department. Our former resident told him she uses Excel every day at work. Still other residents have come to him, saying his classes helped them pass proficiency tests for job interviews.

Both John and Kemp praised our computer lab, which will be updated this year with new computers to better serve our clients. Kemp began teaching here after retiring from Exxon. Now ready to retire from his place in the classroom, he will be succeeded this year by a new volunteer, Ted Braun, who we hope will show as much patience and attention to his students.



John Maag



Kemp Maer

## Gifts from St. Luke's United Methodist Church

In 1977, St. Luke's United Methodist Church established their Houston Project Committee as a part of their community outreach efforts. The Houston Project provides grants to local organizations that enrich the quality of life of Houstonians. The Women's Home's petition was selected as one of eight recipients of the Houston Project's grant in 2014. The grant, totaling \$14,050 covered replacing the major appliances in our four transitional homes, including three ranges with over-the-range microwaves, four refrigerators, four dishwashers, and three washer dryer combos.



NEW REFRIGERATORS, WASHER AND DRYER COMBOS, RANGES AND MICROWAVES WERE PLACED IN TRANSITIONAL HOUSING.

Our four transitional homes each house six residents as a part of our treatment program, residents in these living quarters, work cooperatively to create house rules and share the chores, kitchen and laundry space. Each transitional home having appliances that perform reliably and efficiently is an important part of helping our residents prepare to live independently and meet their daily needs in their future home or apartment. The grant provided by St. Luke's United Methodist Church helps The Home to provide the best residential facilities possible to support our residents.

Thank you to St. Luke's United Methodist Church for supporting our program's efforts to build whole lives.

## A heartfelt thanks to The Professionals Group



Our residents' art room received a new look with the new year, thanks to several volunteers from The Professionals Group (TPG). TPG is a local organization made up of professional women, many of whom are small to medium sized business owners. These ladies enjoy networking and socializing, but they also love to give back to their community.

The planning began months ago, when volunteers from TPG's Making a Difference Committee toured The Home and determined the art room was in desperate need of a makeover. "This did not feel like a room that inspired creativity," says Cindy Jennings, who spearheaded the renovation.

So Jennings and her TPG friends went to work. Receiving input from our residents, the group identified areas for improvement. The walls needed not only a fresh coat of paint, but new colors of paint.

Affectionately named "Lime Rickey" and "Tranquility Pool," the colors, according to Jennings, felt fresh, bright and cheerful. "At first my group was worried it was too much, but once the colors went on the walls, we were all happy," Jennings says.

So were the residents. They returned on a recent Monday to a brand new art room, decked out with bookshelves, cubbies for their projects, a donated sewing machine and much more.

TPG even organized the supplies in the room. The organization is currently seeking donations from its members for more supplies for the art room to keep the project alive.

This is the second year of a two-year commitment by TPG to The Women's Home. Since this partnership began, TPG members have attended special events, hosted a resident awards banquet, donated towels for the clients and assisted with a clothing drive.

The Women's Home and its residents are grateful for the labor of love and the job well done!

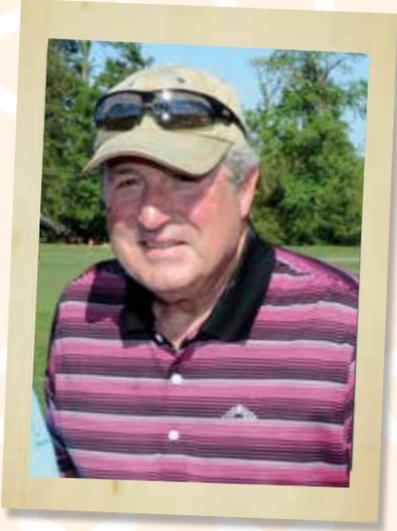
# TRIBUTE GIFTS

Sharing the memory of a cherished person can have great impact. Here at The Home, we regularly receive donations to honor someone special. We thought we might share some of the most memorable gifts from last year.

## RENÉ JOYCE... IN HONOR

*His colleagues made a generous donation in honor of his retirement from Targa in December 2015.*

In the words of his business partners: "It would not be lost on anyone that it is beyond words to say thank you adequately for your having started Targa and created the opportunity to invite so many of us - employees, partners and board members - to share in the journey. But we hope that a donation that helps brings smiles to others will serve appropriately. In recognition of your role as founder of Targa, we would like to honor your contributions with a donation to a cause that is meaningful to both Kay and you... We are proud to support The Women's Home to help women build whole lives."



ended his career in Houston as president of Exxon Chemical Company. He retired in 1998 after 43 years of service with perfect attendance. None of these achievements would have been possible without the unwavering support of his loving wife, Sarah. She approached every transition with grace and enthusiasm. Ray never wandered far from his roots in East Texas. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, playing poker with his lifelong friends and playing a competitive hand of '42' with his children and grandchildren. Ray was an avid sports fan and religiously followed the Houston Texans, Houston Rockets, Houston Astros and, of course, his beloved Texas Aggies. The family he leaves behind will always treasure the memories of their many extraordinary family vacations. Ray knew that the memories of time spent with family were the most valuable things he could ever leave behind. His children and grandchildren will carry on this tradition in his memory."

## RAY NESBITT... IN MEMORY

*Multiple gifts were made in memory of a life well lived and incredible service to the community. Ray and Sarah Nesbitt have supported The Women's Home for more than 25 years.*



"After graduating from Texas A&M, Ray had various job opportunities to choose from, but accepted the offer from Humble Oil Company. He

## ROBERT M. CHANNEY... IN MEMORY

*Because he was a man who valued service and integrity above all, Bob Chaney's family knew that donations made in his honor would leave a lasting legacy. Multiple gifts were received from friends, business associates, neighbors and family to carry on his tradition of service to others.*



He is remembered best by the serenity prayer: "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change...the courage to change the things I can...and the wisdom to know the difference."

# X the Stigma

## Texas Bar Foundation Funds Re-entry Summit!

The Women's Home has been awarded a generous grant from the Texas Bar Association to host a "Houston Women's Re-Entry Summit" on September 17 and 18, 2015.

The state of Texas has the fifth highest incarceration rate and one of the largest prison populations in the nation. Women make up nearly a third of the prison populace. Of all women released, one in five, upon their exit from the system, end up in Harris County.

Ex-offenders face a multitude of legal and social barriers that prohibit them from successfully re-entering society. A study by the Legal Action Center found that Texas has over 32 different laws restricting released prisoners, ranging from

employment policies to limitations on public assistance. These barriers increase the likelihood of relapse and recidivism among individuals with criminal records.

While post-release reintegration is difficult for anyone, women face unique challenges that are often overlooked and lead to unmet needs. Female offenders are more prone to addiction, mental illness, low self-esteem, lack of job skills or experience and homelessness than their male counterparts. Women out of prison also face challenges in finding employment: many second-chance jobs are primarily manual labor and involve time commitments that conflict with childcare responsibilities.

"Going back into the real world is difficult for women. We know they are more vulnerable to mental illness, addiction and homelessness," says Marcia Tapp, Director for Resource Development at The Women's Home. "We see these struggles every day with many of the clients we serve. We hope this summit will provide a way to address the problems, while directly helping the women who will be attending."

The summit will have two major components. In the morning, educational panels featuring local experts and policymakers will discuss the challenges of finding employment and housing, plus other barriers to success. The stigma of the ex-offender will also be explored with a concentration on those offenders overcoming drug and drug-related charges. The goal will be to educate and offer tools to local service providers, community leaders and

the business community so that they are better equipped to serve this unique population.

The other component will be an employment and social services fair, along with a legal clinic, made available to female ex-offenders as part of the summit. The Home will invite businesses that are open to hiring individuals with a criminal background as well as companies that are interested in learning more. Many community social service providers will be present to link individuals with services. In addition, The Home will collaborate with local volunteer lawyers to advise individuals on their specific concerns.

Our area has not seen an event of this nature since 2008, making this a great opportunity to bring our community together and advocate on behalf of female ex-offenders. By educating our community, we hope to create better opportunities for women as they re-enter society, helping to keep them from experiencing homelessness or further incarceration.

For more information about the summit, contact Marcia Tapp at 713.328.1975 or at [mtapp@thewomenshome.org](mailto:mtapp@thewomenshome.org).



# THE WOMEN'S HOME ANNUAL CRAWFISH BOIL



Kick off this spring with a good time in good company for a great cause at The Women's Home 5th Annual Crawfish Boil! Please join this year's chairs - Will Chang, Rachel and Alex Lopez, and Stephanie McGraw - and the event's Host Committee in making a difference at one of the first crawfish boils of the season.

Beginning at 1:00 pm on Saturday, March 28, our fun, Cajun-style crawfish boil is sure to bring together a diverse crowd of Houstonians at West Alabama Ice House in support of The Women's Home. All proceeds from the event will help The Women's Home continue its important work of building whole lives in the Houston area.

Bring the kiddos and your four-legged friends for some family-friendly fun. Tickets are only \$35 for unlimited crawfish! For more information or to purchase tickets, please visit [www.thewomenshome.org](http://www.thewomenshome.org)



MEN'S & WOMEN'S

## INVITATIONAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

### HOLE IN ONE

Come and get into the swing of spring with The Women's Home Men's & Women's Invitational Golf Tournament on Monday, April 6. Hosted at the prestigious Champions Golf Club, the event includes a golf clinic featuring Nancy Lopez, longtime Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) tour member with over 48 wins under her belt. In addition to leading the golf clinic, Nancy will help players get the most out of their game, offering tips, demonstrating skills and assuring a knockout day of golf for everyone.



Registration and lunch begin at 10:00 am with the shotgun start launching the tournament at noon. After a long day of friendly competition, golfers can kick back and enjoy fancy food and libations while bidding on silent auction items at the 19th Hole at Champions! The Women's Home has a few \$1,500 and \$3,000 spots left for teams looking to support the tournament while enjoying special rewards for their contribution.

Don't miss your chance to join in the fun!



## SAVE THE DATE WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19

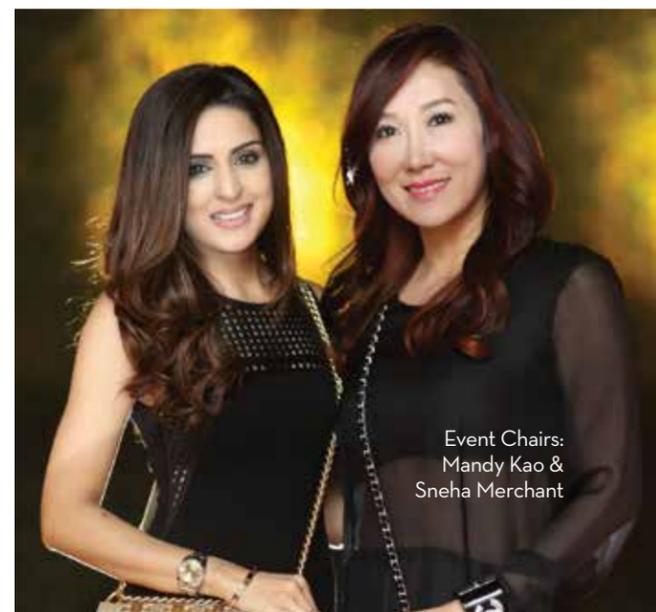


Even though we are months away, the buzz is already beginning for this year's reNEW AND reDo Fashion Show. Mark your calendars for Wednesday, August 19, when our show returns for its seventh year!

We are so pleased to announce our event co-chairs for this year: Mandy Kao and Sneha Merchant. Mandy was one of last year's fashion icons, while Sneha graced the runway as one of our fabulous models. Together, these two charity-minded and fashion-forward women are promising this year's event will be bigger and better!

They have already hit the ground running, recently hosting a kickoff at Neiman Marcus and enlisting the help of their fabulous fashionista friends. Mandy and Sneha will be planning monthly events at area clothing stores and boutiques right up until the show.

In the meantime, we are asking everyone to begin cleaning out your closets for gently used designer items. You can drop off your items at our Cottage Shop, or come to one of Sneha and Mandy's shopping parties. Be on the lookout for time and place!



Event Chairs:  
Mandy Kao &  
Sneha Merchant

# Women OF SUBSTANCE

BENEFITTING THE WOMEN'S HOME

## AN AFTERNOON TEA AND CONVERSATION

with

Barbara Taylor Bradford, OBE

Author Of 30 Best-Selling Novels

AND

Joanne King Herring

Author | Humanitarian

Congressional Medal Of Honor Nominee

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 2015

3:00 PM - 5:00 PM

THE FOUR SEASONS

1300 Lamar, Houston 77010

This Event Is The U.s. Premier Of  
Mrs. Bradford's 2015 Novel  
"THE CAVENDON WOMEN"

Invocation

Reverend Mary Gracely

Conversation Led By

Ernie Manouse, Houston PBS

Staff Editor: Alex Grandstaff, Communications Manager  
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United Way of Greater Houston

# Investing Trust

In the two years that Kathy Jo was homeless, Chapelwood Church's Mercy Street fed her even when she was too ashamed to come up to the food counter herself. Now five years sober, she works for the very group that helped her in her hardest times.

While she was homeless, Kathy Jo grappled with addiction. In addition to food for the homeless, Mercy Street also offers prayer cards for people to write on. Kathy Jo's prayer was always the same: "Get me out of here." An answer came when she found herself at The Women's Home after a stay at Volunteers of America.

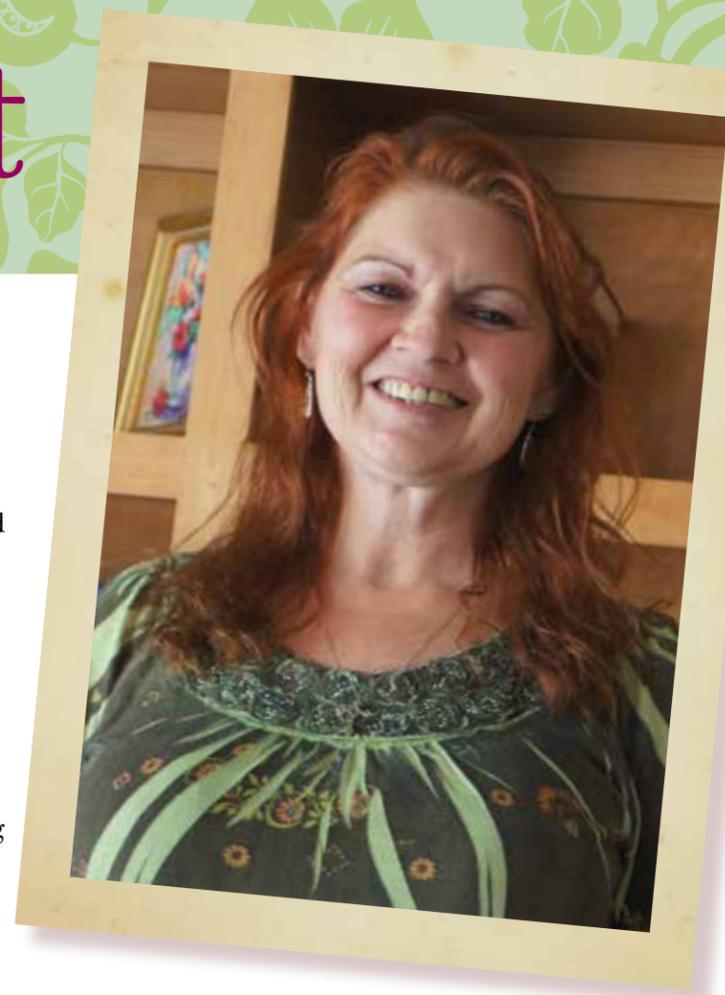
Her stay at The Home helped Kathy Jo uncover who she was beneath her struggle with homelessness and addiction. "The Women's Home gave me all the tools to become the woman I am," she says. During her recovery, Kathy Jo wanted to rebuild her religious faith

and understand her journey as a part of God's plan for her. She asked The Home to give her a spiritual advisor, and Pat went through the twelve steps of recovery with her.

The Home staff also helped Kathy Jo volunteer with Mercy Street, which she wanted to repay for its support in a time when she was most alone. Mercy Street Pastor Gregg Taylor introduced her to Susan Hall, a staff member at Chapelwood who would eventually hire Kathy Jo as an administrative assistant to the church. This confidence in her was transformative. "They had trust in me," she says, "after living on the streets and struggling with addiction. They trusted me to work in the church. I've worked there over two years."

Kathy Jo hopes that sharing her story will help others who are looking for a way out of addiction and homelessness find the help they need at The Women's Home. She now lives at Jane Cizik Garden Place, which she calls her "safety zone." The supportive housing gives her the security that those who hurt her in her past won't be able to take advantage of her again. "I feel really safe here," she says. "They can't come unless I let them and that won't happen."

Kathy Jo now focuses on bringing positive people into her life. Reassured by the safe



spaces of her work and friends at Chapelwood and her home at Jane Cizik Garden Place, she's reconnected with all of her children. Before her recovery, Kathy Jo's children confessed that though they loved her, they did not like the person her addiction made her. Now she has found again her children's laughter. "I can call them up and have a conversation and they make me smile," Kathy Jo says. "And I know on the other end of the line, I think they're smiling too."

"The Women's Home gave me all the tools to become the woman I am."