

HOMEOWNER TO HOMELESS

According to Laurie, a single mom staying at Cross Roads House with her eight year-old daughter, "I am the working poor." She has been steadily employed with full-time work at the same employer for the past six years. She earns just under \$18.00/hour. "People don't understand how I can have a full time job, work hard, and still have to live in a homeless shelter. I either have to make a lot more, or a little less, and that's pretty sad." Laurie explains that if she made just a few dollars less per hour, she would qualify for some benefits that would help her survive.

Laurie had lived locally in public housing, but a few years ago she saved up to buy and renovate a mobile home. As a homeowner she began to struggle financially when her furnace broke and she needed tires for her car. "Things just kept falling apart and I felt like I was playing a shell game with my finances." When summer rolled around, child care expenses increased since she had to pay for camp. Knowing that things were getting bad, Laurie contacted her mortgage company, who referred her to a financial advisor. Unable to come up with a plan to save her home, Laurie ended up signing the deed over to the bank in lieu of foreclosure. She and her daughter then had nowhere to live, "It was extremely scary and gave me a lot of anxiety."

Laurie and her daughter arrived at Cross Roads House on Labor Day...nervous about living in a shelter, but relieved to



Laurie and her daughter, age eight.

know they would not have to sleep in their car. "Moving here was actually a weight off my shoulders. When I first got here I was a little leery, but now I feel safe, my daughter feels safe. I feel a lot of relief. It's actually been really positive. I do want to have my own place again... this is temporary... but very, very helpful. I really don't think a lot of people understand... there are so many different circumstances for people that are here. I don't have drug issues, I don't drink. I'm a hard worker, but I'm in this sort of [situation] where I'm just trying to get by."

When Laurie's daughter was asked how she felt when she had to leave her last home, she shared that it was really difficult. "It was hard to move... because I had to get rid of a lot of my things." She was only able to bring her most valuable possessions with her. Laurie added, "It was hard for her, for me it was easy. I realized it's just stuff. I can get another couch... another chair... this isn't permanent."

Living at the shelter has been an adjustment. The confined quarters have been a challenge for Laurie's daughter. "She's an active child and likes to have a yard to go out and play... so being confined to one room for her is kind of hard." Laurie and her daughter live in a single bedroom in our transitional shelter building, and share common areas (kitchen and bathroom) with other families. "My daughter sometimes climbs up to the top bunk in our room saying she has to get away from me."

Laurie has made great progress since she arrived at the shelter and started working with her case manager Jennie. "I like the staff and Jennie is awesome." They meet every week to set goals. Her first goals were focused on paying off her existing debts and establishing a new budget. Laurie and her daughter are both looking forward to the day when they move out. Her daughter said she would like a home where she could ride her bike that is, "medium size... not too big and not too small because it's just the two of us."

"I never thought I would be [homeless] but here I am. My experience [at the shelter] and the staff have been great. The services have been incredible. I feel blessed that I'm here, honestly I do. I'm actually quite happy with how things have turned out, because it could have been a lot worse... I could be in my car. Cross Roads House provides so much. It's a safe place and a good place for my child. The shelter is definitely worthy of support."

Mission Statement

At Cross Roads House:

We protect men, women and children of the Greater Seacoast area experiencing homelessness from exposure and hunger.

We provide secure, transitional shelter for those seeking to break the cycle of homelessness.

We support individuals and families by providing them with the opportunity to move with dignity and purpose to stable and decent housing.

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Alcoholics Anonymous
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Families First Health & Support Center & Healthcare for the Homeless
Narcotics Anonymous
Seacoast Mental Health Center

From The Executive Director

Dear Friends,

I have been asked several times recently if Cross Roads House will see any affects of the election and the "fiscal cliff" that dominate the headlines today.

Our clients would be the first to feel the impact of changes to public policies. They depend upon a variety of supports to get out of the shelter successfully, many of which can already be difficult to access. For example, a shelter resident on Medicaid who needs mental health care now waits about 12 weeks for their first appointment with a psychiatrist, and it will take a single mother at least two months to find subsidized child care before she can look for work.

Despite the uncertainty of how public programs may change in 2013, the reality is that even those essentials mean little to someone without shelter or food. Some assume that the provision of such basic human needs is a "welfare" function of the government. That's not the reality at Cross Roads House - government grants pay for only about a quarter of our costs.

Private donors – local individuals and businesses – provide for nearly 70% of the food, shelter, and support delivered here. With your continued, consistent support, we can be certain that those basic human needs will always be available in our community.



Chris Sterndale

Volunteer Spotlight



The First Congregational Church of Hampton, under the leadership of Rev. Deborah Knowlton, has been supporting Cross Roads House for over ten years. In recent years, church members have been preparing and delivering dinner for our residents. While many of our volunteers cook in our shelter kitchen, First Congregational volunteers use the church kitchen to assemble meals, and deliver them to us to be heated

up at dinner time. The church group also purchases all the ingredients for their meals which helps keep our overhead expenses down. Thank you to the church and all the volunteers who have so generously contributed their time, talent and resources! If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please consider attending our next monthly volunteer orientation on January 16 at 5:30 pm.

LEADERSHIP GIVING SOCIETY 2012 RECEPTION

Cross Roads House held its annual Leadership Giving Society Reception on October 23, 2012, at the Discover Portsmouth Center. The event was an opportunity for the CRH Board of Directors and administrators to personally recognize and thank society members for their generous support of the shelter.

The Leadership Giving Society was founded in 2010 to recognize donors who contribute \$1,000 or more within our fiscal year (7/1 - 6/30). Along with the annual reception, the names of society members are engraved on a plaque that will hang in the shelter for the year and highlighted in our annual report.

During the reception, Development Director Martha Stone thanked donors for their generosity and read a letter of thanks from a current shelter resident. Board President, David Van Patten shared some highlights from the prior year noting that we served almost 400 people and provided over 28,000 nights of shelter. He also spoke to the success of our transitional program explaining that 80% of participants left the shelter for permanent housing and very few return. Executive Director Chris Sterndale provided guests with an update on shelter programs and noted the completion of our campus renovation project with the renovation of our family shelter building this past year. In addition, he gave a financial update and shared that the shelter will be debt-free in two years as the last of our capital campaign pledges are paid.

Guests were given an appreciation gift that was generously provided by Kilwins candy store located on Congress Street in Market Square. www.kilwins.com



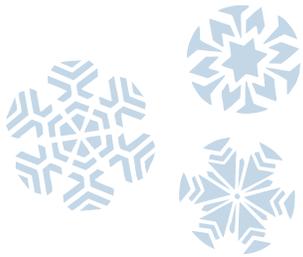
THE CROSS ROADS HOUSE LEGACY SOCIETY

The Legacy Society encourages Cross Roads House supporters to contribute to the shelter through a provision in their will, trust, or another charitable giving vehicle. These gifts ensure that Cross Roads House will be equipped to shelter the homeless in our community for years to come.



Cross Roads House, Inc.
600 Lafayette Road
Portsmouth, NH 03801-5435
603.436.2218

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HOLIDAY GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

Each year during the holidays every resident who is staying at Cross Roads House receives a gift bag with an assortment of items that have been donated by our supporters. In addition to providing gifts for our residents, cash donations are always needed to help fund shelter operations. Thank you for your generosity during this season of giving!

Resident Holiday Wish List

Gift Cards to:

- Wal-Mart
- Rite Aid
- Grocery Stores
- Fox Run Mall
- Gas Stations
- Auto Supply Stores
- Movie Cinemas
- Bike Shops
- Bowl-O-Rama
- Coast and C&J Busses
- Taxis
- Local Restaurants

New Items:

- Hats, gloves, mittens, rain ponchos
- Socks, underwear, thermal underwear (all sizes)
- Wallets, small daily planners
- Bike helmets (adults), padlocks (with keys), bike locks
- Toiletries (toothbrushes, toothpaste, dental floss, razors, deodorant, shaving cream, nail clippers, shampoo).

If you would like to make a donation or provide a gift for a resident this holiday season, please choose an item from the wish list and drop it off (unwrapped) or mail it by December 17th to:

 **Cross Roads House,**
600 Lafayette Road, Portsmouth, NH 03801

Questions? Please phone or email Martha Stone at 603-436-2218 or martha@crossroadshouse.org

