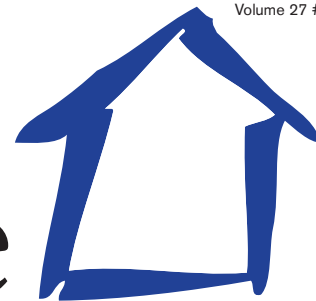


the HOME page

Holiday 2011



Food: Sustaining social & emotional development at Deborah's Place

This November, many of us will feast on turkey, mashed potatoes, pumpkin pie or our own Thanksgiving traditions, feeding both our bodies and our spirits as we connect with loved ones and give thanks for our blessings.

This Thanksgiving, we will give thanks for the many ways that you, our generous supporters, "feed" the women of Deborah's Place. As you serve meals in our programs, drop off food items for our pantry or donate gift cards to local grocery stores, you help us provide over 60,000 meals every year to women in our programs. More importantly, you help us build a community of support so that women can heal together from the trauma of homelessness. Sharing food means sharing conversation, experience, encouragement, growth, community—the most important ways in which shared mealtime nourishes us all.

Food is a core element of daily life that nourishes and sustains us, body and soul. In every culture, meals draw family, friends and communities together. Deborah's Place is no exception. Each day, you can find women sitting down to a dinner lovingly prepared, and served by our volunteers (such as those featured in the Volunteer Spotlight) or enjoying coffee and snacks in the Learning Centers while discussing current events.



Staff Food Coordinator Laura Ignoffo (center) and DP participants unload a food delivery at Marah's Housing Program.

Some of the most therapeutic activities that happen at Deborah's Place center around food. In addition to all of the informal ways food brings people together at Deborah's Place, across the agency, staff and volunteers host formal food-centered groups, from the nutrition education Healthy Beat group mentioned in the Donor Spotlight to intro-level cooking classes.

At Dolores' Safe Haven, staff members Amber Williard and Taylor Buck teach women how to cook

vegetarian and vegan meals and give tips on how to incorporate vegetarian foods and other healthy eating habits into their diets. Another popular cooking group is at Teresa's Interim Housing Program. Every other Saturday morning at the Teresa's "breakfast club", the ten program residents discuss and decide what they are going to prepare the next evening. The staff gathers the ingredients and leads the demonstration, but the staff and participants prepare and eat the meal together.

By addressing these most basic needs, we enable women to focus on longer-term goals, like achieving stability and self-sufficiency.

"Our [cooking] class is to get them to work together as a group as well as to prepare them for when they move into housing", says Tiffany Isom, Teresa's Housing Coordinator. "Many of the women coming to Teresa's are coming from shelters where food is prepared for them and they aren't able to cook," says Tiffany. "This [cooking class] helps them to learn life skills and how to eat healthier."

Tiffany emphasizes the importance of ensuring that the women directly participate in cooking the meal. When the women help plan or prepare meals, they take ownership and pride in it. It also helps them feel safe and regain self-esteem and knowledge that they can take control of the daily activities of life, something that they lost while homeless. Tiffany recalls how "one woman [who lived at Teresa's] previously stayed in a shelter for three years and thought she couldn't remember how to bake a cake. So we got her all the ingredients she needed and got together and baked a cake. And it turned out great!"

The food centered groups do more than help the women develop cooking skills; they help develop social skills, foster relationships, and build self-esteem through community. Group meals, often provided by volunteers, give women a sense of belonging and an opportunity to connect with others. Small food-related gatherings such as

(continued on inside right panel)

deborahsplace.org



Deborah's Place Holiday Wish List

Deborah's Place helps over 400 women each year make progress toward their goals of stable housing, sustainable income and greater self-determination. Please help us provide the women we serve with the following items this holiday season:

Women's Needs and Holiday Gifts

CTA fare cards
New socks/new underwear—sizes M–XXL
New thermal clothing/Long Johns
Hats/gloves/scarves
New twin size sheets/blankets/comforters
New bed pillows
New cookware & dining sets—pots/pans/utensils
Shower curtains/liners/rings
New towels—bath/hand/face
Cleaning supplies—mops/brooms/dustpans/bleach/
cleaning solutions/sponges/scouring pads/
dish soap/laundry detergent
Toilet paper/paper towels/tissues
Toiletries particularly for African-American women—
soap/lotion/deodorant/combs/feminine
hygiene products
Gift cards—Target/Kmart/Walmart
Coffee makers

Dolores' Safe Haven (15 women)

Air purifiers
One-year subscription to Netflix

Marah's Permanent Housing (30 women)

Digitally-compatible televisions
Commercial ice maker (please call for details)

Patty Crowley Apartments (39 women)

\$5 gift cards for the Rewards Store
One-year subscription to Netflix

Rebecca Johnson Apartments (90 women)

\$5 gift cards for the Rewards Store
One-year subscription to Netflix

Teresa's Interim Housing (10 women)

Pajamas—sizes S–4XL
Robes

Daytime Services (200+ off-site participants)

Backpacks/tote bags/canvas bags
Plastic ziplock bags/toiletry bags
Umbrellas
Single-load packets of laundry detergent
\$5 or \$10 gift cards—Subway/Dunkin' Donuts/
Jimmy Johns/other chain restaurants

Please drop off gifts by Friday, December 16, 2011 at 2822 W. Jackson Blvd, Chicago. To arrange to drop off your gifts, please contact Stephanie Dixon at 773.722.5080, x6550 or sdixon@deborahsplace.org.

Food Services

Grocery gift cards—Dominick's/Jewel
Coffee goods (ground coffee/powdered creamer/sugar/
filters)
Non-perishable food items (pasta/rice/canned
vegetables/etc.)

Administrative Needs

Laminating machine
Rubbermaid storage bins
Digital camera
Photo printer/photo printer paper
Carpet shampooer—Carpet Express Model C4
Commercial vacuum
New microwave

Health Services

Gift cards—Walgreen's/Osco for prescription medications
Diabetes test strips for Glucometers—NovaMax/One Touch
Ultra Mini/Prestige Smart System
Sealed, unexpired packages of pain relievers/vitamins/cold
& allergy medicines
First Aid supplies (band aids, cotton swabs/etc.)
Incontinence supplies—Depends/Certainty
Nintendo Wii Console for exercise activities
Pro-bono or low-cost dental services

Education Services

Sets of books for book clubs (five to ten books)
Notebooks/journals
Office supplies (pens/paper/staples/tape/etc.)
Jewelry-making supplies (beads/fixtures/tools)
Arts & crafts supplies
Yarn & crochet hooks
Bingo prizes (small trinkets/gifts)
DVD movies
One-year subscriptions to Netflix (two)
Coffee makers

Employment Services

CTA fare cards
USB flash drives for computers
Resume paper (special stock)
Portfolios/small briefcases
Gift cards—Payless/Kmart/Target
Writing supplies (stationery/ink pens/notepads)

Please note: we are unable to accept donations of used clothing, used linens, open toiletries, and expired or open food or health products.

We request that donated items be new and unwrapped, and the donor completes an in-kind donation form. Forms are available online at deborahsplace.org or at the drop-off location.



Tour & coffee hour

Experience a guided tour. Engage with our residents and staff. Expand your knowledge of homelessness and its impact on women. Events on select Saturdays begin at 9:30AM. Space is limited. RSVP a week in advance to Carol Brumer Glicksman at 773.638.6536 or cglicksman@deborahsplace.org.

1530 N. Sedgwick
November 12
April 21

2822 W. Jackson
February 18

DONOR SPOTLIGHT: Whole Foods Market

This quarter we are honored to feature a donor providing basic needs to women in many creative ways: Whole Foods Market. Four of the Chicago Whole Foods Market locations recently contributed monetary donations, space, in-kind donations, and volunteer time to Deborah's Place.



Beginning with last year's holiday season, Whole Foods Market Lincoln Park designated Deborah's Place as a tip donation recipient for their fiscal year. All tips given to their front bar and diner employees were passed along to the women of Deborah's Place. So far we have received over \$30,000 from this inventive program!

While the Lincoln Park store contributed monetarily, other Whole Foods Markets across Chicago donated time, food, toiletries, and outreach services to Deborah's Place. The Whole Foods Market South Loop gave food for a "Chew n' Chat" session—a monthly seminar for the women coordinated by the Healthy Beat volunteer group that focuses on health and nutrition topics. A group of 30 volunteers from Whole Foods Market Lincoln Park helped clean, landscape, and play Bingo with the ladies at Deborah's Place's Marah's Housing Program, and two Whole Foods Market stores—Halsted & Waveland and Lakeview—also hosted "Community Partner Fairs" where Deborah's Place was able to speak with shoppers about our organization.

Thank you to the Marketing & Community Relations Specialists in each store who helped coordinate donations to Deborah's Place: Emily Larsen, Joshua Sovell, Bridget Mitchell, Fanny Cantero (Lincoln Park), Meghan Hurley, Jesse Mraz, and (formerly) Renee Ascione. And thank you to all of the Whole Foods Market staff involved for going above and beyond to help Deborah's Place!

Funding challenges cuts food program

Deborah's Place embraces the philosophy that by meeting women's basic human needs—like housing and food—they can focus their attention on addressing higher-order needs and making progress toward self-actualization and longer-term goals, such as achieving stability and self-sufficiency, recovering from mental illness or trauma, and improving quality of life.

As one of these basic human needs services, Deborah's Place provides over 60,000 meals each year to residents of the Teresa's Interim Housing Program, the Dolores' Safe Haven Program, and the Marah's Permanent Housing Program. Food pantries are also provided to our off-site participants who are currently homeless and to tenants of the Patty Crowley Apartments and Rebecca Johnson Apartments, which have in-unit kitchens so that residents can prepare their own meals.

Recently meal provisions have become considerably more costly for Deborah's Place. Food prices are soaring, particularly for produce, which the Consumer Price Index

Several of our long-term sources of food support have dwindled, including a 33% cut in funding from FEMA.

reveals is up from last year by 2.4% and 8.9% for fruits and vegetables, respectively. Further price inflation is predicted for this year. Several of

our long-term sources of food support have also dwindled, including reductions in food donations from the Chicago Food Depository, closure of the Anti-Hunger Federation, and a 33% cut—a \$12,000 reduction from previous federal funding year—to our funding through FEMA's Federal Emergency Shelter Program.

In consideration of these challenges, we need your help more than ever to assist us in addressing the basic needs of women who are recovering from homelessness. We are counting on you to allow us to continue providing nourishment, housing, and opportunities for change to hundreds of women.

To donate to our mission and help us bring hope and home to women this holiday, please visit deborahsplace.org or call 773.638.6539.



Raise funds for women who are homeless at the Board Game Bonanza

Join us from 6:30–9:30PM on Thursday, November 17 for a board game tournament with can't-miss raffle prizes. Live band follows event. All you can eat & drink for \$30. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit deborahsplace.org.

McGee's Tavern & Grille
950 W. Webster Ave
Chicago IL 60614

Food *(continued from front page)*

the Tea Group at the 1530 N. Sedgwick site demonstrate how food can nourish emotional development. At the Tea Group, women from all three programs at this site gather to share tea, baked goods, and each other's company. Kim Davidson, the Program Administrator of Dolores' Safe Haven and the Patty Crowley Apartments, says that the Tea Group "is a time for everyone to get together and a chance for ladies to talk about their weeks. We talk about how their weekends were, things the ladies want to do, and upcoming activities." Something as simple as talking about your day over a cup of tea can make a big difference in the life of someone who is overcoming the trauma of homelessness.

Without our supporters—without you—wouldn't be able to provide these services and experiences that women need to recover from homelessness. With the help of our volunteers and donors, we're not only giving the hundreds of women we serve warm meals and housing, we're giving them emotional nourishment and opportunities for growth that will help them rebuild their lives.



What does nourish mean to you? How do you nourish yourself and others? Comment on our Facebook page: facebook.com/deborahsplacechicago.



The Healthy Beat volunteers (shown with DP participants) served dinner at their Fall Food Festival, where women at the Rebecca Johnson Apartments were educated about healthy eating and lifestyle practices.



Staff & volunteers prepare over 22,000 meals each year at Deborah's Place.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: Food service volunteers provide more than meals

Deborah's Place is fortunate to have over 20 regular small group volunteers at our two north side locations. These groups are church parishioners, community groups or friends who bring or serve a meal during one of our 1,400+ meal shifts and provide crucial services to the women of Deborah's Place. But these groups provide more than basic food services. They nourish community in our programs by building relationships between themselves and the participants.

One such group is Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Lakeview. As part of the church's Outreach Commission, Liz Real, Deacon Richard Johnson, and Mary

Changes to volunteer program will increase impact and foster meaningful experiences.

Ann Karales bring a meal to the ladies of Marah's once per month. Operating on a budget means nothing fancy, but the group always brings delicious meals that include pork roast and potatoes, tuna casserole, pizza, or hot dogs and hamburgers to grill outside. The group also plays Bingo with the ladies as a way to distribute needed household items such as liquid soap, body lotion, body wash, toothpaste, socks, and batteries.

This group has been coming for over five years, and like for most volunteers, it's the relationships with the ladies that bring them back. "We like Marah's" says Liz, who describes how the group enjoys getting to know the group of ladies whom they see each month during the meal service. Because the group is able to build relationships with the women throughout their time at Deborah's Place, they have even been able to help ladies who are moving out find housewares for their new apartments.

We love our regular volunteers—both individual and group—and want to foster the incredible community building that happens when volunteers serve throughout the year. For this reason, we are re-organizing our volunteer program at the 1532 N. Sedgwick and 1456 W. Oakdale program sites.

New regular volunteers must now attend a volunteer orientation so that they may learn more about our organization's culture and how we break the cycle of homelessness for women in Chicago. Orientations are held every third Thursday of the month at our 1456 W. Oakdale location, from 6–7:30PM. Following the orientation, volunteers will begin their experience by serving food at either our Sedgwick or Oakdale locations.* Both locations serve both lunch and dinner seven days a week, so there are plenty of opportunities to serve. If new volunteers are interested in different direct service projects, they are welcome to develop workshops, classes or activities with staff after completing four food service shifts within six months.

We hope you or your group will consider joining our volunteer community as a regular volunteer, just as Our Lady of Mount Carmel and scores of other volunteers have done. For more information on how you or your group can participate, please see <http://deborahsplace.org/volunteer>.

*Modifications to these policies may be made for volunteers offering high-need services, based on program staff's discretion.

Maximize resources, minimize costs, maintain quality services

From Audrey's Desk

As summer ends and autumn begins, Deborah's Place and most other human service organizations face continued uncertainty about funding for our critical programs and services. We are consistently challenged by our government funders to provide more services with no additional resources.

We attend meetings, workshops, and webinars on how to sharpen our foundation grant applications or make our services more attractive to corporate grant makers. We are compelled to ask our community of individual supporters to dig deeper and give more at a time when people are still struggling with unemployment and foreclosures on their homes. I receive notes on donation envelopes that say, "I would like to give more but I am still looking for work" and "I hope I can increase my gift next year."

Human Services are needed now more than ever. It is a reality that in Illinois, people have to make difficult choices every day. The 2010 Illinois Poverty Report from Heartland Alliance found that of the people in Illinois who need to use the services of food banks, 44% had to choose between food and paying their rent or mortgage, and 34% had to choose between food and medical care or medication.*

What can we do together to help? We can:

- advocate for our federal state and city legislators and leaders to pass responsible budgets that include raising revenues rather than continued cuts to human services.
- educate our family and friends about hunger and poverty.
- volunteer our time and skills to assist an organization in delivering services.
- give what we can financially to organizations that we know are helping people in need like Deborah's Place.

This issue of the "Home Page" focuses on how Deborah's Place is addressing the most basic of human needs—food. I hope that after reading it, you are encouraged and inspired by our women, staff, donors and volunteers. Your gift, no matter the amount, contributes to our ability to provide basic human needs of housing, food and healthcare.

Gratefully,



Audrey Thomas
Executive Director

*www.heartlandalliance.org/povertyreport/

Deborah's Place faces continued uncertainty about government funding for our critical programs and services while at the same time experiencing an increase in need.

In this current economic environment, it is especially important in that Deborah's Place continues to demonstrate sound financial responsibility. We strive to maximize resources while maintaining a high level of quality services and continue to implement cost-saving and fundraising strategies that will ensure our stability and sustainability. Some of the ways we do so are through:

Collaborations

Collaborations are more important than ever in order to create efficiencies in direct service delivery and administrative functions. For example, in 2010 Deborah's Place joined the Back Office Collaborative, a joint supply purchasing initiative whose goal is to reduce office supply costs for partner agencies. We are also one of the five partner agencies of the West Side Collaborative, a strategic collaboration to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of health services delivery to our clients and other vulnerable residents of Chicago's West Side.

Pro bono services

Skilled professionals generously provide Deborah's Place with free services ranging from HR legal services to graphic design, health services, and financial & accounting services. Not only do professional services like these save Deborah's Place money, they also advance our work.

Volunteers & interns

In addition to pro bono service donors, Deborah's Place receives valuable support services from volunteers and interns. This past fiscal year, 474 volunteers, and interns provided over 17,000 hours of service to Deborah's Place, the equivalent of eight full-time staff members.

In-kind donations

Deborah's Place requests and receives in-kind donations that replace cash purchases of specific goods and services. We are grateful for the generosity of the 341 donors who contributed over \$74,000 in in-kind donations such as food, toiletries, household supplies and gift cards this past fiscal year.

New fundraising strategies

With the aid of board and committee members, staff constantly explores and implements new ways to raise funds. Most recently, for instance, we developed a new major donor strategy and launched our 25th Anniversary Capital Campaign to Fund Continuity and Growth, which will establish critical reserves to fund current and future operating and capital expenses. The agency is also exploring "unrelated business income" (UBI) as a potential strategy to promote financial stability.

Evaluating vendor costs

Deborah's Place continuously evaluates vendor costs in all areas of the agency to ensure that we are receiving quality services at the best price possible. For example, if you visit our website to make a donation online, you may notice that we recently switched to a new online donation software program. This new software will save us close to \$2,000 in annual credit card processing fees.

Food services volunteer opportunities

Holidays

We are currently looking for groups of 6–10 volunteers interested in bringing and serving a full Thanksgiving meal for 25–64 women on any day between Monday, November 21–Sunday, November 27 at three of our locations: 1456 W. Oakdale, 1532 N. Sedgwick or 2822 W. Jackson.

At this time we cannot accommodate individual volunteers on Thanksgiving Day who are not able to bring a meal.

Non-holiday meals

If you are interested in helping prepare and serve food during our regularly scheduled meal times, we welcome you to attend one of our volunteer orientations. These are held the third Thursday of each month at Marah's Permanent Housing (1456 W. Oakdale) from 6–7:30PM. Upcoming orientations are Thursday, November 17 and Thursday, December 15. The orientation will give you an introduction to our organization and our participants, and will prepare you for service.

Community meals are served twice per day, 365 days per year. Lunch services are from 11 AM–1PM at both our 1532 N. Sedgwick and 1456 W. Oakdale locations. Dinner service is from 4–6PM at 1532 N. Sedgwick and 6–8PM at 1456 W. Oakdale.



Scan this code with your smart phone to find out how you can help bring women in from the cold this holiday season.



2822 W Jackson Blvd
Chicago IL 60612-3653

Unable to volunteer but still want to help?

If you are interested in a way to contribute but aren't able to volunteer, please consider these ways to support the women of Deborah's Place this holiday season:

- 1) Hold a food drive at your work, school, place of worship or with your family. Our current top food needs are ground coffee, creamer and sugar; and non-perishable food items such as pasta, canned vegetables, and soups.
- 2) Collect grocery gift cards (Jewel, Dominick's, or Costco) and write a personal note for our women to read on Thanksgiving or Christmas.
- 3) Prepare freezable desserts or side dishes and bring them to one of our locations.

You can learn more about these opportunities and our entire volunteer program on the Volunteer page of our website, deborahsplace.org.

If you have scheduling questions or want to RSVP for an orientation, please contact Sarah Letson at sletson@deborahsplace.org.

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Creative ways of utilizing resources
Funding challenges cut food program
Food services volunteer opportunities
Holiday wish list