



Homespace Corporation

Homespace News

Winter 2010

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Thoughts From Our Executive Director...



I hope this letter finds you in the middle of a cozy and relaxing win-

ter. We have had the opportunity to celebrate so many things this year, and amongst them, some of the sweetest. During 2009 we welcomed 23 families into the Homespace program, celebrated the births of ten newborns, and successfully discharged ten families into the community where they are continuing to succeed as loving, responsible parents. I am honored to have the opportunity to see so many wonderful things in the course of one year!

Our holiday season was one of the best that we have ever had. We are thankful for the generosity of so many companies, community groups, and individuals who made the holidays extra special for



everyone. Our families were appreciative for everything they received and were delighted that so many people came together to make their holidays so memorable. I would like to especially thank Rich Products, GMC Law, Stein Mart, Phillips Lytle, Trinity Episcopal Church, and North Church for their generous donations. Several Homespace families were also assisted through the holiday season by Hodgson Russ and NY Massage. As always, you are very appreciated!

A special thank you goes to Mr. Jerry Irving and his team from Moog who always put on a fabulous holiday party for the kids of both Homespace programs. We were honored to welcome you into our home and enjoyed Santa, Pooh, and Tiger too.

The new year always brings the excitement of rebirth, change, and freshness. Just as you all make your resolutions for yet another great year, so do we at Homespace Corporation. The winter gives us the time we need to slow down and contemplate all that we have accomplished, and also, all that we still need to accomplish in order to continue our legacy of assistance to the Western New York community and the families who need us most. Our goals for the new year include the following:

-Increase the clinical services that each young family receives. This will include short-term, solution focused work, skill building in parenting and

child bonding, and the assessment and encouragement of follow through in long term treatment. We have hired a new Clinical Counselor, Mrs. Kristie Giamo, to assist us with this goal.

-Increase reviews of client/customer satisfaction by expanding the current Utilization Review process to include interviews with pertinent individuals involved in a youth's case. This information will be collected and used to improve service quality throughout the agency.

Our goals for 2010 are impressive, and yes, challenging. I am confident that with the team I have beside me, and the support we have from our generous supporters, we will be able to continue to achieve great things.

Best,
Kim Morris
Executive Director



Program Update: Katie McClain-Meeder, IL Coor.

In the midst of the fierce wind of the winter's first blizzard, heavy snow, and frigid temperatures, Second Chance Home was full of hot food, Christmas activities, and celebration. The Program Committee had been planning a Milestones Celebration for the young ladies at Second Chance, and they weren't going to let the slippery roads or cold air stop them! The residents had been cooped up all day and were excited to have visitors, especially friends bringing food, art supplies, and presents!

Along with our board members, they ate delicious fare, made sparkly Christmas ornaments, and talked casually together. We had previously prompted the girls to think about what milestones they would like to celebrate, but many replied that they couldn't think of any. However, our residents never cease to amaze us and in the end, truly shared from their hearts. Here are some of the personal thoughts they shared with us~

"When I came here, I didn't even have my child, now I have her, I got a certificate from going to parenting classes, and I have my own bank account. I never thought I'd accomplish those things."

"This is *my* house. These girls are my family. I'm proud for giving my kids a home."

"I am proud of myself for deciding to keep my baby."

"I am going to school and becoming a better parent. Before I came to Second Chance, I was totally selfish, now I have my priorities straight."

When one resident didn't know what to say, the others encouraged her . . . "you've been doing really well with going to your appointments" and "you are a good mom and should be proud that your son is doing so well." Cheers and applause erupted after each resident shared.

It was a fantastic night, but it wouldn't have happened without the dedi-

cation of our Program Committee. Thank you to all of you who took part—from making a special salad with the girls, to bringing gifts, to the hot, yummy food and celebratory atmosphere you all helped to create.

On that snowy, cold night, something special happened—a coming together, a true celebration of steps, milestones in the girls' lives that are truly significant. Challenges with relationships and friendship wounds that had existed only minutes before the get-together were dissolved as the residents realized that they are each other's community, each other's support. With the encouragement of the board members, they were able to celebrate themselves and each other.



Fundraising News

On January 25th 2010 Homespace will be hosting a sensational wine tasting event at The Wine Thief. It will be the first of several exciting fundraising events to take place in 2010. Our January event will create community awareness, as well as support the expansion and progression of our educational services here at Homespace Corporation. It will feature wine tasting and education, raffles, door prizes, and food provided by The Wine Thief.

Be on the lookout for information on our next fundraising event that will take place in March. This specific event will provide for funding and expansion of our interpersonal and mental health skill building services. The services focus on and encompass individual empowerment, clinical counseling, positive parenting/bonding, navigation, relationship building (mentors), and the Life Skills educational sessions. Each of these important aspects are crucial in

supporting Homespace's overall goal of changing lives two generations at a time. Let's show our support for this great cause and make an extreme difference that each of these families can carry on BEYOND two generations!

Meet Our Staff

Lindsey Carter, Administrative Assistant

Lindsey Carter joined the Home-space team in October of 2009 and has quickly shown that her organiza-tional skills and her ability to multi-task are invaluable. As of January 2010, Lindsey is the Administrative Assistant through the Homespace offices.

She wears many hats from answer-ing the phone and our front door, to assisting our residents in organizing their bills, to making sure that their bank accounts are in order. Lindsey also provides assistance to the staff in numerous areas to ensure that the entire office runs smoothly. As if having one full time job wasn't enough, Lindsey also is the owner and primary manager of her own

cleaning business, Dependable Cleaning, which specializes in apartment turnovers and office cleaning. She is a busy young lady to say the least! Homespace is excited to have such energy and enthusiasm in our front office area. Welcome Lindsey.

Erica Maultsby, Senior Child Care Worker

In September of 2009 Erica joined Homespace as a Child Care Worker. Shortly after beginning her work with us she was promoted to Senior Child Care Worker at our SILP location. Erica joined our agency after years of working in the juvenile justice system and she

is currently pursuing her Masters degree. Erica has a natural ability to build relationships with others, which is evident in the number of residents that gather around her to share events in their day! Erica has strong values regarding education, which has positively contributed to her conversations with residents about their own goals.

Additionally, Erica's experiences with challenging youth has allowed her to build skills necessary to hav-ing productive, sensitive, and nur-turing conversations with youth about their life situations and goals of self sufficiency. We are very excited to have Erica with us and look forward to being inspired by her commitment to our residents.

Gellenia Smallwood, Child Care Worker

In September of 2009 Gellenia started her journey as an employee with Second Chance Home as a Child Care Worker. Along with working with us, Gellenia also works at CAO Head Start. Her

dedication to developing healthy, happy, and safe children is a clear priority to her and evident in her work at Second Chance Home. She uses a strengths-based ap-proach and provides opportunities for our youth to build their compe-tences to become more confident parents. Our residents are fortunate

to have such a positive role model working with them and we are ex-cited to see her connection with them blossom into opportunities for personal growth. We are ex-cited to have Gellenia with us and look forward to what she will bring to our agency and residents in 2010!

Melissa Uku, Development Di-rector

Melissa Uku joined Homespace in October 2009 as the Development Director. She is a graduate from UB with a BA in Communications and a minor in History. She re-located to Miami, FL where she worked directly with Cece Feinberg PR in Miami, FL and in New York City during specific fashion events. Melissa's experi-ence while with Cece Feinberg focused on public relationship, media promotions, and event plan-ning which included several large

fashion industry events. Melissa returned to the Buffalo area to be closer to family and has found a niche at Homespace Corp. as she is dedicated to the empowerment of young women and the need for her services at the not for profit level. Homespace welcomes her expertise as we take a new look at our events and hope to change with the times in providing for smaller, more frequent events to diversify our audience and increase our com-munity awareness. Melissa has already accomplished a lot in her short time as she has already estab-lished our first 2010 event to be

held on January 25th at the Wine Thief.





1030 Ellicott Street
Buffalo, New York 14209

Phone: 716-881-4600
Fax: 716-881-4604
Homespacecorp.com

Upcoming Events

2010– We will be holding a new series of fundraising events throughout 2010 to benefit our families and their independent living/personal development needs. The next event will be in March, date TBD. Please watch your mail and newsletters to stay up to date with these fun events. Contact Barb or Lindsey for more information at (716) 881-4600. Also check out our website for information and the ability to register through Paypal.

March: Annual Campaign will begin to support the continued work and new initiatives here at Homespace. Please watch for information in our March Newsletter.

Our Mission...

Homespace provides a safe and nurturing transitional living environment with supportive services for single parent families that prepares them to achieve and maintain their independence.

For more information about foster care, visit <http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us>

Family Integrity Security Empowerment Collaboration