

Fall/Winter 2022

Finding Blessings in Every Step

Luz finds peace in her journey home

In 1993, after struggling with recovery, Luz came to stay at the Abby's House shelter. She immediately accessed opportunities and connected to resources to begin healing. "I loved the shelter. They treated me really, really good and provided me with the love I needed to move forward and maintain sobriety."

Luz raised four children alone while working each day on her personal recovery and supporting her family. When her children had grown and moved on to their own homes and families, Luz felt alone. Getting older, she could not easily afford her apartment. **She needed to find an affordable home that could offer social connections with others and one-on-one support.**

She found new housing, but was soon laid off from her job of 15 years and had to take another job with a reduced wage. On the same day she received an eviction notice, she received the call from Abby's House she was hoping for. Luz was invited for a tour, and she viewed the third floor where she was hoping to live. She happened to meet a resident, Julia, in the living room that day who shared, "I'm praying that God gives you the room." Julia became a longtime friend, and they still talk, visit, and go to church together.

Luz moved into Abby's House as one of the first new residents after the renovation of 52 High Street in 2019. While here, Luz connected with many other Latinas, who regularly came together to cook and share meals. She made friends with many fellow residents, giving them rides to run errands, attending church together, and participating in Abby's House events and programs.

In addition to the connections she made with residents, she built relationships with advocacy and housing staff. "They treat you so well. Anything that we needed, staff always had time for us. When I was sick with Covid, my advocate called every day to check on me." The pandemic was hard for everyone, but Luz remembers receiving everything she needed to stay



Luz smiles for the camera at her recent visit to Abby's House to share her story.

safe. An advocate would bring food from the food pantry to her door. When her workplace closed due to Covid, Abby's House made sure she maintained her housing by paying her rent. The Annette Rafferty Survive to Thrive (ARST) fund helped many residents who were impacted by layoffs, reduced hours, and illness.

Luz felt at home and safe at Abby's House, but missed being near her children. Her advocate empowered her to apply for an affordable apartment, helping her to send emails and connect to resources through the Abby's House network of partner agencies. One day her phone rang and a woman from the apartment complex she had applied to asked, "Can you move in tomorrow?" This was the perfect opportunity to live next door to her daughter, who lives in the same complex. Again, with the help of her advocate, Luz received funds from ARST to help her move in.

Luz lights up speaking about her home, "God has been good. I live in a beautiful apartment. It's all mine. This is a blessing." **She knows Abby's House will always be there for her, and through your support, she is enjoying peaceful mornings and family filled holidays.** She loves to sit on her sofa, looking out the window at beautiful woods in the backyard. "You can see the sun rise and set. It's so peaceful. I love it."



52 High Street
Worcester, MA 01609
Phone: 508-756-5486
www.abbyshouse.org



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Mission Statement

The mission of Abby's House is to provide shelter and affordable housing, as well as advocacy and support services, to homeless, battered, and low-income women, with or without children.

Vision Statement

Abby's House empowers the women we serve to lead self-directed lives filled with dignity and hope.



Holiday Greetings

From Executive Director, Stephanie Page



As the year 2022 comes to a close, the Abby's House community has again shown its collective strength, compassion, and determination through another year of Covid-19 and new, more intense economic challenges, such as rising housing costs. At Abby's, women know personal trauma, and it has been exacerbated by the pandemic. Throughout the region, mental health needs and substance use have increased, and there are more barriers to accessing services and housing, and more isolation. Together, we have provided a safe sanctuary for women and children throughout these difficult times, remaining onsite and meeting growing needs.



Stephanie Page
Executive Director

As homelessness rises, the upcoming 2023 expansion of the Abby's House shelter from 9 to 18 beds meets an urgent need and provides a steppingstone to a more permanent home for more women and children. With your support, we will help more women to feel safe, to grow and to discover their strength, and to build caring relationships – all necessary for women and children to move forward in their lives and to heal and thrive.

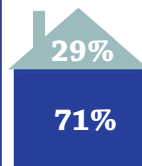
The holiday season is a special time of year at Abby's House. The meaning of the holidays comes to life as your presence is felt deeply through your visits and many kind and generous acts. Together, our light shines bright, helping illuminate the way forward for those who need us.

I wish the Abby's House community an abundance of love and compassion this holiday season. Your presence matters, and we are grateful for you!

With heartfelt gratitude,

Stephanie

Program Funding



As of October 31, 2022, we still need to raise 29% of the total operating budget of the \$2,301,709.

Help us raise \$679,542 before December 31, 2022.

to meet our mission and fully fund the shelter, housing, and advocacy services for women & children.

Mark Your Calendars for

#GIVINGTUESDAY™

Giving Tuesday is a global giving movement created to inspire people to donate their time, talents, and treasure to better their communities! Help us meet the goal of raising \$15,000 by donating to Abby's House on **Tuesday, November 29th** at **abbyshouse.org** and visit our social media pages to hear how your generosity is felt every day here!

Your gift ensures over 500 women and children experiencing homelessness and trauma have a safe place to call home.

Stories of Impact

How Your Light Shines At Abby's House



With your support, and the support of the greater Abby's House community, women and children find healing, comfort, and new beginnings. This holiday season, we celebrate your stories of support and impact.

Honoring A Lost Loved One, Leaving a Legacy

After Paul Bleau lost his beloved wife, Irene, their family wanted to continue Irene's generous and loving spirit by requesting donations to Abby's House in her memory. Paul was grateful that many family, friends, and acquaintances made donations. Moved by their generosity, Paul matched every donation to double the impact of support. Irene's beautiful spirit inspired many to support women and children experiencing homelessness.

Abby's House is truly humbled by the generosity, compassion, and love in the community to honor or remember loved ones. Paul Bleau and his family continue the legacy of love begun by his wife, Irene, in their support of Abby's House.

Making A Tribute Gift This Holiday Season

For the holiday season, tribute gifts increase as supporters like you give heartfelt gifts or honor someone missing from holiday gatherings. This year, we have streamlined the tribute gift process to ensure your loved ones receive an acknowledgment quickly after your gift is made.

To give in honor or memory of a loved one, visit abbyshouse.org/donate and select "Yes" under "Dedicate this Donation." Abby's House now offers electronic or downloadable PDF cards that allow you to print and mail to your honoree.

If you prefer to have Abby's House staff send a card, please mail a check to 52 High Street, Worcester, MA 01609 with tribute details. We encourage you to plan ahead for any tribute holiday gifts. Visit abbyshouse.org/get-involved/ways-to-give for more information.

It Takes a Village: Coming Together to Support Women & Children

For four years, Concentric Energy Advisors, a management consulting firm specializing in the energy industry in the U.S. and Canada, has been supporting the women and children of Abby's House. As a presenting sponsor of the Abby's House 5K, Concentric employees from across North America come together virtually and in-person to raise money and awareness for the needs of women and children experiencing homelessness. Their support of homeless and low-income women shows how it takes a village, and all of us coming together to continue the mission begun by Annette Rafferty and continuing to today.



Josh Nowak (left), Assistant Vice President at Conetric Energy Advisors, welcomes participants to the 13th Annual Abby's House 5K.



Presented by:



Special thanks to
Patti McKone,
5K Committee Chair and to
the entire race committee!

Thank You!

Through your overwhelming generosity, **you raised over \$71,174** for the women and children of Abby's House. To everyone who helped make this event a success, you have the thanks of the staff, Board of Directors, and volunteers who work diligently to support the mission, as well as the residents and guests who call Abby's House home.

Here's How YOU Supported Abby's House at the 13th Annual 5K

- 411 participants participated virtually and in-person
- Participants came from 16 states, Washington DC, and 2 countries
- 21 local businesses and corporations generously sponsored the event
- Over 25 local businesses provided donated items to support the online auction
- 13 individuals raised more than \$500 each to support women & children
- 50 volunteers provided support and collaborated for a great 5K

Get Involved At Abby's House!



Abby's House is community of people working collectively to achieve its mission. Your contributions of time, talent, and treasure make an impact in the lives of the women and children.

Make A Gift:

Now more than ever, your gift makes it possible for women and children to dream of a hopeful future. Once safely housed, women develop a plan to avoid future homelessness and housing insecurity.

To make a gift, visit abbyshouse.org/donate. Set up monthly recurring gifts to multiply your impact.

Volunteer:

We're seeking volunteers to support the the overnight shelter or help in the Thrift Shop! You'll provide a welcoming and safe place for women and children in the shelter or in the Thrift Shop. Training will be provided by Abby's House staff.

To learn more or to fill out a volunteer application, visit abbyshouse.org/get-involved/volunteer/

Join the Legacy Circle:

The Legacy Circle recognizes donors who have named Abby's House in their will or other planned gift. Planned gifts are an extraordinary way to leave a lasting impact on the women and children of Abby's House. Contact Kelly Whalen at 508-756-5486 x214 to discuss ways to further your commitment.

Learn more on how you can make an impact this holiday season, visit abbyshouse.org/get-involved/ways-to-give

Give a Gift This Holiday Season

Women are in need of the following new items.



Gift cards such as:

- Target
- Amazon
- Price Chopper
- Gala Foods Supermarket
- Market Basket
- Walmart
- Dollar Tree
- Prepaid Visa/Mastercard

Holiday gifts such as:

- Hats, gloves, scarves and cozy socks
- Solid, neutral-colored towel sets
- Bath robes (S-4x) & slippers (7-11)
- Pots and pans
- Travel coffee mugs
- Solid, neutral-colored twin comforters
- Craft kits for adults

To view more needed holiday items, shop our Amazon Wishlist, and to view information on scheduling a drop off, visit abbyshouse.org/get-involved/donate-needed-items.

To organize a holiday needs drive or for more information, contact Kathleen Suchenski at kathleen@abbyshouse.org | 508-756-5486 x227.

Operating Grants Received from 11/13/21 - 11/1/22

Albert W. Rice Charitable Foundation, Bank of America, N.A., Trustee

Bank of America Charitable Foundation

Blanke Foundation

Citizens Energy Corporation

Community Engagement Grant, Dell Technologies

Digital Federal Credit Union

Fallon-OrNda Community Health Fund

George F. and Sybil H. Fuller Foundation

Greater Worcester Community Foundation

The Ludcke Foundation

Melvin S. Cutler Charitable Foundation

New England Patriots Foundation

Nordson Corporate Foundation

Reliant Foundation

Saint-Gobain Foundation

Schwartz Charitable Fund

TJX Foundation

Town Fair Tire

Wynne L. Chase Fund of the Greater Worcester Community Foundation

Wyss Foundation

Thank you to our grantors for their steadfast support and belief in the mission of Abby's House.

Naming Opportunities Available

Would you like the opportunity to have one of the single occupancy bedrooms or other designated spaces at the largest location of supportive housing at 52 High Street named in honor or in memory of a loved one, contact Kelly Whalen, Senior Director of Development and Communications, at

kelly@abbyshouse.org or by phone at (508) 756-5486 x214.

Naming opportunities begin at \$7,500.