



HEARTH

ENDING ELDER HOMELESSNESS | SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2021

Celebrating



Gala now Virtual

**WELCOMING
VOLUNTEERS
IN-PERSON**

**COVID-19
PANDEMIC
UPDATES**

**+ PLUS
VOICES OF
HEARTH**

**THE
IMPORTANCE
OF DEI
AT HEARTH**

HEARTH AT FOUR CORNERS

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF HEARTH

PRESIDENT & CEO, MARK HINDERLIE

Dear Friends,

On behalf of Hearth's Board of Directors and staff, I am deeply grateful to be celebrating Hearth's 30th anniversary milestone with you all. As I reflect on our 30-year history, I asked myself, "What does home mean to me?" and as I look around every day, I am reminded that comfort, safety, and health mean home. The pandemic is shining a light on the inequalities so many people face when it comes to affordable housing and healthcare. We must use this momentum to build more affordable supportive housing for older adults who are either homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

The idea of Hearth was born not only with empathy but a pursuit to challenge how we view elder homelessness and to actually solve it. We continue to grow, to serve more elders, and to add more housing units. Hearth at Four Corners opened its doors for residents in June 2021. Adding 54 additional units of permanent supportive housing increased the total number of Hearth housing units to 228, a feat our founders only dreamed of when they opened the 9-unit Elsie Frank House 30 years ago. Our founders' vision and determination to end and prevent elder homelessness continues to be our guiding light.

This wonderful milestone is possible because of the dedicated team of Hearth staff who work tirelessly to prevent Hearth's residents from slipping back into homelessness. Our staff provide critical ongoing support to break the cycle of homelessness and keep our elders safely housed so they can enjoy their community, friends, and family.

Thank you for being part of this housing journey. Your support and belief in our mission to end and prevent elder homelessness has made it possible for Hearth to have housed over 2,700 in our 30 years of operation. I hope you have a wonderful Summer!

From all of us at Hearth, thank you.

Sincerely,

Mark D. Hinderlie

Mark Hinderlie, President and CEO

HOW IT STARTED

ALL VOLUNTEERS
1 LOCATION
9 HOUSED



Elsie Frank-1992

HOW IT'S GOING

87 EMPLOYEES
7 LOCATIONS
2,700 HOUSED



Hearth at Four Corners-2021



HEARTH AT FOUR CORNERS RIBBON CUTTING



On Wednesday, June 30th Hearth held a ribbon cutting ceremony for Hearth at Four Corners. City of Boston Mayor, Kim Janey, joined Hearth President and CEO, Mark Hinderlie, Massachusetts Secretary of Housing and Economic Development Secretary Mike Kennealy, Representative Russell Holmes, Greater Four Corners Action Coalition Board Chair, Stafford Lewis, and Hearth founders, Anna Bissonnette and Ellen Feingold, to celebrate the opening of the 54-unit building.

The \$19 million project created 54 units of permanent supportive, affordable housing for adults age 62 or older. Our vision at Hearth at Four Corners was developed in partnership with the community, our public sector partners, our wonderful architects, our contractor, DF Pray, and so many others.

The project demonstrates how a team can come together, collaborate and support one another. As Founders Anna Bissonnette and Ellen Feingold told the audience, "We are a very passionate group and we want to make a difference. Today we made a difference for 54 elderly adults."



FROM THE HEART: FROM RA TO CHIEF PROGRAM OFFICER



**Chief Program Officer
Dawn Matchett**

"The resilience that our residents and staff have, and their stories keep me going every day."

Dawn Matchett's journey at Hearth began in 1998. Back then Hearth was known as The Committee to End Elder Homelessness (CEEH) and had only two locations, Bishop Street, known today as the Elsie Frank House, and the Anna Bissonette House. She was hired as the Resident Assistant, believing it was a great opportunity as it provided flexibility while she finished her Master of Social Work at Simmons College. What she couldn't imagine back then is how her work and dedication to Hearth's elders would influence its policies and change the lives of hundreds of elders.

When Dawn graduated in 2001 another site, Ruggles Assisted Living was completed. Additionally, the staffing model changed to include social workers. These changes provided her with the opportunity to become the Clinical Social Worker at the Elsie Frank House and Ruth Cowin House in May 2001. In 2005 CEEH rebranded and took the name Hearth, Inc. Over the years Dawn's titles and responsibilities would evolve as Hearth grew and in 2013 she was promoted to Director of Behavioral Health.

Now in 2021, Dawn's current role is the Chief Program Officer, a title she has held since October 2020. In this role, she is responsible for all of Hearth's Housing and Outreach programs.

When discussing all the major organizational shifts she said, "It is great that the organization still values its roots and the original intention behind the work, which was to help elders have a home."

Throughout Dawn's time here she said, "I am most proud of the fact this organization was founded by women who were already successful in their respective careers and embarked on a second career with this project. Having the opportunity to talk to residents and staff about their stories and histories is truly the key to doing the work because it is important to understand where they come from and their backgrounds. The more we know, the more we can understand who the person is today."

Dawn believes Hearth will continue its mission to prevent and eliminate elder homelessness by building more affordable service enriched housing. "What we have learned over the years is that larger sites like Hearth at Olmsted Green and Hearth at Four Corners make more sense for Hearth. I also see us stepping out of the Boston area and to be even more recognized on a national level, which is exciting." She envisions that Hearth will embrace technology as, "COVID-19 forced us to rethink how we utilize technology and provide our residents and staff with the support that they need. The future of Hearth is filled with possibilities!"



Elsie Frank House, Fall 2000

"In Dawn we found our literal beating heart and soul. She has taken on every responsibility and title with a sense of pride, driven by the idea that we can always do better. Her work with the elders and leadership with the staff have made Hearth what it is today, a leader in ending elder homelessness."

- Mark Hinderlie, President and CEO

A GOAL BECOMES A PROMISE FULFILLED

In 2017, we recognized that our staff on the lower end of the pay scale needed and deserved a more livable wage. Preventing homelessness starts with a livable income. At Hearth, we created a plan to be part of the solution. We reviewed our staff earnings and developed a strategy where we would close the gap between minimum and livable wages for all Hearth staff.

In March 2018, Hearth increased our starting hourly wage to \$13.50 and committed to increasing our minimum starting wage to \$15.00/hour by 2019.

That promise was kept and since 2019, hourly paid employees have seen a \$.50/hour raise in 2020 and again in 2021. Salaried positions have also been adjusted upward and salaried employees have received annual increases averaging 3% a year.



Today, Hearth's minimum starting wage for all newly hired hourly employees is \$15.50/hour; compared to the Massachusetts minimum wage which is \$13.50/hour and is not expected to increase to \$15.00/hour until 2023.

The federal minimum wage has been stuck at \$7.25/hour since 2009. There is much debate at the federal level on raising the minimum wage to \$15.00/hour. Hearth kept its commitment to increase its minimum starting wage and in doing so, demonstrated to its employees they are valued at Hearth.

Thank you to our wonderful, dedicated employees. Hearth could not fulfill its mission without each and every employee.

WHY IS DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION (DEI) IMPORTANT AT HEARTH?

Hearth has always championed diversity, equity, and inclusion. However, the social justice movement and the pandemic drove us to make a deeper dive in our examining our corporate culture and to the services to our residents and Outreach clients, to the partners we deeply appreciate, and to the diverse communities we serve.

In April 2020, Hearth's Board and HR Committee recognized the need to add DEI as a strategic goal to our current plan. Hearth entered a partnership with YW Boston earlier this year to launch a DEI initiative and to incorporate DEI into its strategic plan.

So, what does that all mean and why is DEI important to Hearth and its employees?

Let's define D E I:

Diversity is the presence of differences within a given setting.

Equity is the process of ensuring that our processes and policies are impartial and fair and provides equal outcomes for all.

Inclusion is the practice of ensuring that everyone feels a sense of belonging in the workplace, that they feel supported and can be their authentic self.

Understanding how each element of DEI builds upon the others is important to creating a work environment that is equitable and inclusive to all.

WE LOVE VOLUNTEERS!

Hearth is excited to announce we have resumed in-person volunteer activities! We have sorely missed our long-time volunteers and look forward to making new friends.

Multiple opportunities are available, plus you can virtually volunteer!

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

(in- person or virtual)

- Bingo Calling
- Arts & Crafts
- Talent Performances
- Educational
- Spirituality/Prayer Groups
- Your ideas!

AT-HOME ACTIVITIES

- Send cards of encouragement or artwork
- Host a home good drive with friends, family, workplace, or school group
- Create a housewarming basket



VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHT

Over the past three years, Jim Tracy has volunteered as the Representative Payee. Jim came to us from the Ignatian Volunteer Corps (IVC) and has worked tirelessly on behalf of our residents; his passion resolving issues and advocating for Hearth is hard to match. As an essential role, Jim agreed to stay with Hearth during the pandemic, a prime example of the kindness and dedication he brings to the office. This summer Jim has chosen to move forward with a full retirement. He will absolutely be missed and we wish him a happy retirement!



*"Jim's tenure at Hearth has been one of unparalleled dedication to the needs of our residents."
- Linda Vendola, Controller*

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO SIGN UP CONTACT:

Maura Murphy, *Event & Volunteer Coordinator*
617-369-1562 | mmurphy@hearth-home.org
www.hearth-home.org/volunteer

COVID-19 PANDEMIC UPDATE

When the COVID-19 pandemic began in March 2020, Hearth began stocking up on PPE, high touch areas were disinfected daily, and all sites had restricted entry. Our essential workers came to the office everyday to keep our residents healthy and safe and their dedication to our elders made an impact. By the end of 2020, Hearth had less than 20 confirmed positive COVID-19 cases and no COVID-19 related deaths.

When the vaccine became available, Hearth was able to enroll in the CDC's Pharmacy Partnership for Long Term Care Program through CVS. On January 11th the first of 18 clinics began administering the vaccine to Hearth staff and residents. Thanks to this teamwork, we are happy to share over 85% of Hearth staff and residents are fully vaccinated and Hearth has not had a positive case of COVID-19 since February 2021.



HEARTH & I: A RESIDENT'S JOURNEY



Warren, a Hearth resident, shares his homeless to housed journey.

How did you learn about Hearth? I learned about Hearth about a year and a half ago when I was in a unit at Longwood Medical. They were helping me with housing and my LPN there connected with a case worker from Hearth and before I knew it, I was 3rd on the list. Now here I am. It's great!

"I am very pleased and happy that I'm finally here!"

How has Hearth impacted your life? I finally am a resident and not a homeless person anymore. I feel safe and it has guided me to redeem my domestic qualities again.

Now that the pandemic is almost over, what are your plans? I plan to get a whole new network of friends, and think about doing service work. Also, go to my church, St Luke's and continue to volunteer.



Demetri Underwood, Case Manager, & Warren

Hear his full story at the 30th Celebration Anniversary Gala on September 22, 2021



WAYS TO GIVE

HOME GOODS & HOUSEWARMING

You can help make a house feel like HOME!

When you donate brand new essential home good items to Hearth, you are helping alleviate a major concern for our elders. How will they afford to furnish their new home?

Your donation allows our elders to focus on their health and settle into their new homes gracefully.

HOW TO GIVE:

Purchase items on our Amazon wish list:
<https://a.co/gfGUkv5>

Make a housewarming box:
www.hearth-home.org/housewarmingbox

Donate:
www.hearth-home.org/waystogive



SCAN CODE BELOW:



Remember to Donate Today!

By Mail or Online at:
www.hearth-home.org/waystogive

Mission Statement

Hearth is a non-profit organization dedicated to the elimination of homelessness among the elderly.

This mission is accomplished through a unique blend of prevention, placement, and housing programs all designed to help elders find and succeed in homes of their own.



Members of Hearth's Board and Staff, along with Boston Mayor Kim Janey, gathered at the ribbon cutting for Hearth at Four Corners on June 30, 2021.

Follow us on social media!

