13 Houses Campaign Launched

Depaul USA has completed the renovation of 6601 Heather Lane in Little Rock. Depaul USA purchased the abandoned and derelict two-bedroom home earlier this year. Local contractors painted the interior walls, refinished the wood floors, repaired the HVAC and plumbing systems, and installed new cabinets and countertops in the kitchen and light fixtures throughout the house.

Settled Souls, a local non-profit, beautifully furnished the home. In early September, Vincent Talley, an employed graduate of Depaul USA's Jericho Way Day/Resource Center, moved into the home. Vincent will pay a monthly rent equivalent to 30% of his adjusted net income.

6601 Heather Lane is Depaul USA's first foray into affordable housing in Little Rock. The house is also the first house to be purchased and renovated under the banner of the ‘13 Houses’ campaign. The campaign seeks to unite the Vincentian Family in developing housing for homeless and low-income individuals around the world.
At Home

The spirit of St. Vincent de Paul lives in a window box in Little Rock. The window box hangs on a house that Depaul USA purchased and renovated on Heather Lane with the assistance of the Jen-Byro Fund of the Arkansas Community Foundation, Judy Thompson, and the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, Kentucky. A formerly homeless man who is now employed lives in this charming house.

When Judy Thompson made her generous gift, she stated that she wanted the Heather Lane house to have a window box because, as Judy told me, “Window boxes make a house smile.” I could not agree more. When we finished renovating the house, Judy joined me in placing a flower and sweet potato vine-filled window box on brackets in front of the living room window.

The window box is a manifestation of the care and attention to detail that Depaul USA staff and volunteers bring to their work every day. It signals our recognition of and respect for the dignity of those with whom we work. That window box is also a continuation of the charm that animated St. Vincent’s ministry. St. Vincent instructed his colleagues serving dinner to those in need to place a napkin, cup, and spoon on each tray and serve the meal lovingly as if serving their own children. As you read this edition of Homeward, I hope you will recognize plentiful examples of how Depaul USA lives this Vincentian charm 400 years later.

Thank you for all you do for Depaul USA.

Charles W. Levesque
President/Executive Director

Sr. Kathleen Driscoll, D.C. Retires as Depaul USA - New Orleans Director

Sister Kathleen Driscoll joined Depaul USA six and half years ago when Depaul USA was looking for a way to supplement the work being done at The Rebuild Center, a day/resource center on the grounds of St. Joseph’s Church in New Orleans. Depaul USA hit upon the idea of a van to transport program participants to needed services across the city. The passengers increasingly asked her for assistance in securing housing and Sister took it upon herself to track down housing opportunities.

At the same time that Sister was developing ties with her passengers, she was building relationships with the other programs at The Rebuild Center. This work led to Depaul USA being awarded HUD contracts to provide scattered site permanent supportive housing and scattered site rapid rehousing. These programs now serve more than 50 people. Today, the local COC regards these programs as some of the most effective in the City of New Orleans.

Sister Kathleen’s last day with Depaul USA was July 20. She plans to continue volunteering with Depaul USA about once a week. Please join us in thanking Sr. Kathleen for her many years of dedicated and outstanding service to Depaul USA and the homeless men and women of New Orleans!

“Six and a half years of ministry with Depaul USA has been a true blessing in my life. I have been given the grace to work hand in hand with our sisters and brothers who are poor, living on the margins of our society and searching for someone who would listen and care. It was time for me to step aside and make room for the next generation to continue the ministry of service. I will continue to be connected with Depaul USA and do whatever I can to foster its mission. Homelessness has no place.”
Depaul USA Director Honored

St. John’s University awarded Depaul USA President Chuck Levesque the St. Vincent de Paul Medal on September 24, 2018 at its annual Vincentian Convocation. The university confers the medal annually to an outstanding Catholic layman whose life and work reflect the values of St. Vincent de Paul.

Upon receiving the medal from Dr. Conrado “Bobby” Gempesaw, President of St. John’s University, Chuck stated, “I gratefully accept this award on behalf of all my colleagues at Depaul USA, our program participants, and my board of directors. I want to thank the indispensable partners in our work with homeless and housing insecure men and women— the Daughters of Charity, the Congregation of the Mission, and our Vincentian universities. I want to thank Fr. Bernie Tracey of St. John’s University for hiring me eight years ago and introducing me to the wonderful Vincentian charism. The collaboration of the Vincentian Family means that tonight more than 200 men and women will sleep in safe, warm beds; that tomorrow, 300 people will be fed; and that during this week scores of people will meet with case workers to take the initial steps out of homelessness.”

Sleep Out in the Rock Rocks

The 3rd Annual Sleep Out in the Rock took place at Murray Park in Little Rock on September 8 – 9. The rain from tropical storm Gordon did not stop participants from coming together to show solidarity with the homeless community. Depaul USA’s goal of the Sleep Out was to raise critical funds for Jericho Way and increase awareness of homelessness in Little Rock by having people sleep outdoors.

Last year’s Sleep Out raised $35,000. Thanks to the generosity of donors, sponsors, churches and foundations, this year Depaul USA exceeded the goal of $50,000 and raised $60,000 for Jericho Way. A special thank you to Karen and John Flake, presenting sponsors of the Sleep Out and to Hunter Henry, the Honorary Chair. Thank you to the Going Jessies for providing a beautiful acoustic performance under the pavilion. To First Financial Bank, thank you for providing dinner and grilling in the rain. Thank you to the Boy Scouts Troop 59 for taking care of the campfire and setting up tents, and to the City of Little Rock for providing breakfast in the morning.

Support individuals facing homelessness in your community.
Donate at www.us.depaulcharity.org
Depaul USA is a registered 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit organization.
Kathy Webb Joins Depaul USA Board of Directors

In June, Kathy Webb joined Depaul USA’s Board of Directors as the first Little Rock representative to sit on the board. Kathy Webb is the Executive Director of the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance and the Vice Mayor of Little Rock. The mission of the Hunger Relief Alliance allows Kathy to pursue her passion of providing immediate support for those in need as well as fighting for systemic change. Prior to becoming Executive Director of the Alliance, Kathy co-owned Lilly’s Dim Sum, Then Some.

Kathy was elected to the Little Rock City Board in 2014, and was elected to serve as Vice Mayor by her colleagues in January 2017. Until January 2013, Kathy represented District 37 in the Arkansas House of Representatives. She served as Co-Chair of Joint Budget Committee, the first woman in Arkansas to hold that position.

Kathy is an active volunteer leader in Little Rock. She represents Ward 3 on the Little Rock City Board, and is the liaison to the Arts and Culture Commission, the Midtown Redevelopment Commission, and the Children, Youth and Families Commission. She is Vice-Chair of the Capital City Crime Prevention Task Force and President of the Arkansas Cinema Society. She is an active member of First United Methodist Church.

Kathy’s favorite title is “aunt” to her nieces and nephews. She is a lifelong St. Louis Cardinals fan (with the Cubs a close second), loves classic rock, opera, and country. Kathy is a popcorn aficionado (Garrett) and lover of all the foods she prepared in her restaurants. She lives with Maggie, her rescue dog, and Carl and Dash, her Katrina cats.

“Getting to know and become friends with people who are homeless inspired me to want to do more. I admire the work and values of Depaul USA; to be a small part of what they do is a great privilege.”

Depaul USA-St. Louis Raises $51,962 in Urgent Campaign

Last month, Depaul USA-St. Louis hosted successful fundraising campaign to make essential updates to its two Arsenal Street buildings. In 2017, Depaul USA bought the two Arsenal Street buildings “as is.” The buildings, however, have circuit breaker panels that pose a fire risk. An estimated 2,000 fires annually are the direct result of circuit breaker malfunctions.

To avoid placing residents and staff at risk, Depaul USA committed to replace the panels as soon as funds were available. Generous local donors, local churches, the Local Advisory Committee, and staff raised $51,962 for Depaul USA-St. Louis!

On behalf of the Depaul USA board and staff, thank you to all of the donors who are helping improve our housing units.
Meet Depaul USA’s New Senior Director of Development and Major Giving

In August, Susan Murphy joined Depaul USA as the Senior Director of Development and Major Giving. For most of her career Susan has focused on nonprofit work in a variety of sectors from a startup advocacy program for nonviolent felons to a large natural history museum.

For the past 18 years, Susan has consulted to nonprofits in development, and focused on mid-sized organizations in recent years. She came to Depaul USA as a development consultant in 2017 and was inspired by the staff's commitment to the mission that homelessness can be eradicated. Her consulting work evolved into her current role as Senior Director of Development and Major Giving. She and the members of the development team are now creating a more fully functioning fundraising operation.

Away from Depaul, you might find Susan running on the streets of Ukrainian Village in Chicago early in the morning, or traveling to countries where English is not the first language. She strongly agrees with a favorite quote of Mark Twain, “Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry and narrow-mindedness.”

Depaul USA-New Orleans Welcomes New Director

Jessica Lovell joined Depaul USA, as the new Director in the City of New Orleans, upon Sr. Kathleen Driscoll’s retirement in July. Jessica has a Master of Social Work degree from Tulane University. Before joining Depaul USA, Jessica worked as a case manager for the Harry Tompson Center (HTC). Depaul USA, HTC, and Lantern Light are located inside The Rebuild Center, where all three organizations work together to help better the lives of people experiencing homelessness.

In her three and a half years at HTC, Jessica helped more than 50 people find housing through Permanent Supportive Housing and Rapid Rehousing programs, including Depaul USA’s RRCHI and Coming Home programs. Jessica fell in love with the work she was doing with the homeless community. She continues to feel passionate about working with homeless individuals and helping them navigate their journey into housing with a positive and hopeful outlook.

Jessica was born and raised in New Orleans. She enjoys spending time with her family, friends, and especially her 13-year-old son. She loves the New Orleans Saints and loves going on road trips to Pearl Jam concerts and the beach. Some of her other favorite hobbies include kayaking, photography, music festivals, and painting. At the age of 17 she was in a car accident that left her paralyzed and wheelchair bound. She credits that experience with teaching her many valuable lessons, most notably lessons of resilience, overcoming adversity, and appreciating a good challenge. Jessica now understands her disability to be a strength, which motivates and empowers many people whose paths she crosses.

“I slept and I dreamed that life is all joy, I woke and I saw that life is all service. I served and I saw that service is joy.” – K. Gibran

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Donate at www.us.depaulcharity.org Depaul USA is a registered 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit organization.
CLIENT STORIES

St. Raymond's House - Philadelphia, PA

In July 2017, Diamond was decompensating. She was isolating herself from other residents at St. Raymond's House and she stopped communicating with staff. Finally, after an outburst with other residents, Diamond was checked into the psychiatric emergency room and was hospitalized for 20 days. When she returned to St. Raymond's House, her case manager worked with her to develop a stronger service plan so that should could avoid decompensation and further violent outbursts.

Once Diamond began following her service plan, she reported that she began to feel better about herself and her future. She began working with the Employment Specialist to update her resume. In January 2018, she was hired by DePaul USA's social enterprise, Immaculate Cleaning Services, LLC to work two hours a week at a new site. Staff began to notice an immediate change. Her case manager noticed that Diamond began to seek her out for advice. Diamond began socializing with the other residents and started to save her money so that she could get her hair done. She also signed up to work with the Rays of Hope social enterprise.

The change in Diamond from one summer to the next has been remarkable. Diamond says, "Working alongside others has taught me the value of teamwork. I enjoy the time that I spend working and creating with others. It makes me feel valuable."

Daybreak - Macon, GA

Graham Knight moved with his wife and cabinetry business across the Atlantic to Gainesville, Florida. However, his success in the States was short-lived. Graham had an aneurysm and because of his heart condition, he could no longer handle the physical demands of his work. The prosperous cabinetry business disintegrated, and his marriage ended. His wife moved back to England and Graham was alone. After his second aneurysm, while recovering from surgery, Graham signed over his power of attorney to his girlfriend. She cleaned him out, taking more than $100,000.

Circumstances led Graham to Macon, where, unfortunately, he did not have access to medical help. It was a “shock to his system”, having no income. Graham found himself homeless, living in a tent alongside the Ocmulgee River. Graham would spend his days at Daybreak.

At 65, Graham was entitled to an “English old age pension”. Unfortunately, in the moves, he had lost the necessary documentation. With assistance of a caseworker at Daybreak, he was able to receive his pension. It is small but helps to pay rent, the power bill, and living expenses. While spending time at Daybreak, Sisters Katherine and Judy helped him with his medication. Sr. Katherine had him see a cardiologist, thoracic surgeon, neurologist and general practitioner. Graham lives with a strict medical plan that is working. He does not smoke. Although he does not have medical insurance, he is able to pay for the medication needed to control his chronic heart illness.

Graham now works as a part-time administrative assistant at Daybreak. He states that, “Without the help of the Sisters at Daybreak I would not be here.” He strives to repay Daybreak by helping those who need help. He is willing to assist Daybreak whenever needed. “When you’re down and out, if you have help and determination, you can find your life turned toward the good.”
Navicent Supports Macon Clinic

Navicent Health Foundation selected Daybreak to receive a grant of $10,000 from the H.E.A.T. (Healthcare Employees Achieving Tomorrow) Trust Fund. These grants are made possible by employee contributions and help to fund charitable programs that provide access to health-care related programs and services. Daybreak's free health clinic provides medical and dental services for men and women who are uninsured. The H.E.A.T. grant makes it possible for underserved people to access much needed health and dental services at the free health clinic. Thank you for your partnership!

Chicago's Dax House Campaign Receives Matching Gift

Earlier this year, Depaul USA launched a campaign in Chicago to purchase a second Dax House in order to provide a home for homeless DePaul University students. After a successful gala in June, the goal of $150,000 is within reach. Last month, a generous anonymous donor presented Depaul USA with a matching gift of $12,000 to complete the campaign. Once the gift is matched, Depaul USA will have the funds needed to purchase the home. If you would like to support the Dax House please visit https://give.depaulusa.org/daxhousecampaign

Subaru Drives Daybreak Forward

For the second year in a row, Depaul USA’s Daybreak Day/Resource Center is Subaru of Macon’s Hometown Charity for the 2018 ‘Share the Love’ campaign. Everyone who purchases or leases a new car from the Macon dealership between November 15 – January 2 can select Daybreak to receive a $250 donation. Subaru of Macon’s generous donations will directly support operations to end homelessness in Macon. Depaul USA is delighted to partner with Subaru. If we ‘share the love’, we can change lives.

Support individuals facing homelessness in your community.
Donate at www.us.depaulcharity.org
Depaul USA is a registered 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit organization.
We hope you have enjoyed reading about the work of Depaul USA in this edition of Homeward. It is our mission to ensure that everyone has a place to call home and a stake in his/her community. To support us, please complete this section and mail your check (if applicable) to:

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Our vision is a world where everyone has a place to call home and a stake in his or her community

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