THE SHEPHERD

Good Shepherd Newsletter

Summer/Fall 2019

Congratulations to Good Shepherd's Class of '19!

Good Shepherd hosted its annual celebration of achievement and resilience on June 18. Six youth – one from Notre Dame House School and five from the Jeanne Scott Parent & Child Resource Centre – were awarded their high school diplomas. Our graduates demonstrate what is possible when we invest resources to help at-risk youth. They overcome their challenges in life and in the classroom, while we help them to forge a path to success

Social housing project will help people most in need of support

35 units are expected to be ready in September

Travis is 49 years old and in need of stable housing. He rents a single room in a noisy rooming house in the Barton-Sherman area of Hamilton.

Travis is also an admitted addict who wants desperately to turn his life around. He got to this point in life following a motorcycle accident in 1990. He spent two years in hospital with a serious leg injury. During his rehabilitation, he says, he developed an addiction to opioids. He became homeless and three years ago he arrived at the door of Good Shepherd's men's shelter on Mary Street.

Travis's life at the shelter was not an easy transition. He could not beat his drug use and overdosed three times. He nearly died during the third overdose and was resuscitated by the Brother Nick Foran, our shelter manager.

"Finally, I said 'enough's enough' and I stopped. If it wasn't for Brother Nick and some of the shelter workers, I don't know if I could have stopped using."

He hasn't used drugs or alcohol since.

Now, Travis is looking forward to starting another chapter in his life: moving away from the noise, temptations and

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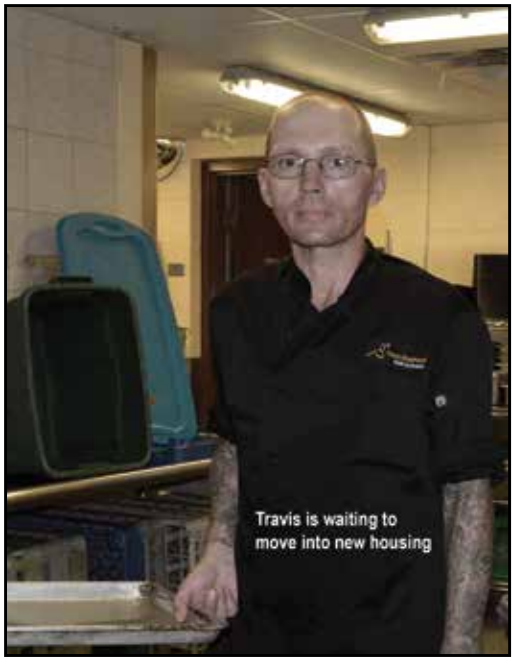


Travis is waiting to move into new housing

A MESSAGE FROM

BROTHER RICHARD

Building project helps to alleviate affordable housing shortage

Our community is struggling to accommodate the housing needs of thousands of residents. Precarious housing is a leading cause of chronic homelessness.

Even with a total of 13,800 social housing units in the City of Hamilton, it's estimated that the average wait for an affordable housing unit is two years. That is an unacceptable reality that can only lead to more poverty and homelessness. Good Shepherd is privileged to be at the forefront of efforts to alleviate the waiting list for prospective tenants.

For the last two years, we have been transforming one of our landmark buildings into modern affordable and supportive housing units.

Everyone who is aware of even a small part of Good Shepherd's history knows that we have occupied the building at the corner of Mary Street and Cannon Street East since 1995. It served as our food and clothing warehouse until 2014 when we opened the Venture Centre and Marketplace just a block east.

As you will read in this issue of The Shepherd, the old "warehouse" has gone through extensive renovations and retrofitting and we anticipate that it will be ready for occupancy in late summer.

The project has been made possible by our partners and funders, as well as an anonymous donor whose generous assistance has allowed us to ensure that more people will have a place to call home.

We look forward to updating you on the success of the project as we begin to welcome our tenants.

CONGRATULATIONS, GRADUATES!

In June, we celebrated the academic accomplishments of several marginalized youth. We were honoured to hand high school graduation diplomas to six students – one from Notre Dame House School and five from the Jeanne Scott Parent & Child Resource Centre.

Every year I am inspired by the tenacity of the youth who participate in our education programs. Their accomplishments demonstrate what is possible when we invest in our community's at-risk youth. They overcome their challenges, both in life and in the classroom, while we help them to forge their personal paths to success.

These are two vital ways that Good Shepherd helps to create healthy and resilient communities.

Housing is a human right. Join us in promoting programs that address the scourge of homelessness by making a gift to Good Shepherd today.

Thank you on behalf of the people we serve,

Bro. Richard, OH

Brother Richard MacPhee, OH
Chief Executive Officer

Save us money and save some trees

Help Good Shepherd save postage and printing costs! Send us your email address and we'll deliver our newsletter to your computer as soon as it's ready. To receive your electronic newsletter, please email goodshepherd@gsch.ca.

Learn more about Good Shepherd by visiting:
goodshepherdcentres.ca

Or follow us on social media:
facebook.com/goodshepherdhamilton
twitter.com/goodshepherdham
instagram.com/goodshepherdhamilton

CHML's Shannon Sleep (left) presents a $5,000 cheque to Good Shepherd's Sarah DeLuca. Thank you to the CHML Children's Fund for donating to Good Shepherd's Christmas programs.

Many marginalized youth who live with homelessness or early parenthood face challenges that prolong their tragic cycle of poverty. A high school diploma can be the key that unlocks opportunities for post-secondary education and employment, leading to brighter futures.

Good Shepherd's two alternative learning classrooms – the Jeanne Scott Parent & Child Resource Centre and Notre Dame House School – help break down barriers to post-secondary education and employment caused by homelessness, poverty, family breakdown and mental illness. Good Shepherd's graduation and accomplishment ceremony celebrates the young people who have taken brave steps toward a healthy and independent life in the community.

Here are inspiring excerpts from Blair and Olivia, the schools' class valedictorians.

BLAIR

Jeanne Scott Parent & Child Resource Centre

High school, for me, wasn't the best experience. Each year I felt the need to pursue a different identity which left me feeling lost and unmotivated. My grades have always been good but I missed out on everything else that came with a high school experience. I didn't connect with any teachers, participate in activities, have many friends or relationships. Six years ago, when I dropped out of high school, I thought it was the end for me as far as my education went. I tried booklets, and adult schooling but nothing seemed to motivate me. Sometimes I got as far as completing the course, just never doing the exam. It was not until I started coming to Jeanne Scott that my motivation and self-worth were restored. For me Jeanne Scott was more than just a school. I made friendships with wonderful ladies that constantly empowered me to reach my full potential. This led me to finding my own self worth and almost instantly my motivation followed. I started really trying to graduate this year for not only myself but my daughter.

I found myself longing for Monday's and the opportunity to connect with other individuals who were going through the same experiences as I was while completing my education and bettering our lives. Now with the help of the program I am on track to start the personal support worker program this coming September. Without this program I would not have completed high school, had childcare for my daughter or had a plan for post secondary school.

My daughter Delilah has (grown) since attending the daycare program. Not only was I able to complete my education; hers was able to start early as well.

I would like to thank all the staff and volunteers who helped plan program events; school trips and holiday parties. Each and every person has made this program so much more than just a "young mom school."

OLIVIA

Notre Dame House School

I went to several different high schools in my life. I tried fitting in with the popular kids by smoking cigarettes (even though I shouldn't have), telling lies so they would like me.

I was at Ancaster High School for half a year then got moved to an all-girls group home treatment centre called Lynwood Charlton Centre on January 4, 2017. I lived there for nine months to get help for my anger and how to control it and it also helped with my depression and anxiety.

While I was living there, my parents ... told me that my sister Gerri-Lynne passed away from overdosing on her own meds and Tylenol. It was really hard to go through it but my family, and the girls at Lynwood Charlton and the staff there helped me a lot.

I ended up going to Notre Dame House School. I went for a while then dropped out and ended up going to Westdale High where I made a new friend named Kiwi. Let's just say I annoyed him so much he didn't want me to leave. Love you, Kiwi.

Then I ended up going back to the Notre Dame House School and now I'm here in front of all of you graduating.

My plan for the future is to take one step at a time and not rush myself. Maybe get a job in a few years, maybe go back to school, but honestly I just want to appreciate everything I have first and then move on.

Congrats all you amazing graduates. We made it. Here is my advice for you:

Appreciate everything and everyone around you because once it's gone it's gone. And also never give up on yourself even if you want to because there are a lot of people to support you and help you through everything.

THE VOLUNTEER
Outreach

Stephanie brings youthfulness to Good Shepherd's volunteer program

Stephanie Barron may be new to volunteering at the Good Shepherd Family Centre and Women's Services but she is very familiar with the organization's mission and values.

"I've wanted to volunteer at Good Shepherd since I was a kid," says Stephanie. "I'd like to pay my dues to this organization."

Stephanie was born in Hamilton after her parents emigrated here from Mexico. She praises the work of Good Shepherd in helping her father get on his feet when he first arrived in Canada.

"Good Shepherd not only gave my dad food and a place to stay but also connected him to different opportunities and people that he would go on to form lifelong friendships with," she says.

Stephanie's upbringing and personal experiences have led to her desire to give back to the community. Living through her parents' experiences as immigrants has emphasized the importance of helping others and feeling empathy for people who were born into difficult circumstances.

"My family is a reminder of my privilege being the first born in Canada and to not forget the responsibility of uplifting others by acting with compassion," she says.

In the last year Stephanie has developed an interest in social work and chose volunteering at Good Shepherd as a way to gain valuable experience that would affirm her decisions to pursue social services as a career. As a volunteer, Stephanie works on youth programming and child minding at the Family Centre and in Women's Services.

Stephanie has recently acquired an invisible disability which has profoundly changed the course of her life. She says that her disability has opened her eyes to the role that ability plays in society and she is dedicated to learning more about the different abilities and how to help people face challenges that are similar to hers.

Over the past year, Good Shepherd has seen a significant increase in the number of inquiries from people in their 20s and 30s who are interested in volunteering. Many of them have had personal experiences that connect them to Good Shepherd programs and they want to give back. For these young people, there is no stigma associated with issues like mental illness, poverty or abuse and they are eager to interact with our clients and be a part of the change.

For Stephanie, helping children navigate through life's challenges has been the most rewarding experience and her volunteer work has helped her determine how her strengths can help define her future career path.

"I have found that knowing a second language has really come in handy," says Stephanie. "I've learned that the best thing you can do is focus on your own interests and your strengths when looking for a volunteer role."

Good Shepherd is grateful for the dedication of more than 5,000 volunteers who assist in the everyday operations of our programs and services, we couldn't do this important work without them. Thankfully, there's no doubt that the majority of this new generation wants to make a difference.

VOLUNTEER WITH US!

Call Krista or Maggie
905.528.6565 x3333 or x3321

You can help Good Shepherd by volunteering at a range of different programs and services. There's something for every skill set and commitment level. We're looking for volunteers with the following interests:

Child minding babies and young children

Wellness programs (yoga, Zumba, massage/reiki, fitness, meditation)

Food prep, cooking and baking

Administrative support, reception desk duties

Household tasks (laundry, dishes, cleaning and organizing)

Talking and spending time with seniors, speech-language pathology

Sorting donations and stocking shelves

Helping people shop and bagging groceries

Special Skills: hairdressers, nail artists, gardeners, musicians, arts and crafts

Visit www.goodshepherdcentres.ca/volunteer

Call Krista or Maggie
905.528.6565 x3333 or x3321, or email volunteer@gsch.ca

Good Shepherd
Faith in people.
Lemonade Stand Day

Supporters of Good Shepherd throughout our community and in Toronto set up Lemonade Stands to raise money for homelessness prevention programs in Hamilton.

We thank everyone who took the time to set up their stands and sell their delicious lemonade and snacks.

Lemonade Stand Day was such a success we'll be doing it again next year. Stay tuned!

Helping to reduce the city's housing wait list

Former food bank will have 35 units, including six that are wheelchair accessible

... Continued from Page 1

influences at his rooming house and into Good Shepherd's new affordable and supportive housing building on the corner of Mary and Cannon Streets.

The former Good Shepherd food bank is being retrofitted to accommodate 35 one-bedroom apartments, including six with wheelchair accessibility. It is expected to begin welcoming residents in September.

The complement of tenants will have a 50-50 gender balance in keeping with Good Shepherd's Vision statement, which says "we are committed to working together to build healthy and resilient communities founded on the principles of social justice for all."

They will include clients who have been identified as most in need of housing in our community. Women, men, youth, seniors who need a higher level of day-to-day support, and people with other mitigating conditions will be given the opportunity to live in the units.

Good Shepherd staff will be available to support tenants address some of the factors that contribute to their housing instability.

Construction continues on Good Shepherd's new affordable and supportive housing units on Mary Street.

Hamilton is experiencing an enormous shortage of affordable and supportive housing, particularly support that is geared to the income of the individual being housed. It is estimated that the current waiting list for social housing in Hamilton is more than 6,800 households, representing 16,650 individuals.

The 35 new units will help to fill a part of that shortage by giving people in need of more support a place to live. That, in turn, will open up other Good Shepherd units.

Meanwhile, Travis expects to be one of the first tenants to move in. He volunteers at Good Shepherd by helping in the kitchen of our hot meal program. It helps him stay focused on his recovery and his desire to live a healthy, independent life.

"I spend a lot of my time here," he says. "I can't tell you how big a help Good Shepherd has been. Things aren't running through my head when I'm volunteering and I can keep clean."

Resources for the project has been provided by a variety of funders, as well as the generosity of an anonymous donor.

Good Shepherd representatives visited Denninger's in Hamilton recently to thank them for their many years of generosity to Good Shepherd. The company's donations have helped alleviate hunger in the community.

HOMELESSNESS

Hamilton's Affordable Housing Crisis

13,800
Social housing units in Hamilton

16,650
Estimated number of people waiting for units to become available

2 Years
Average wait time

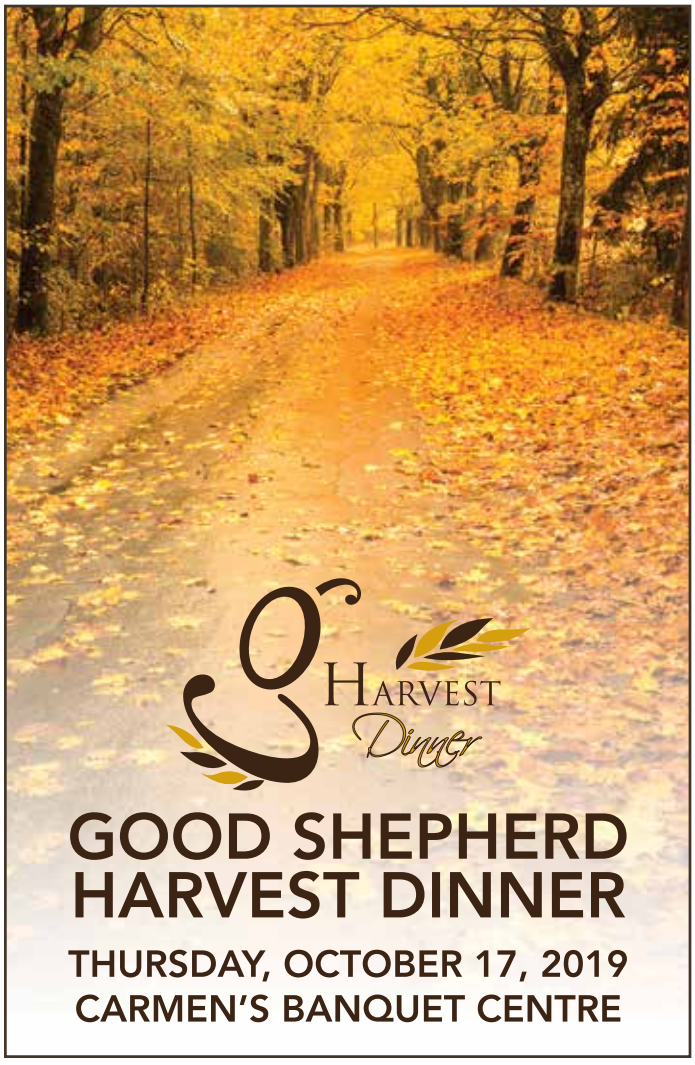
The average cost to rent a one-bedroom unit is **$907**. Too many people in our community can't afford to pay rent, food, and other necessities in life.

At Good Shepherd, the average monthly occupancy rate is **over 100%** in the shelters that support women as well as families.

MISSION ~~IM~~POSSIBLE

Our **monthly giving program** allows us to provide food, clothing and other emergency needs to people in need. Monthly donations give us the opportunity to help them look for stable and affordable housing, counselling, education and other needs to help them succeed.

You can make our **mission possible** – Seeing the person, not just their problems. That's ***Faith in People***.



A MESSAGE FROM

CATHY WELLWOOD

The sun comes out to celebrate graduating youth

June is one of my favourite months at Good Shepherd. That's because we get to witness the positive results of the dedication of our Youth Services co-workers and clients.

Every year, it seems, the sun comes out to symbolically celebrate the bright futures of students at Good Shepherd's two alternative education classes. This year, we proudly stood with the students' families and friends as they received their high school graduation diplomas or certificates of achievement. The ceremony was emotional – full of inspiration and tears of joy.

As I sat there, I couldn't help but wonder what was going through the minds of the young people's loved ones. They must be overjoyed. These youth face hardship and challenges throughout the year and yet they persevered. As Blair, our valedictorian from the Jeanne Scott Parent & Child Resource Centre said, "I started really trying to graduate this year for not only myself but my daughter." What a mature young woman!

Thank you to the many individuals and organizations who provided bursaries for the students. Each graduate was given a gift to help them get a foothold on life after school. Our donors are wonderful!

We have changed the date for our exclusive special event with Milli – a Hamilton's fashion and lifestyle destination. Join us on **Tuesday, September 24** for a fun and exciting evening of style, fashion and socializing at Milli on Main Street West in Hamilton. Your $200 ticket includes a $200 promotional card that can be used in store until December 19, 2019. Every dollar from the purchase of your ticket is donated to Good Shepherd.

God bless,

Cathy Wellwood
Chief Development Officer

GOOD SHEPHERD'S COMMITMENT TO YOU

Good Shepherd
Faith in people.

Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God
Province of the Good Shepherd in North America

The Shepherd Newsletter is published three times a year. It is our way of sharing Good Shepherd news and events. You will also receive greetings from the Brothers and Staff of Good Shepherd at Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Each Good Shepherd mailing is accompanied by a reply card and a return envelope for your convenience. Although your support is vital, we understand that not everyone can make a donation in response to each mailing.

If you prefer fewer mailings, or none at all, let us know. We also invite you to use the reply envelope enclosed to communicate with us. Please tell us how we're doing and inform us of changes in your mailing information.

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