



FAMILY FUN!

GRANT FROM JEWISH FUND FOR HUMAN NEEDS HELPED WITH SUMMER ACTIVITIES

This spring, Room at the Inn received a \$2,000 grant from the **Jewish Fund for Human Needs** to support a Summer Family Activities Program for the homeless children and families Room at the Inn serves. This was a new program for Room at the Inn, and staff were as excited about it as the clients who participated.

“Many of our families come from impoverished backgrounds and are overwhelmed by problems related to debt, inability to maintain stable housing and transportation troubles,” said Angela Hamilton, client coordinator at Room at the Inn. “With special outings and activities made possible by this grant, we can help plant seeds of hope in our young clients by providing them experiences outside of their impoverished environment.

“Children who participated in the program were able to explore and learn about environments that were different from their own, free from the life stressors of homelessness,” Angela added. “These activities created opportunities for positive family interaction and learning together, which help to strengthen/ stabilize the family.”

Several families spent the day at Six Flags, enjoying the rides and the water park. This was the first time these children had ever been to an amusement park.

Other activities included an afternoon at Swing-A-Round Fun

Town, visits to the Magic House and the Science Center, and going to a movie at an AMC Theater.

All of the clients attended a karaoke and pizza party at the shelter, with many of them joining in the singing. One of the clients said, “It was a good change of pace, and it seemed to bring all of the residents together.” When asked what she learned, one child said she learned that her mom knows how to sing and dance!

The children in the program also attended summer camp programs at **Kirkwood United Methodist**

Church and Samuel United Church of Christ in Clayton.

The grant covered admission, transportation, box lunches and other costs related to the activities.

We extend our thanks to the **Jewish Fund for Human Needs** for this grant to make these opportunities available to our families, and especially our children, at Room at the Inn!

Photos from the karaoke event and one of the summer camp experiences are posted on facebook.com/roomstl.



Making a splash at summer camp!



Their first time at an amusement park!



Angela Hamilton, left, and two clients perform at the karaoke party at the shelter.

ROOM AT THE INN BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Matthew Podjeski
Board Chairperson

Geralyn Frandsen, Ed.D., RN
Past Board Chairperson

Ronald Payton
Vice Chair

Anita Santiago
Secretary

Mark Kaltenrieder
Treasurer

Molly Batsch
Crystal Barker

Beth Damsgaard-Rodriguez
Al Fressola

David Gerst
Sister Barbara McMullen, CDP
Robert Miller

Rev. Dr. Jeff Moore
David Renaud

Riddhi Shah
Sister Ana Lydia Sonera Matos, CDP
Julie Wolfe
Randall Wollenberg

PROVINCIAL LEADERSHIP TEAM

Mary Francis Fletcher, CDP
Maria Fest, CDP
Donna Marie Gribshaw, CDP
Ana Lydia Sonera Matos, CDP
Mary Traupman, CDP

STAFF

Peggy Slater
Interim Executive Director

Monica Barnett
Administrative Coordinator

Sharon Blount
Program Coordinator

Angela Hamilton
Client Coordinator

Christopher Hotard
Volunteer Coordinator

Mary Kaminski
Development Coordinator

Melanie Matthew
Program Coordinator

NIGHT SITE SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

Room at the Inn gratefully recognizes these congregations for their service anniversaries!

20th Anniversary

First Presbyterian Church of
Kirkwood
Saint Peter Catholic Church

15th Anniversary

Arlington United Methodist
Church
Holy Name of Jesus Catholic
Church

10th Anniversary

Christ the King Catholic Church
Saint Joseph Catholic Church

5th Anniversary

Greater Grace Church
House of Hope
New Hope Baptist Church
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church

NIGHT SITE RECOGNITION EVENT

A Night Site Recognition Event will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday, October 27, at Central Reform Congregation, 5020 Waterman Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63108. The night sites celebrating service anniversaries will be honored but all night site coordinators, clergy and key volunteers are invited to attend.

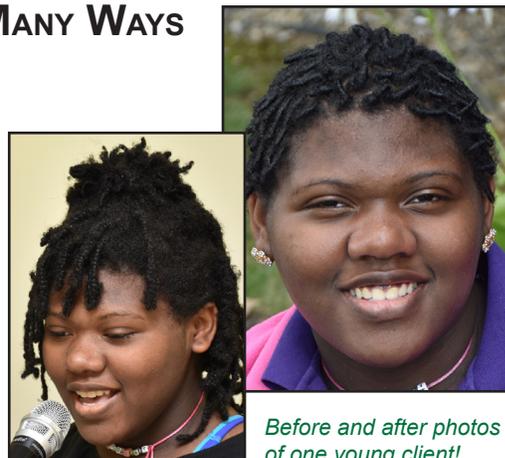
For more information, contact Chris Hotard at chotard@roomstl.org.

GIFTS CAN BE GIVEN IN MANY WAYS

Some of the clients at Room at the Inn received a personalized gift from a pastor and her hairstylist!

Mrs. Coleman, the pastor of Power of Deliverance Church, has supported Room at the Inn for many years. She had mentioned to her hairstylist, Mercedes from The Loft in Creve Coeur, Mo., about her volunteer work for the shelter, and Mercedes asked how she could help. That was an easy answer!

Soon after that conversation, Mercedes spent an afternoon providing cuts, color, braids and texture curls for the women and children. Bobby Coleman, the



pastor's son, took the men to a barber shop as well.

Several staff commented that our clients were truly transformed!

We thank the Colemans and Mercedes for this wonderful act of service for our clients!

BREAKING THE CYCLE

When Brittany was two weeks old, she and her twin sister went to live with their “Granny.” Their birth mother had been addicted to drugs.

But things weren’t easy with Granny, either. Granny, who they also called Momma, was young and had growing children of her own, each with their own set of issues. Granny also had a gambling problem.

As a result, Brittany spent years

ticket or two that she couldn’t pay. Then warrants were issued from different municipalities. Then there was the chance of being arrested because of those warrants.

Room at the Inn staff connected Brittany with a lawyer to help clear up the warrants. They helped her get a job, but then the baby got sick and needed surgery.

“This is my last chance to get it right for me and my kids,”

Room at the Inn works with clients to help them stabilize their families and reduce barriers to housing

of her young life in and out of homeless shelters.

Today at age 26, Brittany is living in homeless shelters again, only now she has four children between the ages of 1 and 9.

And to make the situation worse, the baby, Ayanna, has had two surgeries and has been diagnosed with desmoplastic fibroma, bone cancer in her skull. She began chemotherapy this summer.

Room at the Inn has been a focal point for Brittany getting her life back on track. Brittany said she “has come too far to mess up again.”

Brittany proudly shares that she finished high school. However, as she describes herself, she admits she was selfish in the past. She was putting her wants first, not the priorities of being a family. “I was depressed, had anxiety, got lost, was lazy,” she said sadly.

And things kept happening that sidetracked her, like a traffic

Brittany said. “And it’s not just because my baby is sick. I know I might still need help along the way but my mind is on the right track now.”

“I love Room at the Inn,” Brittany said. “They do things for you but they are tough. They do what they do to let you know that this – staying at Room at the Inn – is not the final goal. Being here is still an obstacle. It’s not a home.

“But while you are here, they treat you like you are family!”

Brittany took advantage of many of the classes available to the clients, like budgeting and nutrition. She worked on her parenting skills. She liked that they had clean, safe places to sleep at night when they went to the night sites at area congregations. “The volunteers would reach out to us. They showed us they cared.”



Brittany has four children. The youngest, pictured left, is undergoing chemotherapy for bone cancer in her skull.

What’s next for Brittany and her family? “My next step is to find a home for my kids. I can’t fail any more. I have let my kids down far too long,” Brittany shared. “This isn’t how they should grow up.”

THANK YOU to the Boeing Employees Community Fund (ECF) for \$3,000 toward helping our clients reduce the debt that keeps them from permanent housing.

Our partners make it possible!!!



Room at the Inn

Shelter with a purpose. Clients with a future.

3415 Bridgeland Drive
Bridgeton, MO 63044

MISSION STATEMENT

Sponsored by the Sisters of Divine Providence, Room at the Inn provides emergency shelter and a stabilizing support system to women and families in need in St. Louis County, using a collaborative, interfaith effort of congregations and organizations throughout the St. Louis Region.

roomstl.org

facebook.com/roomstl

twitter.com/innstl



St. Louis County
Children's Service Fund
Keeping Kids First



stlouis.bbb.org



Some funds for the Room at the Inn emergency shelter program for homeless families are provided by government grants from the Department of Housing and Urban Development and administered by St. Louis County Human Services.

Webster Groves Christian Church
and Westborough Country Club present:

Third Annual Golf Tournament for Room at the Inn

Monday, October 10, 2016

Westborough Country Club

Information, registration and sponsorship opportunities:
roomstl.org/events | 314-209-9181 | maryk@roomstl.org