

RESIDENT PROFILE

You Are Providing a Home for Wendell

Wendell remembers the day his mom said she was moving, leaving him with nowhere to go. After bouncing around in family members' homes, he knew that he needed to find a home of his own. That home for a year and a half was a shelter. Wendell says with relief, "They told me about Caritas. It changed everything."

He continues, "I worked at a steak house for 5 years until I had to have an operation and take time off to recover." When Wendell recovered, he went back to working in restaurants for 10 more years, doing food prep, dishes, and whatever was needed. Then, Covid struck last March.

"In one day, they let 25 people go and closed down. It was tough. I lost vacation and sick time and, at first, had a hard time getting unemployment. I had bills coming in and was really worried. When my unemployment came through, with the \$600 supplement I was able to pay my bills and save for future bills...but when my checks

decreased to \$266 and my savings ran out, I had to borrow money from my mom which was really difficult. I've been looking for jobs since the pandemic started, but no one is hiring.

It is very frustrating because I love working. I'm still in touch with the people I worked with, but it is nothing like being together, laughing, joking, doing our jobs. I try to spend as much time with my family as possible. It makes my day to have family laughing and joking."

Wendell is keeping up with rent payments, but they take up a big percentage of his current income,



"The people care about you."

Wendell, Boston resident.

and he is relying on food banks for nutrition. He is anxious for restaurants to open up so he can get back to work.

Wendell adds, "I would recommend Caritas to anyone. If you're looking for a place to live, they will try their best to help you. The people care about you. I'm so grateful to be in the right spot and I'm not planning on going anywhere." ■

Community Partnerships Help Fight Food Insecurity



Strong community partnerships are key to achieving our mission, and we love working with other local non-profits serving our community. The pandemic has exacerbated food insecurity, and we are thankful for several organizations that provide fresh food to our residents.

Three food-rescue organizations connect Caritas residents with

unsold or excess food ranging from supermarket items, fresh produce, bakery, and restaurant-prepared food that would otherwise go to waste—a win-win. Our longest food-rescue partnership is with, **Lovin' Spoonfuls**, which delivers weekly to our largest building in Cambridge, home to 128 formerly homeless men, and also to 1202

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Dear Friends,

While there is still a long struggle ahead with the pandemic and its economic devastation, I see a glimmer of hope. As the vaccine rolls out and we get a little closer to warmer weather and the tapering of this recent surge, we look toward better days ahead.

You help our residents every day to stay healthy and retain their housing. Thanks to your support, we have a strong Resident Service Coordinator Team that is reaching out to Caritas residents as they become eligible to help them make appointments for the vaccine. We will also need your continued support to provide rental assistance to those who have lost work, and we expect this need to last throughout 2021.

At the same time, we look toward the future. The struggles we have seen this year have only emphasized the essential nature of this work. Without safe, permanent housing, individuals and the community cannot achieve health and well-being. We must continue to expand our housing and services in order to meet the need. We are actively pursuing opportunities to acquire or build new housing, as well as rehabilitate older buildings in our portfolio to ensure they continue to provide dignified affordable housing for decades to come.

You make it possible. I wish you a safe and joyful 2021.

In gratitude,

Karin Cassel Mitterando

Executive Director

Community Partnerships Help Fight Food Insecurity *Continued from page 1*



Jana and Tony Gimenez from The Food Drive delivered bakery items from a local shop to our home in Wakefield.

"We feel a particular connection to your mission"

— Jana Gimenez, The Food Drive Founder and Board Chair

Commonwealth Ave, which is home to 60 very low-income residents.

Food Link regularly supplies rescued food to our homes in Arlington. Our newest partner, **The Food Drive**, based in Melrose, is delivering regularly to two Caritas houses north of Boston.

"We feel a particular connection to your mission" said Jana Gimenez, The Food Drive Founder and Board Chair, "because just as Caritas is preventing homelessness by providing permanent housing, The Food Drive is tackling hunger by providing consistent access to food."

Breaktime intersects housing and hunger by providing homeless young

adults with job opportunities and career training in the food service industry. Breaktime delivers fresh cooked meals to residents at two Boston Caritas houses on a regular basis, and Caritas is a housing provider for a couple of Breaktime's young-adult participants.

These are just a few of the community partners we work with who align with our mission to prevent homelessness and improve lives in Greater Boston. ■

Learn more about our partners at:

lovinspoonfulsinc.org

foodlinkma.org

facebook.com/fooddrivemelrose

breaktime.org

SPECIAL THANKS also to the following individuals and businesses who provided meals or food for residents during 2020.

Maura Bilafer

Holly Burwell

Miriam and Duane Clark

Marci Cohen's initiative

Linda Darman

Lee Grinspoon

Kerry and David Keohane

Phillip MacArthur

Kate Majike and Tom Keane

Middlesex Savings Bank

The Molinari Family

Panera Bread

Chris Peris

Prince Lobel Tye, LLC

Temple Shir Tikva, Wayland,

Mussar Class



DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Goulston & Storrs

In 2020, the law firm of Goulston & Storrs donated over 200 hours of legal services to Caritas.

The law firm of Goulston & Storrs is deeply committed to the mission of Caritas Communities. The Goulston & Storrs team is extremely generous with its time and expertise in advising and managing the many complex legal issues that arise, starting with legal support during the acquisition and development of new properties and continuing through all aspects of our ongoing business.

Caritas simply could not afford the market cost for services with the level of quality and expertise that Goulston & Storrs provides pro bono.

In addition to the legal expertise they provide, the Goulston & Storrs team performs many volunteer projects such as repainting interiors at our property on Hancock Street in Everett, where they met residents and brought dignity and pride to their home. Goulston & Storrs also demonstrates its commitment with



generous annual financial support. We are proud to partner with Goulston & Storrs in serving the most vulnerable in our community and working toward a better life for all of us in Greater Boston. ■

The Goulston & Storrs team painting at our Hancock Street, Everett home.

You Made Our First Virtual Gala a Resounding Success!

Coming Together Online to Safely Celebrate 35 Years and Raise \$730K



Since its founding in 1985, Caritas Communities has hosted an annual celebration to help raise critical funding needed to fill the gap between housing and homelessness. In the early years, the celebration included live music and dancing. In recent years attendance grew to over 700, and supporters enjoyed an inspirational multimedia program.

In 2020, we had to pivot to something entirely new. On November 18, we streamed a fun and educational 30-minute online program. Co-hosted by Caritas resident Andrew J. Brown and

Executive Director Karin Cassel Mitterando, the program included moving profiles of hardworking residents and a tribute to our frontline staff who have done an incredible job during the pandemic. Sponsors received home-delivered boxes of food and small gifts so we could celebrate together while being apart.

We heard from Kimya, whose apartment had burned down, leaving her with nothing. She was living in a hotel before she found her Caritas home. Kimya works as a case manager for women at

a homeless shelter, and she contracted COVID-19 during the first wave back in April.

We also heard from Greg, who found Caritas to be an affordable step on his road to recovery from a substance use disorder that had left him living on the street. Greg was working at Home Depot and has now moved on to installing cabinets for a home renovation contractor.

Avalon Bay stepped up in this challenging year as our lead sponsor, contributing funds early in the Spring to help Caritas when rental income dropped dramatically. Event Co-Chairs Bill and Linda McLaughlin led our Gala Committee to raising a phenomenal \$730,000 in support for this non-traditional event. ■

Above left: Karin Cassel Mitterando and Andrew J. Brown hosted our 35th Annual Virtual Gala. Above right: Linda and Bill McLaughlin served as event co-chairs. Bill is Executive Vice President at AvalonBay Communities, our generous lead event sponsor.





A New Technology Partner for Property Operations: Leonardo247

Caritas is grateful for a new charitable partnership with Leonardo247, a cutting-edge property management software company that will help us manage our 33 properties and improve on-site operations including inspections, property operations, preventative maintenance, and remote site management. The software and services are valued at \$100,000 annually.

“Managing 33 properties is challenging, time-consuming, and critical to the people we serve, so we are grateful for Leonardo247’s generosity in providing the technology and services at no cost to Caritas, helping us to improve the housing experience for our residents and manage our properties more efficiently,” said Victor Martinez, Caritas’s Chief Operating Officer. “Leonardo247 will optimize our time spent providing management oversight as we continue to grow and expand our services to more citizens so we can spend less time mired in minutia and more time focusing on serving our residents.”

“Caritas is making a significant impact within the Boston community.”

— Daniel Cunningham, CEO, Leonardo247

“Caritas is making a significant impact within the Boston community,” said Daniel Cunningham, CEO of Leonardo247, “and our software solution and ongoing support will allow them to operate at the same level of sophistication and thoroughness as the nation’s largest for-profit real estate companies.” ■

Above: 8 Water Street in Wakefield, home for 26 residents.

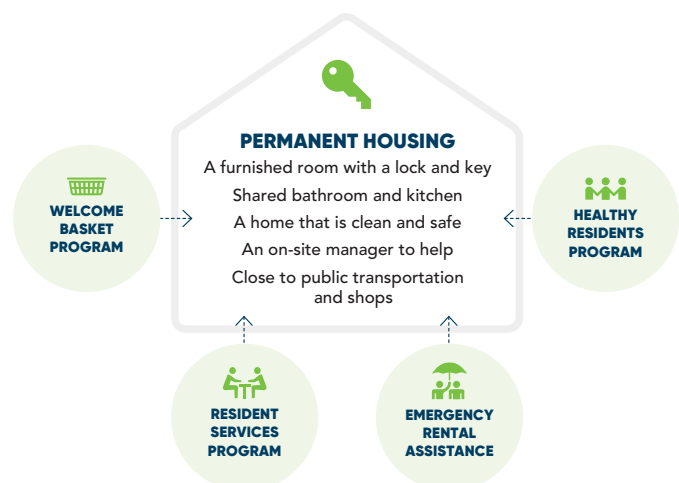


The Caritas Experience

WHERE RESIDENTS COME FROM:



OUR MODEL FOR SUCCESS:



Note: Percentages are based on a 2019 resident survey.

Save the Date

36th Annual Gala

Wednesday, November 17, 2021

Look for event details this spring!



Give the Gift of a Home.

Please support Caritas Communities. For information or to arrange a tour of our properties, please contact Vernell Clouden-Duval, Director of Development at 781.843.1242 x33 or VCloudenduval@caritascommunities.org.

Double your Impact!

The Paul McGrath Homelessness Prevention Endowment Fund will provide grants to residents who are struggling with a short-term financial setback.

All gifts to this fund received by March 31, 2021 will be matched 1-1 by the John and Mary Corcoran Foundation, in honor of Paul McGrath. Visit caritascommunities.org/support-us/paul-mcgrath-fund/



Rebuilding Lives

This newsletter is published twice a year for supporters and friends of Caritas Communities. Amy Meneely, Director of Communications, Editor and Writer. Wendy Price, Volunteer Coordinator, Contributor. One Visual Mind, Design. Caritas Communities, 25 Braintree Hill Office Park, Suite 206, Braintree, MA 02184 www.caritascommunities.org ■ 781.843.1242 Copyright 2021