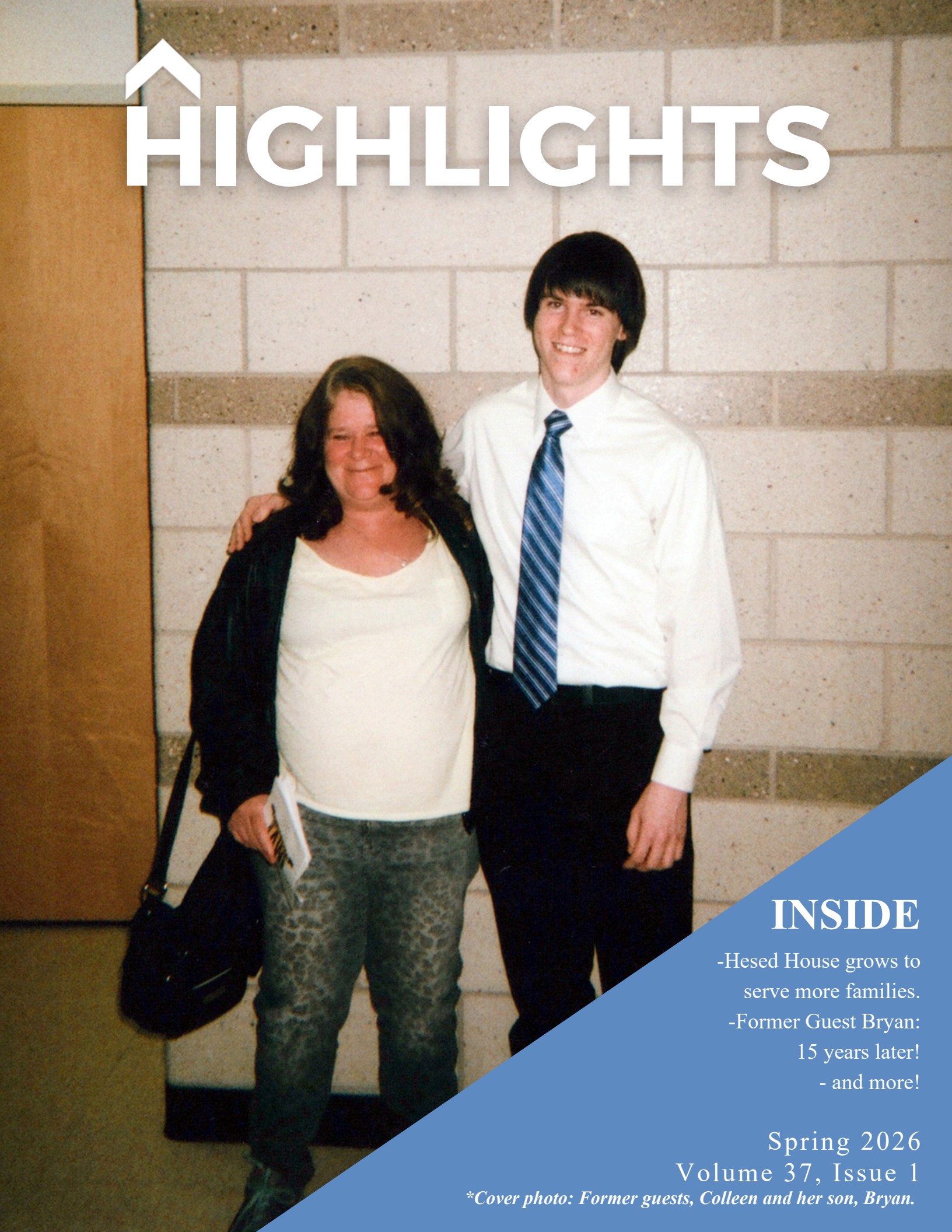
HIGHLIGHTS



INSIDE

-Hesed House grows to serve more families.
-Former Guest Bryan: 15 years later!
- and more!

Spring 2026
Volume 37, Issue 1

Cover photo: Former guests, Colleen and her son, Bryan.

Hesed House grows to serve more families!

Creating more space, safety, and support for families.

Every family deserves to feel safe. Every child deserves a place to just be a kid. That's why Hesed House is expanding our Family Shelter — and we couldn't be more excited about what's coming.



Above: Former child guest staying in the Family Shelter celebrates the New Year.

Kids need to play — rain or shine. The expanded Family Shelter will offer a new indoor playground. Kids staying at the shelter will have a real place to run, laugh, and just be kids — no matter the weather or time of day.
Because childhood doesn't stop during a family crisis.

The expanded shelter also gives families access to a private space for time to be together, a quiet room for homework, and laundry facilities so parents can care for their kids with dignity. Families will also have easy access to the Comprehensive Resource Center (CRC), where they can get health care, legal help, and case management — the tools they need to get back on their feet and into a home of their own. All this for more people than we have been able to serve before!



Above: Hesed House staff prepares to serve a meal during the Easter holiday.

More families will have a safe place to land temporarily. More kids will have room to be kids again.

The need in our community is growing. Thanks to every donor, volunteer, and advocate who helped Hesed House get this far. None of this is possible without you. Because of you, Hesed House can answer the call to serve — one family at a time.

Demolition starts soon. You can be part of this. Financial gifts and in-kind support are necessary to bring this space to life. To learn how to help, contact us at donate@hesedhouse.org.

"Hesed House has gone through many changes over the years, but it has always remained flexible enough to respond to the needs of our community. In the past, we served mostly single adult men, along with some women, but not many families. Today, the group we are seeing increase the fastest, and most significantly, is families. Once again, Hesed House is adapting to meet the needs that exist in our community, and the Family Shelter expansion is how we are responding to this change." — Carolyn Sprawka.



Above: Carolyn in the new Adult Shelter located at 680 S River St.

You may recognize Carolyn's name! For more than 30 years, Carolyn has been part of Hesed House - as a coordinator for her church, Hesed House Board Chair, volunteer, and staff member. She retired in '25 and rejoined Hesed House in the spring of '26 to continue to serve our most vulnerable neighbors by leading our program team.

Bryan's Story: The Sound of Hope

Finding home and stability after hardship.



Above: Hesed House staff, Bryan and his late mother, Colleen, at Bryan's graduation.

When Bryan was in middle school, he and his mom, Colleen, had nowhere to go. They walked into Hesed House during a busy dinner rush — uncertain, vulnerable, and without a plan. What they found was more than shelter. Over three years, they found community, celebrated birthdays, built lifelong friendships with staff and volunteers, and held onto hope. Colleen counted down the days to their move-out, and together, they made it.

"Hesed House is the place that can really develop and grow you as a person. While I wouldn't say I would wish anybody to go through the experience [of homelessness], I do look back at it, and I am grateful that it was a part of my story. I definitely felt the love and support; it will always be a special place to me." - Bryan, Former Hesed House Guest.



Above: Bryan and his late mother, Colleen, share a moment at Hesed House.

Colleen later lost her battle with cancer — but not before watching her son become someone extraordinary. Today, Bryan is a National Guard Veteran, a University of Illinois engineering graduate, and newly engaged to his girlfriend Maddi. He carries his mother's resilience within him in everything he does. Their story is a testament to what becomes possible when a community refuses to give up on people.



Earlier this month, Bryan and his fiancée, Maddi, joined many of you at the Hesed House Derby Party. Bryan generously spoke about his experience many years ago. He came back to say thank you. His words stopped the room.

"That is what Hesed is — steadfast love, mercy, and compassion. That's what I felt when I was there, and that is what I felt well after. Today I am standing here because people like you chose to help." - Bryan at the 2026 Derby Party.

After speaking, Bryan participated in a Hesed House tradition and rang the "Gone Gong". When Bryan and his mom left, the Gong didn't exist yet. It's a newer tradition to celebrate a family or individual leaving the shelter for a home of their own. So he rang it that night — loud and clear — for the journey he and his mom had shared. Because of you, people like Bryan and his mom, Colleen, were able to move forward with dignity and respect, with hope for a new day. Thank you.

Please use this QR code to watch a video and hear directly from Bryan about the positive impact you made on him and his mom, Colleen. Join us in wishing Bryan, and his fiancée, Maddi, continued success and lifelong happiness!

A special thanks to all of our 2026 Derby Party sponsors!

SAVE THE DATE FOR NEXT YEAR'S DERBY PARTY ON MAY 01, 2027! FOR MORE INFORMATION, EMAIL DONATE@HESEDHOUSE.ORG

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YOUR IMPACT IN 2025

MEALS PROVIDED THROUGH EMERGENCY OVERNIGHT SHELTERS: **329,685**

AT RISK HOUSEHOLDS WHO AVOIDED BECOMING HOMELESS THROUGH CASE MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT: **731**

FAMILY SHELTER NIGHTS OF SHELTER: **35,173**

INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES DIRECTLY ASSISTED WITH HOUSING: **261**

ADULT SHELTER NIGHTS OF SHELTER: **74,722**

INDIVIDUALS SUCCESSFULLY ADDRESSED MEDICAL ISSUES: **553**





INTENTGEN'S 3RD ANNUAL SOLSTICE CENTURY RIDE



Help raise **$100,000** for local charities, including **Hesed House**!

Join us for a ride that helps our neighbors in need!

When: Friday, June 19th 2026
Where: Whalon Lake, 1496 Royce Rd, Bolingbrook, IL 60440
Arrival Time: 6:00am
Ride Starts: 6:30am

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SCAN THE QR CODE OR VISIT HTTPS://SOLSTICECENTURY.COM

GAS-ONLY GIFT CARDS MAKE A MEANINGFUL DIFFERENCE FOR HESED HOUSE GUESTS!

They help eliminate transportation barriers that often prevent individuals from getting to work, medical appointments, and housing opportunities.

Hollie, Director of the LIGHT-House program, recalls giving a mother of three a gift card to help fill up her car to go to work. "These gift cards help people avoid choosing between getting to work and feeding their kids".

You can help ensure reliable transportation for guests during some of the most critical moments in their lives!

To donate gift cards, please visit www.hesedhouse.org or call us at (630) 897-2156.

Public Action to Deliver Shelter, Inc., dba Hesed House is a 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit organization. Our EIN# is 36-3285644. Please email donate@hesedhouse.org if you would like a tour, or with questions about how you can get involved.

www.hesedhouse.org | 659 S. River St, Aurora, IL 60506 | (630) 897-2156