



HIGHLIGHTS

Formerly Homeless Teen Boldly Moves Forward in Life

Maria used art to help her through homelessness and is now using it to get to Europe.

Maria (and her mother/brother) lived in the Transitional Living Community (TLC) at Heses House. Now she is a junior in high school (with pretty awesome grades) living in an apartment with her family. Maria got her first job working part-time at the Fox Valley Park District this past summer. She has also taken on the challenge of raising additional funds for a school trip to Europe planned for early 2018. A natural artist, Maria explains, “My art has always allowed me to express myself in a way nothing else can, especially when my family was struggling. It was an outlet.” She is currently selling her art as a means to help fundraise for the upcoming trip.

Recently, Maria reminisced about what it was like when her family moved out of Heses House. “The feeling of knowing when I walk in my house and I see the TV, the couch, the kitchen and thinking, “Wow! *This is all just for us!*” She goes on to explain, “Celebrating my birthday that first year was incredible. I got to smell my mom baking my cake and I even got to have friends over for a sleepover at MY house! Being able to celebrate our own traditions in our own home is very special for me now.”

“The volunteers and donors should know how their support allows people like me to confidently move back out into the world. Without the support we received from Heses House, we not only wouldn’t have our home, I wouldn’t have the confidence or the opportunities I have today.”

“The volunteers and donors should know how their support allows people like me to confidently move back out into the world.”



Maria poses with a piece of her art that she is selling.

Dear People of Hesed,

Having lost much of the arrogance (and confidence) of youth, there is very little of which I am certain anymore.

Of this, though, I have no doubts: *how we treat the most vulnerable matters.*

It matters in at least three ways:

- 1. Their humanity is at stake.** “The least of these” (Jesus’ phrase, not mine) live in a desert, where simple human dignity has dried up. When we—“the least vulnerable” (my phrase, not Jesus’)—treat them as equally valid members of the community, their humanity blossoms like a cactus after a summer rain. *They actually become more fully human.* I have seen it a thousand times. It is one of the joys of working at Hesed House.
- 2. Our humanity is at stake.** When we mistreat the unloved (even when they are acting unlovable) a piece of our soul breaks off, never to be recovered. But, when we share a kind word with someone who has no power, that divine spark inside us—the one that defines and gives life to our humanity—grows warmer and brighter. *We actually become more fully human.*
- 3. Our world is at stake.** I don’t know how else to put this: *Everything simply works better when every person—the powerless and the powerful—is more fully human.* The world is safer and calmer and more beautiful when everyone feels valued. That isn’t some sappy, idealistic, sentimental “Kumbaya” notion. It is a hard fact that is best understood when the world is dangerous, chaotic and ugly.

Those of us with money and power think we are immune from the suffering of others, but we are not. There is no wall tall enough to separate us from “the other.” By divine mandate or cosmological accident the world simply doesn’t work that way.

Obviously, how society-at-large—and our representatives in Government—treat the most vulnerable matters, but that isn’t the only thing I am talking about.

I’m also talking about how you and I treat the most vulnerable as we go about our daily lives. Do you make eye contact with the panhandler on the street, affirming his humanity? Do you have patience with the immigrant in front of you in the checkout line as she struggles with her English? Do you share a kind word—or a snide remark—with the grumpy old man in the ill-fitting clothes? In such moments you have an opportunity to increase the amount of humanity in the world—another’s and your own.

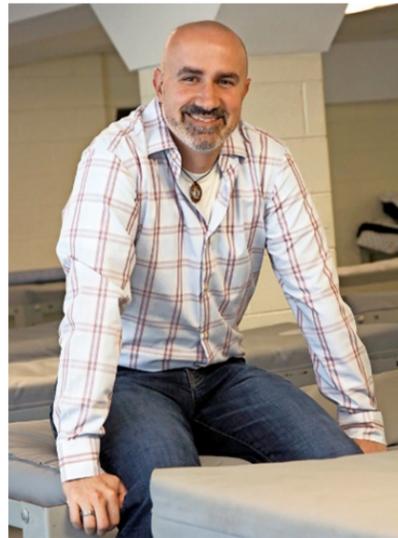
Difficult as it is to accept, the future of our collective humanity—and our world—is birthed in a million such tiny interactions that happen around our country and planet every day.

Thank you for your humanity.

Peace,

Ryan J. Dowd, Atty., MPA
Volunteer, Donor & Executive Director

“How we treat the most vulnerable matters.”



Nurse Millie Cares for Guests’ Bodies and Souls

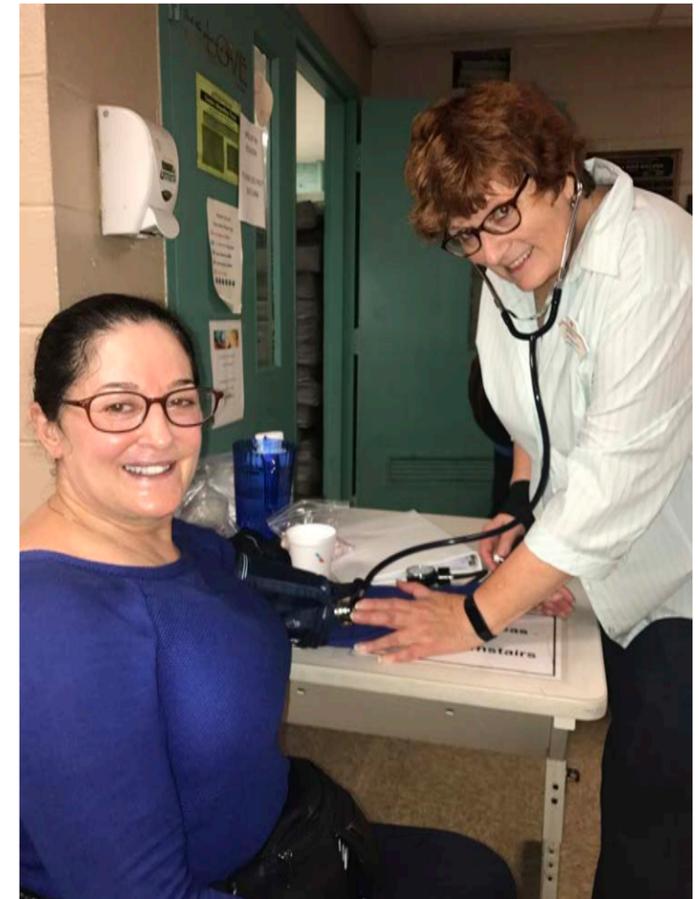
Retired nurse volunteers weekly in PADS shelter and plays Santa at Christmas.

For the last three years, Nurse Millie (as she is fondly referred to) has been providing critical care to the guests of Hesed House. Following her retirement as an ER nurse, Nurse Millie quickly found a way to put her skillset to use for our guests. Today, she provides vitamins, cough drops, answers to health questions and blood pressure readings to the guests in Hesed House’s PADS overnight emergency shelter on a weekly basis. The guests, always eager to have Nurse Millie visit their table at the start of dinner, greet her with cheer.

“Caring for others is not hard; I do what I can to make a difference in the lives of others.”

Since starting her weekly visits, Nurse Millie recalls one story of a young man who was staying at the shelter. “He was young, physically fit. You would have assumed in good health.” After providing the young man with a blood pressure reading, she quickly learned that he was at great risk for a stroke. Nurse Millie gave him immediate guidance and direction to care. Today, we are happy to report that the young man is truly healthy, with much lower readings, monitoring his health with a doctor.

Besides providing for their health, Nurse Millie has also provided nourishment for our guest’s spirits at Christmastime. Each Christmas, she has provided a handmade (by her) scarf, hat or mittens that she wraps for each of the guests. “Who doesn’t want a Christmas gift? Caring for others is not hard, I do what I can to make a difference in the lives of others.”



Nurse Millie providing a blood pressure reading for a PADS guest.

Larson Family: Goal Set, Goal Achieved

The Larson Family finds the perfect permanent housing.

When the Larson Family came to Hesed House they had only one goal: obtain permanent housing in Sandwich, Illinois. We are proud to share that they have done just that (and very quickly, too!). They are most excited to prepare their own

meals together in their new home and share, “Thanks to the donors and volunteers that make programs like TLC possible we have been able to save money, buy a car, obtain housing and keep this type of thing from ever happening to us again.”



Tammie, David, Scarlett and Stephen on the day they moved out of Hesed House.

Counting Miracles: Successes from January 2017 – August 2017



5th Annual TLC Halloween Bash in 2017

Two of our Transitional Living Community (TLC) kids ready to party, Halloween style!



Two of our Transitional Living Community (TLC) kids ready to party, Halloween style!

and friends provide costumes, games and treats for each child and have done so for the last 4 years (even though the family moved to Indiana last year, they still return just for this party!).

For the last 4 years, volunteer Heather Edwards has set up an elaborate and spooky Halloween Bash for our Hesed kids in TLC. Heather, her family

Upcoming Special Events

O'Malley's Holiday Fundraiser to Benefit Hesed House

Saturday, December 9, 2017

O'Malley's Pub & Eatery

Doors open at 11 am, Dinner is served at 6 pm

Join us for raffles, door prizes and 50/50 raffles all day long presented by Glasshopper Schor Glass!



To make a dinner reservation or for sponsorship information, please contact Carolyn Fairbanks at 630-897-2156 ext. 514 or cfairbanks@hesedhouse.org.

1st Annual Great Gatsby Gala Presented by American Guardian Group of Companies

Friday, November 17, 2017

Paramount Theatre

7 pm to 10 pm

This event will bring together the community for a night of camaraderie, entertainment, wine, and most importantly, the chance to support Hesed House.

For more information, please contact Helen Stone at 630-534-4175 or hstone@agswinc.com.



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THANK YOU! We are so thankful for the love and generosity of our donors, staff and volunteers. If you would like to learn more about how you can get involved, please contact Director of Development Michelle Kallevik at 630-897-2156 ext. 537 or donate@hesedhouse.org.

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