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Stacy Grube

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## Inside the Pandemic from Dayspring's

# Amazing Direct Care Staff



## SCHUYLKILL RESIDENCE

Shannon Andres, Senior Residential Advisor

At first, Schuylkill residents and staff were curious how the new routine of being at home would go. How would we, as staff, keep the residents active and focused on health and safety while finding new activities to enjoy at home? Once a plan was formed, and we settled into the new normal, the residents enjoyed being home with each other and the additional time with staff.

Throughout the months of stay at home orders,

residents enjoyed coloring, listening to music and audiobooks, playing guitar and video games. Everyone had a special activity they loved to do by themselves, as well as various activities enjoyed as a group, such as karaoke, watching the Cincinnati Zoo segments about the animals, making slime, games of cornhole and going for walks. Singing and dancing to favorite songs became my personal favorite activity, because...*continued on page 3*

# MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Greetings! Since the onset of the pandemic, the residents of Dayspring Homes have been happy, healthy, safe, and believe it or not, busier than ever! While their usual routines came to a screeching halt in March, they have continued to enjoy a wide range of activities such as dancing, singing, reading, baking, cooking, arts and crafts, board/card/video games, trips to the park, and countless virtual activities including music therapy, occupational therapy, yoga, fitness classes, zoo trips and social gatherings, just to name a few.

Despite the plethora of challenges and unknowns we have faced as an organization in recent months, I marvel at all the extraordinary ways Dayspring has been blessed! As of the date this newsletter went to print, there hasn't been a single resident in any of our homes who tested positive for COVID-19. And while it is unfortunate that a few of our staff, all working in different homes, tested positive for COVID-19 over the course of a couple months, each one of them, thankfully, made a full recovery. Even individuals with whom a number of our staff had close physical contact with (outside of Dayspring) fully recovered from the virus! Our entire Dayspring community has, indeed, been blessed.

As I've said many times before, our direct care professionals are the heart of Dayspring! We could not do the important work we do without them. Throughout the pandemic, their compassion, care, dedication and commitment to our residents never wavered. They demonstrated extraordinary strength and resilience, even in the midst of their own uncertainties, fears and concerns, all while



continually adapting to ongoing changes in protocols and policies. The entire leadership team watched their relationships with residents, along with their trust and faith in one another, grow and change in tremendous ways. Residents and leadership also benefited greatly from their generation of incredibly creative and innovative ideas.

In the event of anyone testing positive for COVID-19, particularly in our group homes, it was the hope of leadership that we would find staff to volunteer (at a much higher rate of pay, of course) to live in with our residents in order to provide the highest level of protection for everyone. It was just before Easter the first time one of our staff tested positive and, to our surprise, two of the staff who worked in that particular home, Joye Weah, House Supervisor, and Jocelyn Joseph agreed to live in for the entire quarantine. This was incredibly brave and sacrificial on their parts considering it was Dayspring's first quarantine.

While we planned as much as possible ahead of time for a potential quarantine, there were still so many variables and unknowns depending on where and when it might have happened. The leadership

team provided daily support, including dropping off supplies whenever the need arose. Unfortunately, two additional quarantines followed at two more of our homes. The second one was covered by Cassie Rambo, House Supervisor, and Cathy Arroyo. The third one, which happened to fall over Mother's Day, was covered by Shannon Andres, a Senior Resident Advisor from one of our other homes, and Brian Savina from our Day Program. Thanks to these six amazing staff, we were able to get through all of our quarantines without any additional spread of the virus.

A huge thank you goes out to all of the individuals and organizations that provided funding and donated critical supplies and protective personal equipment (PPE) during this difficult time. Thank you also to our resident families who dropped off Easter baskets, cards, gifts and meals – including a delicious Easter feast. We live in a very caring and generous community! It was also nice to see so many of you participate in our Virtual Spirit Weeks and Direct Care Appreciation campaign. We hope you enjoyed participating as much as we did.

God bless each and every one of you!

**Stacy Grube**

*Always Hopeful. Forever Grateful. Dayspring Strong!*

*continued from cover...* everyone loved to get involved. Once the weather became nicer, we also enjoyed going to the park for lunch as a group.

This time not only brought residents closer to staff, it also strengthened staff relationships. While working through this unusual time, we had a choice to make the best or worst of the situation we were facing; we chose to make the best of it! As coworkers collaborating through a difficult situation, we grew to enjoy each other's company, which had a positive impact on the way the residents interacted as well. Everyone was more eager to try new things, participate in a wide range of activities and demonstrate a greater willingness to step out of their comfort zones.

Speaking for myself, I have enjoyed this time immensely and learned so much. The residents

have taught me to enjoy the little things in life and that you can still have fun when times are stressful. Even coloring, watching a movie or playing Wii are great memories to cherish. Their eagerness to participate in new activities has shown me that even though change can be scary, it can lead to so many positive outcomes. I learned to be more patient, more caring and more compassionate to others. This time has not been the most ideal situation, but I am extremely blessed by the relationships formed and the memories that have been made.



## HILLSIDE RESIDENCE

Joye Weah, House Supervisor

Personally, I live in the moment and take things one day at a time. This pandemic has been a nightmare, but the positive thing about it is that Dayspring Homes management was quick to put into place preventive measures through the implementation of various protocols and guidelines as recommended by the CDC and the state. Dayspring also provided personal protective equipment (PPE) for all staff and participants early in the pandemic when these supplies were harder to come by. Bravo to the incredible leadership team.

Our Hillside residence was the first home to have a direct care staff test positive for COVID-19. This meant we were the first home to be quarantined. Management asked if any staff were willing to live with the participants through the duration of the quarantine. One of my residential advisors and I



agreed to do this. Imagine how it felt to be self isolating in a home we usually only work in, wearing a mask 24/7 and having sleepless nights. We could not have done this without the support of our able and concerning leadership team. May God continue to see us through this difficult period of our lives.

## CROSSWALK DAY PROGRAM

Ariel Sanz, Crosswalk Program Manager

On March 17th, the closure of our Crosswalk day program was mandated by Governor Wolf. At that point, we chose to disperse our day program staff amongst our residential homes. We wanted to make it a priority to keep our individuals engaged, stimulated and positive, while also helping them maintain some level of socialization during these unknown times. This was in addition to providing some much needed support to our residential teams as well.

Our day program team members were tasked to use their resourcefulness and creativity to find activities that each and every one of our residents would enjoy and look forward to every day, while also helping them to adjust to their new stay at home routines. Our individuals participated in numerous virtual activities such as music therapy,

yoga, virtual field trips to zoos and aquariums, and virtual Occupational Therapy with students from Alvernia University. We also created a daily chat for all of our Crosswalk families through Google Hangouts so they were all able to stay in touch and celebrate birthdays together. Staff did a wonderful job creating fun activities such as spirit week, where all individuals joined in on themed days such as "Crazy Hair Day", "Crazy Socks Day", "Red, White & Blue Day" and more. They also shared photos and videos.

Our individuals and staff have really enjoyed all of these activities - and more! Even so, we look forward to the day when our Crosswalk family can all be together again.

# Thank You

to the following organizations and individuals for your support during this critical time. Your contribution is invaluable.



### GRANT FUNDERS

The Friends of Reading Hospital  
United Way of Berks County

### PPE DONATIONS

Berks Fire Water Restorations  
Betti Bjorken  
Brentwood Industries  
Capasso Couture  
Esterbrook Pharmacy  
GoggleWorks Center for the Arts  
Hawk Painters  
Kevin DeAcosta  
The Duncan Family  
The Young Family  
United Way of Berks County  
Val Pellicciotti

# HAZEL RESIDENCE

Sherry Chamberlain, House Supervisor

The intrusion of COVID-19 and the stay at home order brought about a big change for people all over the world and specifically to the residents and staff of Dayspring Homes. The residents adjusted reluctantly but welcomed the creativity of staff as they supported them in this new lifestyle.

When I think about the last few months, I think about Lynda, one of our staff members, tuning in the radio to a variety of music, and hearing one of our residents belt out tunes, new and old. Another staff member took on the challenge of trying to find a song that this particular resident wasn't familiar with - a challenge that still has yet to be met. I think about Terri, a day program staff, who brought out the very "talkative" side of another one of our residents, which greatly surprised us all.

This particular resident spent a lot of time laughing as staff helped him to dance and enjoy the music outside on the deck. He and another resident also enjoyed throwing "snowballs" at stacked red solo cups, enjoying a little friendly competition. I also think about one of our residents putting puzzles together on a daily basis and another resident engaged in his favorite shows ("Leave it to Beaver", "The Price is Right", "The Three Stooges", and "The Rifleman"), playing cards and Connect Four, all while keeping us laughing with his jokes and family stories. This gentleman takes such pleasure in making people smile.

A favorite daily activity was tuning into the Music Made Mobile live session provided by Music Therapy Associates. This daily session helped the

residents acclimate to the day, month, season and weather in a fun, musical way. Staff spruced up the deck with flowers, wind chimes, lights, along with bird feeders adjacent to the deck. As the weather became more pleasant, the residents spent a lot of time in this outdoor space. One resident, in particular, loved to hear the birds sing, which made another of our residents smile. Many bean bags were tossed. And everyone spent time listening to many books, with a special love for "Pete the Cat".

An especially fun day was a resident's birthday in June. This particular resident talks about her birthday almost every day of the year, so we knew we had to celebrate despite masks and social distancing. She had a "Pete the Cat" cake and

cake pops to share with anticipated visitors. As she and her housemates stayed in the kitchen, their friends and staff from other Dayspring homes greeted them from the back deck, one home at a time. She was not disappointed to hear "Happy Birthday" sung by every group of visitors! In fact, she thoroughly enjoyed singing to herself and laughing with her friends.

While this time has been challenging, we know now that we can adjust to challenging times as needed, be creative in our support of the residents, and stay safe doing it. Thank you and bless you to all of the residents, staff, and management of Dayspring Homes.



## CROSSWALK & HILLSIDE RESIDENCE

I distinctly remember our first team meeting about coronavirus. We were all urged to strictly take care of ourselves and the participants through various protocols and procedures. Indeed we all responded positively as a team to these instructions.

Immediately after each occasion when it was discovered that a staff member had tested positive for COVID-19 in three separate homes, I could see a chain reaction between staff, the house supervisor and management in trying to combat it. This teamwork and zeal to follow all protocols, with the help of God, made us positively achieve in fighting the spread of this virus to anyone else. Indeed it is true that "united we stand, divided we fall".

- Idah Muntanga, Direct Care

## DAYSPRING HOMES GIVES BACK!

Mohamed Kanu, Program Manager

On a hot and sunny June day while I was going to the Dollar Store, I saw a father and daughter struggling to fix their beat up wheelchair in the parking lot. The Dad was laying down on the ground lubricating the wheels in an attempt to get the wheels to spin. I approached the daughter and told her that I was a Program Manager at Dayspring Homes and would like to assist them. We exchanged information before I left. That evening I told our CEO, Stacy Grube, about what I experienced and asked her if there was any way we could help them. Stacy did not hesitate and told me to check in with all of our homes to see if any had a wheelchair in



storage that didn't belong to one of our current residents so that we could donate it to the family. Fortunately, I found a gently used wheelchair in storage at one of our homes. The next day, I called the daughter and made an appointment with her to meet me at the same parking lot that we previously met. I then met her and gave her the wheelchair. She was extremely grateful and thankful to Dayspring Homes.

# DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Ashley Chambers  
United Way of Berks County



## What is your position at United Way of Berks County and how long have you worked with the organization?

My role at United Way of Berks County is the Senior Vice President of Community Impact. I am responsible for stewarding the investment of UWBC's financial resources to create solutions for Berks County's many health and human service challenges. I have been in my current role since March 2020 but have over ten years of non-profit experience.

## Can you share how United Way has supported Berks during COVID-19?

With the approval of our board, UWBC launched the Berks County COVID-19 Response Fund in late March. As the impacts of the pandemic started to heighten, it was clear to us that agencies in the community would be hit hard, with increased demand and costs, but reduced revenue due to events and other fundraising cancellations. We focused on getting funds to agencies providing

critical safety net services. The fund has since raised over 1 million dollars through the support of our community and we have distributed over \$650,000 so far. We also helped to convene a homeless prevention task force focused on bringing together providers and identifying solutions to avoid high rates of eviction once the moratorium was lifted in the state. In addition, UWBC also coordinated and distributed various PPE, cleaning, and personal care supplies to agencies in the community.

## Dayspring Homes was so appreciative of receiving a grant for PPE. Why did you choose Dayspring to receive a grant? I imagine there were many applicants.

There were many requests submitted and to keep up with demand our group of experienced volunteers continues to meet weekly to review applications. When Dayspring applied, the focus was about getting financial support to agencies providing much needed services, but having to

develop strategies to keep both their staff and clients healthy and safe. Our volunteers saw that in your application. Your application highlighted the difficulty in obtaining such supplies given the demand in hospital settings back in March and April. Supporting your application meant you would be able to operate your residential homes while maintaining safety for your residents and staff.

## How would you suggest others in the community help during the pandemic?

I believe effects of the pandemic will be felt in our community for much longer than we would like. Our most vulnerable populations will continue to be impacted. Those who are able should consider a financial gift either to the United Way or another organization that is supporting efforts to help our community recover. You can volunteer for one of these organizations if you feel comfortable or ask if there is something you can do virtually to help. United Way of Berks County can connect you with opportunities of interest.

## What have you learned during this experience?

The past several months have simply been unbelievable. Never in my life have I experienced something like this. Fortunately, I am not alone in this; we are all in this. All of us are learning to do without, whether that be seeing and hugging

extended family or adapting to the daily usage of virtual platforms. I believe what made these days bearable was knowing that I was not the only one who had to figure out how to navigate this new environment and that help was available if I needed it.

## Do you have a positive story you could share during these trying times?

Berks County continues to be a generous and compassionate community. Despite being in the middle of a health crisis, our office was receiving calls daily from individuals looking to volunteer and asking how they could help. We also had companies offering help from lending staff to volunteer or donating personal care items for us to distribute to agencies in need. I am so appreciative of the community response to the pandemic. Instead of retreating, it has seemed we all found ways to do our part.



# THIRD ANNUAL A STAKE IN THE FUTURE CANCELED

Thank you for supporting our Third Annual A Stake in the Future event. Unfortunately, we were not able to have the event this past spring due to COVID-19. We were hoping that we could reschedule this event for October 1st, but have decided to cancel due to the pandemic. We look forward to being together in person, once again, for our Fourth Annual A Stake in the Future in 2021.



## DAYSPRING HOMES NEEDS YOUR HELP

Please contact 610-376-5648 ext 228 or email [vswain@dayspringhomes.org](mailto:vswain@dayspringhomes.org) with any questions. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

### THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS FOR TAKING A STAKE IN OUR FUTURE

#### VIP Sponsors

Jerry and Carolyn Holleran  
Joe Jurgewicz and Son, LTD

#### Host Sponsor

Power Kunkle Benefits Consulting

#### Venue Sponsor

Willoughby's On Park

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Esterbrook Pharmacy  
Masano Bradley LLP

#### Bronze Sponsors

Penske Transportation Solutions  
The Cairnie Family  
Visions Federal Credit Union



**Your generosity will help us to continue to provide for our residents.**

- I would like to make a donation in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_ toward the purchase of a grill.
- \$150 donation (This donation would provide one grill per residence)

**If you are unable to help with the purchase of a grill, we also have regular ongoing needs for the following:**

- Disinfectant Cleaners
- Hand Sanitizer
- N95 Masks
- Medical Grade Gloves (Boxes of M, L or XL)
- Personal Care Items (i.e. toothpaste, shampoo, body wash, etc.)
- Gift Cards (i.e. Redners, Giant, Walmart, Target, Lowe's, Boscov's, etc.)
- I would like to make a donation in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_ toward any of the above

## WE MOVED!!

Dayspring's Administration office has a new location. We are now located at 250 S. 12th St, Reading, PA 19602. Our phone number remains the same 610-376-5648. See below for our new extensions.



Dayspring Homes provides compassionate care for the individuals we serve. On a daily basis, our residents & homes have the same needs as many of your own.

We are looking to purchase 6 new grills for our homes. Outdoor picnics are a wonderful activity for our families and residents to do while social distancing and enjoying the beautiful weather.

**Stacy Grube** CEO ext 231

**Brenda Rivera** Director of Operations ext 227

**Tamara Harner** Director of Human Resources ext 225

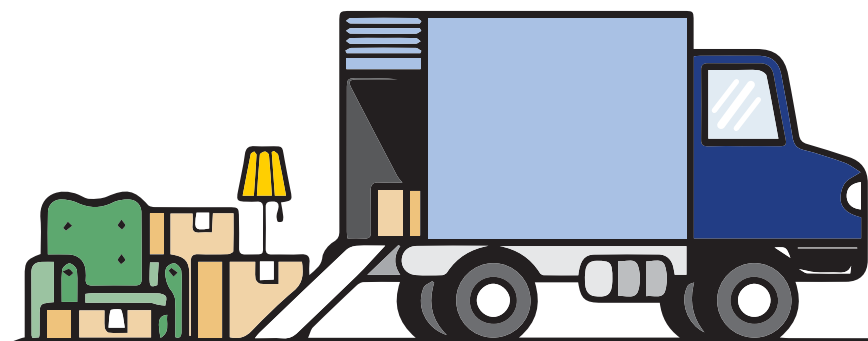
**Vicki Swain** Director of Development ext 228

**Debbi Dougherty** Compliance Manager ext 229

**Peter Adeyemi** Finance Manager ext 230

**Abby Briscoe** Office Manager ext 221

**Lorry Pender** Administrative Assistant ext 222



**For donations please detach this portion and mail to:** Dayspring Homes, Inc., P.O. Box 158, Reading, PA 19607

Please make checks payable to Dayspring Homes and enclose this form with your donation.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Donation Amount or Gift Being Donated: \_\_\_\_\_

### Thank you for your continued support!

The official registration and financial information of Dayspring Homes, Inc. may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, (800) 732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

## **DAYSPRING HOMES, INC.**

P.O. Box 158  
Reading, PA 19607

### **Change Service Requested**

A photograph of a woman with glasses and a child sitting on a couch. The woman is smiling broadly and holding a large, colorful lollipop. The child is sitting next to her, looking down at something in their hands. The background is a simple room with a blue wall and a white baseboard.

## **SMILE WITH US!**

Did you know that when you shop on Amazon.com, you can have .5% of the value of your purchase donated to Dayspring Homes, Inc. AT NO COST TO YOU? It's super easy! All you need to do is visit <https://smile.amazon.com/> and choose Dayspring Homes as your charity option. Then bookmark the link and be sure to place all your amazon orders through this site. It's that simple!

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