

The State of the Heart

Spiritus Christi Prison Outreach ✦ Fall/Winter 2015

What's Inside

Executive Director's Update.....2-3
 Reflections from Volunteers.....3-4
 Jennifer House News.....5
 Nielsen House News.....6-7
 Interns Move Forward
 By Giving Back.....8-9
 House Directors Honored.....7

Gratitude for Grants.....4
 Strategic Plan Summary.....9
 SCPO Board of Advisors.....10

Please Save the Date!

April 23, 2016
SCPO Spring Gala



Mark your calendar to join us for a fabulous evening of food, fun, and fellowship that supports our ministry. Check our website in upcoming weeks for event details and sponsorship opportunities.
www.spirituschristiprisonoutreach.org



Nielsen House has a new furry friend! See pages 6 and 7 for news from our houses.

From 'Too Many Rules' to Lasting Friendships and a New Life

Kizzie Frank, Jennifer House Alumna, Tells Her Story

By Eleanor Coleman

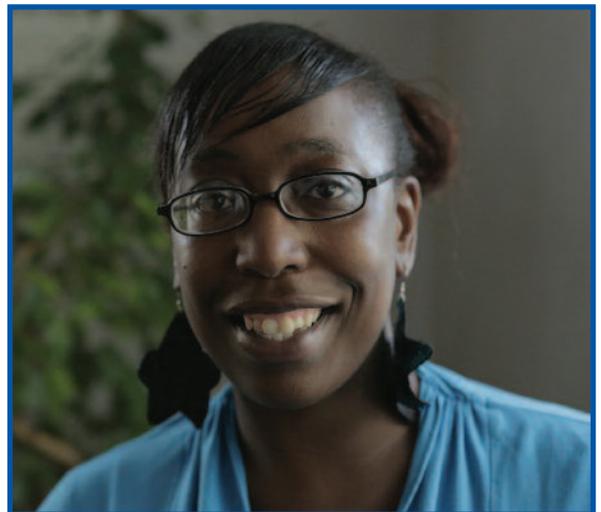
Kizzie Frank is a Spiritus Christi Prison Outreach success story—a woman who took responsibility for her actions, became determined to change for the better and accepted help to get there.

Kizzie came to Jennifer House from prison in September of 2014, after three convictions for driving while intoxicated. The last infraction occurred when Kizzie's children—Dennis, who is 8, and seven-year-old Deneja—were in the car with her.

Kizzie's first impression of Jennifer House was not a good one. "Too many rules!" she exclaims. She had just come from an environment with intense structure and was not pleased that it appeared she was going to get more of the same. Kizzie found it especially irritating to be told that, in the first 30 days, she would not be able to leave the house on her own or go to Albion to see her children.

Slowly, however, "The place grew on me, and I started making friends" Kizzie says. "Even when I broke some of the rules, I didn't get kicked out. There would be consequences, but I didn't get kicked out. That meant a lot to me."

Through daily morning meditations, Kizzie learned spiritual principles—things like gratefulness, powerlessness, acceptance, love, surrender, perseverance, and determination. And, she says, friendships grew stronger.



Less than a year after coming to Jennifer House, Kizzie Frank has regained custody of her children, is living independently and has a job. Kizzie, who is two years sober, has a lot to be proud of.

"I remember when they let my kids stay overnight for Christmas and we all went to Mass the next day," she says. "When I was getting ready to leave in January of 2015, the staff helped me work on a plan and set goals. I did everything I said I would in my plan—now I need a vacation!"

There are many things about which Kizzie is proud. They include graduating Restart's chemical dependency outpatient program in May, where she was told she "succeeded in achieving all her goals." She completed her six-month DWI class while in prison. When asked about her greatest successes, Kizzie names two: Getting back full custody of her children and staying sober, for two years now.

Another reason to be proud is that Kizzie has been working since June, most recently as a cashier in a retail store. Staying connected to Jennifer House is important to her, and weekly State of the Heart meetings are one way to do that. Staff is still available to talk about services and resources that former residents often need after heading out on their own.

"It's been harder now that I have a job but I stay in touch by phone and stop in when I can," she says. "I have friends that still visit with me today."

Kizzie notes that Jennifer House was extremely helpful with furnishing her home when she moved, including needed appliances, clothes for the children and other household needs. "The overnight staff person gave me curtains that were still in the bag!"

Her greatest challenge is staying vigilant about sobriety, always being on guard for relapse, which would bring her back to incarceration. "I love my kids to pieces," she says, "They've been through a lot with my

"Even when I broke some of the rules, I didn't get kicked out. There would be consequences, but I didn't get kicked out. That meant a lot to me."

Kizzie Frank
Jennifer House Alumna

drinking. They like me sober, and I want to make a better life for them."

Kizzie Frank is doing just that, thanks to her own determination and the help readers of this newsletter provide by supporting Spiritus Christi Prison Outreach.



Three Jennifer House women wore spooktacular costumes at last month's Halloween party for residents, staff and children. The men of Nielsen House worked to have the best haunted-looking yard in the City for Halloween. For more news on both our houses, see pages 5-7.



Executive Director's Update

By Jim Smith

Creating Room at the Inn, and Within

As the holidays approach, I am mindful of the wonderful gift that Spiritus Christi and the Community of Rochester are able to offer the men and women of our Prison Outreach. Together we provide a safe home, warm bed, wonderful meals, love, support, and hope to homeless ex-offenders. Last year we offered our homes to 99 men and women. We are grateful to all of our supporters who join with one voice and say, "Yes, we have room for you. Come in. Our home is your home; together we will break bread and heal."

It is essential that we not only offer a bed—a room at the inn—but also an open, loving, non-judgmental heart within ourselves. The healing presence at the Prison Outreach is not something that just happens. It is intentional. In the early days of the Prison Outreach we spent far too much time trying to fix men and women who were broken. As our ministry matures, we are learning how to be a healing presence to the men and women.

The healing presence at the Prison Outreach is not something that just happens. It is intentional.

A passage by the Persian mystic poet Hafiz reads, “Troubled? Then stay with me, for I’m not.” Many of the men and women who come to Nielsen House and Jennifer House are troubled by terrible burdens: addiction, mental health issues, poverty and homelessness. Author and life coach Martha Beck describes well the role our staff plays in helping to ease their burdens.

“If I come to you with a broken heart and you feel sad for me, your job is not to stop my pain, but to return to happiness yourself.”

“Instead of trying to feel better by fixing me, just feel better. This will give me the environment I need to solve my own problems. Everyone in distress just wants to walk beside still waters.”

The staff at the Prison Outreach is working hard to be still waters for the men, women and children they serve. Over the last year the staff of Jennifer House spent a great deal of time articulating guiding principles, some of which are printed here. These principles are essential for the staff to embody as we commit to offering a healing presence in the lives of the women served.

The staff and volunteers are working to hold each other accountable to these high standards, some of which come from Spiritus Christi church staff and are based on Gospel teachings. It is this quality that the staff is practicing that creates a healing, loving home for the men and women that we serve.

Thank you for creating “room at the inn” by joining with us to support Jennifer House and Nielsen House. Please contemplate ways in which **you** can create room within, to lighten your own heart and the hearts of those around you.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE JENNIFER HOUSE PROGRAM

- We uphold the dignity of each person and honor her experience and story.
- We are responsible for each person’s safety – physical, emotional and mental. We fulfill this responsibility by using our influence wisely and justly. We can present with love and friendliness, but we are not friends of the people we serve.
- We honor the sanctity and equality of each person, regardless of the differences of birth and learned experiences.
- We create an open, honest and trusting environment.
- We practice humility and integrity within the workplace, leading by example in a positive and professional manner. Staff and volunteers are responsible for high ethical conduct at all times and places.
- We value honest communication, feedback, and interaction.
- We will continue to develop and maintain collaborative relationships with the community to enhance the quality of services offered to the women in this critical transition.
- We will be good stewards of the resources entrusted to us and ensure record keeping and reporting are accurate, professional, and shared freely with appropriate parties.

Why Do We Visit Men and Women in Prison?

Editor’s note: Along with providing safe housing and support for men and women after they are incarcerated, Spiritus Christi Prison Outreach facilitates weekly visitation groups for about 400 men and women each year in the Monroe County jails and New York State prison system. In our last issue, we asked Executive Director Jim Smith and four volunteers—Dominick Annese, Tom DaRin, Gerry Lynch, and Margot MacAulay—to share their thoughts about the visitation groups. This month we’ll hear from Al Monahan, Gwen Nelson, and Dave Nichols.



Making a Journey of Change Together

By Al Monahan

Volunteer for 13 years
Orleans Correctional Facility

I am 75 years old, the father of 6 children and 11 grandchildren. Over the years, little by little, inch by inch, through my many life experiences, it has dawned on me—I’m a late bloomer—that the key to happiness is giving, sharing, supporting and serving others. Serving the men in prison makes me very happy. That is the paramount reason that I go.

The men deeply appreciate our visits and look forward to them. We work on change. Most of the men are working on change in their lives and making good progress. This motivates us, gives us hope and encouragement and keeps us coming back. It also encourages me to continue to work on change in my own life. We and the men

have a partnership to work on this journey of change together.

I love the men's life stories and often wish I could have a tape recorder in prison. Many times their stories are deep and profound—ranging from heartache, abandonment, regret and deep sorrow to love of their families and significant positive life experiences. These stories encourage me to move onward and upward.

I LOVE the men in prison. I clearly see God through the men we visit each week. Jesus said he is most visible and present in the poor, people in prison, those who are sick, and others in need of special love and care. This is so profound and so true. To paraphrase Dostoevsky, "To see the living God face to face, one must not seek him in the emptiness of one's mind, but in human love."



A Way to Help Correct Unfairness

By Gwen Nelson

Volunteer for 16 years

Groveland and Orleans Correctional Facilities

Prison groups for the past sixteen years have been and continue to be a meaningful engagement for me. To participate is to be directly affected along with those the group is formed to serve. We grow from listening to one another, developing awareness of the role attitude and choice play in our lives. We have an opportunity to recognize similarities and differences, to benefit from the coming together of different cultural, ethnic, educational, domestic, and personal backgrounds.

Coming to know one another well through weekly meeting reveals the larger areas we have in common, and the role of active support that comes from sharing mutual concerns. I am especially drawn to the reality of change that clearly takes place

through these interactions in a step-by-step, caring process. Most people believe in a second chance; often our group members never had a first chance. The prison group goes some way to correct that unfairness.



An Unexpected Benefit of Self-Improvement

By Dave Nichols

Volunteer for 9 years

Orleans Correctional Facility

I first approached Jim Smith to volunteer at the prison because I was strongly compelled to do so. While I have a strong desire to give back to society, there was no logical reason for me to pick the prison ministry. I have no background in social services and no experience with prison, 12-step programs, or behavior therapy. But the urge was almost overwhelming, so I acted on it.

The initial reason to visit the men in prison was to give back to society. But that reason is only valid if I truly see a benefit to society from the prison ministry work. And I have. Our visits help men to change their behaviors and their thought processes. We don't change the men we serve, but we help them change themselves. This process usually takes years, but as they change, their relationships improve, their self-identity is clarified, and they become capable—even driven—to live in society without repeating the crimes that put them in prison. As the men improve themselves, those around them also benefit. Relationships heal, victims are no longer created, and the cycle of violence can be halted, all of which truly benefits society.

As I started working with the men at Orleans, it became clear that some of my thought processes could be improved, and that the behavior therapy skills used in the group could benefit me personally.

It seemed reasonable that I should improve my thought processes if I'm asking the men in prison to change theirs. As I applied the skills and principles used in the group to my own life, I experienced improved relationships, a better perspective and approach to my work life, and more positive mental well-being overall. Changing myself helped me better understand how difficult it is to change, and the level of persistence it takes to implement improvement in one's life. This understanding cycled back to help me improve my volunteer work at prison. So the second reason for continuing to meet weekly with the men at Orleans is to continue to gain insight into myself and make improvements in my thinking and life. This second reason was completely unexpected, but a true blessing from my volunteer work with Spiritus Christi Prison Outreach.

Gratitude for Grants:

The Prison Outreach is grateful for the following gifts received or awarded since publication of the Spring 2015 newsletter.

Public

City Of Rochester

Monroe County Department of Human and Emergency Food and Shelter Program

New York State Office of Temporary Disability

U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development

Private

Alstom Signaling Foundation

Daisy Marquis Jones Foundation

Fidelity Charitable

First Unitarian Church-Gilbert Spirit Fund

Greater Rochester Health Foundation

Guido & Ellen Palma Foundation

M&T Bank Foundation

Ronald McDonald House Charities

Sperandio Family Foundation

Rochester Area Community Foundation-Women's Giving Circle

Women's Club of Pittsford

Women's Foundation

Jennifer House News

By Dellena Harper, Director

Deep-seated renewal is what transpires at Jennifer House. So many times I have witnessed women arrive at our door broken, fragile, fearful, and hopeless. These women are fighting the biggest battle of their lives, the battle between their old self and a new self. The Jennifer House staff is committed to inviting these women to reclaim who God intended them to be. Together the programs and staff help the women to grow from the inside out. They help some women to recover their self-esteem, self-worth and confidence; others are acquiring these traits for the first time.

Elizabeth, who arrived for an interview at Jennifer House in the spring of 2015, is one woman who comes to mind. She reported being homeless, and I remember that she cried during our entire interview. I also remember feeling honored that she felt safe to let herself be so vulnerable with a stranger. My job was to be fully present to her while validating her emotions.

After the interview, Elizabeth was invited to our Tuesday evening State of the Heart meeting. She ended up joining us for dinner that evening, and participating in the meeting as best as she could. She showed up, and that is the key. She showed up again the following Tuesday and learned that we had a bed for her.

Liz kept to herself at first as she learned the ropes of the house. She had a very unique goal; for her mind, body and soul to align so that she could once again be whole. Liz said she felt as if she were only existing, instead of truly living as she had in the past.

Liz and I met once a week to see how she was doing. Each week that passed she felt more connected as a direct result of less stress, not having to find a place to stay each night, a friendly and safe environment, and words of wisdom at our morning reflections that gave her new ideas to walk away with. Liz returned to meditation, which had helped her in the

past. She was able not only to recognize but to accept her limitations; Liz also realized that the connection to her soul can improve when she remembers to be more appreciative.

Liz is a woman of insight and wisdom. Watching her blossom was truly an honor and a sight to see. During her stay here, our overnight staff person made the decision to move on. Liz was the first person we thought of to fill the role, because she already was like the “mother” of the house. We actually created that position for her. Liz is the new “House Mother” of Jennifer House, formerly known as the live-in overnight staff. She says that working here has given her a purpose.

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Corona (Wisdom Doll)

Liz recently brought a wisdom doll, also called a Corona, to the house. She explained to me what each symbol represented and I listened intently. The Corona has no facial features.



She does not need eyes, she just knows, as a seer with keen insight.

She has no nose to smell or breathe, as part of the universe who just “is.”

She has no mouth because she knows the taste of life and death and understands the connection between the two.

The Corona’s crescent moon is called the empathetic, and she uses this to guard her heart. She feels great empathy and knows when to let it go and when to keep it.

The staff the doll holds reminds her to evoke the warrior within; not in a physical way, but with her mind.

The pot at her feet is her place of healing; it upholds the connection of the mind, body and soul within.

As she was explaining this to me, I remember thinking: “I wonder if Liz realizes how much this wisdom doll... this Corona... represents her?” We are delighted and honored that Liz is sharing her wisdom and insight with the women of Jennifer House every day.

Nielsen House News

By Miss Wanda Johnson, Director

We have been busy, busy since the last time I talked to you. It was a long and very productive summer. We went on our Annual Darien Lake trip—I love seeing the men run around the park, and the excitement in their faces after riding “The Superman” or “Mind Eraser” roller coasters. They tried over and over again to get me to ride with them, but I replied with a firm **“No way.”** We spent the whole day and tailgated for lunch. Lots of fun was had by all.



Wanda with men at Nielsen House.

With the weather being so hot this summer, we also spent a lot of time at Durand Beach. The residents like Durand because we can build bonfires there. One of my guys wears an electronic monitor and was unable to swim, so he took advantage of the nature walk. He actually jogged; he is a fitness buff.

We hired an evening house manager, Deryl Brown, who interned at Nielsen House while attending Brockport College and graduated this past summer with a bachelor's degree in social work. Deryl has a passion for working with marginalized people and understands their struggles. We welcome him on board, and I hope that some of you will have an opportunity to meet him soon.

In March we attended the annual Spiritus Christi Prison Outreach gala. A parishioner named Yvonne had donated her deceased husband's clothing to Nielsen House. When we drove out to get the items, it became apparent that this was no ordinary pick-up. The moment we crossed the threshold of Yvonne's house, we traveled

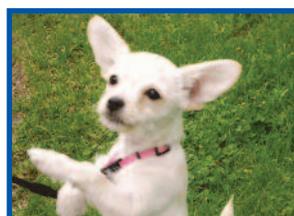


Yvonne with some of the well-dressed men of Nielsen House at our SCPO spring gala.

back in time. She took us on a tour of her house and her life. When we got to the clothing, it was prepared in a way to honor her husband, and everything was ready-to-wear. Yvonne's husband dressed every man in the Nielsen House—and if you think back to the gala, they were looking **good!!!!** We invited Yvonne to sit with us that night, and boy did she look amazing in a red dress and red pumps. She was just beautiful, and it must have been like a night out with her

husband for her. We are forever grateful to you Yvonne. Thanks for the memories.

On May 1st I celebrated 10 years as an employee of Spiritus Christi Prison Outreach. Somehow I ended up with a puppy! I had lost our beloved cat Quincy back in January. Because I work so much I did not think I had time for another animal, and as May began I was still in mourning for Quincy. But a chi-poo (chihuahua and poodle mix) showed up at the door of Nielsen House, car sick from the ride over and shivering.



Meet Ms. Genevieve Johnson!

I was having a feel-good moment on my anniversary day and accepted her into my heart.

The men fell in love with the puppy immediately, and she has been spoiled from the very beginning.

One of the men asked to name her, and after saying yes I inquired what he wanted to call her. He thought for a minute and said “Genevieve” with a big smile on his face. So

we welcomed Genevieve Johnson. I share her with the men of Nielsen House, and she has such a positive effect on them. One of my guys has ADHD and Genevieve helps to calm him, keeping him and his thoughts in one place. Since getting her I have been looking at different articles on pet therapy and how it works. When my son was in prison in Florida he was enrolled in a program called “Pals and Puppies” that gave inmates a dog to care for during their incarceration, and he really enjoyed it. So I see how animals help ex-offenders. No problems so far with pets and allergies.

In June we had a Family Day when the men invited their moms, dads, sisters and grandchildren to visit. A real highlight of that



German joined by many of his relatives at our Nielsen House Family Day in June.

day involved German, one of our residents who had been released from prison after 25 years. Fifteen members of his family came over, and they did not come empty handed. They brought dishes to pass—rice and beans, panin (pork), chicken, and a beautiful cake for desert. German's sisters and nieces helped to serve everyone. Some family members were seeing him for the first time, and many tears of joy were shed that day. I was crying too! German has since moved in with his brother, but he stops by often to let our staff know that he is doing well. We played a Nielsen House version of the "Taboo" game and everyone really got into it. I took photos of the men with their family members and gave them the pictures in 5x7 frames for their family memories.

Many of you know Betty Monahan—Miss Betty, as she is called by staff and residents—our volunteer recreational therapist. Back in April, an alumnus and a current resident of Nielsen House and I traveled with Miss Betty and her husband Al down to Saratoga Springs for a state-wide recreational therapy conference. We were a part of a panel discussion and had a ball. Al and Betty treated us to a wonderful dinner and told us about some of the great things that happen down in Saratoga. The conference went very well and Miss Betty made a great presentation about how recreational therapy helps ex-offenders with life skills and team-building. I was able to attend another workshop session about art therapy and the use of aromas. *(Editor's note: See our Spring 2015 newsletter for a cover story on recreational therapy and more details about the conference.)*

I am so glad to be a part of the happenings around the Nielsen House. It's like a front row seat to God's picture show. There is never a dull moment. One alum's family donated a ping pong table to the house that

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our men enjoy. The entire time he lived at the house his parents would drop off men's toiletries, laundry soap, body washes, razors, toilet paper, and paper towels. They did this weekly. It speaks to the heart of families and their appreciation of our ministry.

We also did some renovations. For years we had these unattractive bilco doors—the kind of exterior doors that open upward and lead to a cellar—on the east side of the house. The doors were rusty, and we were always doing some repairs to keep the rain out. The Spiritus Christi facilities committee came out and took a tour of the house. They came up with a list of needed repairs, and the very capable men of Nielsen House took on some of the small repair jobs. One of the ideas was to replace the bilco doors. We asked a contractor named Michael, who is also a Nielsen House alumnus, to give us an estimate. After looking, he suggested just filling the area in and making it a patio. I could immediately envision his idea—and as soon as we got the go-ahead from the facilities committee, Michael began the work. Within a week we had a brand new patio area. He also replaced the front porch railings. He did an amazing job.

Three Nielsen House alumni—Robert R, Justin W. and Gerald S.—graduated recently from Rochester Drug Treatment Court. Luther, our live-in staff member, attended the ceremony. This was a dual celebration, because it was also the 25th anniversary of Drug Treatment Court in Rochester. We are so proud of the hard work done by our residents. It's a good feeling for all of us.

We are gearing up for the holiday season now, starting with Halloween. Last year we had no "treaters," and this year I have some guys who are really into Halloween, so we put up some decorations to have the best haunted-house yard in the city. We had some old tombstones our residents made a few years ago in the basement. We also built a coffin out of cardboard boxes, made masks with Miss Betty, carved pumpkins and did other fun Halloween things, with safe treats for the children of our residents and trick-or-treaters.

Until next time, have a great holiday season and give God the glory. Please continue to pray for the men and staff of Nielsen House, and we will do the same for you.

Honors for Our House Directors



Since our last newsletter, the leaders of Jennifer House and Nielsen House were each honored at community events for their service to homeless ex-offenders. In April, Dellenna Harper – joined by Jim Smith and Judy Simser in this picture – spoke about Jennifer House at the Rochester Women's Network "W" awards ceremony, where she was one of five finalists.



In June, Wanda Johnson – pictured here with Jim and Kimberly Valentine – spoke about her work with the men of Nielsen House at the Pathways Houses of Rochester luncheon, where she received the Rev. Thomas B. Richards award.

Moving Forward By Giving Back

Two Women Helped by Jennifer House are Working There as College Interns

“The Blessing of Graduating Again”

By Sarah Lee, State University of New York College at Brockport

In 2008 I became a resident at Jennifer House. I was transported directly from Monroe Correctional Facility as part of a release condition known as “bed to bed.” I was a member of Rochester Drug Treatment court and also on probation.

My stay at Jennifer House was a blessing; however, it was not easy. It was very difficult in the beginning to adjust to a new way of life. Many times I did not follow the rules and made things harder for myself, but the Jennifer House staff believed in me when I didn't believe in myself. I was able to accumulate about three months of clean time and move forward in my journey. From there on I continued to grow as a person, and as a woman, and continue forward into my own housing.

I successfully graduated Drug Court and probation. I decided to go to college, and earned an associate's degree in substance abuse counseling from Monroe Community College. Even as I continued my transition to long-term housing, I always stayed



Sarah Lee

linked to Jennifer House. I remember someone telling me to “never forget where I came from.” It was easy to remember the streets, but I wanted to stay linked to Jennifer House and always remain a part of it.

I have continued to attend Tuesday evening dinners and State of the Heart meetings over the past seven years, and also sponsored a few of the women at the house. Since living there my life has completely changed. I now have over seven years of continuous sobriety, work for the State of New York, and also go to school for my bachelor's degree in social work. I'm currently interning at Jennifer House, and it has been the biggest blessing to be able to give back what was given to me—love, hope, and a chance to be the person I was always meant to be!

However, this internship came to me purely by the Grace of God. As a senior I must complete an internship in order to graduate. The college chooses internship placements among 700 competing students and placements. When I received the call from the SUNY Brockport placement agent, the conversation was incredible. My phone rang and she said, “Sarah, I'm calling

about your placement. Unfortunately, (the school) could only find one placement that's compatible with your work and school schedule.” I asked, “Where is that?” She replied, “Jennifer House—do you know what that is?”

I started to cry. I couldn't believe it. I explained that I had lived in Jennifer House, got sober in the house and without it I would not be where I am today. She shared the heartfelt moment with me, and we proceeded to arrange my

internship. I will be interning here until May, when I share the blessing of graduating again along with the rewards of both recovery and staying connected to Jennifer House.

“Safe Enough to Be Me”

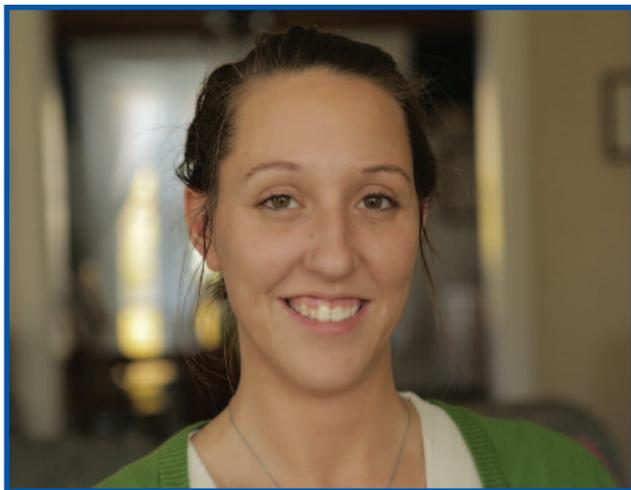
By Dustie Lynn Huff, Finger Lakes Community College

I first came to Rochester about three and a half years ago, to live in a recovery house that is just around the corner from Jennifer House. I had never been in Rochester, even though I lived just 20 minutes away for all of my life. I already had seven months clean, and some people from the Finger Lakes area gave me suggestions of women in Rochester to get in touch with for support in this foreign environment. Dellenna Harper's name was the first to come up. We met over coffee, and Dellenna told me to come to a meeting on Tuesday at 6:30 p.m., and she wrote down the address. I was nervous, because I had no idea what I was walking into.

“It has been the biggest blessing to be able to give back what was given to me...

However, this internship came to me purely by the Grace of God.”

Sarah Lee



Dustie Lynn Huff

I nervously rang the doorbell of Jennifer House, and the woman who answered the door—I think she was a resident—greeted me as if I belonged. She was excited that I was there, which instantly made me more comfortable and less guarded. I asked for Dellenna, and the women took me to the kitchen, where she yelled my name and hugged me. I really could feel the warmth and love in this environment. Jennifer House is a welcoming and comfortable place. Even on the worst of days, I can find comfort and serenity here.

Jennifer House has remained a safe place for me ever since. The State of the Heart meeting was something I looked forward to every week. At that time it was the only place I felt safe enough to be me, the real me, and really let my guard down. Kim

“Jennifer House is a welcoming and comfortable place. Even on the worst of days, I can find comfort and serenity here.”

Dustie Lynn Huff

Valentine is a huge part of my processes for learning to accept and love myself. I do not get nearly as much time with these women as I would like, but their voices and spirits are definitely present at exactly the right times.

I graduated from that recovery house around the corner, an accomplishment I am not 100% certain would have happened if I didn't get to the State of the Heart meetings at Jennifer House every week.

I have since grown into the confident young woman that the women at Jennifer House always knew I was. After that graduation, I was reunited with my children and participated in a Women's and Children's program. When I successfully completed that program I was accepted into an independent living program subsidized by the government.

Since this move, I have begun college and am working to graduate my associate's program at Finger Lakes Community College in May of 2016. I will then move into a bachelor's-degree program at Keuka College. I am currently an intern at the Jennifer House, and what an amazing experience it is to work on the other side of things. I have learned valuable practices that help me to achieve my goal objectives. Multiculturalism is one of the major goals, and I receive exposure here at Jennifer House. I am eager to learn about these residents and learn from the staff how to handle the diversity of the house.

Jennifer House is a huge part of my process. It supports the successes I have achieved and the ones I am on my way to achieving. I will be forever grateful to the Jennifer House and the staff here—and, of course, the residents past and present for all the love and acceptance they have given and continue to give me. This place builds a strong foundation in people's lives, thanks to the unique structure provided by the rules and staff of Jennifer House.

SPIRITUS CHRISTI PRISON OUTREACH STRATEGIC PLAN

OUR MISSION

To visit women and men who are incarcerated and journey with them as they enter the community

OUR VISION

The Spiritus Christi Prison Outreach is the lead agency serving the homeless ex-offender in the Monroe County area

OUR STRATEGY

1

Visitation to support men and women in jail or prison

2

Safe housing from highly supervised temporary homes to permanent housing

3

Case management to coordinate the treatment and services our residents need to live independently

4

Employment planning by providing access to the education, training and support they need to get good jobs

OUR GOALS FOR 2015-2019

Expand independent living options

Increase employment planning tools

Improve programming to teach life skills and support family reunification

Achieve financial sustainability for our mission

SCPO Board of Advisors

Velma B. Campbell	Retired Social Worker
Sharon Castronovo	Grants/Office Manager, Spiritus Christi Prison Outreach
Eleanor Coleman	ProsperRochester, Inc. & Office of Adult Career Education Services (OACES)
Jim Dillon	Professional Life and Career Coach
Dellenna Harper	Jennifer House Director, Alumna of Jennifer House
Jean Hawkes	VP, Planning, Development & Marketing, Lakeside Health System (Retired)
Stephen LaSalle [Emeritus]	Vice President – Finance, Nazareth College (Retired)
Nelson Leenhouts	Chairman & CEO, Home Leasing Corporation
James McCauley Jr.	Director of Operations, Camp Good Days and Special Times
Alan Monahan, Ph.D.	Senior VP, Xerox Corp (Retired)
Chip Partner	Chief Communications Officer, Rochester City School District
Edward Nowak, Esq.	Monroe County (NY) Public Defender (Retired)
Todd Schirmer	Vice President, Northwest Savings Bank
James Smith LMSW;CASAC	Executive Director, Spiritus Christi Prison Outreach
Kathleen Tranelli, Esq.	Vice President, Legal Division, Eastman Kodak Co. (Retired)
Newsletter Editorial Team	Chip Partner, Corinne St. Martin, Doug Buckley, Kathleen Tranelli, Jim Smith



Check out: www.facebook.com/SpiritusChristiPrisonOutreach where you can find links to recent media coverage and favorite reflections of residents and staff.



Want A Speaker?

We have dynamic speakers who are anxious to tell the community about the great work our Outreach is doing to help people with a criminal record transform their lives. All we need is a name and contact information for your club, church or community group; we'll handle the rest. Contact Jim Smith at 288-0504 for more information.