



FALL 2018

# COMMUNITY

People Serving People helps homeless and at-risk children and their families manage crisis situations and build a strong foundation for their long-term success.

## guest advisory council

On a recent Friday afternoon, emergency shelter guests, supportive housing residents, and staff gathered at People Serving People to discuss concerns and brainstorm ideas about safe infant bathing options, dress code policies, and opportunities for teens.

These are just some of the topics the Guest Advisory Council (GAC) addresses to make People Serving People a better place in which children and families in crisis can safely transition to stability.

The GAC was formed in March 2017 during our process to become a trauma responsive organization. The organizational self-assessment we conducted highlighted the need to offer more opportunities for guests to provide advice and feedback on matters impacting their experience here. **The GAC has helped us sustain and evaluate our ongoing efforts to be trauma responsive.**

In the early GAC meetings, the group created a participation agreement for staff and guests who join the council. The agreement outlines that anyone is eligible to attend and all feedback—whether positive or constructive—is welcome. Participants agree to respect each other's viewpoints, ideas, and feedback; maintain confidentiality; and volunteer at "Adopt-a-Block" clean-up days.

The GAC now meets every other Friday. Council members establish the biweekly agenda and are encouraged to bring new business and invite additional members to each meeting.

While the attendance at GAC meetings varies due to schedule conflicts and our highly mobile shelter population, each participant has expressed an appreciation for this new avenue to get involved.

"I wanted my voice to be heard....to share my thoughts and concerns," said Daniell, a shelter guest.

As supportive housing resident Ali'Cia put it, "I love that it's an actual community where I feel like I belong. Diversity actually stands for something. I do it because I'm being heard. I see major changes at People Serving People."

In the short time that the GAC has existed, they have helped drive changes throughout People Serving People.



*"I love that it's an actual community where I feel like I belong. Diversity actually stands for something. I do it because I'm being heard."*

"The GAC now sees policies and procedures when they are being considered and is asked for input. It's created a level playing field, one that's empowering and inclusive, and allows our guests to help drive and shape what we do," said Noah Gerding, People Serving People employee and GAC member.

The GAC has identified hidden needs among our shelter guests and supportive housing residents.

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## strategic plan update

In 2016, People Serving People began to implement a new three-year strategic plan and new mission: “People Serving People helps homeless and at-risk children and their families manage crisis situations and build a strong foundation for their long-term success.”

As the final year of the plan wraps up, we look back on the ways People Serving People has grown.

The strategic plan was guided by two questions: **What creates the greatest stability for children while they’re with us? What creates the greatest stability for children in the community?**

These questions led us to expand our work beyond and within the shelter walls.

Internally, we underwent an organization-wide initiative to incorporate trauma informed care into our policies and procedures. This staff-driven initiative has helped us better serve our guests. **Viewing our work through a trauma informed lens gives us a better understanding of how trauma shapes our guests’ experiences and behavior.** We have made changes to our policies, physical environment, volunteer onboarding, messaging and communications, and operations to reduce inadvertently re-traumatizing guests. Trauma responsive policies have also helped us better support our staff who experience vicarious trauma through their work. Staff are attending relevant trainings, creating self-care plans, and being encouraged to “step away” after a stressful experience. The Guest Advisory Council, formed out of our trauma informed care initiative, continues to help shape and guide our policies, service delivery, and operations. Being trauma informed is an ongoing process. A sustainment plan is in place to continue this work and build on our progress in the coming years.

Many of our shelter guests struggle with mental health and chemical health. We hired an Advocacy Services Coordinator in 2016 to focus on mental health and addiction

services. She leads Life Skills and Mental Health groups that cover topics such as anxiety, addiction, and anger management. These groups educate guests on the effects of trauma, mental health, and addiction on physical health; teach skills needed for healthy and positive family lives; and connect families to resources to provide longer-term assistance.

Externally, we expanded our work upstream of the shelter system with the opening in 2017 of the Center of Excellence Preschool and Learning Center. Our nature-based, licensed child care center has a Four Star Parent Aware rating and is designated a Strong Beginnings site by Hennepin County. It serves up to 52 children, ages 6 weeks–12 years old.

We have also grown our systems change work. In 2017, we established and hired a Director of Systems Change and Community Engagement to lead systems change initiatives throughout the organization. This expanded our scope to address some of the overarching policy challenges impacting our service population. We have worked to improve the field of trauma informed care and family resilience by hosting community gatherings and educational trainings. Additionally, our guests and staff have become more involved in advocacy and public policy discussions at the state and local level.

Throughout all of this work, we continue our robust community partnership program, collaborating with 46 partners to increase the services offered to our shelter guests and Center of Excellence families.

In the coming months, we’ll share with you how People Serving People is building on these successes and moving forward with our 2019–2021 strategic plan. Stay tuned!



## systems change: get out the vote

“How do I know if I’m registered or not?” “I’ve never done it before.” “I don’t think I’m eligible.” “Where do I go to vote?”

Have you ever heard someone say this? Or have you said it yourself?

Voting is an important civic duty, and People Serving People is working to answer these questions, clear up common misconceptions, and empower everyone to get out and vote in 2018.

**People with low income and those experiencing homelessness often face significant barriers to voting (access to the polls, proper identification to register to vote, frequent address changes, etc.).** As a result, turnout is often low for these populations and their voices are left underrepresented.

*“As a supporter of People Serving People, we also hope you will amplify the voice of our families and exercise your own right to vote this November, because your vote does matter.”*

This fall, People Serving People is building awareness and excitement for Election Day through a variety of nonpartisan voter education and voter registration events.

A cross-departmental team of staff are partnering with guests of People Serving People to educate staff and guests on the upcoming election, register as many people

as possible to vote, and mobilize our population for voting on Election Day.

In Minnesota, voters can register ahead of time or at their polling place on Election Day. Adults experiencing homelessness can vote using the place where they are currently sleeping as their current residence. A registered voter from that precinct or a staff person from a shelter can accompany them to the polling place to confirm residency. For many years, People Serving People’s staff have accompanied shelter guests who are interested in voting to our neighborhood polling place and verified their residency.

**“It’s inspiring to accompany someone to the polls who’s never voted before. They feel empowered.** People Serving People is building on the Get Out The Vote activities of previous years to register and mobilize more voters than ever this election,” said Jennifer Swick, Community Engagement Manager.

Our commitment to promoting voter education and voting extends beyond our organizational walls to the community at-large. We were proud to support candidate education opportunities like the MinneMinds Gubernatorial Questionnaire and the Homes For All Gubernatorial Candidate Forum on September 12th. These are great opportunities to learn the candidates’ positions on many facets of policy and their visions for Minnesota.

“One of the things I heard from guests at the National Night Out voter registration drive was ‘My vote doesn’t matter.’ It hurts me to hear that, especially when we know that elected officials pay attention to people that vote,” said Rinal Ray, Director of Systems Change and Community Engagement. “As a supporter of People Serving People, we also hope you will amplify the voice of our families and exercise your own right to vote this November, because your vote does matter.”



Join us for events that benefit children and their families supported by **People Serving People**. Chefs for Change dinners are sponsored by chefs and restaurants who donate their culinary skills and the food and wine or beer served at dinner. Our Annual Gala is sponsored by local business partners and generous donors. Event proceeds support programs and services for children and their families at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness.



This "chef's table" experience is an elegant dinner party for 40-50 guests, hosted by a top Twin Cities chef, including a four to five course meal with wine or beer pairings. **Are you a restaurant owner or chef who wants to help families find their way home? See Mallory's contact info below.**



Thank you to our recent hosts!

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## save the date: 2019 gatsby gala

Celebrate the Roaring Twenties at our 20th Annual Gala!

Join us at the Gatsby Gala for dinner, dancing, auctions, and more as we support People Serving People's work in our community.

**April 13, 2019**  
**Hilton Minneapolis**  
**1001 Marquette Avenue**

**\$180/ticket, \$1800/table of 10**

For information on making a donation to our silent auction or becoming an event sponsor, see Mallory's contact info below.



families  
volunteering  
together

Enjoy volunteering as a family experience with your children or grandchildren ages 5 and older.

We invite you to bring a donation of new or nearly-new board books for our youngest guests.



01.27.19

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2:45-4:45pm

614 3rd Street S.  
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55415

**\$5/person**

## house party

Host a House Party to benefit People Serving People: provide hors d'oeuvres and beverages to introduce People Serving People to a new audience and raise funds for a specific project.

Interested in learning more?  
See Mallory's contact info on p.4.

## back to school breakfast

*presented by Thrivent Mutual Funds*

On September 13th we hosted our first-ever Back to School Breakfast at the Center of Excellence. Guests were introduced to People Serving People and learned about our educational programming at both the emergency shelter and Center of Excellence. Thank you to our sponsors, table captains, matching donors, and attendees for making this event a success!



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Check out more event pictures online!

Facebook.com/  
PeopleServingPeopleMPLS

@PeopleServingPeople

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To register for or sponsor any of these events, contact Mallory Evans.



peopleservingpeople.org/events



612-277-0256



mevans@peopleservingpeople.org



## GIVING GUIDE

### \$2,500 Prepares children today for success tomorrow.

Our nationally accredited, 4-Star Parent Aware rated early learning environments use research-based and trauma-informed practices to prepare children for kindergarten and future academic success.

### \$5,000 Empowers families to gain stability.

The average stay of a family at People Serving People is 41 days. Families can access any of our comprehensive and onsite services from early childhood development, K-12 education and enrichment, and advocacy to employment, parent engagement, and mental health programs.

### \$1,000 Engages children, youth, and families.

Afterschool and weekend enrichment activities sustain and increase children's academic skills and provide the whole family with a safe and fun outlet for recreation and stress relief.

### \$750 Builds multi-generational capacity in our community.

Our theory of change revolves around early childhood education. Through partnerships and community engagement, we continue to move upstream of the shelter system while improving the field of trauma-informed education and service delivery.

### \$250 Equips parents to be their child's advocate.

Parent Engagement programs help increase families' awareness of their child's development and growth through parenting groups, individual meetings, and connections to community partners and resources.

### \$500 Supports parents in employment search.

Family and Employment Advocates focus on the strengths of families in shelter, working with guests individually and in groups to connect them with community partners and resources while offering onsite services to assist them with job searching, employment, health, wellness, and financial goals.

People Serving People is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, tax identification no. 41-1965067. Donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. Gifts may be used to support any program unless otherwise restricted by the donor.

## WAYS TO GIVE



### one-time gift

We welcome your generous support with a one-time gift.

Online via credit card at [PeopleservingPeople.org](https://PeopleservingPeople.org)

Donors can also donate the following types of gifts:

- Stock, mutual funds, or other appreciated investments
- Qualified Charitable Distributions from an IRA
- Donor Advised Funds

Checks or cash mailed to:  
People Serving People  
614 3rd Street South  
Minneapolis, MN 55415



### sustaining gift

Make a difference in the lives of children experiencing homelessness with a sustaining monthly or quarterly gift.

Online via credit card at [PeopleservingPeople.org](https://PeopleservingPeople.org)

Automatic gift from checking account.

Payroll deduction at participating employers, contact your employer.

United Way annual campaign, designate "PeopleservingPeople."



### planned giving

Your legacy. Their futures.

Your legacy gift helps build a community in which all children have the stability and support they need to develop their full capacity to thrive.

Gifts can be made via:

- stocks
- securities
- cash bequests
- retirement accounts
- life insurance
- charitable gift annuities
- and more



### employer gift match

Leverage your contribution or volunteer hours with a matching gift from your employer.

Search our online database of employer match gifts at [PeopleservingPeople.org](https://PeopleservingPeople.org) or ask your employer.

Contact Noah Gerding, Director of Development, at [ngerding@peopleservingpeople.org](mailto:ngerding@peopleservingpeople.org) or 612-277-0219 with questions regarding donations.

"guest advisory council" continued from cover

Dietary and allergy concerns raised by GAC members led us to update the electronic screens in the dining hall to include up-to-date menus and allergy information. We also worked with the GAC to expand the list of healthy food options guests can keep in their rooms. The laundry process has become more equitable, accessible with additional hours, and easier for staff to oversee thanks to feedback from the GAC.

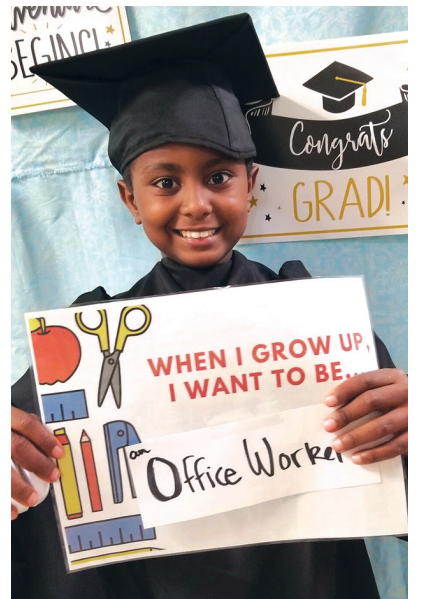
GAC members have also shared their stories and experiences in the community. The Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless led a "self-advocacy" training for GAC members. They used their voices to share their stories at Homeless Day on the Hill and other advocacy events.

GAC members have also sought out opportunities to get more involved in creating a sense of community within People Serving People. They have helped plan and lead Family Friday Fun night activities, including a graduation-themed event in June and back-to-school event in August. As the GAC members have described it, these events are "for us, by us." The GAC has also taken on the

responsibility of the flower planters in front of the building and other beautification efforts.

**Over the course of its tenure, the GAC has become a valued resource for People Serving People staff to learn from and alongside our guests and residents.** It's safe to say, the feeling is mutual.

As Ali'Cia said, "Seeing that those who are employed here care enough to have something like this for people staying here—how can we not be appreciative?"



## volunteer at the center of excellence

Rocking babies, reading stories, helping with snack time—these are some of the ways volunteers are helping at our newest volunteer opportunity. This fall we launched the volunteer program at the Center of Excellence Preschool and Learning Center.

"The teachers at the Center of Excellence are excited to begin welcoming volunteers and have extra hands and support in their busy classrooms," said Mallory Evans, Volunteer and Events Manager. **"This is a great opportunity for anyone looking to engage with kids and see an impact over the course of several months."**



The Center of Excellence Preschool and Learning Center has five classrooms, serving children ages six weeks-five years old. The after school program reaches children up to 12 years old. Volunteers provide additional assistance to classroom teachers, supporting children's education and healthy development.

Volunteers can easily sign up for an orientation and training session at the Center of Excellence's new website: [www.centerofexcellencepreschool.org/volunteer](https://www.centerofexcellencepreschool.org/volunteer).

Shifts are available from 9:00 am-1:00 pm in each of the five early education classrooms and 2:30-6:00 pm with the school age youth. These opportunities are open to individuals 18+ who pass a background check and agree to a three month commitment to a weekly volunteer shift.

The Center of Excellence is People Serving People's external initiative in the Phillips neighborhood of Minneapolis. It is located in the Lutheran Social Service Center for Changing Lives at 2400 Park Avenue South, with free parking available in the adjoining lot.

Volunteers are critical to our mission. In 2017, more than 6,500 volunteers provided over 32,000 hours of service to People Serving People. Join us as we grow, and make a difference in the lives of children in our community!

Questions about this new volunteer opportunity? Contact Tom Golembeck at [tgolembeck@peopleservingpeople.org](mailto:tgolembeck@peopleservingpeople.org) or 612.277.0216.



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