



Empowering Women to Choose Life Since 1978

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Desperate Need for Housing

During these cold winter months, we are especially concerned about the women and children who are without housing and a permanent place to stay. The limited availability of suitable housing for pregnant women in Chicago often leaves our clients in a bind, and our counselors with a heavy heart. It is always such a blessing when one of our housing referrals works out, especially as in Jaime's case.

This past July, Jaime found Aid for Women on the internet and called us in desperate need of housing, material items and prenatal care. She was about 6 months pregnant at the time and did not want to end up in a shelter with her 3 year-old daughter. We were immediately impressed with Jaime's maturity and determination to find an appropriate and safe place to stay. We referred her to the Missionaries of Charity Maternity Home hoping that there would be room for her and that she could find a way to comply with the curfew requirements. It was an answer to our prayers when Jaime called us a month later with the news that she was staying with the Sisters! She adjusted her work schedule, had her own room, and was extremely satisfied with the safe and caring environment.

Jaime was so thankful for Aid for Women's services that she referred another woman to us that she met at the home. In the months that followed, Jaime participated in our Client Bonus Program where she earned "bucks" to "purchase" much-needed items for her baby, due in November. This past October, Jaime found permanent housing out of state through HUD, (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development), and was able to bring her new baby into a real home.

While we wish that all of our clients had the determination and maturity exemplified by Jaime, it is often difficult to find a place for those young women who are unable to adjust to the requirements of the current housing programs in our city. In fact, at the recent Client Reunion, one of our clients told us that earlier that morning she was asked to leave the place where she had been staying, and she had no place to go after the party was over. During these cold months, we ask you to pray for all those men, women and children who are without a home, and to pray for the continued development of housing programs in our area.

Special Thanks

Many thanks to Fr. Jerry Boland of Holy Family Parish for allowing us to use his parish center for our Client Reunion Christmas Party.

We are also very grateful for Michael Georgopoulos, John Delisi and Rich Grippando who helped us out throughout the day setting up and serving lunch.

Thanks to Madge Garvey and Joni Benson, our reunion co-chairs, whose leadership and planning is so important to the success of our event!

Look inside for pictures!

Client Reunion Christmas Party

'Twas the first week of Advent, when all through the city
The Auxiliary was planning a party so pretty
For all of our clients and their good girls and boys,
Full of merry surprises and plenty of toys!

The party was set for a snowy white morn'
At Holy Family Parish that welcomed us warm.
We decked all the halls and cooked up some treats
And readied the music for some caroling beats.

Mary and Laima led us in song
And the children made ornaments and whistled along.
The tree was delightful and helped set the mood
For this festive occasion with gifts and yummy food!

As we laughed and made merry we sat down for the feast
Fit for Santa himself, and ate every last piece.
Speaking of jolly, are those bells that I hear?
They're getting louder and closer, that much is clear...

Who can it be? Why, Father Christmas Himself!
And who did he bring? She's our favorite elf!
Herb "Santa" Hrebic emerged with his toys
And Kate "The Elf" Berley helped spread the joy.

A present for each child and a hug and a pic
He's always a hit, our good ol' Saint Nick.
The children just love him and don't want him to go,
But his time has come, and he disappears thru the snow.

Many thanks to the Auxiliary who threw us this party
And to the volunteers and servers who helped out on Saturday.
Without your hard work, generosity and talent
Our client Christmas party would be disappointingly absent.

Such a perfect occasion to celebrate the life,
Of our clients' beautiful children that are such a delight.
Warmest thanks to all who made our event so so bright
Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night!



Giving has Never Been Easier!

To make giving a gift to Aid for Women hassle free, we have developed a new e-giving program allowing you to automatically make a donation on the same day every month. Choose to have your gift deducted monthly from your bank account, or charged to your credit card.

Included in our Christmas Card was a simple form to opt into the program. If you missed the insert, would like to

request another one, or would like more information, please contact our office. Once we have received the completed form, you will receive a letter confirming your participation in the E-Giving Program. Each month, your record of giving should appear on your bank or credit card statement. If at any time you wish to discontinue your participation in the program, simply contact our office!

Meet our Nurse Manager

Shelley Spielman, RN

How did you first come to know of Aid for Women?

I first learned about Aid for Women through a colleague of mine, Debbie Buck, who has volunteered at Aid for Women for many years. She had often told me bits and pieces about how much she loved the organization, and I was intrigued. Then one day, she told me there was an opening for a nurse, and if I was interested, I should come with her for a visit to the downtown center. I thought about it, and made a plan to go. I was looking forward to my visit after having heard so much about the program and the wonderful work.

I shadowed Debbie as ultrasounds were performed. I was really taken by the warmth, compassion and friendliness I saw that day, so I accepted the position. A few weeks later, I attended the Spring Luncheon and had a chance to meet some of the board and auxiliary members. I also had the opportunity to learn more about the program from Sharnina's presentation at the luncheon.

What attracted you to the Nurse Manager position?

I thought the organizational structure of AfW would allow me to perhaps function in a role that really matched what I want to do and what I value. As a nurse, I always felt that I was given the opportunity to work in an intimate capacity with people, and to make a difference in their lives at a critical time.

How have your past experiences in the medical profession prepared you for your position at Aid for Women?

My background is in maternal and child health. I worked with many pregnant women, pregnant teens and children as a public health nurse for the Evanston Health Department. In another position, I made home visits to women who were identified by the state of Illinois as being at risk for adverse pregnancy outcomes. I'm committed to helping women, children and families, and feel the work being done by AfW is so important. When a woman is experiencing a crisis, there's a real opportunity to make a lasting difference in her life by helping guide her through the decision making process. I saw the opportunity to really make a difference, and I wanted to be a part of that.

And you also know Dr. LaPata, our Medical Director, and Dr. Nelson, our advisor, from your past professional and personal experiences. Is that right?

Well, certainly I knew of Dr. LaPata for many years. Being from Evanston and working in Evanston, I came to know of him because he has a very good reputation. He is also a personal friend of my cousin, also a physician, who was Dr. LaPata's neighbor and close friend. When I discovered that Dr. LaPata is the Medical Director, I knew that AfW must be a quality organization or else Dr. LaPata wouldn't be associated with it.

Dr. Nelson is in the same practice as my Ob/Gyn. It's funny that I actually met Dr. Nelson briefly when I was pregnant 22 years ago. I was pleased when I heard he is involved with AfW. I felt secure, and again, confident that I made the right decision. I am pleased to work with both of them because I feel they're both wonderful doctors.



Memorial & Honor Gifts

A special gift is a meaningful way to remember a friend or a loved one at the time of his or her death – or in life by honoring that person’s accomplishments and character.

In Memory Of

Dr. Alexius J. Crowley

Mr. and Mrs. Charles A. Ault
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Bassett
Jean C. Brunk

Mr. and Mrs. John Bure
Mr. and Mrs. Robert H. Daily
Roy and Marta Evans
Richard and Vivian Fjeldheim
Adele N. Gutman

Thomas and Susan Hodgkinson
Dr. and Mrs. Martin Kass
George and Gloria Keats
Guy and Carole Keefer
Frank and Julie Kelly
John and Sue Lehsten
Angelo and Ursula Loukas
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Steven and Deborahanne Reimer
Harold and Kay Severns

Mr. and Mrs. Robert W. Shimer
Edward and Frances Stanwood
William and Joan Trukenbrod
Jeffrey and Karen Wadler



In Memory Of Lillian Grams

James and Susanne Bajt
Sherry Gini
Robert and Melanie Mauser

William J. Cook

George and Joan Weigel

In Honor Of Margaret Nona

John Nona

Roger Lewis

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Bonnan

Tom and Heather Bresler

Leroy and Catherine Ellgass



Defending Life and Family

Saturday, January 29, 2011

Doubletree Oak Brook

1909 Spring Road Oakbrook, Illinois

This year’s featured speaker will be Ken Blackwell of the Family Research Council. David Bereit of 40 Days for Life will receive the Henry Hyde Life Leadership award. Join Aid for Women at this important day of Pro-Life speakers and break out sessions! To register, visit www.SpeakOutIllinois.org

Junior Board

Keep your eyes peeled for info about our next Junior Board event!

Who? Young adults in the Chicago area

Where? Blue Star Wine Bar, 1209 N. Noble Street

When? An evening in late February or March

Mary Hallan FioRito, Executive Assistant to Francis Cardinal George, will speak to our group as we enjoy delicious wine and tasty appetizers. More details to follow through email and at facebook.com/afwjuniorboard

Save the Date!

Auxiliary Spring Luncheon Saturday, April 9, 2011

at the Glen View Club in Golf, Illinois

As we begin the beautiful season of Spring, we hope you will join our Auxiliary for a garden-themed Luncheon with special guest Jennifer Brennan from Chalet Nursery in Wilmette.

Jennifer is ABC-TV Channel 7’s horticulture correspondent, appearing monthly with

Tracy Butler, the Morning News weather anchor.

She has appeared with her expert commentary on most area television and radio stations, including *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. She is a frequent lecturer at regional industry shows and garden clubs, and is cited in gardening, home and other publications.

For more information about the luncheon, please contact Erin at 312.621.1107 or estec@aidforwomen.org.