



Written with and for individuals experiencing homelessness to break down the walls. **ISSUE 7 • FALL 2013**

The Return Home: “I Am Still Alive”

By Melissa Katz

War has plagued this country since its founding, most recently from the Korean War and the Vietnam War, to the more recent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Each war has a different focus, origin and outcome. One thing that does not change from war to war, no matter the circumstances, is the effect it has on returning veterans. It is a simple fact – no one returns home the same as when they left. What they return home with – the traumas and the images – lasts a lifetime.

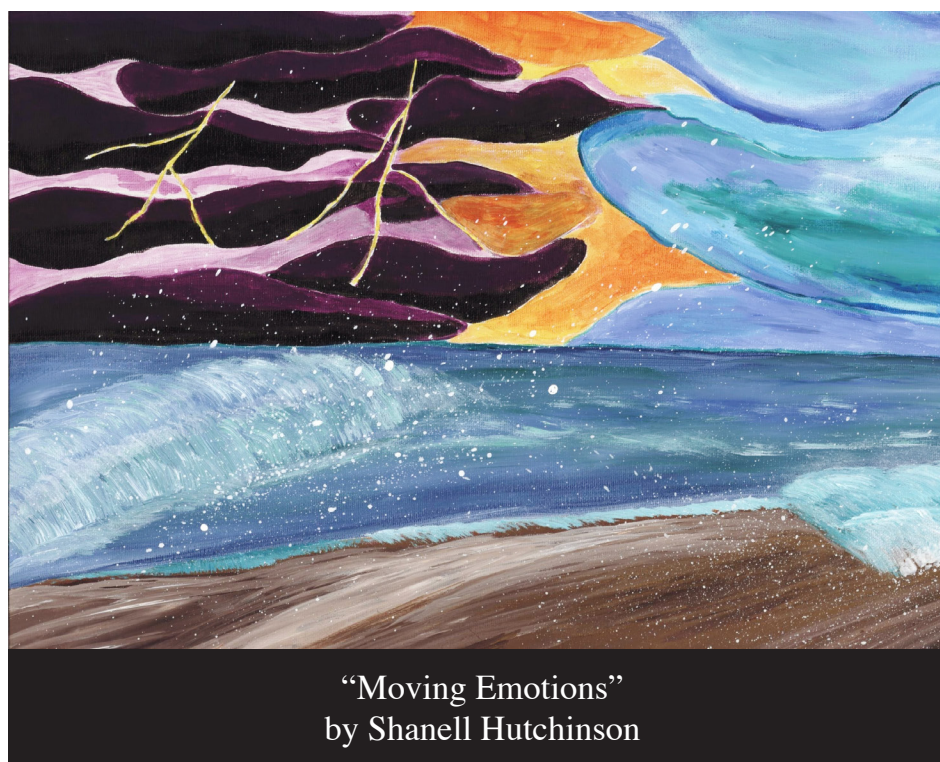
Kenneth Bridgewater, a United States Marine Corps Veteran of the Vietnam War, is now residing at the Salvation Army Perth Amboy Corps in Perth Amboy, New Jersey.

Bridgewater has had a life full of struggles and difficult times, from the time he was drafted at the age of 19 in 1968. He began abusing drugs as soon as he entered the service and did not stop until 2012.

“I’ve been clean now for 18 months. I’m still alive. I’m 65 and I’m still alive. We’re still human beings. We still have a mind and we still think.”

Bridgewater grew up in Trenton, New Jersey with a mother, three sisters and two brothers. After being drafted, he began work as a warehouseman in the U.S. Marine Corps. He described his first days in the Marine Corps as: “Scary. It was my first time away from home.”

He was assigned to stations



“Moving Emotions”
by Shanell Hutchinson

in Hawaii and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. During his time serving, Bridgewater got involved in the pervasive drug use among Army and Marine Corps troops, which continued for 44 years after returning home.

Over these 44 years, Bridgewater was in and out of jail, constantly involving himself in different drug activities.

Upon returning home, Bridgewater got married, but he did not feel any respect from the public. In 2010, he was put in jail on multiple drug charges.

“I should’ve gone in for 50 plus years. I was lucky. I got probation and a fine,” said Bridgewater.

In 2011, he was taken back to jail for probation violation and spent 5 months in the county jail.

At this point, Bridgewater had had enough. After getting out of jail, he went to the East Orange VA Hospital and spent 44 days in a drug rehabilitation program. He continued in his recovery by spending the next 6 months in the Lyons Veteran’s Hospital in Basking Ridge, New Jersey, before coming to the Salvation Army Perth Amboy Corps.

As of 2012, it is reported that as many as “62,619 veterans are homeless on any given night. Over the course of a year, approximately twice that many experience homelessness,” according to the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans and the Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR), prepared by the Housing and Urban Development

Department for Congress. “Only 7 percent of the population can claim veteran status, but nearly 13 percent of the homeless adult population are veterans.”

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs reports that “each year, Veterans Affairs (VA) provides health care to almost 150,000 homeless veterans and other services to over 112,000 veterans through its specialized homeless programs.”

Multiple factors contribute to the homelessness of veterans, such as lack of resources, poverty, support networks, employment. Difficult living conditions in substandard or overcrowded housing may be their only option. These factors are also putting about 1.4 million other veterans at the risk of finding themselves homeless, according to the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans.

Many of the displaced or at-risk veterans suffer from post-

Continued on Pg 8

What Is Inside?

Womanspace.....	pg 2
“I’m Excited”.....	pg 2
Gandhi Garden.....	pg 3
NJ Foreclosure Policy.....	pg 4
“GRACE”.....	pg 4
Anchor House.....	pg 5
Resource Pages.....	pg 6 & 7
Beyond Expectations.....	pg 8
LGBTQ and Triad House.....	pg 9
“Mesa”.....	pg 9
Prisoner Reentry.....	pg 10
“Hunger Awareness”.....	pg 11
“(Untitled)”.....	pg 12

Womanspace: Aiding Victims of Domestic Violence

Womanspace has served over 301,076 adults and children since 1977 according to their website—providing them with the help they needed catered to their personal situations—do not be afraid to make that number 301,077. — Julie Kayzerman

By Julie Kayzerman

Every nine seconds, a woman in the United States is assaulted or beaten, one in four women have experienced domestic violence in their lifetime and between 4 and 8 million women are victims of domestic violence every year, according to national statistics. Yet, domestic abuse is an avoided subject, an issue that “not many people want to talk about” and even in “2013, we still think it’s not happening,” said Reyna Carothers, director of Emergency Services at Womanspace.

However, it is happening — it is happening everywhere and it is happening right here. “We know that it happens everywhere because domestic violence doesn’t discriminate,” Carothers says. “It

happens everywhere regardless of your social economic status or your educational background.”

Often, leaving the violent situation leads to homelessness which can discourage a person from removing themselves from the situation.

That is why Womanspace is readily available in Mercer County, offering several programs to help victims of domestic abuse get support and overcome their tragedies.

“It’s important we do this because it’s a service that is needed, in Mercer County,” Carothers said. “I hate to say it’s bad, but it’s bad.”

Womanspace offers emergency services like 24/7 hotlines in English and Spanish with the option to connect to other languages as

well as sexual assault and domestic violence response teams, transitional housing, shelters, support groups, advocacy programs, access to counseling and more.

“We can be someone who will be there for them,” says Carothers. “If they don’t want to pursue anything legally, we are still able to provide them with supportive services.”

But it is not just the obvious victims that can receive help too. According to Carothers, about 30 percent of cases include children that have been present during instances of domestic violence, and those kids are victims too that can get help from Womanspace.

Womanspace has served over 301,076 adults and children since

1977 according to their website — providing them with the help they needed catered to their personal situations — do not be afraid to make that number 301,077.

“This is something that I’m passionate about,” Carothers said. “I want to impart some sort of hope in the clients that we work with. I realize that we’re not going to be able to help everyone because it’s their choice and they may choose to go back, but my hope is that they are better off by coming to our program than they were before.”

Womanspace
(609) 394-9000
1-800-572-SAFE (7233)



“Small Woman 2”
by Kimberly Lennon

I’m Excited

By Pervis Upshur

Poetry

I’m excited because I have good people around me.
I’m excited because I get to do things in my life that I thought I could never do.
I’m excited cuz I have people to help me with stuff I don’t know how to pronounce. But I’m learning how to pronounce it.
I’m excited because the sun comes all the way out and the sky is bright.
I can go outside my house and eat ice cream and talk to my neighbor.
I’m excited cuz I’m starting to do things by myself without any help.
And I’m excited because I’m helpful to elderly people and they talk to me. They tell me things that I need to hear.
I’m excited cuz I can go out and work and do somethin’ to earn money when I need it.
I’m excited because I’m myself. I’m excited because nobody can take it away from me.
And I’m excited just to be excited.
I’m excited because I have another chance to keep myself first.

Change is Coming with the Help of Gandhi Garden

By Alexis McLaughlin

Jonathan Gordon looks upon the garden with certainty, a satisfied grin spread across his face. His labor was well worth the cost.

"We needed a space like this," said Gordon, still taking in the scene. Weeds six feet high overran this small yard, just one year before. It was another desolate fixture of the Trenton community.

"It was a huge eyesore to the area," Gordon recalled.

Things have since changed — and drastic are the end results.

A yard of weeds, old tires and wooden planks is now an oasis, with vivid murals, fresh produce, and eco-friendliness abound.

Named the "Gandhi Garden" by Gordon and his two partners, Will "KASSO" Condry and Graham Apgar, the goal behind its creation is simple: to create a sense of compassion and community among all who visit.

Moved by the teachings of activists like Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi (after whom the Garden was named), Gordon,

Apgar, Condry, and the rest of the S.A.G.E. (Styles Advancing Graffiti's Evolution) Coalition designed the Garden in the hopes of inciting change in the Trenton community through "civil disobedience." The artful, but illegal, graffiti mural of Gandhi along the garden's grounds is a tribute to this philosophy.

"Be the change you wish to see in the world" is the Gandhi adage that the founders live by, Gordon said — and one that they hope to spread, through the expansion of the Garden.

"It just benefits so many people on different levels," Gordon said

This drive for community is further reflected in the Garden's architecture, Gordon explains. The designated "artgineer" of the group, Apgar designed the Garden free of gates and archways in order to foster a feeling of accessibility to everyone.

"You always have a feeling of it being open," Gordon said of the design.

This open atmosphere has

brought visitors to the Garden in droves. Carl Washington, a local poet and videographer for the S.A.G.E. Coalition website, cites the many artistic elements as the Garden's finest feature — both for its quality and the lack of rivalry behind it.

"It's competitive, it's a sport," said Washington about the art. "Everything's big...sometimes, you get drowned by the greats."

Yet a competitive edge is not necessary to inspire. With regular musical and theatrical performances along with frequent art shows, Washington is often awe-struck by the creativity that immerses the Garden.

This is precisely the effect that Gordon strives for. The Garden, he believes, is a model — one which allows people of "any base and any background" to "build something beautiful out of waste material."

An avid craftsman for most of his life, Gordon credits the Garden with improving his imagination.

"The project [Garden] has inspired me to be more...creative in what I create," said Gordon with a smile. Across from him trickles a solar-powered water fountain made from a used tire. "It's really helped get the creative juices flowing again."

Others would agree. "To me, it's just, like, a place of serenity," said Trenton native Messiah Harrell. A candle maker and woodworker for the past four years, Harrell sees the Garden as the place to go, when he hits a creative or emotional slump.

"It's a place you can come to, clear your mind, and let fresh

thoughts enter," said Harrell.

The Garden has also gained the attention of Trenton's more prominent officials. A member of the Cadwalder Place Civic Association, Rachel Cogsville-Lattimer notes the drastic transformation of the land over the past year.

"The area wasn't beautiful, by any means," Cogsville-Lattimer asserts. "But now, it is a beautiful area because of the hard work of the S.A.G.E. Coalition."

Yet the Garden's beauty, in her view, spans far beyond aesthetics.

"My favorite [part of the Garden] is not only the beautiful location," Cogsville-Lattimer said, "but the level of respect" that all visitors receive.

It is a true show of community — the greatest goal that Gordon and the S.A.G.E. Coalition has aspired to.

"I feel good because I'm using my money to fund a great program," concluded Gordon. 🏡



"Birds in a Tree"
by Devonna Todd



"Young Girl in Garden"
by Gennie Darisma

Foreclosure: The Process of Padlocking a Home

By Michael Nunes

The foreclosure rate in New Jersey has spiked 89 percent for 2013, reports CNN.

Since the housing bubble burst in 2008, foreclosure rates nationwide saw a spike because many people could not afford to pay off their mortgage. The bursting of the housing bubble contributed to the credit crisis, bringing on an economic recession. At its peak, the recession caused many Americans to be laid off and unable to make payments, thus the foreclosure rate began to rise.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the unemployment rate before the recession hit was a stable 4 percent. After the recession it shot up, hitting a peak of 9.7 percent in December of 2009. Currently, the unemployment rate has been slowly sinking to 8.5 percent throughout the state.

New Jersey has so many foreclosures that banks have delayed the process to keep up with the influx of homes. The average foreclosure time-table, according to law offices of Jenkins & Clayman, is 1033 days, the second longest in the nation next to New York.

Foreclosure is a long process that

could take months or even years.

It all starts innocently enough with a missed mortgage payment. Most banks will usually wait until the second or third missed mortgage before taking legal action. Before the bank can legally foreclosure on a home, they must inform the owner at least 30 days ahead of time. After those 30 days, the bank will file a complaint with the courts.

Once the bank files a complaint with the court system, the homeowner will also get a notice. This is meant to notify the owner of the foreclosed home that the bank has taken legal action. Once the complaint is mailed, the homeowner will have 35 days to respond. If the court does not get a response from the homeowner, then the foreclosure process will continue.

By responding to the court notification, the homeowner gets to appeal the foreclosure process.

The General Equity Judge hears the cases presented by both the bank and the homeowner. Before the banks can repossess the house, the judge has to make a ruling in favor of the banks.

The General Equity Judge for Mercer County is Paul Innes. De-

pending on evidence put forth by both parties, the court case could take a few months to complete.

Even if the judge rules in favor of the bank, the process is still not over. When the banks try to sell a foreclosed house, they must advertise the home every week for a month in local media outlets, such as newspapers.

After the sale of a home is properly advertised, the bank schedules a sheriff's sale. A sheriff's sale is a public auction where foreclosed property is sold. Due to the large amount of home foreclosures in the state, the sheriff's sale often is pushed back.

At any time during the process, a homeowner could take steps to reclaim their home and stop the banks from repossessing the house. If the late mortgage payments are paid, including late fees, to the

bank, then the home is no longer in danger of being taken.

There are other ways as well, including modifying a home loan or refinancing debt. Filing for bankruptcy stops the foreclosure process from going any further. This gives the homeowner time to repay loans.

As stated earlier, New Jersey has one of the highest foreclosure timelines in the nation. This could prove useful for settling late mortgage payments. 🏠

For more information about available resources please see the resource guide.

The Crisis Ministry of Mercer County, Inc.

**Trenton — (609) 392-0922
(609) 396-9355**

Princeton — (609) 921-2135



“Pink House”
by Christine M.

GRACE

By Derrick Branch

Poetry

On my travels in life
God has been so generous to me.
All my needs are somehow taken care of
almost miraculously.
At times when I need to eat
I may go hungry for a while,
but before I starve my hunger is satisfied.
And when I'm truly financially stressed,
down on my luck,
a good job is right around the corner.
Bet your bottom buck.
When bullets fly and there's mayhem in the streets,
I walk safe and secure
in virtual peace.
I'm never lonely.
There is always a friend,
and no matter how many times I fall due to my sins,
I manage somehow to get up again.
And most of the time,
in the end I truly win.
And all of this is due
to the grace that the Lord sends.

Providing Shelter and Support to the Homeless Youth

In Mercer County last year, 303 people under the age of 18 were reported homeless, according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. — Natalie Kouba

By Natalie Kouba

When hardship hits home, it can be difficult to ride out the storm. Some young adults and children decide their best option is to abandon ship and leave their families altogether, while for others, it is the only alternative. Either way, many youth nationwide are faced with homelessness each year, and look for the anchor to keep them grounded — that is what Anchor House aims to do.

Since 1978, the Anchor House in Trenton has provided a safe haven for not only the youth in Mercer County, but across the country, ensuring “a safe place to rest; wait through the storm while in crisis and a way to move on when the crisis is calmed,” according to the Anchor House website.

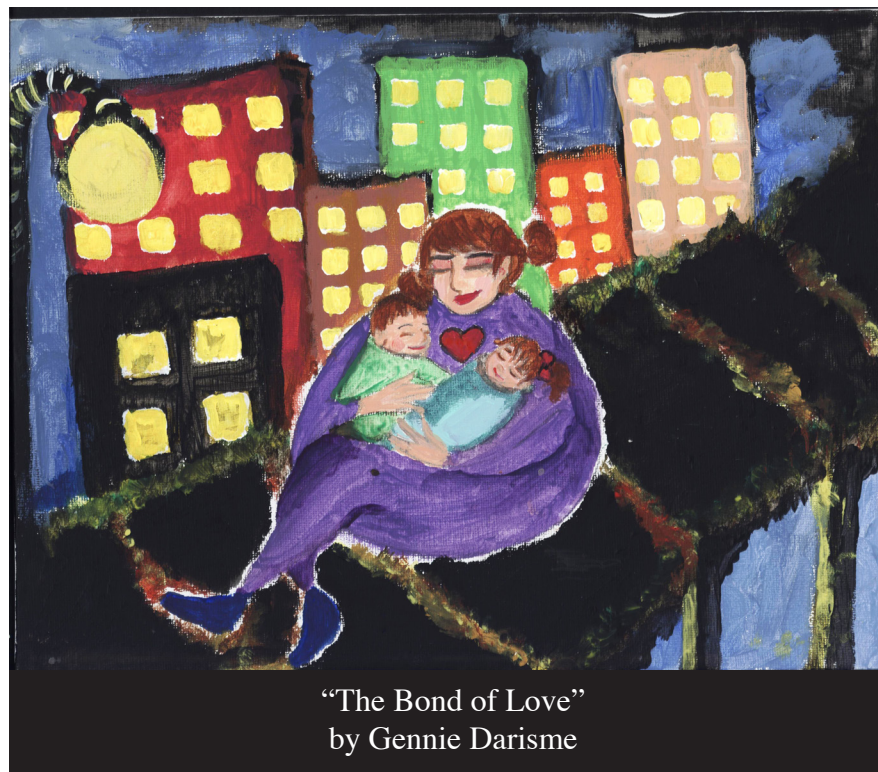
In Mercer County last year, 303 people under the age of 18 were reported homeless, according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Of that group, 117 children who were homeless were between the ages of 7 and 17, and 186 were six-years-old or younger.

The Anchor House aims to provide opportunities for the futures of young adults through temporary housing and long-term support.

Through five different programs, youth can find the resources and support they need, respective to their appropriate ages. From newborns to 21-year-olds, the Anchor House opens its doors to anyone who walks by.

“They can just walk in,” said June Albanowski, director of Children & Youth Services. “So they can just ring the bell, and, you know, they can come that way. Or they can call us.”

The Anchor House is available 24/7 to ensure that help is provided whenever needed. Anchor Link, the Anchor House’s street outreach program, is a drop-in program for youth 14 to 21-years-old where



“The Bond of Love”
by Gennie Darisme

they can find day-to-day relief, such as eating and showering, but is also designed to assist in strengthening life and career skills.

While the Anchor Link program does not provide housing, most of the other programs that they offer are 30-day shelters.

For the especially young children, Angel’s Wings takes in those who have faced many potential issues, ranging from neglect to abuse to behavioral problems. Newborns to 12-year-olds are welcomed into foster homes until a permanent home can be arranged.

At the Anchor House Shelter youth from 10 to 17 are housed. While it only is a 12-bed program, the staff will never turn a child away, but instead, find an alternative housing situation.

Youth gain a sense of support and purpose, at the Shelter, where it may have been lacking elsewhere. Over the course of the 30-day transitional program, these children become much more than guests.

“It is a home for them, so, you know, it’s not institutionalized,” Albanowski said.

The youth at the shelter are given a temporary release from the stresses they face, and actually have fun during their stay. Staff members assure they get to school, and even try to keep them in their own school districts, but take them on recreational and educational trips in their free time. Volunteers also work closely with the youth to tutor them and teach them about their own hobbies.

The staff and youth form friendships as well and regularly go to the local park for a game of basketball, on roller-skating outings, to the movies and even the Great Adventure theme park.

Community service is also a valued part of the program. Staff members take youth to the soup kitchen or nursing homes to lend a hand to the community which has helped them.

“We believe it is important for them to give back to the community as well and not just be recipients of service and that they are able to do things for others,” Albanowski said.

The Anchor House programs are intended to serve as temporary

shelters and try to reunite youth with their families as soon as possible, when possible.

Individual, family and group counseling sessions are held weekly at the Shelter to try and knead through any communication rifts and mend gaps.

From runaways to youth who have faced abuse, neglect or homelessness, some have not only been able to get themselves out of troubling situations, but have excelled beyond what they thought was possible.

The Anchorage program, which currently only has six young adults, helps them work toward independence. Here, the young adults learn about becoming self-sufficient in their careers and finances. They gain valuable skills in communication, personal health and wellness, time management and budgeting.

From graduating high school to moving into a college dorm, the Anchor House prides itself in the success of their youth.

“One went to Rutgers ... some of them even live on campus, so they transition out from our program and might go to college full-time,” Albanowski said. “That, I think, is a real success story. Some of them even say that if it weren’t for our program, they wouldn’t be in that situation.”

Anchor House Shelter, School Outreach Program
(609) 396-8329

Anchorage Transitional Living Program
(609) 989-1625

Anchor Link Street Outreach Program
(609) 218-5630

Anchor Line
(609) 218-5630
www.anchorhousenj.org

Where You Can Turn for Help!

All days and times are subject to change without notice. Created December 2013 and will update for each issue.

Trenton and Mercer County Homeless Shelters

Amani House

518-520 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, 25 bed facility.
Transitional housing (24 single adult males between the ages of 18-65). Call for appointment. Tel. (609)-393-3168 ext. 13.

Anchor House Inc.

482 Center Street, Trenton, NJ
24-hour program for runaway, homeless and at-risk youth ages 10-17 in Mercer County.
Anchor House Shelter, school Outreach Program, (609) 396-8329
Anchorage Transitional Living Program, (609) 989-1625
Anchor Link Street Outreach Program, (609) 218-5630
Anchor Line, (609) 218-5630
(609) 396-8329, www.anchorhousenj.org

Community Innovations

Administration Office – 509 Perry Street, Trenton, NJ (609) 826-9480. Trenton Family Preservation House (17 Families & Single Women). Chester House 1 – 24-Single Men – ages 18 and up. Chester House-11 – 15 Single Men - ages 18 and up. Mercer County Board of Social Services Referrals

YWCA's Dunham Hall

Main Office: 140 East Hanover Street, Trenton, NJ (609) 396-8291
Dunham Hall Residence is 127 Academy Street, Trenton, NJ
Dunham Hall is a 90-bed SRO (single room occupancy) women residence that provides permanent housing to low-income and homeless. (609) 396-2413

Escher Street SRO & Transitional

50 Escher Street, Trenton, NJ (609) 392-4599
Single Occupancy Rooms for single men and women (Project Specific Section 8); Transitional Housing for single men (26 beds) and women (8 beds). SRO accepts transitional housing clients and walk-ins. Referred by MCBOS or Department of Corrections.

HomeFront

Administrative Offices
1880 Princeton Ave, Lawrenceville, NJ
Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, and Permanent Housing are available. Call for appointment. (609) 989-9417

Triad House (LifeTies)

1301 W. State Street, Trenton, NJ, 08618 (609) 394-6747
Providing 24/7 shelter for homeless LGBTQ youth ages 14 to 18.

Rescue Mission of Trenton

98 Carroll St Trenton NJ (609) 695-1436
Emergency Shelter: Overnight shelter, meals and clothing for single adult men and women.
Vince's Place: Residential addiction treatment.
Permanent Housing: Room & Boarding House; Perry Street and Brimmer House rental.
Outpatient: Addiction counseling; TEACH and Work Readiness; Thrift store and courtesy store; Sunday soup kitchen.

Womanspace

Mercer County, NJ (609) 394-9000; 1-800-572-SAFE (7233)
Emergency services designed to assist victims of domestic violence and sexual assault immediately following the initial crisis. 24-hour hotlines and Spanish-speaking staff available. Short-term emergency housing in a confidential location for victims of domestic violence.

UPI - Trenton Treatment Center-22-Bed Transtional Housing Program

56 escher Street, Trenton, NJ, 08609 (609) 392-2822 and Fax: (609) 392-3215
Providing transitional housing service for single homeless males of Mercer County. Accepting transitional housing referrals from Mercer County Board of Social Services.

Human Services

A Better Way

1040 Pennsylvania Ave., Trenton, NJ (609) 392-1224
Specializes in mentoring, re-entry (has program) & gang reduction.

Catholic Charities

Mercer Emergency & Community Services

132 N. Warren St, Trenton, NJ 08618. Outpatient (609) 394-8847.
Provides support related to housing, food, mental health,.

Crisis Ministry of Mercer County, Inc.

123 East Hanover Street, Trenton, NJ (609) 396-9355
61 Nassau Street, Princeton, NJ (609) 921-2135
Financial Services for Low Income People in Mercer County. Food Pantry; Emergency Financial Assistance. Call or walk-ins.

Greater Goods Thrift Store

114 Rogers Avenue Hightstown, NJ 08520 (609) 448-2702
Monday & Tuesday 10am - 3pm, Wednesday - Saturday 10am – 7pm.

City of Trenton – Health & Human Services

(609) 815-2160
Emergency assistance for back rent, first month rent for the homeless and/or at-risk homeless and as well as assistance for Senior Citizens.

Helping Arms

50 Escher Street, Trenton, NJ (609) 396-7515
Provides counseling, employment placement services, housing and other social services to low income people, and operates a prison re-entry initiative in Trenton. Referrals from Dept. of Corrections.

HomeFront

Administrative Offices
1880 Princeton Ave, Lawrenceville, NJ
Homeless prevention (rent/security); permanent service-enriched affordable housing; food pantry; FreeStore; Furnish the Future. Mon-Fri 9am-5pm. Except Tuesday 12-8pm (609) 989-9417.

Opportunities For All

1701 S. Broad Street, Hamilton, NJ (609) 394-7000
Training and employment opportunities to a diverse group of job seekers. We specialize in working with applicants with disabilities.

Family Guidance Center

946 Englewood Avenue, Trenton, NJ (609) 924-1320 or (1-800) 813-0555. Credit Counseling, Financial, Financial Assistance

Community Health Law Project

225 East State Street, Suite 5, Trenton NJ (609) 392-5553.
Discusses legal questions with those with disabilities. Will make appointments.

VA Hamilton Outpatient Clinic

3635 Quakerbridge Road, Hamilton, NJ (609) 570-6600
General Medicine for veterans.

RISE Main Office

116 North Main Street Hightstown, NJ 08520 (609) 443-4464
The Rise main office is open: Monday-Friday 9am - 4pm
(Closed for lunch from 1pm - 2pm daily)

Mercer County Board of Social Services (MCBOSS)

200 Woolverton St., Trenton, NJ (609) 989-4320.
Complaint Line: (609) 989-4400. Social Services: (609) 989-4451. assist individuals with General Assistance, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, Supplemental Security Income and other services.
M-F, 8:30am- 4:30 pm, T 8:30am-8:30pm. Can call or walk-in.

County Clerk's Office

209 S. Broad Street, PO Box 8068, Trenton, NJ (609) 989-6998
ID's- Voter registration forms, Mercer County photo ID, passport.
Mon-Fri. 8am-4pm; Wed. until 6:45pm. Walk-ins accepted.

County Connection

Rte 33 and Paxson Avenue, Hamilton Township, NJ
County ID card and passport services. Mon, Wed, Fri. 10am – 6pm. Tuesday & Thursday, 10 am – 8 pm. Saturday, 10 am – 3 pm.
Walk-ins accepted.

One-Stop Career Center

(NJ Dept. of Labor), 26 Yard Avenue, Trenton, NJ (877) 989-AJOB, (609) 989-6523. One Stop Center - offers workforce readiness services and career resources. Referrals from MCBOS, unemployment. Walk-ins accepted. (Monday-Friday), 8:30am- 5pm, Tuesdays, 8:30 am- 8:30pm.

Legal Services

Central Jersey Legal Services, Inc., 198 West State Street, Trenton, NJ (609) 695-6249. Will discuss legal issues with individuals, landlord/tenant or issues and will make appointments. Call for appointment (9am-4:30pm).

Salvation Army - Homeless Drop-In Center

575 East State Street, Trenton. Hours 8am – 3pm, 5 days a week

Office on Aging

640 S. Broad St., Trenton, NJ 08650
Information for Seniors (877) 222-3737, (609) 989-6661

County of Mercer - Department of Human Services

640 S. Broad St., Trenton, NJ (609) 989-6526 and Fax: (609) 989-6032

Child Care Connection

1001 Spruce St, Suite 201, Trenton, NJ. (609) 989-7770. Resource and Referral agency assists families in their search of quality child care. Mon, Tues, Wed, Fri. 9am-5pm. Thurs. 9am-6pm

Social Security

635 South Clinton Avenue, 2nd Floor, Trenton, NJ (609) 989-2254; 1-800-772-1213. Assists clients with social security card replacement, Disability info, questions and assistance in applying for SSI and SSDI. Call or walk-in.

Trenton Area Soup Kitchen

72 1/2 Escher Street, Trenton, NJ (609) 695-5456
Soup Kitchen, Food, Food Pantry; Adult Education; Computer Classes; Job Search Assistance. Monday to Friday Lunch from 10:30am to 12:50pm; Monday to Thursday Dinner from 3:30pm to 5pm

Ujima Urban Women's Center

1001 Pennington Road, Ewing, NJ (609) 882– 2098
P-roviding compassion, advocacy, and training to urban women residing in Trenton and surrounding areas. Call for Appointment.

United Progress Inc. (UPI)

162 West State Street, Trenton, NJ (609) 392-2161 (Main Office). Provides substance abuse treatment, HIV/AIDS counseling, employment and job development counseling, emergency food, utility, housing services and homeless prevention. (609) 392-2161

Veteran Services

20 Washington Place, 3rd Floor, Newark, NJ (973) 645-1441 or at the Mercer County Department of Veterans Affairs. Assists veterans with information on services available to them, assist with forms, makes appointments. The health benefit number is (877) 222-VETS. LoHomeless Veteran in need of help? Call (1-877) 4AID VET (1-877-424-3838). Call for appointment.

VA Homeless Intervention Program

Hotline is intended to assist homeless Veterans and their families, VA Medical Centers, federal, state and local partners, community agencies, service providers and others in the community.
(1-877) 4AID VET (877-424-3838)(National)

US Veterans Center

934 Parkway Avenue, Ewing, NJ (609) 882-5744
NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs : Mercer Veterans Affairs 2280 Hamilton Ave., Hamilton NJ. (609) 989-6120. Companion program to Federal Department of Veterans Affairs. Homeless intervention.

Womanspace

Mercer County, NJ (609) 394-9000; 1-800-572-SAFE (7233)
Emergency services designed to assist victims of domestic violence and sexual assault immediately following the initial crisis. 24-hour hotlines and Spanish-speaking staff available. Short-term emergency housing in a confidential location for victims of domestic violence.

Community Justice Center

(609)218-5120. Encouraging the empowerment, resiliency and rights of those struggling with disabilities by providing the essential ingredients of legal education, outreach, advocacy and representation. Will discuss legal questions with veterans and disabled and will make appointments.

Division of Disability Services

1-8880-2850-3036
An information and referral line that helps with all disabilities.

***Dial 211 for Community Resources.**



Health Services

Capital Health System at Fuld

750 Brunswick Avenue, Trenton, NJ. (609) 394-6000.
Clinics, Medicaid, Medical Care, General Acute Medical Care.

Capital Health System at Mercer

446 Bellevue Avenue, Trenton, NJ. (609) 394-4000
Clinics, Medicaid, Medical Care, General Acute Medical Care.

Capital Health System Crisis Center

750 Brunswick Avenue, Trenton, NJ. (609) 396-6722
Mental Health Crisis Assistance. Accepts Medicaid, Medicare

Carrier Clinic

Rte 601, Belle Mead, NJ. 1-800-933-3579 Access Center (24/7).
Specializing in psychiatric and substance abuse treatment. Accepts Medicaid (mental issues only) and Medicare.

Family Guidance Center - Outpatient Care

946 Englewood Avenue, Trenton, NJ. (609) 396-4357

Brighter Day Behavioral Health Services

2783 Brunswick Pike, Suite 302, Lawrenceville, NJ. Call for appointment. (609) 771-3777. Program for the mentally ill and chemically addicted. Accepts Medicaid, Medicare.

Mount Carmel Guild

73 North Clinton Avenue, Trenton, NJ 08609, (609) 392-5159. Limited Utility and Prescription assistance. Home Health Nursing Services: visits for medication management, vital sign checks, pre-filling syringes, administer injections for economically disadvantaged, medically frail elderly. Free and do not accept third party payments.

Henry J. Austin Health Center

317 Chambers Street, Trenton, NJ (609) 278-5900. Adult Medicine and the above services. The satellite centers are open Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Appointments are encouraged.

Greater Trenton Behavioral HealthCare-Other Programs

See www.gtbhc.org for information on services and locations.

Princeton House Behavioral Health

741 Mount Lucas Road, Princeton, NJ. (1-800) 242-2550; (609)- 497-3347 Intensive outpatient, partial hospitalization. Accepts Medicaid, Medicare.

Rescue Mission of Trenton

96 Carroll St., Trenton, NJ. (609) 393-3533. Residential and Outpatient Treatment for addictions and co-occurring disorders.

Robert Wood Johnson Hospital at Hamilton

One Hamilton Health Place, Hamilton, NJ. (609) 586-7900
Clinics, Medical Care, General Acute Medical Care Accepts Medicaid, Medicare.

St. Francis Medical Center

601 Hamilton Avenue, Trenton, NJ. (609) 599-5000
Clinics, Medicaid, Medical Care, General Acute Medical Care. Accepts Medicaid, Medicare.

Trenton Division of Health

218 N. Broad St., Trenton, NJ. (609) 989-3242
Health Promotions and Clinical Services; Health Incentive Program for Women (HIP4W).

Trenton Treatment Center (Part of United Progress, Inc.)

56 Escher Street, Trenton, NJ. (609) 392-2822
Trenton Treatment Center offers residential (for men only) and outpatient programs for those addicted to drug and alcohol. Accepts referrals from MCBOS, client walk-ins, and referrals from other service provider agencies, and uninsured Mercer County residents.

University Medical Center at Princeton

253 Witherspoon St, Princeton, NJ. (609) 497-4000
Clinics, General Acute Medical Care. Accepts Medicaid, Medicare.

Oxford House-Half

(301) 587-2916, Toll Free: (800) 689-6411
Way houses to transition from rehab to independent living for individuals experiencing drug and alcohol addiction.

Henry J. Austin Health Center (3 locations)

321 North Warren Street (Main) Trenton, NJ - (609) 278-5900
Offers fast track, pediatrics, adult medicine, OB/GYN care, social services, podiatry, eye care, behavioral health care, dental services, HIV and Hepatitis C testing and treatment. Have ID. Accepts Medicaid, Medicare. Monday through Friday 8am-5pm and Sat 9-1.

Trenton Adult Rehabilitation Center

Salvation Army: (609) 599-9801

Henry J. Austin Health Center

112 Ewing Street, Trenton, NJ (609) 278-5900. Adult Medicine and the above services and dental care. Open Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Appointments are encouraged.

New Horizons Treatment Service, Inc.

132 Perry St., Trenton, NJ. Appointment: (609) 394-8988.
Provides an array of medical, clinical and special services, i.e. substance Abuse treatment, detoxification, methadone maintenance, methadone detoxification. Mon-Fri 6am-8pm. Accepts Medicaid, WorkFirst NJ, and self-pay.

Planned Parenthood

Trenton Center - 437 E. State Street, Trenton, NJ. (609) 599-4881
Hamilton Center - 2279 State Hwy 33, Hamilton, NJ. 689-4964
2000 Pennington Road, Eickhoff Hall, Ewing, NJ (609) 771-2110
Services: Abortion Services, Birth Control Services, Emergency Contraception, General Health Care, HIV Testing, LGBT Services, and more.

Catholic Charities, Behavioral Health Services

10 Southard St Trenton. (609) 396-4557.
Integrated behavioral health and physical health services.

Greater Trenton Behavioral Health Care Homeless Outreach

31 Lexington Avenue, Ewing, NJ 609-583-1901. Linkage to mental health services, medical services, entitlements and housing. Call for appointment.

Note that most Health Services accept Medicare and Medicaid.

Food

Jerusalem Baptist Church

150 N. Clinton Avenue, Trenton, NJ (609) 394-9816 . 3rd Saturday of a five Saturday month and 1st Saturday of a four Saturday month. 11:30am-1pm. Call for details on other services.

Rescue Mission of Trenton

98 Carroll St., Trenton, NJ. 1st Saturday of a 5-Saturday month and every Sunday. 11am-12pm.

Sacred Heart Church

343 S. Broad Street, Trenton, NJ (609) 393-2801. Soup Kitchen, 4th Sunday
Lunch from 12:30pm to 2:00pm. Food pantry, 3rd Tuesday of the month. 2pm-6pm.

St. Mary’s Cathedral (Loaves and Fishes Food & Soup Kitchen)

151 N. Warren St. (Perry and Warren), Trenton, NJ. (609) 396-8447. Last two Saturdays of the month. Lunch is 11am to 2pm

Trenton Area Soup Kitchen

72 1/2 Escher Street, Trenton, NJ. (609) 695-5456. Monday to Friday Lunch from 11am-1pm; Monday to Thursday Dinner from 4pm-5:30pm. Call for other services.

First United Methodist Church of Hightstown

187 Stockton Street, Hightstown, NJ. Thurs Dinner, 4 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Divine Mary Parish, St. Stanislaus Church

60 Randall Avenue, Trenton, NJ. Thursdays Dinner, 5 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

West Trenton Soup Kitchen

Trinity Episcopal Cathedral. 801 W. State Street, Trenton, NJ. Thursdays Dinner, 5 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Soup Kitchen South

First Baptist Church, 128-140 Centre St., Trenton, NJ. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday Dinner from 5pm to 6:30pm.

West Trenton Soup Kitchen at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral

801 W. State St., Trenton, NJ. Thursday from 5pm to 6:30pm

Bethel Seventh Day Adventist

207 Hillcrest Ave., Trenton, NJ (609) 393-2224. Open third Sunday of the month 8am-12pm.

Mount Carmel Guild

73 North Clinton Avenue, Trenton, NJ 08609, (609) 392-3402. Operates a food pantry Mon-Fri. 9:30am – 11:30am and 1:30am – 3:30pm

Free Community Dinner, Wed. 5-6:30pm,

Princeton United Methodist Church, Nassau & Vandeventer, Princeton, 609 924-2613

The Crisis Ministry of Mercer County, Inc.

123 East Hanover Street, Trenton, NJ (609) 396-9355
61 Nassau Street, Princeton, NJ (609) 921-2135
Food pantry and emergency rent and utilities assistance for low income people in Mercer County. Individuals can call and walk-ins accepted.

Pantries

Bromley Neighborhood Civic Center

1801 East State St., Hamilton, NJ (609) 587-8100. Open Tuesdays from 9am-1pm and Thursdays from 2-4pm.

Catholic Charities

132 N. Warren St., Trenton, NJ (609) 394-8847. Open Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays from 9am-12:30pm.

Community Action Service Center/RISE

225 Franklin St., Hightstown, NJ (609) 443-4464. Open Monday through Wednesday from 9am-12pm.

Concerned Citizens of Ewing Inc.

320 Hollowbrook Dr., Ewing, NJ (609) 882-0856. Open Monday through Friday from 9:30am-1:30pm.

Crisis Ministry (Bethany Presbyterian Church)

400 Hamilton Avenue, Trenton, NJ (609) 393-6318. Open every Friday 9am to 12pm.

Greater Donnelly Initiative

27 Fell Street, Trenton, NJ (609) 802-3287. Open second Monday of the month from 4-6pm and fourth Monday of the month from 12-2pm.

Greater Word for the World Ministries

29 West Front St., Trenton, NJ (609) 394-9094. Open Saturdays (not first Saturday of the month) from 9-11:30am.

East Trenton Center - Food Pantry

601 N. Clinton Ave. Trenton, NJ (609) 393-8009. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday - Summer 10-1 Winter 11-1. Produce distribution Friday.

Hamilton Township’s J. O. Wilson Neighborhood Center

169 Wilfred Avenue, Hamilton, NJ (609) 393-6480. Open Mondays from 10am-12noon, Wednesdays 1pm-3pm.

The Crisis Ministry of Mercer County, Inc.

400 Hamilton Ave. (corner of Chestnut Ave.), Trenton, NJ (609)392-0922. Open Mon-Fri 9am – 12pm, last three weeks of each month

The Crisis Ministry of Mercer County, Inc.

123 East Hanover St., Trenton, NJ (609)396-9355. Open Monday & Tuesday 1pm – 3pm, Wednesday & Friday 9am – 12pm

The Crisis Ministry of Mercer County, Inc.

61 Nassau St. (Nassau Pres. Church), Princeton, NJ (609)921-2135. Open Monday through Thursday 1:30 – 4pm

The Haitian Center

530 South Olden Ave., Hamilton, NJ (609) 588-8808. Open Monday through Thursday from 8:30am-3:30pm.

Hamilton Township’s Bromley Neighborhood Civic Center

1801 E. State Street, Hamilton, NJ (609) 587-8100. Open Tuesdays from 9:30-11:30am and Thursdays from 3-4pm.

HomeFront

1880 Princeton Ave, Lawrenceville, NJ (609) 989-9417. Open Tuesdays 12pm-8pm, Mondays and Thursdays 9am-5pm.

Lutheran Church of the Redeemer

189 S. Broad Street, Trenton, NJ (609) 396-2411. Food Pantry. Last Thursday of month. 8am first come first serve.

Princeton Deliverance Center

301 Southard Street, Trenton, NJ (609) 392-9161. Wednesday (not 1st of month) 12:30am-1:30pm, Friday 9am-12pm.

Primera Iglesia Pentecostal (Alpha and Omega Inc.)

347 Second St., Trenton, NJ (609) 571-9135. 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month. 5:30pm-7:30pm

Rise Food Pantry

225 Franklin Street Hightstown, NJ 08520 (609) 443-4464. The Rise Food Pantry is open: Monday-Wednesday 9am - 12pm

Sacred Heart Church

343 S. Broad Street, Trenton, NJ (609) 393-2801. Food Pantry. 3rd Tuesday of the month. 2pm-6pm

Salvation Army - Homeless Drop-In Center

575 East State Street, Trenton. Hours 8am – 3pm, 7 days a week
Limited food. Please call for an appointment. (609) 599-9373

Samaritan Baptist Church

531 Dr. ML King Blvd, Trenton, NJ (609) 393-0016. Food Pantry. Saturday 9am-11:30am

Trinity Cathedral Food Pantry

801 W State Street, Trenton, NJ (609) 392-3805. Food Pantry. Every other Saturday 9am-11am

Turning Point United Methodist Church

15 S. Broad Street, Trenton, NJ. Dinner served and Food Pantry. 3rd Sunday 1pm-3pm.

United Progress, Inc.

162 West State Street, Trenton, NJ (609) 392-2161. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9am-12pm.

Jewish Family & Children’s Services food Pantry

707 Alexander Rd., Suite 102, Princeton, NJ 08540 — (609) 987-8100

***Dial 211 for Community Resources.**

“I Am Alive”
Continued from Pg 1

traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), in addition to substance abuse and an absence of any family or communal support. “Additionally, military occupations and training are not always transferable to the civilian workforce, placing some veterans at a disadvantage when competing for employment,” said the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans.

“The problem is people don’t know,” said Nathan, an employee of the Salvation Army Perth Amboy Corps. “Most people are unaware of the issues when veterans return. The public needs information. It’s important for people to know how much we want to legitimately do good for the people of Perth Amboy and specifically our returning veterans.”

The Salvation Army is devoted to helping communities everywhere, keen on providing whatever is necessary to help people.

“This place is helping me get on my feet,” said Bridgewater as he smiled and let out a deep breath. “I’m still alive.” 🏠

The Salvation Army New Jersey
Divisional Headquarters

P.O. Box 3170
Union, NJ 07083

Phone: 908-851-9300
Fax: 908-688-4460

Email: nj@use.salvationarmy.org

The Salvation Army
Homeless Drop-In Center

575 East State Street
Trenton, 08609

Phone: 609-599-9373

More resources for veterans
experiencing homelessness can be
found in the resource guide.

Life after Foster Care

Teaching Teens Marketable Skills and Boosting Self-Esteem

By Amanda Ippolito

Foster Care

Turning 18 is a major milestone. It means going to college, moving out or finding a job. And it can be difficult. But the independence associated with this particular birthday has very different – and frightening – implications for foster care children.

At 18, teenagers in New Jersey foster care age out of the system. They face realities such as homelessness, joblessness and incarceration. Many are left to transition into the real world without the support of a family, but there is an organization based in Trenton that can help.

Beyond Expectations

Beyond Expectations is a non-profit that provides teens with marketable, tangible skills that can be used in the workforce. The program provides hands-on media education, featuring workshops in filmmaking and television production.

Participants are involved in every step of the process, from the concept all the way to production. While the program focuses on media, the skills learned prepare teens for jobs in any field.

“Everything we do is about giving them something very tangible that they can use,” said Leontyne Anglin, a founder of Beyond Expectations.

The organization was started in 1999 by a group of parents in Burlington County who wanted early exposure to college and careers. In 2008, after learning about the difficulties teens in foster care face, the group decided to shift its focus. One year later, the Beyond Expectations Teen Film Program was launched.

Beyond Expectations is open to all youth – not just those in foster care. They partner with organizations such as the YMCA, group homes and mental health groups.

Teens can also choose to enlist themselves individually.

Beyond Expectations has two locations: Bordentown in Burlington County and Trenton in Mercer County. It also travels across the state to work with organizations. Programs are typically five sessions. Short-term programs – such as weekend retreats and a one-day speed program – are also offered.

Workshops in the filmmaking program include storyboarding, camera instruction, script development, recording sessions, and film shooting. Television workshops include camera instruction, teleprompter operation, audio production, vocal techniques, and wardrobe styling. Both programs also discuss college and careers.

All aspects of production are in their hands. They decide the subject, crew and camera operators. After deciding who they will interview, they conduct research and write interview questions.

“There is nobody in any of our programs sitting in the corner. Everyone is engaged,” Anglin said.

“Participants might realize if they enjoy storyboarding and writing, they could start a blog. And if they enjoy working behind the camera, they might consider freelance photography,” Anglin said.

Some might even decide to pursue a career in television, film or radio. In a video on Beyond Expectations’ website, Anthony Weaver, a participant in the program, says his experience has inspired him to pursue a career in media.

“I’ve taken a lot away from this (program), whether it be knowledge, or doing what I want to do for the rest of my life,” he says in the video.

While teens learn many technical skills specific to the media industry, they also learn soft skills necessary for any job.

“Some benefits teens take away

Continued on Pg 12



“Building Piece”
by Shanna Brown

Combating LGBTQ Homelessness with Safe Spaces and Representation

By David Sanchez
Op-Ed

Every year in the United States, thousands of homeless LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer) youth live in the shadows, burdened with discrimination and hatred from family and strangers.

A recent study conducted by the Williams Institute found that over 40 percent of homeless, American youth identify within the LGBTQ community.

This astonishing number lends itself to numerous issues faced in the perceptions of LGBTQ youth. The study cited the leading cause of LGBTQ youth homelessness was rejection by family due to gender identity or sexual orientation. Gender identity refers to whether an individual identifies themselves as either male, female, transgender, or somewhere not restricted by the gender binary of male or female; while sexual orientation refers to sexual or romantic preferences of an individual.

Being forced out of home is not the only reality faced by many LGBTQ youth. The study states almost 35 percent will fall victim to sexual, physical or emotional abuse. This leads to a greater dilemma, for the choices are either to stay in a violent or abusive home or to run away and take the chances of survival on the streets.

In Trenton alone the resources needed to combat homelessness are scarce, and even more scarce are safe places where LGBTQ individuals can survive without the threat of violence or rejection.

So what fuels anti-LGBTQ sentiment? It does not take long

to find hateful and inaccurate representations of the queer community in media. For clarification, queer is an umbrella term used for the LGBTQ community—it was a slur once used against the community to incite hatred, but in recent years has been reclaimed as a term of empowerment.

By turning on the television, it is quick to see episodes of “Jerry Springer” or “Maury” titled, “Tranny Lover,” “Wild Trannies,” or even “My Gay Brother Stole My Boyfriend.” Television shows

often depict transsexual and transgender women as prostitutes looking to trick men in an effort to emasculate them. At the same time, gay men are stereotyped as hyper feminine and weak, and often do not have roles other than sassy friends with quick one-liners.

New television shows have given queer individuals a safe space to exist in broadcasting. Shows such as “RuPaul’s Drag Race” and “Orange is the New Black” introduce viewers to powerful transgender women.

Laverne Cox, who stars in “Orange is the New Black,” is making national headlines as a powerful actress who is transgender. Because of her new found fame, she has been able to speak to the nation through magazines and other publications on the ability for transgender people to surpass the low expectations held on them by society.

Representation of queer individuals is vital because it is dehumanizing for many when they

“When hate is removed from the picture, when love is the motivator behind our actions, we do not have a need for suffering.”



“Midnight Tree”
by Malory C.

Mesa

Poetry

By Paul Norris

The highway undulates like a diamondback, making its way across a sandy wash.

Back and forth, up and down, twisting and turning lazily until its belly slithers over the horizon.

The clouds gather and vie for position as a crowd, pushing and shoving each other out of the way for the view.

But as quickly as they come, they see and lose interest and wander on to the next show.

Some darkening and crying at their disappointment.

The winds blow briskly, prodding the dust to flee before it.

Into every nook and cranny it crawls, hiding, like a jackrabbit from the soaring hawk.

Yet stands the lonely Mesa, unmoved...

Continued on Pg 11

Prisoner Reentry: Giving People a Second Chance

By Maria Minor
Op-Ed

At A Better Way, a nonprofit in Trenton, we help those who have been incarcerated acclimate back into their communities and be successful members of society.

When I first started working at A Better Way, a year ago, I thought it was a friendly place with well-intentioned services. I quickly came to the realization that this nonprofit was fighting a war against injustice and overwhelming odds.

One day after GED class, one of my students came to me and apologized for being late. He told me that he needs this course so that he can pass and support his family. He told me that he has done the whole street thing, he has been in and out of prison, and does not want that life anymore.

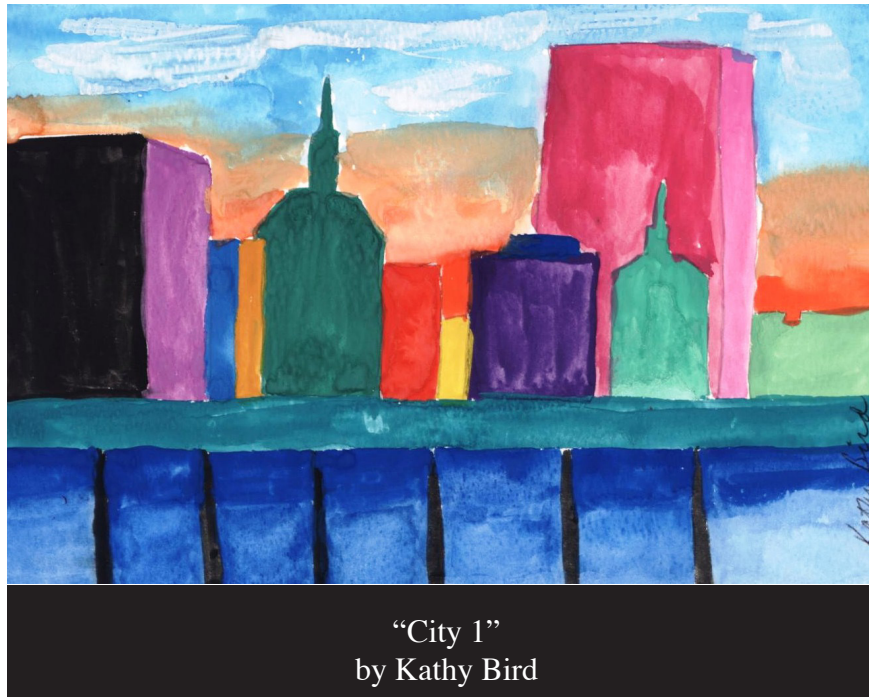
The current correctional system traps people in a vicious cycle that may as well be a death sentence, and burdens law-abiding citizens with exorbitant taxes to support this injustice.

Likewise, the current reentry program — most popularly supported by our state and federal institutions — involves driving ex-inmates to a bus stop and dropping them off.

To those of us not exposed to the multidimensional issues surrounding prisoner reentry, a bus ticket may seem like a fair deal. However, imagine a man who has just finished a 15 year sentence.

When he went to prison, he had an 8th grade education to his name, most likely from an under-achieving school district. He has not been educated since, and the psychological or emotional damage that occurred prior to his incarceration has not been addressed.

Family ties have been broken or strained. He may not own a house or have a place to live.



“City 1”
by Kathy Bird

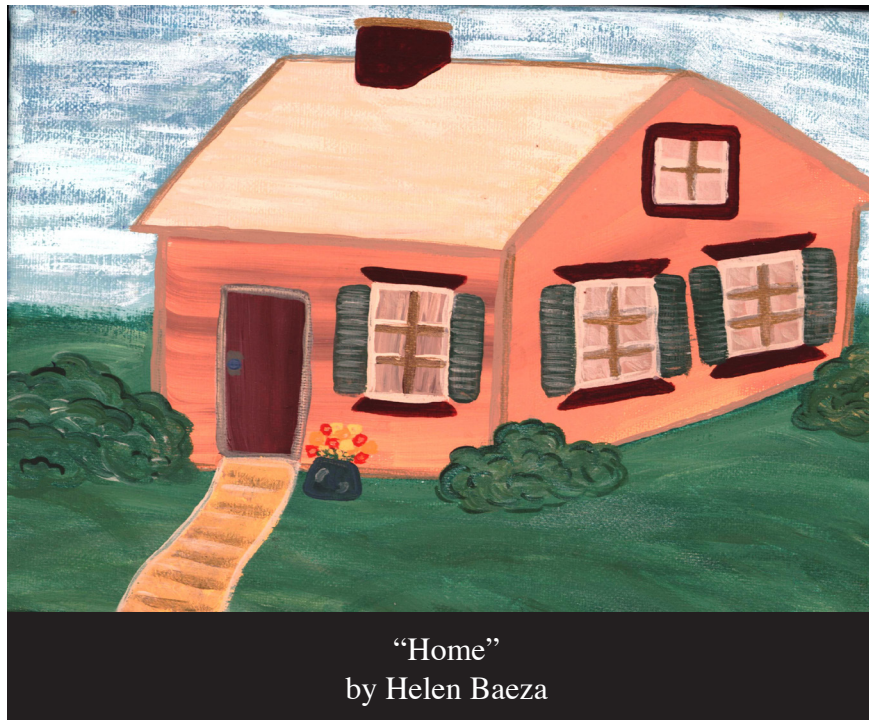
He possibly owes money for child support. He does not have a job or many means to support himself or his family. He probably does not have an active license or vehicle. And the only thing his resume shows is a criminal conviction and 15 years of unproductivity.

By all practical purposes, ex-offenders are our nation’s refugees, to whom we turn a blind-eye because we fear them, mistrust them, and do not want to be bothered. They are

the invisible people who have fallen through the cracks of our society and left to “make it by” because they are criminals and have gotten what they deserve.

So they turn to the streets —the only place they can really go. More than one third of ex-offenders return to prison. This is not the life they would choose for themselves.

This current situation is not only an inexcusable social injustice, but also a drain on citizens.



“Home”
by Helen Baeza

According to the 2012 report done by the VERA Institute of Justice, the incarceration of each individual costs about \$55,000. Many who are released then become reliant on welfare and social services.

Bo-Robinson is a prison in Trenton that is addressing this injustice. Prisoners who have a year or less remaining of their sentence are transferred to Bo-Robinson where they receive counseling, guidance, training and education. Initiatives, like these, bridge the gap between incarceration and reentry into society.

This past month, Bo-Robinson held an alumni night where ex-inmates shared their testimonies. The alumni strolled in like celebrities to the sound of a roaring crowd. One after the other had left this program and bettered their lives. They all had pursued basic and higher education, and are currently employed. Some found the love of their lives and married.

One man had served 25 years only to then earn his GED, bachelors and doctorate degrees.

When he came up to speak, he stood in front of the crowd of inmates and said, “Who wants freedom?”

A few people nodded their heads. He then yelled, “Who here wants to be free?” To those who jeered and raised their hands, he said, “Good, I can work with you.”

More importantly than any degree or job is the change of character these alumni professed. They spoke about personal responsibility, honesty and integrity. They said that humility is necessary to change, and without that willingness to reject who they were, they would have never have made it a foot off the streets.

Most ex-offenders are not

Continued on Pg 11

“LGBTQ”
Continued from Pg 9

cannot see themselves on the television screen—that is past the role of either prostitute or accessory.

Despite the newfound representation of queer individuals in media, violence is still a very real threat against them.

Several studies, as well as one conducted by the Human Rights Campaign, found that one in every 12 transgender individuals will be killed in the United States. In a classroom of 25 kids, that would mean that two of them would be killed because their gender identity does not match the sex they were born into.

There are agencies looking out to curb the violence and tragedy in the queer community in Trenton.

The Triad House is a non-profit home dedicated to providing a safe place for queer youth. Although the home is funded by the state, it also accepts private donations in order to provide for its occupants. One of these donors is The College of New Jersey’s PRISM group.

PRISM hosts an annual drag show to raise money that will directly benefit the Triad House. Because of the services that the Triad House provides, it is not uncommon to see drag performers or other members of the queer com-

munity put on charity events to keep funds flowing into the home.

This past year, PRISM’s event raised several hundred dollars for the Triad House.

As the perceptions surrounding queer youth become more accepting, it is hopeful that the rate of homelessness for this population will decline.

The key method to combat these negative perceptions is to face them head on. Children need to be educated that being gay or transgender does not define who they are as an individual. Just as well, learning that one’s son or daughter is a homosexual does not constitute violence or for them to

be forced out of their home.

When I came out to my father, I was terribly afraid that he would reject me and that made me keep part of my identity hidden from him for years. When I finally came out he said, “You are the son I raised and I will love you no matter who you love.”

When hate is removed from the picture, when love is the motivator behind our actions, we do not have a need for suffering. 🏡

Triad House (LifeTies)

1301 W. State Street
Trenton, NJ, 08618
(609) 394-6747

Hunger Awareness

By Ethel D. Mack

Hunger is like a disease eating away at you and your interior organs, leaving you with little self-control.

While you’re slowly deteriorating you start to drift into a stage of weakness, as the pains of hunger start to take its toll.

Hunger is not something you practice or preach.

Hunger is not something we try to teach.

It falls amongst us one at a time.

It sneaks up on us as though we’d committed a crime.

But there is always someone trying to point you to a way of hope, love, and some tender care.

(Because) knowing, as well as I do, that hunger is not a joke, because having this pain is too much for one to bare.

Not aware of the fact that there are people, places, and things to help you survive.

Being hungry puts you in a lost place; the only difference is now you’re trying to stay alive.

Poetry

“Prisoner Reentry”
Continued from Pg 10

nearly as fortunate as the alumni of Bo-Robinson. Without this sort of support structure, many are doomed to the same life that led them to prison in the first place, which includes poverty, homelessness, and crime.

I hope to see a brighter future

for our justice system where we treat people humanely, offering them correction as well as rehabilitation. Facilities like Bo-Robinson and organizations like A Better Way prove that a second chance is not in vain and that it is never too late for people to turn their lives around and be an inspiration to us all. 🏡



Mercer Alliance to End Homelessness - Publisher
Shayna Innocenti, TCNJ Bonner - Editor-in-Chief / Layout Designer
Steven Rodriguez, TCNJ Bonner - Business Manager / Videographer
Raj Manimaran, TCNJ Bonner - Business Manager
Austin Leigh, TCNJ Student - Layout Designer
Ashley Garguilo, TCNJ Bonner - Artwork Coordinator
Madeline Bell, TCNJ Bonner Staff Manager

Contributing Writers:

Amanda Ippolito, Alexis McLaughlin, David Sanchez, Julie Kayzerman, Maria Minor, Melissa Katz, Michael Nunes and Natalie Kouba

Editorial Review Board:

Tarry Truitt, Mary Gay Abbott-Young, Dennis Micai, Patrick Donohue

Contact:

bonner@tcnj.edu
(609) 771 - 2548

Acknowledgements:

We appreciate all of the support and submission for this project from: Bonner Center for Civic and Community Engagement of TCNJ, Bonner Foundation, Robert Hackett, Christen Foell, HomeFront & ArtSpace, Trenton Area Soup Kitchen A-Team and artists who submitted their inspirational artwork. Special thanks to all of the writers who contributed to this edition.



(Untitled)

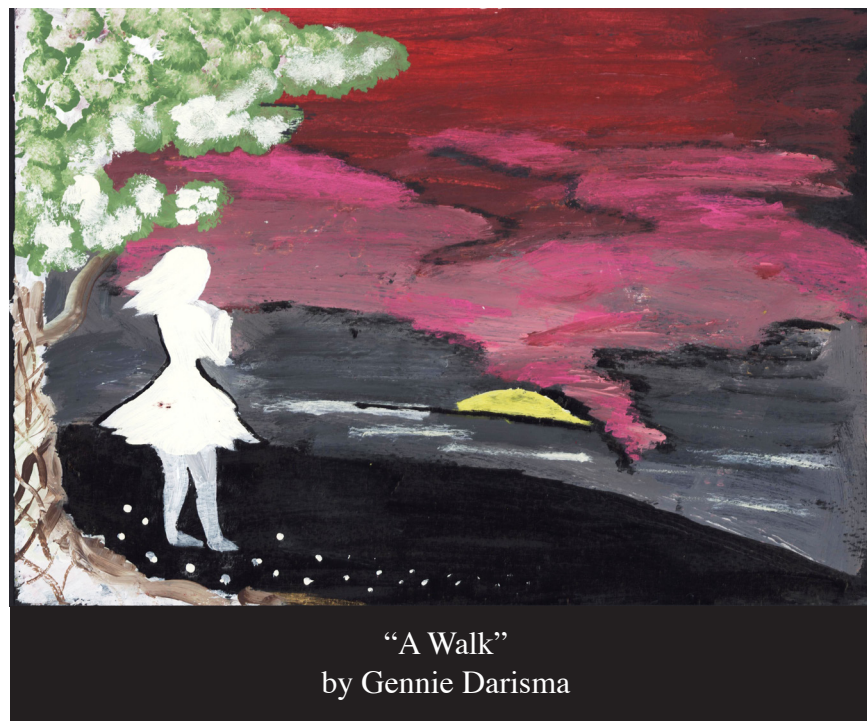
Poetry

By Agnes Abdelwahabe

I am crying all the tears I didn't cry.
Letting out the tears I try to hide.
I don't like this feelin' that's hangin' over me.
So I pray to God to set my soul free.
I'm trying to move forward but yet I am trapped.
Trying to hide my feelings but yet I collapsed.
Returnin' to my shell from the world outside.
And even though you see me you see my pride.
Because I won't let another see me down.
I won't let another person smile at my frowns.
In order to achieve I must believe.
But first I know it starts with me.
But before me it starts with God.
He the shepherd will guide me with his rod.
And he alone will guide me to the light.
And bring me to my future that is oh so bright.
But in the meantime I'm suffering,
Waiting for His words to let my soul sing.
And even though patience is key,
It feels like I have been waitin' for an eternity.



“Woman in Thought”
by Agnus



“A Walk”
by Gennie Darisma

“Foster Care” Continued from Pg 8

from the program include enhanced communication, the ability to collaborate, refined body language and improved self-esteem,” Anglin said. “They also learn the importance of planning and management.”

“Foster children may experience a lack of trusting relationships, as they often move from place to place on their own,” Anglin said. “When they work on a crew with Beyond Expectations, they feel a sense of being needed; the rest of the group is dependent on them.”

Beyond Expectations notes on its website, “The same young people often shunned and overlooked have become the role models.”

Anglin explained that a group of young men – who many people did not want to work with, as they were “rough around the edges” – wrote and produced a short film with Beyond Expectations. After presenting their film at a community screening, they were approached by people who wanted them to speak at their schools.

“If you provide any young person – I don’t care what their background – if you provide them with access to information and resources, you can change their whole lives,” Anglin said.

“When they come to our pro-

gram, we want them to learn everything they possibly can,” Anglin said.

There is a sense of urgency, she said, because they often do not hear from participants again.

“I think they’re surprised at themselves and at how much they are able to achieve in such a short span of time,” Anglin said. “Our classes are typically only 20 hours. It’s less than one day that we have to transform young people who typically are never exposed to this type of program.”

Having marketable skills – such as those learned in Beyond Expectations – is particularly important for teens in foster care, who may not have the resources or connections that other teens have.

In 2011, more than 26,000 children in foster care aged out of the system, according to a 2012 report from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Sources.

According to childrensrights.org, 12-13 percent of those who aged out experienced homelessness. The unemployment rate was 25-55 percent. Those employed had average earnings below the poverty level, and only 38 percent of those employed were working after one year.

To learn more about Beyond Expectations and how to get involved, visit <http://beyondexp.net/>. 