



SPRING 2017

HomeFront's Affordable Homes: A Foundation for Success



Ms. Robinson and her family are delighted to be new homeowners.

Since HomeFront's beginning, we understood that self-sufficiency requires an environment of stability, holistic support—and housing at a reasonable price. We tackled this challenge by providing well-maintained, permanent affordable homes—housing that is a stable platform upon which a family can build a future.

This kind of housing, coupled with ongoing supports for families, is the core of our vision. It is why, in 1999, we formed a separate non-profit to develop affordable rental homes—

Homes by TLC. Homes by TLC provides the bricks and mortar; HomeFront provides the case management and supportive services. The sum of these two programs is what makes our units more than just housing—they are homes.

“When people can live, work and raise their children in a safe place that they can afford,” explains HomeFront Founder Connie Mercer, “and they have the HomeFront family to turn to for support and encouragement, it is life-changing for them. Their dreams become possible.”

The need for more affordable homes is great, and we continue the push for them. HomeFront currently has almost 100 units of dignified, service-enriched housing located in Mercer County—with more in the pipeline!

Ms. Robinson is one of many examples. Ms. Robinson had a 3-year-old daughter and another child on the way. She was leading a difficult life and knew she needed just the kind of stability that our permanent affordable housing could provide. Homes by TLC rented her a one-bedroom apartment and HomeFront provided her case management, including help with personal challenges. She worked her way up from part-time work to a full-time manager. We helped her children by providing academic support, enrichment activities, school supplies, summer camp and Christmas gifts. Soon she moved into one of our larger apartments. Today she is the happy, proud owner of her own home.

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KidZone!

This is the happiest page of our newsletter because it features the happiest faces in all of HomeFront. These faces are everywhere, every day, all year long—but you will see these faces especially at the Family Campus, at tutoring, on field trips, and summer camp. Here are several great examples where smiles may be prompted by volunteers or staff, and they are always contagious.



UPCOMING EVENTS



Art Exhibit & Sale to Benefit HomeFront's ArtSpace



For details visit our website,
www.HomeFrontNJ.org

Parenting Classes

Partnering with Children's Futures, HomeFront has launched an important new program for expecting and new parents residing in the Family Preservation Center at our Family Campus. "Your Child's First Teachers" trains moms and dads how to nurture, clean, feed and interact with the newest members of their families. This class has already helped many families get off to a great start together.



Our Community Cares

What makes us tick? You do! From our very beginning, our volunteers and donors have been and continue to be our heart and soul. Here are just a few wonderful examples of what happens when our community steps in.

A Week of Hope



As part of our Week of Hope in January, 14 information tables were set up in grocery stores, shopping centers, libraries and fitness centers to raise community awareness and recruit volunteers.



Our Week of Hope attracted 237 new volunteers and renewed commitment from many old friends who helped HomeFront in 28 different ways! Among some of the many volunteer activities were the creation of our new diaper pantry, after-school tutoring and making arts & crafts with kids, helping in our food pantry and FreeStore, a career night for our clients, and a baby shower at which baby care items were donated for new and about-to-be moms. Some volunteers brought in their favorite children's books and read them to eager listeners before donating them to the Family Campus library.



Cute and Cuddly

Every year, the children of Village School West show their love and support for the new young lives at HomeFront. This past winter, snuggly blankets arrived to keep sleepy babies wrapped nice and warm.



Home-Cooked Delivery

We have an ongoing need for dinners at our regular meetings with HomeFront families who are beginning to live independently. Sonya Travis and her daughter recently delivered a delicious meal for our group.



Welcome BB&T

HomeFront COO Sarah Steward recently welcomed Christopher Warren, Market President & Senior Vice President of BB&T, for a tour of our Family Campus. We look forward to an ongoing partnership on behalf of HomeFront families.

HomeFront Family Campus Happenings

There's always plenty going on at the Family Campus! Moms and dads in classes, music lessons, children reading in the library, kids doing homework or at the computer or trying out their culinary skills in the teaching kitchen. It's a place full of positive energy.

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Annie Battle, volunteer extraordinaire, along with alumna Kathy Bird, displays our beautiful book, *New Ways of Seeing My World*, which features Kathy's work along with that of many HomeFront clients.



Music Lessons

Another of the Family Campus offerings for kids, music time brings a Westminster Choir College graduate and her ukulele to teach preschoolers songs and even how to make and play their own instruments. There is also a music enrichment program offered for school-age children.



Kids' Yoga Once a week, 10 pre-school residents enter the zone of mindfulness in a guided yoga class taught by Adriana Hansen. Adapting surprisingly quickly to the fundamentals of breathing and poses, they are learning how to calm themselves and concentrate. *Namaste!*

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Kids in the Kitchen

Teaching kids the joys of cooking is the best way to keep them off of junk food and to develop a healthy palate. Once a week, a dozen school-aged residents join Ms. Chris, HomeFront's teaching kitchen manager, for their own version of "The Chew," as they prepare and eat weekly specials such as pizza, soup and apple pie.



Donated Hats

The knitting group of Dutch Neck Presbyterian Church sent us beautifully handmade hats for our children, just in time for the frosty weather!



Notes From Connie's Desk

Building a Legacy

We enjoyed an early spring feeling as we were reinvigorated by the number of new volunteers and renewed support shown by our caring community during our Week of Hope in January. The surge has continued in the numbers of people asking us what they can do to help. We are deeply appreciative of the difference all of you make in the lives of HomeFront families every day, and hope to build on this wave of community action by enlisting your help in securing our future.

As the slashed New Jersey state funding for emergency assistance is our "new normal" and other sources of government support for homeless and at-risk families is threatened, we're focused more than ever on how not to let our desperate families down.

With these challenges to overcome, we're launching a mission-critical initiative: the HomeFront Legacy Giving Program. Over our 25-year history, with your loyal and generous support, we have established an array of nationally-recognized programs and an innovative approach to centralizing

intervention and support services for homeless and at-risk families. We have a deep sense of responsibility to our clients and to you to ensure that we preserve and grow those services. The HomeFront Legacy Giving Program is an important step in helping us fulfill that responsibility for many years to come.

Here is an opportunity for you to continue to have a lasting impact by making a bequest to HomeFront. Your gift may be earmarked for a particular program such as housing, education, child care, or enrichment programs.

I am so gratified that we have had a number of caring supporters step forward to become legacy donors. Two of them are featured below. We hope you will be inspired to join them.

Connie Mercer
HomeFront Founder and CEO

What We Need Most:

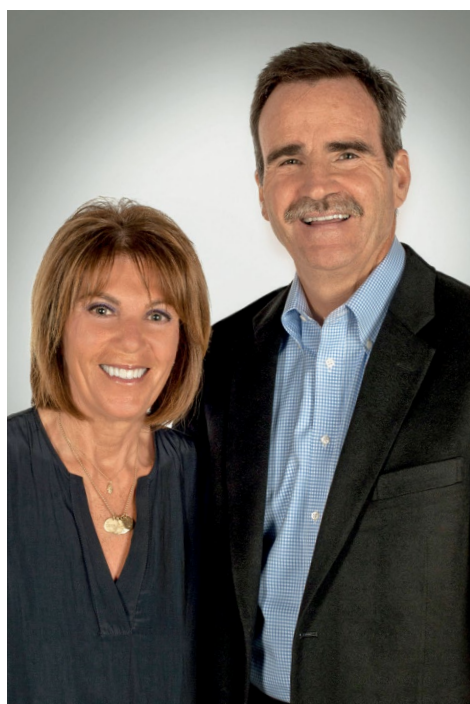
- New and gently used high chairs, strollers, car seats & booster seats
- Can openers; new, small household items
- Bar soaps & body wash
- Feminine hygiene products
- Diapers & wipes
- Unbreakable cups & plates
- Men's hygiene products
- Bedding & towels

To donate items or get more information contact us:
(609) 989-9417 x133, or
MeghanC@HomeFrontNJ.org



On the Cover

Each issue of *HomeFront Matters* features work created by an artist in ArtSpace. This issue's flowers were painted by JoAnn A.



Joyce and Don Hofmann

Be a Hero Today

Make a Legacy Gift

That Will Impact Future Generations

By making a gift to the HomeFront Legacy Giving Program, you will be supporting HomeFront's mission for the long term.

Don and Joyce Hofmann have included HomeFront in their will. Don says, "Joyce and I have included HomeFront in our will because we are inspired by Connie's brilliant vision and the dedicated team who make our clients' lives better every day. We want to help ensure that HomeFront has the resources to continue its crucial work for many years to come."

For more information, contact Connie Mercer by calling her at (609) 989-9417 x103 or visit our website at www.HomeFrontNJ.org, where you'll find a tab on our home page for this topic.

Celebrate Mother's Day

Honor a Special Woman in Your Life with a Tribute Card...
...and Give a Homeless Mom a Gift of Hope

This Mother's Day, consider honoring a special woman in your life with a donation to HomeFront's Mother's Fund. This is a dedicated reserve fund that enables homeless moms to do something special for their children. They may access the fund to pay for something they could not otherwise afford—perhaps a baseball glove, a trip to the movies, or money to go on a class trip—things many of us take for granted.

When you make a tax-deductible donation to HomeFront, we will send a beautiful card created by a homeless mom in our ArtSpace program, with a greeting from you to any person you designate.

To be a part of this wonderful tradition,
please use the enclosed remittance
envelope and return by April 30. Or
donate online at www.HomeFrontNJ.org.



Help Us Save! If you'd like to receive HomeFront Matters online, let us know and we'll add you to our paperless list. Contact homefront@homefrontnj.org



Unless someone like
you cares a whole
awful lot, nothing is
going to get better.
It's not.
— The Lorax, Dr. Seuss



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