

# ROSIE'S PLACE NEWS



## SPRING 2018

Food Programs Meet a Growing Need

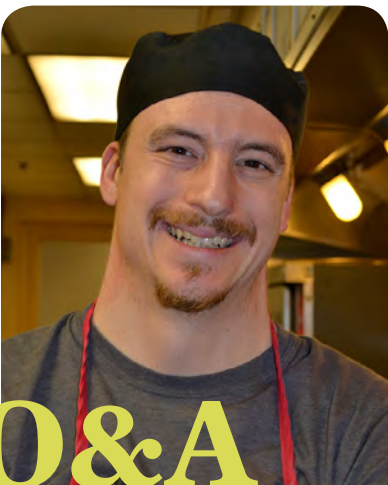
Our President on Food Insecurity

Federal Budget Cuts Affect Our Guests

Annual Breakfast Features Local Restauranters

Honor Your Mother and Support Our Work

An Updated Wish List



## Q&A

**MATT PASTORE**

FOOD PROGRAM SHIFT COORDINATOR

Food Program Shift Coordinator Matt Pastore began his work overseeing breakfast and lunch in the Rosie's Place Dining Room in August. He comes to us following five years at The Cottage Wellesley and other Wolfe Management Group restaurants, rapidly working his way through the ranks, from dish washer to sous chef to general manager. While he admits to looking for a change after experiencing some job burnout, he intentionally sought out a workplace like Rosie's Place.

### Tell us about your role with volunteers.

The meal is planned and prepped by other staff; my biggest role is in providing an excellent experience for the five breakfast and 10 or more lunch volunteers who assist us every day. For many people, it's their first time here, and I want to get them interested and excited. I'm proud to have them see how impressive Rosie's Place is, that we're efficient with the money we have for meals. I think it's a special place.

### How do you apply your restaurant background here?

I feel the most important part of my job is to serve the guests. They live through a lot of unfairness in their daily lives, so we try to treat everyone equally and fairly. I want them to know they can rely on us; we are that touchstone in their life. I enjoy greeting guests at the Dining Room door and learning their names. Then I circulate around the room, like a restaurant general manager. It makes sense to try to solve small problems ahead of time so they don't turn into big problems. When it's time to serve the meal at the table, I like to have the food plated with the same care and skill that we use in fine dining. I think the message "Everybody is loved" can be communicated through food.

### You made quite a career change. Has the job been what you expected?

Yes, I knew I'd take a pay cut, but that's fine because I love everything about being here. I'm excited to come to work every day. I grew up on a farm and while this city gave me enormous opportunity, it also showed me another side. After working in restaurant dish pits with people living on the edge, paycheck to paycheck, I wanted to give back to the community, to work for them. I want to feed the people. Right now, faith is what drives me.

## Food Access for Our Guests Is a Priority

A hot meal among friends was the first promise of Rosie's Place when we opened our doors on Easter Sunday, 1974. We have provided millions of meals since then, as feeding poor and homeless women and their children continues to be at the heart of the critical services we offer.

According to the organization Feeding America, one in eight people in the United States currently struggles with hunger. The term "food insecurity" describes a household's inability to provide enough food for every person to live an active, healthy life. Families that are just getting by can find themselves quickly strapped for money for groceries after one unplanned expense. Food insecurity is difficult to solve because the underlying causes—poverty, unemployment/underemployment and inconsistent access to enough healthy food—are often interconnected. Rosie's Place's food programs strive to provide steady access to food for our guests.

Currently, Rosie's Place serves breakfast, lunch and dinner five days a week and brunch and dinner on weekends, 104,000 meals a year. When a woman enters our bright and inviting Dining Room, she is assured her meal will be both nutritious and delicious.

"I've been here almost 18 years, and our menus have never been healthier," says Food Program Manager Ruthie McDonough. "We've established certain standards: each meal I plan has to be low-fat, low-sodium, low-sugar and high in protein and fiber. We also try for three or more servings of vegetables and a serving of fruit at each meal."

Breakfast usually includes hot oatmeal, yogurt and fruit. Lunch and dinner begin with a vegetable-based soup and bread. A review of a recent week of menus reveals offerings such as a lunch of orange garlic chicken over Japanese noodles with sautéed carrots and leeks,

and green beans, and a dinner featuring salmon, asparagus and orzo salad, with a tossed green salad. A call for "seconds" is made when everyone has been served. "We want women to feel like this is their home, and a good meal served to them at their tables can make them feel special," adds Ruthie.

Beyond providing sustenance for the body, meal time at Rosie's Place offers a setting for guests to lift their spirits by socializing with old friends and making new ones. As a means of building community, a range of musicians perform—usually during dinners—and encourage guests to sing along and even take part in creating music themselves.

### A growing Food Pantry

At the Rosie's Place Food Pantry, we serve far more women who are poor than are homeless. They also come for meals, often with their children, to stretch modest food budgets. Last year, approximately 2,000 women per month took home 20-40 pounds of fresh and non-perishable groceries. Thus far in 2018, we have seen an increase of 10%, as many women are losing or having to re-qualify for food stamp benefits. "We are seeing some women who haven't come to the pantry for months, who now need to supplement their grocery purchases while their new SNAP (food stamp) applications are in process," says Sharon Briggs, Assistant Food Pantry Manager.

As guests discover in the Dining Room—and throughout Rosie's Place—we present our services with their dignity in mind. This approach is carried into the pantry where, rather than guests receiving pre-bagged groceries, they can select what they like and "shop" among our shelves. Guests visit our non-perishable and produce rooms to fill bags with staples such as cereal, peanut butter and rice, as well as meat, dairy products and a wide variety of fruits and vegetables.

Guests have started to use a kiosk in our lobby that offers the convenience of signing up for a pantry visit in advance. And recent renovations to the pantry and storage area, donated by The Fallon Company and Turner Construction, will further enhance our guests' experience.

We are able to keep our Food Pantry well-stocked thanks to our relationship with the Greater Boston Food Bank, grants from foundations and donations from generous individuals and groups who hold food drives on our behalf. We also offer food rescued from farmer's markets, supermarkets and Amazon, a new partner that each week donates 500 pounds of fresh and shelf stable food, including gluten-free and vegan items.

### Volunteers are essential

Our food programs could not operate as effectively as they do without the legion of volunteers who assist us in the Dining Room and Food Pantry. Each day, approximately 25-35 adults and young people help prepare and serve meals, and clean up after breakfast, lunch and dinner alongside our staff. Another five-10 volunteers assist guests in the pantry and stock the shelves. A third group packs bags of groceries, taking dietary restriction information into account, and delivers the food to 23 homebound women each month. We are fortunate that so many individuals and school, corporate, church and civic groups are committed to playing a role in alleviating hunger among the low-income women in our community. They make our work possible.

"Most of the guests who visit us are working hard and trying to make ends meet," explains Sharon. "They shouldn't have to choose between eating and paying rent. Our guests should be guaranteed some food security in our society."

## NILDA'S STORY

Nilda (or Nelly as she calls herself) came to Rosie's Place after fleeing a dangerous situation in Florida. She'd spent years in an abusive relationship, with the responsibility of caring for her young son. There were many times she wanted to leave her husband, but was too afraid to do so. She also had no financial independence, as he withheld her earnings from her.

Eventually, Nelly worked up her courage to divorce her husband. In later years, she moved in with her now-grown son and his three children. This was a happy time for Nelly: she worked at a job she liked and watched her grandchildren in her spare time.

Her ex-husband then reentered her life, pressuring her to marry

him again. When she refused, she once again feared for her safety. Feeling desperate to get away from her ex and without options, she knew she had to move away.

With no place to turn, Nelly ended up in Boston. Her first call was to Rosie's Place.

We immediately helped her connect with resources in the area. She ended up spending most nights at the city shelter and her days with us. She took advantage of meals, Food Pantry, housing search services and group workshops. She obtained a locker and took showers here, too.

"Once I arrived at Rosie's Place, I felt I could breathe," Nelly says. "They gave me hope."

After 2 1/2 years of homelessness, she received a Section 8 voucher and moved to Brockton. But she had her eye on the low-income building across the street from our location at 889 Harrison Avenue, and when the opportunity to move there in October presented itself, she jumped at it. It was important to her that she maintain the support network she'd created here. Nelly is at Rosie's Place at least two days every week—and often more—for meals and activities. She says eating here and visiting our Food Pantry helps her food stamps last longer each month.

Nelly now has a circle of friends at Rosie's Place and the freedom to live her life as she chooses. She says, "When I feel lonely, I know I can just cross the street and feel the love."



## OUR PRESIDENT ON FOOD INSECURITY

Dear Friends:

Meals at Rosie's Place are unlike those served anywhere else. Breakfast...brunch on the weekends...lunch...dinner. We serve more than 100,000 meals a year in our Dining Room, the true heart of Rosie's Place. At lunch and dinner, we always have homemade soup and appetizers or "openers" to tide a hungry woman over to the main meal. Every woman is served tableside by our friendly volunteers, and every woman gets a plate of nutritious, tasty food.

A visit to our Food Pantry is unlike receiving food anywhere else. Our guests—generally, 120 women per day who shop once per month—are able to select food from our pantry shelves with the help of a dedicated volunteer. In addition to dry goods, women can select fresh milk, eggs, meat and produce in our new produce room created by The Fallon Company, Turner Construction and their friends. Homebound women are visited by volunteers who deliver bags of food on a regular basis.

At Rosie's Place, we see women every day who are struggling to walk the razor's edge that keeps them from hunger and homelessness. No matter how they scrimp and save, no matter how hard they try, the inescapable costs of housing, heat, electricity, transportation, non-prescription drugs, child care and more keep them always on the precipice. These women—and often their children—crowd our Dining Room and Food Pantry.

Government and advocacy sources say that in 2016, 12.3% of U.S. households were food insecure, meaning that they had difficulty at some time during the year providing enough food for all their family members because of a lack of resources. That level is essentially unchanged from 2015, but down significantly from 14% in 2014. Lower food insecurity rates mirror trends in other economic indicators over this time period, including decreasing poverty rates and lower food prices.

Food-insecure households can be separated into those with low or very low food security. In 2016, 4.9% of all U.S. households experienced very low food security, also unchanged from 2015. In this more severe range of food insecurity, hungry people had to eat less food, and their normal eating patterns were disrupted because they could not afford enough food to eat.

While official statistics show that overall food insecurity is down slightly, we continue to see hunger in all our programs...at our Franklin Field public housing satellite, in working with parents at the Boston Public Schools and at nine local courthouses. Women make hard choices every day—between paying for food and paying rent; between having breakfast and having the MBTA ticket to get to court; between having the resources for lunch or for dinner.

We try to help all hungry women directly: By inviting them to our cheerful and busy Dining Room and by serving more than 2,000 per month with bags of groceries to take home.

We couldn't do this without you. Your financial support and volunteer efforts make these things possible. Many thanks for all your caring and help!

With hope,

*Sue Marsh*

Sue



Please support Rosie's Place by making a donation online at [www.rosiesplace.org/springnews18](http://www.rosiesplace.org/springnews18) or by sending a gift in the enclosed envelope. We thank you!

ROSIE'S PLACE NEWS is published three times a year to inform our friends about activities and events taking place throughout the Rosie's Place community. OUR MISSION is to provide a safe and nurturing environment to help poor and homeless women to maintain their dignity, seek opportunity, and find security in their lives.

**President** Sue Marsh  
**Vice President of External Relations** Leemarie Mosca  
**Director of Communications | Editor** Michele Chausse  
**Communications Coordinator | Contributor** Daniela Serrano  
**Design** Colette O'Neill

We'd love to hear from you! Please contact us with your comments at 617.318.0210.

## Double Your Impact Now Through Monthly Giving

We strive to improve our guests' lives every day and our *Friends for All Seasons* supporters play an important role in making this happen. Our monthly giving program is an easy and convenient way to give year-round with scheduled credit card or checking account payments. With a minimum monthly gift of \$15, you allow us to put your money to work right away.



Longtime monthly donor Joan LeBel (left) believes in year-round giving, and she has provided Rosie's Place with a generous Challenge Grant. **When you join our Friends for All Seasons program, your first monthly gift will be matched in full—up to \$2,500 through April 30, 2018.** By acting now, you can double your support for women in need.

**And if you are already a Friend for All Seasons, and want to increase your monthly gift,** Joan will match your new gift, dollar for dollar, up to \$2,500 through April 30, 2018.

Other benefits of automatic monthly giving include:

- Administrative costs are reduced, allowing your gift to have more of an impact
- You will be kept up-to-date on our work through the Rosie's Place newsletter and invitations to special events but will not receive any other requests for support
- You will receive one tax receipt in January summarizing your giving for the year
- You will be able to give at a level over a 12-month period that you may not have thought possible as a one-time donation

With this monthly commitment, we can continue to provide meals, shelter, advocacy, groceries, educational and employment opportunities, and so much more to 12,000 poor and homeless women each year. And we can use your gift with confidence, knowing we can count on you throughout the year.

Please act now to take advantage of this limited opportunity to double the impact of your donation as a *Friend for All Seasons!*

**Become a Friend for All Seasons today!**

**Online:** [www.rosiesplace.org/fas](http://www.rosiesplace.org/fas)

**Phone:** Katie Amoro at 617.318.0211

**Mail:** Provide your credit card information or a check in the enclosed envelope and check the monthly giving box.

## QUOTABLE

"I originally heard about Rosie's Place because my parents and some of their friends had gotten in the habit of donating every year. In high school, I spent the summer in the Social Justice Institute working in the Dining Room and Food Pantry. I had been looking for an opportunity to come back to Rosie's Place since then because it had always stuck with me how every employee of Rosie's Place approached the guests with compassion and empathy. I was really excited to be able to see another side of Rosie's Place through working in the Development office this past semester. I would say it has helped confirm for me that I want to work in the non-profit sector, as well as expanded my view of what that could look like."

Reflections from **Claire Bunn**, who interned at Rosie's Place for a semester after her freshman year of college.



CLAIRE BUNN



LEAH

"I'm glad I found this place, I really am, because it's not pretty out there."

**Leah**, a homeless guest, commenting in an NBC10 news story about being sheltered at Rosie's Place during a cold snap in late December.

"I see so much similarity between what we do in the hospitality industry and the way that Rosie's Place works and functions, the way they treat their guests...especially in the dignity and respect with which the women are treated." - Karen

"Rosie's Place is the most special organization I've actually ever encountered...the reason is that level of empowerment that they build in their guests. Just the fact that they call the women 'guests' says everything from the start." - Nancy

"Feeding people is my job. So when we look at charities to be involved with, to partner with, we look at community, and that they (Rosie's Place) are feeding people is primary to us. And it's also my job to give back." - Andy

Local restaurateurs and Rosie's Place supporters (from left) **Karen Akunowicz**, **Nancy Cushman**, and **Andy Husbands** shared some insights on their commitment to community in a panel discussion during our Leadership Council Annual Breakfast February 28.



KAREN AKUNOWICZ, NANCY CUSHMAN & ANDY HUSBANDS



# COMMUNITY of FRIENDS



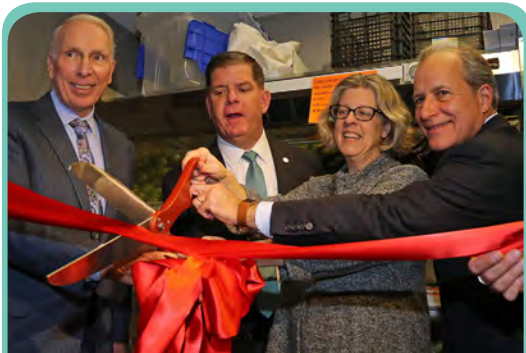
Our wonderful supporters came through again this year at holiday time! Many thanks to the 86 individuals and community groups we worked with to provide 857 women and 186 children throughout our programs with holiday gifts, the most ever distributed! Left: At the annual party at our Franklin Field satellite office, manager **Catherine Louis** ensured that 98 children received a toy and 31 teenagers received a gift and/or \$25 gift card. Right: His goal was 2,018 but at his New Year's Eve party in Boston, **Andrew Sullivan** far surpassed that goal when he collected an incredible 2,795 hats and gloves from his guests...for our guests.



This year, two great friends of ours—**Scott Harmon** and **Karen Sikola**—are running in the Boston Marathon to benefit Rosie's Place! Together they hope to raise \$10,000, or more, to support our services by the race date, April 16. There's time to make a gift today at [www.rosiesplace.org/news\\_and\\_events/upcoming\\_events](http://www.rosiesplace.org/news_and_events/upcoming_events). Thank you!



WBUR hosted its 15th annual reading of *A Christmas Carol* at the Omni Parker House in December, continuing a tradition begun by Charles Dickens in 1867. Thanks to the talents of WBUR journalists (from left) **Jack Lepiarz**, **Bill Littlefield**, **Robin Young**, **Meghna Chakrabarti** and **David Boeri**, \$23,500 was raised to benefit Rosie's Place.



We recently celebrated the completion of renovations to our Food Pantry and storage area with a ribbon cutting. We are grateful to Joe Fallon and The Fallon Company, Turner Construction Company and many others who generously donated their services to this vital project. From left are **Joe Fallon**, President and CEO, The Fallon Company, **Boston Mayor Marty Walsh**, Rosie's Place President **Sue Marsh** and **Peter Davoren**, President and CEO of Turner Construction Company.

## TAKING ACTION AT ROSIE'S PLACE

President Trump has released his budget proposal for FY2019, and among the cuts to safety net programs is a 30% reduction in funding for food stamps (SNAP). SNAP is our nation's most effective anti-hunger program, helping one in eight Americans put food on the table. This cut will harm every type of SNAP participant, including the women we serve at Rosie's Place: the elderly, individuals with disabilities, low-income working mothers with children, and those struggling to find work. Half of the SNAP benefits would be replaced with a "Harvest Box," a demeaning collection of non-perishable foods with less nutritional value than the groceries a recipient could buy through SNAP. Please contact U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren and Senator Edward Markey and your U.S. Representative and ask them to take a stand for their constituents by protecting SNAP and other poverty-reduction programs in the federal budget.

Locally, a successful food program will soon be suspended in the state. The Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) created the Healthy Incentive Program (HIP), which automatically enrolls SNAP households. HIP then matches purchases using SNAP of local fruits and vegetables at farmer markets, farm stands, mobile markets and community-supported agriculture farm share programs. The HIP program has been highly effective in its first year. More than half of the HIP purchases are made by older adults who can benefit from fresh, healthy foods, and HIP has significantly boosted SNAP purchases of locally-grown fruits and vegetables.



The HIP benefits are set to be suspended on April 15th unless the Massachusetts Legislature acts to fully fund the program. Please call the Governor's Office at 617.725.4005 and contact your Legislators in support of a supplemental budget to fill the gap between the suspension and the new fiscal year.

Please call Director of Public Policy Mehreen Butt at 617.442.9322 for other ways you can help. Contact information for state and federal legislators can be found at [www.malegislature.gov/Search/FindMyLegislator](http://www.malegislature.gov/Search/FindMyLegislator).

Check this space going forward for news about our Public Policy efforts and ways you can get involved. Thank you!

# DID You KNOW?



**Rosie's Place staff coordinated events** and activities for guests during February, Black History Month. Women took part in civics classes, art projects and watched topical movies such as *Loving* and *Hidden Figures*. At the celebratory dinner prepared by staff and their families, guests were treated to a dance performance, performed in a talent show, took photos, competed in trivia and enjoyed the meal of traditional Southern and Caribbean food.



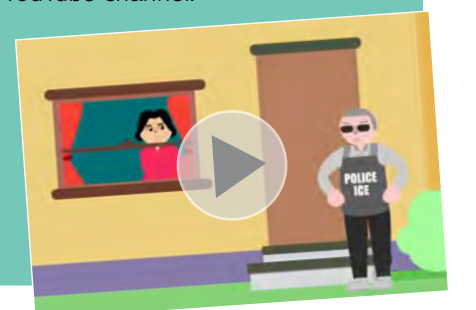
Please look for the **Boston Globe GRANT program** again this year. We are thrilled that we were among the top five non-profits with the most votes in 2017, which enabled us to place two quarter-page ads in the paper. We ask all subscribers to select Rosie's Place when they send in their ad vouchers. Thank you!



**More than 100 guests** attended our annual "Day to Love Yourself" event, an afternoon that offers women a chance to pamper themselves—mind, body and spirit. This is a special day for our guests, whose daily struggles with poverty and homelessness leave little time for themselves. Continuing the tradition begun by his mother, and now held in her honor, volunteer Andrew Maggiore, along with his friends and family, recruits generous local vendors to provide a variety of wellness and beauty services to guests, including massages, manicures, makeovers, journaling, aromatherapy, glamour photos to take home and more.



**Our Legal Program**, in partnership with the non-profit Artists for Humanity, recently developed a series of three 30-40 second animated vignettes to convey important messages for guests and others in the community concerned about their rights as immigrants. With a minimum of words, they cover "Right to not open the door without a warrant," "Right to remain silent," and "Make a safety plan." The videos can be viewed on the Rosie's Place YouTube channel.





## Mother's Day Giving

### "Honor Your Mother by Helping Another" at Boston Interiors

Boston Interiors is again celebrating Mother's Day through a special partnership with Rosie's Place. Boston Interiors will donate partial proceeds of its sales over Mother's Day weekend, May 12 and 13, to support our programs and services. In addition, handmade items from the artisans at our Women's Craft Cooperative, including earrings, necklaces, bracelets, key chains and book marks, will be available at each store for purchase from April 13 through Mother's Day. One-hundred percent of the proceeds go directly to Rosie's Place. Visit Boston Interiors in *Bedford, NH, Burlington, Dedham, Hanover, Mashpee, Natick, Saugus, Stoughton* and *Westborough* to take part in this Mother's Day giving event or go to [www.bostoninteriors.com](http://www.bostoninteriors.com) for more information.

boston interiors



### Special Edition Set

This year our Women's Craft Cooperative artisans have designed special items for our new Organics collection, featuring light green sea glass and sterling-silver plated tubing. In addition to the pieces shown in the photo, the collection will feature additional necklaces, earrings and a bracelet. You can put together a three-piece set you or your mother will wear all summer long! The set is yours for a donation of \$65. Order by noon on May 8 and we'll mail with

special gift wrap to your loved one. Visit [www.rosiesplace.org/shop](http://www.rosiesplace.org/shop) to view these and many more jewelry and gift items perfect for the holiday.



## spring WISH LIST

During the renovation of our Food Pantry and storage area, we've been unable to accept as many donations as usual. With its completion, we are sharing a list of the **only** items we are now seeking. We thank you for your patience!

- New regular and travel-size toiletries (including maxi-pads)
- Lip balm and sunscreen
- New and gently-used bath towels
- New and gently-used bras
- New underwear and socks
- New t-shirts
- New slippers and bathrobes
- Jeans
- Sweatpants and yoga pants
- Adult paperback books and children's books, hardcover and soft
- Non-perishable food
- Mugs

**All donations can be dropped off at Rosie's Place between 8:30a.m. and 4:30p.m. Monday through Friday. As always, your generous support of our work is greatly appreciated!**



### SAFE AND SOUND GALA

WEDNESDAY, MAY 2, 2018, 6:00PM

THE CYCLORAMA AT THE  
BOSTON CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Please join us for an evening of food, friends and philanthropy at our annual Safe and Sound gala. Enjoy delicious cuisine by Boston's best chefs and beautifully paired wines, as well as an opportunity to bid on premier, insider-only silent and live auction packages. Tickets and sponsorship opportunities available. To support the event or for more information, contact **Kristen Leonard** at [kleonard@rosiesplace.org](mailto:kleonard@rosiesplace.org) or **617.318.0232** or visit [www.rosiesplace.org/gala](http://www.rosiesplace.org/gala).

### FUNNY WOMEN...SERIOUS BUSINESS

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2018

BOSTON CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION CENTER, BOSTON

Join Rosie's Place at our annual luncheon—the best in Boston! This year's featured speaker is **Edwidge Danticat**, an award-winning Haitian-American novelist, whose writing, including *Breath, Eyes, Memory*, addresses national identity, mother-daughter relationships and politics. For sponsorship or ticket information, contact **Katie Amoro** at [kamoro@rosiesplace.org](mailto:kamoro@rosiesplace.org) or **617.318.0211** or visit [www.rosiesplace.org/fwsb](http://www.rosiesplace.org/fwsb).

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
BOSTON, MA  
PERMIT NO. 14526

[www.rosiesplace.org](http://www.rosiesplace.org)  
889 Harrison Avenue  
Boston, MA 02118  
ROSIE'S PLACE

