

ROSIE'S PLACE NEWS



WINTER 2016

A Mother and Daughter Find Hope at Rosie's Place

Brightening the Season for the Women We Serve

Ways to Get Involved This December

Recognizing Our Community of Friends

Our Winter Wish List

Consider Scheduled Giving in 2017



Q&A

ISABELLE CETOUTE
ADVOCACY MANAGER, ROSIE'S PLACE

After a decade in different roles at Rosie's Place, **Isabelle Cetoute** was named Advocacy Manager in July. In her new position, she oversees the direct services provided to guests by a nine-member multi-lingual Advocacy team and Overnight Program staff. Isabelle is looking toward a holiday season where we could see more guests than ever at Rosie's Place.

Why is it important to make the holidays special for guests?

Many of the women we see at Rosie's Place this time of year are not connected with their families, or they're new to Boston. We don't want the holidays to go by for them without some kind of celebration. In many cases, these women come to think of us as their family, so through activities and gifts, we try to show them how important they are to our community. Our message is "We're here for you."

What are some of the ways we work to brighten these days?

Thanks to the many donations from our friends in the community, we're able to give each guest a bath and body gift set and a gift card. Last year we gave gifts to 500 women and we anticipate adding 200 more this season. Guests served by our outreach and overnight programs also receive gifts, as do the women with children we see through our outreach van, at the Boston schools we serve and at our satellite office at Franklin Field, who all get toys for their families. We organize holiday parties, help connect mothers and grandmothers with community toy programs, and compile lists of other holiday assistance resources available to our guests.

What is the mood at Rosie's Place?

All staff look forward to the holidays every year. We try to make everything festive, including the dinner we serve on Christmas. Last year, I was helping a guest with a utility payment and then offered her the bath gift set and gift card. She was surprised and became emotional. "It's a beautiful thing," she said. If we can lift guests' spirits, it lifts us too!



Olivia and Alicia



Rosie's Place Keeps Mother and Daughter Close at Holidays

It was more than 20 years ago that Olivia Thomas, a proud woman raising a large family on her own, first came to Rosie's Place. She'd heard from a friend that she and her children could find a healthy meal and receive some groceries to help stretch her meager budget. Rosie's Place quickly became a place of security for Olivia, and she knew she could count on our help when she needed it. So it was no surprise that years later when her adult daughter Alicia found herself overwhelmed, she remembered her childhood visits here and she, too, sought assistance from Rosie's Place.

In October of 2014, Alicia found herself in position she never expected. Her mother, Olivia, suffered multiple strokes that left her in a coma at only 57 years old. Alicia was appointed her mother's guardian and took on the responsibility of fighting for her mother's recovery, which doctors said was unlikely.

Olivia and Alicia had an especially strong bond that developed when Alicia was a baby. "I was sick when I was born and Mom said that all the extra attention and worry really connected us," Alicia says. "My mother and I did everything together—shopping, cooking, going to the hairdresser. She was at my house all the time."

Alicia took over paying the rent on her mother's apartment while she was in the hospital so she would have a home to return to. This was no easy feat, as Alicia worked full-time as a case manager for the Department of Transitional Assistance and struggled to pay her own rent while raising two young children with little or no child support. She sought help from Rosie's Place when the financial burden became too much to bear.

At Rosie's Place Alicia was assigned a stabilization worker who visited her at home to ensure that she would not jeopardize her own apartment while trying to hold onto her mother's. After many months, Olivia came out of the coma but was still unable to speak or walk and was beset with a host of other health problems, including failing kidneys. In spite of such discouraging news, Alicia never lost faith that

her mother would leave the rehabilitation facility and resume her life. Realizing that Alicia wouldn't be able to continue paying two rents, Rosie's Place helped her to combine their two housing vouchers, allowing for them to have one larger, shared apartment that the whole family could live in. Rosie's Place also covered the cost of a service to clean her mother's apartment and move her most treasured belongings to Alicia's house. Alicia was relieved to know that when her mother was able to return home, there'd be a place for her with her family.

"Alicia is one of the most determined women I have ever worked with," says Michelle Bell, her housing stabilization worker. "She has taken on so much, practically on her own, and we're doing what we can to back her up every step of the way."

According to Alicia, she looks to Rosie's Place as a support system—a place where she can walk in with her children for meals and a visit to the food pantry, where she can get help with rent and electric bill payments if she falls behind, where she can get connected to other services she and her mother need. "They recently helped me look into immigration issues for my mom's Social Security eligibility," she says.

Remarkably, Olivia has made strides that far exceed expectations: she has regained her ability to speak and has a very clear memory. Best yet, she is at a new rehab hospital that is working with her to build up her strength so she can manage at home. "Her dream is to walk into church with me, and I believe it can happen," Alicia says.

As the holidays approach, Rosie's Place is helping Alicia become ready to move into a new four-bedroom apartment and, after two long years, to have her mom back with her family again. It will be the best gift she's ever had.

"Even when she couldn't respond, my mom knew I was there all along. She never gave up on me years ago. And I'm never, ever going to give up on her."

OUR PRESIDENT ON OUR UNWAVERING COMMITMENT

Dear Friends:



Since its founding in 1974, Rosie's Place has always protected and supported poor and homeless women with nowhere else to turn—and that won't change. With the divisive and mean spirited campaign season behind us, many of our guests worry that their lives and those of their children will be hurt by new or resurrected policies by the new President and Congress. We assure our guests—and you—that Rosie's Place will stand by our guests. Our mission remains what it has always been: to provide a safe and nurturing environment for poor and homeless women to maintain their dignity, seek opportunity and find security in their lives.

The women who arrive at our door face so many obstacles on their way to get help. They have so few resources that small mistakes can be fatal. A late fee, a fine, a charge to provide a report or a document—it seems sometimes that our guests are disadvantaged not only by big problems but an onslaught of small ones too. They depend on overburdened public systems and friends and family that are stretched to the maximum. Some of our guests are mentally ill, or addicted; some lack education or the ability to speak English. Others struggle with reading and writing, physical disabilities or chronic illnesses. Almost all of our guests are tired and frustrated. Their lives are frequently disorganized and chaotic. Women come to us lonely, isolated, bored and unhappy. Small wonder that by the time a woman finds Rosie's Place, she is at the end of very long, very frayed rope.

At Rosie's Place, we recognize that our guests are real people who have both strengths and weaknesses. They are not the sum of their problems, and what we see at Rosie's Place is not truly who they are. They are whole people. We work hard to remember that, and to see the woman behind the hurts and losses.

The days ahead for Rosie's Place are challenging ones. The numbers of women in our Dining Room have increased, and the gathering of women seeking help from our Advocates starts at dawn and ends at night. More and more of our guests are working, but come to Rosie's Place for help because almost all of their wages go to pay the rent. We are determined to meet the need of every woman who comes to our door, because we know that, for them, we are their last resort. We are confident that we will meet the need of every woman who comes to our door, because we know that we can count on you to help us.

As the new year begins, we ask you to stand with us as we examine the ideas our leaders present to address the serious problems our nation faces. We ask that you keep our guests in your view as you consider the proposals that will come from the White House, the State House and Capitol Hill. We ask that you do what you have always done—take up the cause of poor women as they struggle to live lives of dignity and safety.

The story of the beginnings of Rosie's Place creates the context in which we do our work. Our mission and our origin are so tied together they make it obvious what Rosie's Place should and shouldn't do. We should treat our guests as whole people. We shouldn't take government money because then they'll try to tell us what to do. We should welcome every woman with unconditional love. We shouldn't underestimate the power of each of us to make change. We should remember that Rosie's Place is as much about social justice as direct service. The power of our creation story—as the first shelter for women in the nation—is that it guides our work to this very day.

Thank you for all your love and support, it is returned a hundred times from everyone at Rosie's Place. And the happiest of holidays to you all.

With faith,

Sue Marsh

Sue

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.

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

5 WAYS TO GIVE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON



Winter Evening in the Boston Public Garden by Thomas Dunlay

Every holiday season brings more women in need, both at Rosie's Place and in our community. We make a special effort at this time to reach out to often forgotten women to provide them with warmth and comfort. Here are some ways you can help us brighten the season for our guests:

1. COLLECT NEEDED HOLIDAY ITEMS

Coordinate a drive with your workplace, school or family to collect holiday gifts for our guests. For more information, visit www.rosiesplace.org/drives. Our most-needed items include:

- \$25 gift cards (CVS, Walgreens, Target, Payless, Old Navy)
- Bath and body gift sets with lotion, body wash and body spray (from stores such as Bath & Body Works)
- Sets of hats, scarves and gloves
- New wrapping paper, ribbons and tape

2. CATER A MEAL IN OUR DINING ROOM

Gather a group of up to 10 coworkers or friends to prepare and serve a meal for 150 to 200 women. Underwrite the \$350 cost for the entire meal by splitting the donation up among your group or finding a sponsor (such as your employer or church) to support you. Contact volunteer@rosiesplace.org to get started.

3. SEND CUSTOMIZED HOLIDAY CARDS

Our 10-packs (\$18), variety packs (\$24) and custom orders of 50+ are available in seven designs. We've brought back *Winter Evening in the Boston Public Garden* by acclaimed local artist Thomas Dunlay, adding another timeless Boston winter image to our collection. View designs and order at www.rosiesplace.org/holidaycards.

4. BENEFIT ROSIE'S PLACE WITH AN EVENT

Consider making Rosie's Place the beneficiary of your community event or holiday gathering. To organize a drive for food, coats and other winter essentials or holiday gifts, contact kamoro@rosiesplace.org.

5. DONATE TO ROSIE'S PLACE

Visit www.rosiesplace.org/give to support our vital programs and services for 12,000 women each year with a one-time gift or monthly donation that funds our work year-round!

Rosie's Place ACCEPTS NO GOVERNMENT FUNDS AND RELIES INSTEAD ON COMMITTED SUPPORTERS LIKE YOU!



JEANNETTE WALLS

"Dad never did build us that big old fancy house [the glass castle] but I believe that in sitting down and thinking about it and planning it, that he gave me a hope and a dream for the future...that I deserved something better than what I had... he gave me the gift of hope. And in touring Rosie's Place yesterday, I kept thinking about that gift because I think that is one of the things that Rosie's Place gives its women. They kept referring to the people who use the facilities as guests...they make them feel wanted and loved. Despite what is being said in certain circles, words are important"

Jeannette Walls, author of *The Glass Castle*, sharing a significant childhood experience, excerpted from her keynote speech at the 2016 FWSB luncheon, October 13.

QUOTABLE

"I've been coming to Rosie's Place just about every day for the last year and a half. One of the things that drew me in was the level of engagement—encouraging women to speak up for themselves and empower themselves, rather than having other people speak up for us. It makes a huge difference in a person's self-confidence."

Aubri E., a guest whose story of addiction, homelessness and recovery was shown at the 2016 FWSB luncheon, speaking about the difference Rosie's Place has made in her life.



AUBRI E.



SENATOR ELIZABETH WARREN

"I believe in the work done by Rosie's Place. You are making a real difference in our communities...I want to say 'thank you.' Thank you to the staff, the volunteers, the supporters who help make this possible. You strengthen our community and make this city a better place for all our families, and we are all deeply grateful to you."

Excerpted from remarks by Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren, speaking via video at the 2016 FWSB luncheon.

COMMUNITY *of* FRIENDS



Our annual FWSB luncheon broke records again this year, raising \$750,000—15% more than in 2015! Thanks go to the 1,700 attendees, table hosts and sponsors, especially Headlining Sponsors **Bank of America, Christina and Mike Gordon, Linda and Jay Hooley, Michele May and David Walt, OMAM, and Deb and Mark Pasculano** and Presenting Centerpiece Sponsor **Neiman Marcus Natick**. The remarkable women who added so much to the program are, from left, **Kim Khazei**, 7 News; **Vanessa Welch**, Fox25 News; co-emcee **Karen Holmes Ward**, WCVB 5; featured speaker, author **Jeannette Walls**; co-emcee **Susan Wornick**; Rosie's Place President **Sue Marsh**; and **Shannon Mulaire**, necn. Also participating in the program were Boston City Council President and Rosie's Place board member **Michelle Wu** and U.S. Senator for Massachusetts **Elizabeth Warren**, who delivered her remarks via video from Washington, D.C.



Rosie's Place was the fortunate beneficiary of a \$30,000 donation from the Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors of Massachusetts' annual golf tournament fundraiser, held this summer. In photo are, from left **Frank Monroe**, PHCC of MA President **Brian MacDonald**, **Susan MacDonald**, **Katie Amoro**, PHCC of MA Golf Committee Chairman **John Cersosimo** and PHCC of MA Executive Director **Tom Theroux**.



Many thanks to the running team of biotech venture firm **Atlas Venture** who donated funds equaling their miles on the road to underwrite, as they expressed it, our work "tirelessly supporting women in need"



Our South End neighbor, **Hannah Blount Jewelry**, has created the Rosie's Place Cameo Necklace to honor the women we serve. It is available in 18k gold with grey freshwater pearl and oxidized silver with pink freshwater pearl. They have recently added an oxidized silver with white pearl choice for the holidays. They are donating 30% of each necklace sold to Rosie's Place. Go to www.hannahblount.com to learn more.



The Friend of Rosie's Place young professionals group gathered at the Lincoln Tavern in South Boston in November for a night of creativity and networking. **Alexa Lyons and Lauren Begley** (from left) were among the supporters who enjoyed knitting a scarf with assistance from the staff of luxury accessories company The Third Piece.

DID YOU KNOW?



During this important election year, the Public Policy department was especially active: They registered more than 100 new voters and took guests to the polls for early voting. Guests who had received training registered other guests, including those whose first language is Spanish. Guests staffed a phone-bank and canvassed in support of the Boston ballot question for the Community Preservation Act. In addition, advocates and candidates, including Rep. Byron Rushing, Councilor Annissa Essabai-George and Councilor Andrea Campbell spoke to guests about the importance of voting.



Rosie's Place is offering a \$40,000 fellowship to a woman who has new ideas, talent and energy. The Kip Tiernan Social Justice Fellowship is awarded annually for an independent and innovative project in the New England area that will improve the lives of poor and homeless women. Informational sessions are in January and concept papers are due February 6, 2017. The Fellowship is awarded in spring 2017. Visit www.rosiesplace.org/fellowship for more information.



Rosie's Place guests have been offered the opportunity to take a class at the Harvard Extension School. The Extension School has generously offered the free courses and we have been working to coordinate the spring semester enrollment. The Women's Education Center offered a seven-week preparatory class for interested guests, and we all look forward to their success.



Jewelry and gifts from our Women's Craft Cooperative make great stocking stuffers and last minute gifts! Our popular Czech bead tree ornament is now available in seven color combinations. Visit www.rosiesplace.org/shop to browse our necklaces, earrings, bracelets and gift items.





winter WISH LIST

Meeting the emergency needs of our guests is a top priority for Rosie's Place and we couldn't do it without you! In order to continue responding to these critical and constant needs, we're expanding our food pantry. Unfortunately, while this renovation is underway, our storage space is limited and as a result we can only accept the following items:

- Winter coats
- Hats, scarves and gloves
- Food
- New and gently used bras
- New underwear and socks
- Holiday Wish List items

We are not able to accommodate donations of clothing other than the winter needs listed above at this time. We will be sure to update the community just as soon as our renovations are complete, so please visit www.rosiesplace.org for the most up-to-date information. Thank you for your support this season and all year through!

Holiday Wish List

- \$25 gift cards (CVS, Walgreens, Target, Payless, Old Navy)
- Bath and body gift sets with lotion, body wash and body spray (from stores such as Bath & Body Works)
- New wrapping paper, ribbons and tape

SIMPLIFY YOUR LIFE WITH AN AUTOMATIC MONTHLY GIFT TO ROSIE'S PLACE

Make it your New Year's resolution to support Rosie's Place all year through our monthly giving program, Friends for All Seasons. This is an easy and convenient way to give year-round with scheduled credit card or checking account payments. Your minimum monthly gift of \$15 provides steady and dependable funding that enables us to better meet the needs of our guests. Other benefits of 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

Please contact Katie Amoro at 617.318.0211 or kamoro@rosiesplace.org with any questions.

Become a Friend for All Seasons Today!

Online: www.rosiesplace.org/Tas

Phone: Katie Amoro at 617.318.0211

Mail: Provide your credit card information or a check in enclosed envelope and mark to make your gift a monthly donation.



WBUR'S A CHRISTMAS CAROL

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2016, 7:00PM
OMNI PARKER HOUSE, BOSTON

This year marks the 14th anniversary of WBUR 90.9 FM's reading of the Charles Dickens' classic, *A Christmas Carol*. You will hear your favorite WBUR personalities at Boston's historic Omni Parker House, the site of Dickens' first reading, bring this timeless tale to life. Tickets are \$60 and all proceeds benefit Rosie's Place. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www.rosiesplace.org/wbur.

SAFE AND SOUND GALA

WEDNESDAY, MAY 11, 2017
CYCLORAMA AT BOSTON CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Please be our guest for a special evening of food, friends and philanthropy at our annual Safe and Sound gala. Enjoy delectable cuisine prepared and served by celebrity chefs with fine wine pairings—and the chance to win unique insider-only auction packages. Sponsorships are available and tickets begin at \$500. For more information, please contact **Kristen Leonard** at kleonard@rosiesplace.org or 617.318.0232.

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