



The

Advocate Current

Fall 2010

Advocates for Homeless Families, Inc. 216 Abrecht Place Frederick, MD 21701 301-662-2003 www.afhf.org

Support Advocates and Get a Tax Credit!

It's the season when individuals and businesses will begin to think about tax exemptions before the close of the year. Advocates is thrilled to offer tax credits to Maryland residents and businesses. The State of Maryland expanded the eligibility for community investment tax credits to individuals. Previously, only businesses could take advantage of this opportunity to receive a tax credit for 50% of their donation.

Businesses and individuals that donate to Advocates can earn tax credits equal to 50% of the value of the monetary donation worth \$500 or more. For a minimum donation of \$500 (maximum \$250,000) in support of our Transitional Housing and Families Forward programs, you will receive a tax credit for \$250 that you can use to offset your Maryland tax liability at the end of this year. That's \$250 off the top of your state tax total! These tax credits are in addition to the full deductions on both Federal and State taxes as a result of the charitable contribution. Based on the income and tax structure of the individual tax payer or business, the net cost of the donation could be as low as \$0.27 for every \$1.00 contributed.



If you wish to take advantage of this terrific tax-savings opportunity, enclose a note with your donation to Advocates and/or write "tax credit" on the memo line of your check. We also are authorized to accept credit card donations under this program. If you have questions about the tax credit program, please contact Ken Allread or Joe Case at 301.662.2003.

Thanks to you...

Since January 2010, Advocates has provided **67** previously homeless individuals (**23 families — 23 adults and 44 children**) with **11,488 bed-nights (This year alone!)** in safe, well-maintained, separate housing units in our Transitional Housing program. An additional **31 individuals (11 adults and 20 children)** at risk of becoming homeless received monthly support to assist with the cost of living expenses. We currently have **87 families** on our waiting list for services. With your help, we can do more!

2009 Annual Report Available online

In an ongoing effort to decrease costs, Advocates now publishes its Annual Report in-house and no longer mails the report, which saves the organization over \$6500 in publishing, printing and postage costs. The Annual Report can be viewed and printed in a PDF file by visiting our website at www.afhf.org

ADVOCATES FOR HOMELESS FAMILIES, INC. is a 501(c)3, non-profit organization.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bunny O'Dell
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MISSION STATEMENT

Advocates for Homeless Families' mission is to empower motivated families to overcome homelessness. Families achieve success through a structured two-year program of education, housing, and support services

Changed Lives Participant Profile

Africa and her family were referred to Advocates by the Community Action Agency in December 2009. Africa and her two young daughters (soon to be three) were starting over, and desperately needed housing. "I needed a stable, safe home to raise my daughters."

Africa and her daughters entered Advocates transitional housing program in March 2010. In May, Africa gave birth to a beautiful baby girl. Since then, she has been on the "fast track". Besides being a devoted mother, Africa is enrolled in The Temple—Paul Mitchell School's program—and is expected to graduate as a stylist no later than May 2011.



Africa is now looking for clients. Please call The Temple School at 301.682.7550 to schedule a hair appointment.

"Advocates has not only provided my family with a home, but they provide us with guidance and connections to much needed services that have helped us get further ahead," stated Africa.

There is no question that the Advocates program provides more than just a house, it provides measurable stability that is necessary to reverse a downward spiral. Since entering Advocates program, Africa has worked diligently with the Frederick County Public School System to ensure her children excel in school, and they are doing very well! Africa and her family are not looking back. They have developed a plan of action and are working hard to see that their goals will be met—something that would not have happened if they were still bouncing from one place to the next in search of a safe haven.

Be a Designated Giver...

Advocates for Homeless Families has been approved for annual workplace giving campaigns. Advocates respectfully requests that you consider our organization when designating your payroll deduction this year. Advocates relies on the support of donors like you to continue our mission of serving homeless families with children in Frederick County.

Below is a list of workplace giving campaigns in which Advocates participants. Simply fill in the corresponding code number on your payroll giving form. Thank you!

Agency	Code#
Combined Federal Campaign of Western Maryland	13775
Combined Charities Campaign of Frederick County	0700
Frederick County Employees	0700

Ausherman Family Challenge Grant Met

The very exciting dollar-for-dollar matching challenge grant from the Ausherman Family Foundation has been a great success! Since July 1, 2010, Advocates raised more than \$15,000.

Our sincere thanks goes out to everyone who contributed toward this grant.

Advocates also wishes to thank our friends at the Ausherman Family Foundation for all the wonderful support they give to the Frederick community.

Advocates Celebrates 22 Years

Advocates' 22nd annual Make-a-House-a-Home Gala was held October 15, 2010, at All Saints' Episcopal Church in Frederick. By all reports, the evening was a grand celebration: a gathering of old and new friends, wonderful food provided by Canapés Catering, music by Soundsations, award presentations, and an impromptu auction. While Advocates continues to battle financial challenges—like other non-profits throughout the country—we nonetheless had much to celebrate.

First, we acknowledged our wonderful family participants. Nineteen single mothers and one single dad who are making measured and steady progress toward regaining a foothold in society. The Shining Starr Award this year was presented to Doris M, a devoted mother of two boys who is pursuing a career in the nursing field. The Shining Starr Award is presented each year to the participant who best exemplifies those qualities needed to turn his/or her life around. In Doris's case, those qualities are determination, maturity, and kindness. Congratulations Doris!

Master of Ceremonies Ted Luck and co-hosts Kathleen Jefferson and Maria Young presented awards to Dan Schiffman as Volunteer of the Year and to the All Saints' Episcopal Church Junior and Senior Youth Group members for all of their work throughout the year to support Advocates. Dan was recognized for his dedication to fund raising for Advocates—Dan brings in around \$45,000 a year through the sale of tax credits to Frederick businesses. The Junior and Senior Youth Group members devote weekends throughout the year to help beautify and repair the properties housing our previously homeless participants. How fortunate we are to have this kind of dedicated support for our mission.



Joey and Krista Romagnoli dancing the night away.

Advocates also received two awards. Dan Schiffman presented Executive Director Joe Case with a \$10,000 check from the Northwestern Mutual Foundation, and Sara Brownlow, representing the United Episcopal Church, presented Joe with a plaque that accompanies a \$20,000 grant for the development of a Life Skills curriculum for our adult participants.

Art students from Urbana, Frederick, and Thomas Johnson High Schools constructed and decorated 30 model houses and presented them to Advocates to use as centerpieces at the Gala. Erik Legg stepped away from spinning records to demonstrate the skills he utilizes in his day-time job—professional auctioneering. Erik auctioned off these beautiful and clever creations with the proceeds going to Advocates. Then, he resumed his DJ duties, filling the dance floor with hits from the 80s. Garth Phoebus donated his time and talent to capture the evening on film.



Jim Stanton, owner of Soundsations, displays one of the centerpieces decorated by local high schools.

We thank and salute all of those who made this event a truly memorable one.

Advocates for Homeless Families has begun to accept sponsors for our newsletter. If you would like to be honored in an upcoming addition by sponsoring, please contact Joe Case at jcase@afhf.org or 301-662-2003 ext. 23.

Introducing Kyree: Winner of the President's Volunteer Service Award

Kyree, who is now in 8th grade, has been awarded a very special honor, The President's Volunteer Service Award. In recognition of his hard work and dedication to the Summer Serve program, he was also awarded a Certificate of Special Recognition because he has worked more than 100 hours of volunteer service. Kyree spent the last two summers working to help improve the Frederick community through Summer Serve, a youth service program sponsored by Volunteer Frederick, Inc. Summer Serve is an intense five week summer service learning program that engages our youth in gaining the skills and knowledge necessary to make changes for the better. Everyone here at Advocates is quite proud of Kyree's accomplishment - not only for serving two years in a row, but for donating more than 100 hours of service.



Kyree's family entered Advocates' program in April 2009. They have since accomplished many goals and have moved into permanent housing. Kyree has certainly demonstrated his commitment to the purpose and the mission of the program. Congratulations, Kyree! We look forward to the many wonderful things you will accomplish in your lifetime.

A Special Thanks...

...go out to the following individuals for their donated time and efforts during our third quarter:

Adam Eckinrode for donated computers.

Aashima Gupta, Jackie Zaybekian and **Marissa Yaple** for child care during weekly group.

Colleen Guardia and **Karl Helmold** for constant school support.

Traci Bidingier for database development.

Ruth Wett for her wonderful cooking demonstration.

All Saints' Parishioners for gala donations.

Sarah and Kristen from the Mental Health Association for their group therapy counseling.

The Temple Paul Mitchell School for donating hair and make-up services to our mothers.

Janet Fogle for her presentation on improving credit to our participants.

Advocates Partners with Public School System

A wonderful partnership has developed between Advocates and Frederick County Public Schools (FCPS), primarily through the efforts of Colleen Guardia and Karl Helmold who both work for FCPS and the Homeless Prevention Program. This partnership supports the FCPS students who are also participants in the Advocates program, in their efforts to succeed in school.

Ms. Guardia and Mr. Helmold began working with Advocates last summer by offering summer enrichment outings and tutoring to students of all ages. As the school year approached, they joined us for an evening to discuss a multitude of concerns, including curriculum, transportation, and how to best communicate with the individual schools. They also worked very hard to supply all the necessary back packs and back-to-school supplies, which really helped alleviate the anxiety that is often present among families during that time of year.

Mr. Helmold has continued to show up regularly at meetings to address concerns and work individually with the families and students on specific needs and challenges. Ms. Guardia and Mr. Helmond are now actively working with Advocates to design and deliver a Good Grades program that will motivate and acknowledge both good attendance and good grades. The staff and participants at Advocates greatly appreciate all of Ms. Guardia's and Mr. Helmold's efforts. Together Advocates and FCPS can continue to help move families forward.