

SPRING 2009

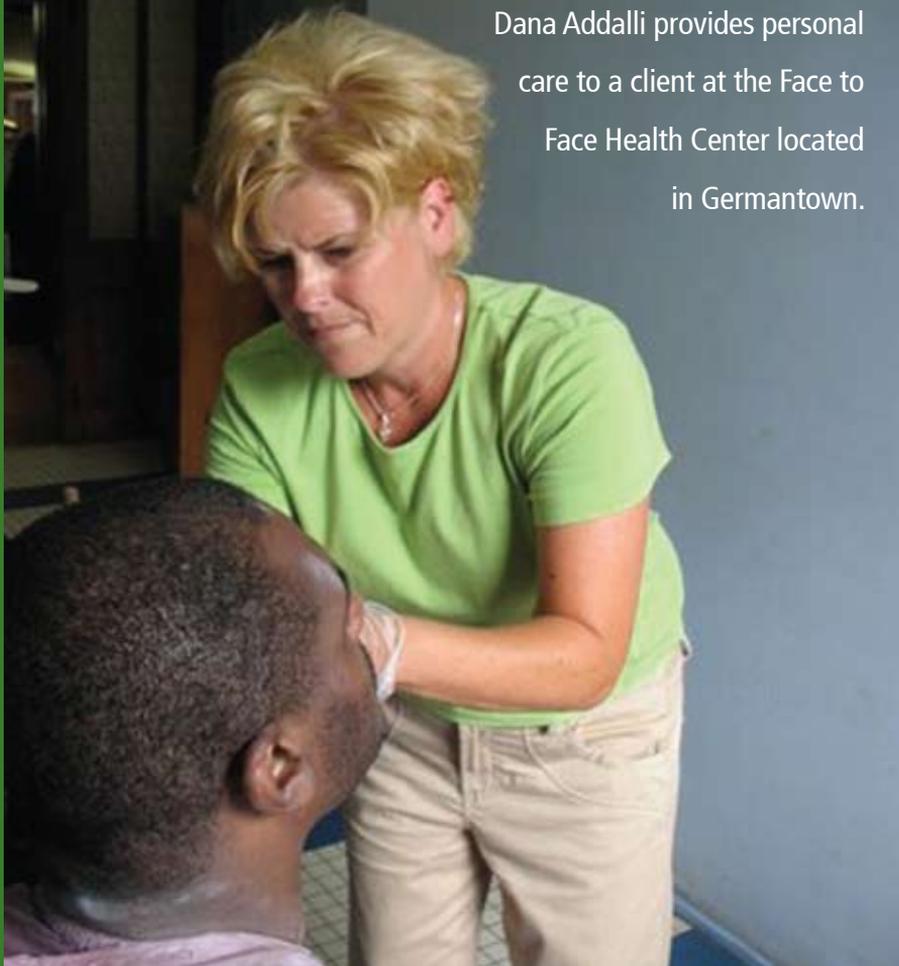


GreenTree Community

HEALTH FOUNDATION

A Deeper Impact

Dana Addalli provides personal care to a client at the Face to Face Health Center located in Germantown.



Read more about how the Foundation-funded programs have touched people in our community



Improving the Health and Well-being of our Community
through Partnering for Change

A FACE TO FACE ENCOUNTER

Written by: Kathryn Maleney,
Face to Face, Development Director



Face to Face Social Worker, Susan Willson, meets with a client.

When the Green Tree Community Health Foundation granted support to the Face to Face Health Center last Spring, it was assuring the success of one of the cornerstones in the social network of East Germantown. The nurse managed health center is part of the colorful umbrella of programs offered by Face to Face at St. Vincent Community Center on Price Street. The organization offers programs for adults and children, and draws volunteers from across Philadelphia and its suburbs.

On a Sunday morning at Face to Face, the line for the Dining Room forms quickly. The midday meal draws hundreds of people from across Germantown and Northwest Philadelphia. The hall is energetic; people call out to each other, stamp snow off worn shoes and settle in, waiting for the warm scents drifting from the kitchen to become a meal served on a plate, steaming before them.

The corridor is jumping, but across from the dining room there is a door which opens half an hour before the meal is served. The Face to Face Health Center is a haven of calm and healing in the lively stream.

Stepping inside, the wooden floors and light from large windows filtered through soft curtains, take the clinical edge off the health center. Flute music is played

on a CD and, for a moment, one is transported to a place far from the hustle of life on the streets of East Germantown.

“We work to create an atmosphere where healing and wholeness are the reality” explains Health Center Director, Donna Whitehead. “Our introduction to the client starts with blood pressure screening, assessing for history of medical problems such as diabetes, heart disease, emergently treating wounds and triaging immediate issues, as well as working to connect patients to health care providers and services. But above all, we work to create an atmosphere of trust, where transformation and empowerment become a possibility and, we hope, a reality.”

Donna Whitehead, BSN, has directed the center since 2005, having succeeded to the post after the founding director, Melanie Gavin MSN, retired. The mission of the health center has remained consistent since its founding, providing nursing care, foot care, complementary wellness modalities and social service. Nurses work to link clients to health

and social services, including primary healthcare, striving to do this in a friendly community based atmosphere.

In any week there are multiple examples of success at the center, but success comes quietly, often a matter of what doesn't happen. There is an absence of drama when a person with a heart condition becomes regular in taking their medication, and it is hard to see the success which is the result of encouraging a client to set appointments and maintain regular contact with a primary care physician – but these are exactly the successes which health center nurses take pride in.

“Here's an example” says Whitehead, looking through a logbook of significant cases. “Mr. B. came in to our health center to ask for vitamins. We did a routine blood pressure check and found that his blood pressure was extremely high and in need of treatment. He had no idea that his blood pressure was dangerously high, but as a result of our referral to primary health care, which resulted in the start of high blood pressure medications, his blood pressure is now well managed. Also,

Mr. B has taken a proactive role in his care, and seeks, through our health center, continuous monitoring and health education.”

When a person has lived on the outside of “mainstream” society, whether on the streets or in prison or elsewhere, he or she often feels judged when entering the offices and institutions of mainstream society. The Face to Face Health Center provides a bridge that helps bring people, who do not find it easy to step into regular doctors' offices, to begin to establish a path toward personal empowerment for wellness. Trust and caring relationships are keys to success at the health center. Because Mr. B sensed that he was in a setting where he would not be judged, but would be accepted, he felt comfortable taking a step that he would not have taken otherwise. Sincere care for the well being of clients like Mr. B. makes the Face to Face nurses so successful in their work.

Last year there were more than 3,500 health center encounters, with more than half of clients responding positively to follow up on nurse recommendations. These numbers are impressive, especially for a health center that is open only 12 hours per week.

Funds from the Green Tree Community Health Foundation have been instrumental in the operation of the center. The pool of nurses available for this work is small. Funds from the Foundation have helped Face to Face attract and retain excellent nurses and support staff for the program.

In the year ahead, the Health Center will be seeing a significant expansion in its office space. The additional space will allow for more health empowerment workshops on topics like Diabetes, Nutrition, and Stress Management. The Health Center will also become host to the new Washateria, where clients can take showers and launder their clothes. These projects are just getting started in the spring, and will become part of the Health Center work by early autumn. ■



Susan Koster, RN, CRNP during a workshop on Diabetes Care

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES, ONE BABY AT A TIME

Written by: Bette Begleiter, MCC, Deputy Executive Director

While there has been much in the news about the uninsured and under-insured, little has been focused on the needs of a very important group of people – our region's expectant Moms. With all the concerns new mothers must manage, can you imagine also having to worry about how you will be able to pay for prenatal care? Sadly, we have seen too many women postpone, and at times forgo, prenatal care because they lacked health insurance. With the generous support of Green Tree Community Health Foundation, Maternity Care Coalition's Northwest MOMobile program now works to ensure that all pregnant women have early and adequate prenatal care by helping them to access the insurance that makes care possible. One such woman

helped was Lynn, a 31 year old woman with a lovely smile. Lynn wanted the best for her baby, so she applied for



Javier Alexander Hall - son of West Philadelphia MOMobile client

Medicaid early in her pregnancy. To her dismay, she was denied benefits. Unable to understand why her application was not approved, Lynn turned to the MOMobile. Maternity Care Coalition's expertly trained Advocates quickly connected Lynn to prenatal care at a Philadelphia community health center while, at the same time, working with the County Assistance Office to fix the “glitch” that had incorrectly rejected Lynn's application. Within a few weeks we were thrilled to get Lynn's call, expressing her excitement that she had received insurance and could now see her own doctor for prenatal care. We are privileged to play a part in stories of success like Lynn's and to continue strengthening families, one baby at a time.

NURSING SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

In December 2008, Green Tree Community Health Foundation awarded scholarships to 17 nurses, pursuing advanced education, from the Elissa Messori Nursing Scholarship Fund. Since its first awards in 2002, 64 scholarships to 43 nurses enrolled in nursing studies have been made for a total distribution from the Messori Fund of \$146,407. Not only is this an investment in their education, it is an investment in nursing excellence—clinical skill and compassionate care—for the community. To learn more about the Scholarship Fund please visit www.greentreecommunityhealth.org. If you are interested in making a donation to support Scholarships awarded in the future please contact us, 215-438-8102 or updates@greentreecommunityhealth.org.

DREXEL UNIVERSITY
Meredith Robison (Royersford)

HARCUM COLLEGE
Kathi Reilley (Ambler)

IMMACULATA COLLEGE
Mary Ellen Bower (Ambler)
Barbara Daulerio (Roxborough)
Cecelia Ford (Mt. Airy)
Natalie McGraw (West Oak Lane)
Melissa Leach (Glenstone)
Bethanne Salamone (Horsham)
Jennifer White (Roxborough)

GWYNEDD MERCY COLLEGE
Susan Eberwine (Blue Bell)
Susan Esquirell (Harleysville)
Diane Lomas (North Wales)
Joanne Markowitz (Horsham)
Kathleen Morrione (Norristown)
Lisa Reiss (Harleysville)

LASALLE UNIVERSITY
Anna Grasela (Port Richmond)

VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY
Gina Genesisio (Wayne)



Nursing Scholarship Awardees are joined by (front row, left to right) Susan Hansen, Executive Director and CEO; Tine Hansen-Turton, Board member and Scholarship Committee Chair; and Dr. Divo Messori at the presentation reception in December 2008 at the home Cheryl Wade, Board member.

LOVE STORY... NORTHWEST PHILLY STYLE

Written by: Rachel Falkove, NPIHN, Executive Director

Interfaith Hospitality Network of Northwest Philadelphia (NPIHN), one of the organizations that Green Tree Community Health Foundation supports, is celebrating an unexpected, sweet result of its work.

John Washington and Aislyn Lee, two graduates NPIHN's shelter program, just recently got married!

John was a single father of two teenager daughters, whom he raised on his own since they were young. He and his daughters lived with his sick, aging mother, for whom he provided care as well. After his mother died, John, who worked as a chef in a center city hospital, began looking for a two-bedroom apartment that he could afford on his salary, without his mother's monthly income. However, nothing was in his price range of about \$450 a month.

Aislyn was a newly-separated mother of three young children. She had just been laid off from her well-paid airline job and was struggling to find work to pay for an apartment. Aislyn was thinking about a career change to nursing. However, she could not even afford a place to live, let alone college tuition.

Neither John nor Aislyn expected to be homeless. They were hard-working people, devoted to taking care of their children. But they were unable to do so without subsidized housing, which had waiting lists of many years.

Both ended up at NPIHN in 2006, Aislyn first and John several months later, when their families moved into Germantown Mennonite Church, one of NPIHN's participating host congregations. After having spent two weeks in Philadelphia's shelter for women, the only option for John to stay with his daughters, John, especially, was relieved to be in a quiet, calm environment, with a private room, home-cooked meals, and caring congregational volunteers.

He and Aislyn became friends during their stay, and the friendship continued post-shelter, when they found themselves living in the same neighborhood. After helping out with each other's children for



Aislyn Lee and John Washington enjoy a well deserved evening

about a year, they decided that they were really "in a relationship."

On March 21, 2009, John and Aislyn exchanged their vows in the church where they met, surrounded by family, friends, and NPIHN staff and volunteers, many of whom held their hands and gave them encouragement throughout and beyond their shelter stay. A sweet touch ... Amy Yoder McLaughlin, the NPIHN volunteer coordinator who welcomed John and Aislyn to Germantown Mennonite Church, is now a pastoral student at Lutheran Theological Seminary and officiated at the wedding.

John and Aislyn currently participate in NPIHN's Transformational Housing Program. Their blended family, which includes six children, resides comfortably in a congregational parsonage in Germantown that was rehabilitated by NPIHN volunteers. John survived a job loss after 16 years of service and is now working for another hospital, thanks to employment connections through NPIHN. He has testified before the Pennsylvania House of Representatives Urban Affairs Committee and met with Senators Casey and Specter's office concerning the need for more affordable housing in safe neighborhoods. Aislyn has been in a pre-nursing program and has started a full-time job this week. She also serves as a member of NPIHN's Board and is a strong advocate for the housing needs of working families. Says Aislyn, "Even when times are dark, one can find community, love and hope. John and I are proof of that."

FY 08-09 GRANTS

- AID FOR FRIENDS
For services in Northwest Philadelphia
- AWBURY ARBORETUM
East Germantown
- BREASTFEEDING RESOURCES CENTER
Glenside & Chestnut Hill
- CARIE
For services in Northwest Philadelphia
- CROSSING THE FINISH LINE
Blue Bell
- DRAGONFLY FOREST, INC.
For services in Northwest Philadelphia
- EPISCOPAL COMMUNITY SERVICES
For services in Northwest Philadelphia
- FAMILY SERVICES OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY
West Norriton
- FUMCOG
Germantown
- THE FOOD TRUST
Norristown & Chestnut Hill
- JEWISH EMPLOYMENT VOCATIONAL SERVICES
For services in Northwest Philadelphia
- JOURNEY'S WAY
Roxborough
- KARDON INSTITUTE FOR ARTS THERAPY
For services in Flourtown
- KEYSTONE HOSPICE
Wyndmoor & Chestnut Hill
- LEGAL AID OF SOUTHEASTERN PA
Norristown
- MATERNAL WELLNESS CENTER
Mt. Airy
- MERCY NEIGHBORHOOD MINISTRIES OF PHILADELPHIA, INC.
Nicetown
- MANNA
For services in Northwest Philadelphia
- NIM
Mt. Airy & Chestnut Hill
- NORTH LIGHT COMMUNITY CENTER
Manayunk
- PENN ASIAN SENIOR SERVICES
For services in Eastern Montgomery County
- PHILADELPHIA CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE
For services in Northwest Philadelphia
- PHILADELPHIA EARLY CHILDHOOD COLLABORATIVE
Mt. Airy
- PHILADELPHIA OUTWARD BOUND CENTER
For services in Northwest Philadelphia
- PHILADELPHIA SENIOR CENTER, INC.
Nicetown
- RSVP OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY
Blue Bell
- ST. CATHERINE LABOURE MEDICAL CLINIC
Germantown
- SUPPORT CENTER FOR CHILD ADVOCATES
For services in Northwest Philadelphia
- SUPPORTIVE OLDER WOMEN'S NETWORK
Manayunk
- TEMPLE'S TIME OUT RESPITE PROGRAM
For services in Northwest Philadelphia
- VISITING NURSE ASSOCIATION
For services in Norristown & Eastern Montgomery County
- WOMEN OF FAITH AND HOPE
East Germantown
- YMCA OF GERMANTOWN
Germantown

JOIN US...



DESIGN BY AMY T. D'AMICO

Rabbit in the Hat acrylic and oil stick on paper 40x60.

Come Taste the Magic
of Emerging Chestnut Hill Artist
Anna Belle Loeb
at a Wine and Hors d'oeuvres Preview
of Her First Exhibit
Rabbit Years
at the PAGUS Gallery
619 W. Washington Street, Norristown
April 18, 4-7 p.m.

Discussion on
"A look at Paintings ~ How it works, Why it matters"
by Artist Timothy Hawkesworth at 5:30

\$25/ person

Proceeds benefit Green Tree Community Health
Foundation's work in the Greater Norristown Area

RSVP 215-438-8102

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