# Anchor House

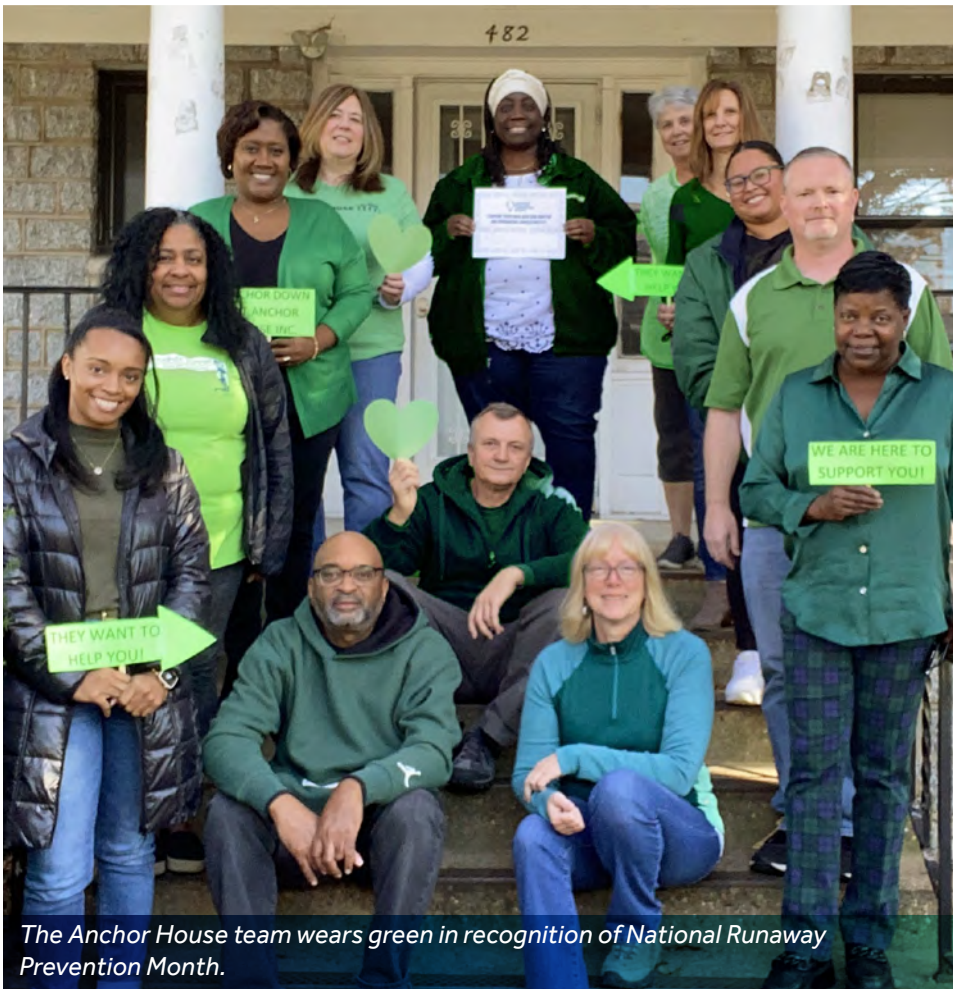
*Celebrating 45 Years of Serving Youth*

# IMPACT REPORT 2023

## TOGETHER WE SHINE

# Mission

To provide a safe haven where abused, runaway, homeless and at-risk youth and their families are empowered to succeed and thrive.




*The Anchor House team wears green in recognition of National Runaway Prevention Month.*

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**Board terms ended during 2023*

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Mereides Delgado, M.Div.
*Director of Young Adult Services*

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Nicole Cody
*Community Engagement Coordinator*

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Kathy Drulis
*Liaison*

**Board terms ended during 2023*

*The Anchor House Foundation organizes the annual Ride for Runaways to help support Anchor House programs.*

# Message from the Executive Director and Board President

Dear Friends,

When we reflected on 2023, a number stood out to us. **45**. In 2023, Anchor House celebrated **45** years of serving youth and families in our community. To commemorate this milestone, Anchor House hosted a celebration in September that many of you attended and supported. After so much uncertainty, loss, and fear during the pandemic, we wanted to gather in person to celebrate. Our tagline for the celebration was "Together We Shine," a nod to exiting the darkness and isolation COVID-19 brought to so many.

The evening turned out to be so much more than a party. It was a time for us to look back on our accomplishments and to shine a light on several of the individuals who have been a part of the Anchor House story. There was not a dry eye in the house after four of our youth told their stories about the caring and dedicated staff at Anchor House who helped them overcome obstacles and find their path toward a bright future.

Another number came to mind. **38.** Why 38? **There was a 38% increase in homelessness between 2022 and 2023 in Mercer County and 28% of those who were experiencing homelessness were children under 18**. We see this increase firsthand as there has been a rapid rise in the number of youth needing our services. For instance, the number of residents at our Shelter for youth under 18 **almost doubled in 2023** compared to 2022, from **24 to 42.**

Nevertheless, we continue to pursue our goal to one day end youth homelessness and have been busy executing our Strategic Plan. In 2023, we conducted a feasibility study on building a clinical mental health department at Anchor House. The study confirmed that we could help eliminate waiting lists in Trenton and Mercer County for youth in need of mental health services, and we are actively working to build the new department. As part of our efforts to improve communications and reach a wider audience of young people, at our 45th Anniversary Celebration, we debuted a new video that tells the story of Anchor House.

We would be remiss if we did not acknowledge the amazing team at Anchor House. Their dedication, passion, and tireless efforts have not only made a difference but have laid the groundwork for sustained success.

Some of you have been with us from Day One. Others are newer to the Anchor House family. Whatever part you have played at Anchor House – donor, volunteer, friend, or if you are one of our youth, young adults, or family members who received our services – we are thankful for you. As you delve into the pages of this Impact Report, please join us in celebrating our achievements, acknowledging our challenges, and uniting in our commitment to provide a safe haven where abused, runaway, homeless, aging out, and at-risk youth and their families are empowered to succeed and thrive. Together, we will write the next chapter of success and create lasting change. We ask that you continue to shine your light with us as we embark on our 46th year.

With gratitude,

**Kim McNear**

*Executive Director*

**Kristie Sells**

*President, Board of Directors*

# Anchor House Celebrates our 45th Anniversary

In 2023, Anchor House celebrated our 45th anniversary. We commemorated this milestone at an event on September 28 at Mercer Oaks. It was a sold-out crowd with a mix of old and new friends to Anchor House. The theme of the event was "Together We Shine." Honorees at this event were:

- ***Philanthropic Angel Award: Rue Foundation,*** a longtime partner and supporter of Anchor House. Since its formation, the Rue Foundation has provided more than $1,000,000 in grants to support educational institutions, health care providers, and organizations like Anchor House. Most recently, the Rue Foundation provided a generous gift toward renovating our new site at Brunswick Avenue in Trenton.

- ***Champion for Youth Angel Award: the Golis Family*** who created the Cory Golis/Anchor House Foundation Scholarship Fund to provide tuition assistance to high school graduates to attend college, trade, or technical school in memory of Cory Golis, a bright light and youth advocate, who left us too soon. Since 1999, the Golis family, Jim, Jerri and Jeremy, held "Cory's Ride" each year to honor Cory's memory and raise scholarship funds. Numerous Anchor House youth have benefited from the generosity of the Golis Family over the years to help pursue their post-secondary goals.

- ***Community Advocate Award: Rev. Rupert A. Hall, Jr.***, the Servant Pastor of Turning Point United Methodist Church in Trenton who was recognized for his deep commitment to his community and helping individuals who are experiencing homelessness. Turning Point hosts the Annual Homeless Memorial, distributes food and hot meals and is welcoming to all.

At the celebration, four youth were honored as Shining Stars who shared their stories with the crowd about how Anchor House changed their lives. These Shining Stars have been able to accomplish so much despite the obstacles they have faced in their lives. They have been able to reach both academic and career goals and all have a desire to give back to Anchor House. The accomplishments these young people have been able to do despite the obstacles they have been able to overcome in their lives is inspiring. Our two co-founders, Arthur R. Sypek, Esq., and Joe Yuhas, spoke about starting the organization and why it is still needed today.

At the event, Anchor House debuted a promotional video about our agency which provides information and moving testimonials about our services and about our impact in the community. It was produced by Positive Solutions, a full service marketing agency. Anchor House now has a YouTube channel to house our videos.

Kudos to the 45th Anniversary Committee for the planning and execution of this celebration and to all involved in making the event a success. The committee had an ambitious goal of $50,000 and raised an impressive $52,746 with $36,600 in sponsorships and 100% board participation in fundraising efforts.

*Pictured left to right are Anchor House Co-founder Arthur R. Sypek, Esq., Executive Director Kim McNear, Board President Kristie Sells, Mercer County Executive Dan Benson, and Anchor House Co-founder Joe Yuhas.*

Our 2023 Youth Honorees (l-r) included: Shanese, Zach, Rebecca, and Zena.

Reverend Rupert A. Hall, Jr., seated with his wife, enjoying the celebration. Pastor Hall was one of the evening's honorees, receiving the Community Advocate Award.

Lisa Rue, Rue Foundation (center), poses with Kristie Sells, Anchor House Board President (left), and Kim McNear, Anchor House Executive Director (right). The Rue Foundation was one of the evening's honorees, receiving the Philanthropic Angel Award.

Members of the Golis family smile for the camera. The Golis family was one of the evening's honorees, receiving the Champion for Youth Angel Award.

James Donzi and Elaine Tanimura, event chairs.

Scan the QR code to check out our video that premiered at our 45th anniversary celebration that demonstrates the impact Anchor House is making in the community.

A happy raffle basket winner claims her prize!

Anchor House staff members Karen Stettner and Rebecca Santiago.

Members of the Anchor House Board gather for a group photo.

# Impact By The Numbers

## Snapshot of how we make a real impact in the community

**42**

Shelter residents – Increased almost 2x from 2022

**45**

Years serving our community

**134**

Youth placed in a safe environment after discharge

**48**

Youth discharged to permanent housing

**3,623**

Food, drink and hygiene items distributed through our Street Outreach and Coordinated Entry Assessment System Teams

**3,696**

Calls and texts to check-in with youth

**60%**

Connect to Home young adults are also parents receiving services for their children

**17**

Youth attending post-secondary institutions

**2,611**

Contacts made on the street

**26**

Planning, development and advocacy events participated in by Youth Advisory Council members

Our Impact in Action:

# Your Support Made a Difference

## Supporting Parenting Youth

Anchor House has seen an increase in parenting youth, particularly in our Safe Housing Programs. For instance, in our Connect to Home Program, **60%** are parenting youth ***(a 20% increase over 2022)*** with 21 children among them. Parenting youth at Anchor House are provided with the same resources and support that they would receive from a traditional parenting program. Case Managers are working with youth to help them navigate securing permanent housing and being a parent. They teach them to be advocates for their children and their children's education and connect them to resources like subsidies for childcare so they can juggle school or work or both so they can one day secure a permanent home for themselves and their children.

Being a parent is hard. Our Case Managers are supportive and non-judgmental. Parenting workshops are offered, most recently Interactive Play and Mama & Money (a session on budgeting, saving and motherhood). We also offer workshops for expecting parents like "Doula: Is this Right for Me?" and a Community Baby Shower, both offered through Children's Futures. We also want our families to have fun together, so we coordinate activities like a trip to the Lion King musical at Princeton University, visits to Sesame Place and Skyzone, and Equine Therapy: Mommy & Me.

*"Listening to the workshop and presenters' stories has made me want to be a better mother for my son."*
*– Connect to Home participant*

## Responding to the Needs of LGBTQI+ Youth

One in four adolescents who identify as LGBTQI+ have experienced homelessness or housing instability at some point in their lives. Research has shown that those who identify as LGBTQI+ have a 120% higher risk of experiencing homelessness, and are more likely to experience assault, trauma, depression, and suicide when compared to non-LGBTQI+ populations. In 2023, 11% of Anchor House youth identified as LGBTQI+. Anchor House offers counseling and screenings that are culturally responsive, LGBTQI+ affirming, and offer a safe space to everyone in all of our programs.

*Story continues on next page*

*"The Anchor House gave me the motivation to keep going when I first became homeless. I know I wouldn't have given up regardless, but this opportunity made it easier to stay determined and I wish more youth like me would take this opportunity because you don't have to do it alone."*
*– CEAS participant*

Our Coordinated Entry Assessment System (CEAS) team serves youth ages 18-24 who are experiencing homelessness. In 2023, our CEAS team worked with two area agencies to make sure a youth had a safe place to stay. The youth had been physically assaulted and abused by family members after coming out as transgender. The Case Manager at an area agency reached out to CEAS to find this youth a housing placement, and CEAS connected with a local nonprofit that had an apartment available. The nonprofit's Director of Supportive Housing called the CEAS Case Manager on the day she assisted the youth with moving into the apartment and said how happy and excited the youth was to be housed. The youth told her, "I can't believe I am safe in my own apartment." This is a great example of how Anchor House works with our community partners to meet the needs of our youth.

# Anchor House Shelter and Anchor Link Street Outreach Program (SOP) Challenges Result in Success

The number of residents at our Shelter for youth under 18 continues to rise, almost doubling between 2022 and 2023, from 24 to 42. One reason for the increase in Shelter residents is that Anchor House once again has a contract with the NJ Department of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P) for Shelter placements. Statewide budget cuts made in 2020 as well as the DCP&P's decision to shift away from congregate care resulted in a loss of funding and referrals from DCP&P.

Despite this loss, Anchor House was determined to keep our Shelter doors open. At the time of this decision, many of you rallied to support Anchor House, sending donations, and writing testimonials to state legislators, and we are forever grateful for your support. Fortunately, DCP&P realized that the emergency crisis services we offer at the Shelter are needed, and, Anchor House once again has a contract with DCP&P for more placements.

In 2023, Anchor House received the devastating news that our agency was not awarded a grant from the Administration for Children & Families (ACF) for our Anchor Link Street Outreach Program (SOP) for the 2022- 2025 cycle, a loss of $104,000 annually. Even worse, no agency in New Jersey was selected to receive funding from the ACF for SOP. Without this funding in 2023, Anchor House did not have a full-time SOP team, which limited the scope and scale of our street outreach to Trenton. In positive news, Anchor House has been awarded a grant for the 2023-2026 cycle.

Government funding can be unpredictable which is why Anchor House is so appreciative to have donations from corporations, area businesses, foundations and individuals. All of our services are needed, now more than ever, demonstrated by a 34% increase in homelessness between 2022 and 2023 in Mercer County; 28% of those who were homeless were children under 18 and 6.2% were youth between 18 and 24.

***"Anchor House is by far the best place we've ever had to stay."***

*- a 15-year-old staying at the Shelter with her sister*

# Rapid Rehousing Program

The Rapid Rehousing Program (RRH) serves youth ages 18-24 who are HUD eligible for supportive housing. The program provides rental assistance, case management, employment and educational assistance, life skills training, and assistance with housing counseling and searches. The RRH Program is designed to help youth get on their feet with the hope to move them to independence within the year. Before entering this program, youth were living on the streets, sleeping in cars and in other unsafe locations, or residing at another adult shelter.

In 2023, 22 youth were housed in apartments through RRH, and 20 of these youth were discharged to permanent housing, ***a 67% increase from last year.*** Eighty-two percent of RRH residents had graduated high school or had their GED and 41% were pursuing post-secondary education.

***"When I applied, I thought I wasn't going to get in. You don't know how grateful I am to have this opportunity. When my friends see my apartment, they really can't believe it's all mine. The staff has been great to work with and I couldn't be happier. This has really given me confidence and letting me know that I can make it on my own. I'm not afraid anymore to get out in this crazy world. I'm going to make it. I'm going to succeed, thank you Anchor House."***

*– Rapid Rehousing resident*

# Life Skills Program

In our Life Skills Program, youth between ages 14-21 are referred to by the Department of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P) and receive case management and life skills sessions tailored to meet their needs and help them develop into thriving, successful adults. DP (initials used to protect her identity) was a senior who had been struggling all year long with her grades and the Life Skills Program and had been seriously thinking about dropping out of school. She was also dealing with problems with her family and wanted to quit her job because she had no time to be with friends. DP had not been returning calls from her Life Skills Case Manager. He spoke with both her grandmother and DCP&P worker who were very concerned about DP's situation. The Case Manager was persistent with DP and, after a while, DP starting buying into the Life Skills Program and they began meeting weekly. He gave DP advice on finding a job, being punctual, and how to be a good co-worker. They started working together on her schoolwork and set schedules for studying and completing homework assignments. She had very little time but together they made a schedule for her to spend time with her friends. By the end of the school year in June, DP had gone to her senior prom, had a job working at a restaurant and graduated from high school. Her Case Manager was so proud of her. She told him that without him, she didn't think she would have graduated from high school.

# Awards and Recognition

*Pictured left to right are Arthur R. Sypek, Esq., Kim McNear, Anchor House Executive Director, and Angelo J. Onofri, Mercer County Prosecutor.*

We are always grateful and humbled when our agency is recognized for our work. In late October, Anchor House received a Community Partner Award from the Mercer County Bar Association at their 007 Gala. The timing of this award is extra special because it happened alongside Arthur R. Sypek, Esq. receiving the Harry O'Malley Award for his service to the community, including being one of Anchor House's founders.

*Members of the Anchor House team (pictured) accepted the award at an event hosted by Bank of America on December 13.*

In December, Anchor House was honored to be one of just two agencies from New Jersey to receive a Bank of America Neighborhood Builder Award.

In addition to a sizeable grant award, the Neighborhood Builder Award also includes nonprofit leadership development training opportunities, including one for an emerging leader at Anchor House. At the December award event, our Executive Director Kim McNear participated in a fireside chat facilitated by Alberto Garofalo, the President of Bank of America New Jersey. During the chat, Kim discussed the impact Anchor House is making in the community, as well as how this award would help contribute to this impact.

## Anchor House Foundation and the 2023 Annual Ride for Runaways

As always, the Anchor House Board and staff supported the Anchor House Foundation's Ride for Runaways by participating as riders, walkers, table staff, and serving as cheerleaders!

The Ride is the biggest annual fundraising event, and in 2023 raised $500,609 in total. This year, participants could choose the 500-mile Classic Ride (Northampton, MA to Trenton, NJ), the Flex Ride, or a Walk-Run. Anchor House staff members Alashia Mays, Tyler Fowler, and Luisanny Ortiz, as well as Board members Russ Buckley, Beth Mowery, and Denise Bard were all part of the Classic Ride, while June Albanowski, Director of Youth Services, participated in the Walk.

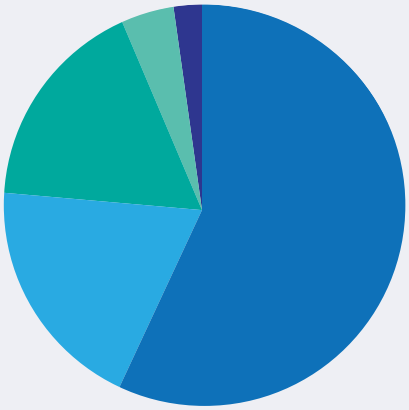
This Ride was made extra special through the participation of **Zach** (above, left), one of our former youth. Back when Zach first came to Anchor House, he said that he wanted to one day participate in the Ride. In 2023, that dream became a reality.

We want to thank **Kathy Drulis** (left), the Chief Operating Officer of the Anchor House Foundation, who retired in September 2023 after 32 years of dedicated service to the Foundation. Kathy, you have and always will be all about the kids!

Support the 2024 Anchor House Ride for Runaways at https://anchorhouseride.rallybound.org

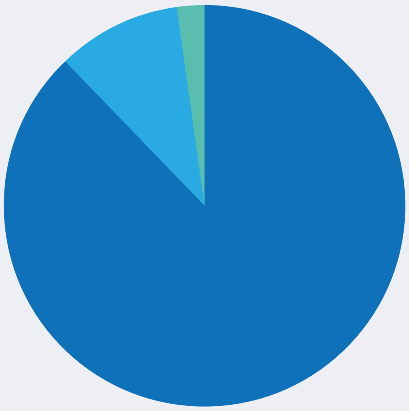
# Financial Summary 2023

## 2023 Actual Revenue
## $3,166,679



- **56%** Government
- **19%** Corporate & Foundation
- **17%** Anchor House Foundation
- **6%** Individuals
- **2%** Other

## 2023 Actual Expenses
## $2,721,955



- **87%** Programs
- **10%** Management and General
- **3%** Fundraising

This year in review is based on the calendar year.

**Anchor House relies on donations to help youth, young people and their families access our services free of charge.**

# A Caring Community of Supporters

Thank you for investing in our youth!

Anchor House is grateful for a caring community of donors who help make our work possible during challenging times and decreased government funding. As we move forward with high cost of rent, soaring inflation and economic uncertainty your support is critical to help provide a myriad of services to youth in need.

Together, with the generosity of individuals, businesses, foundations, churches and government agencies, we can continue to lift up individuals as we work to prevent and end youth homelessness in Trenton/Mercer County.

Donors listed for 2023 calendar year.

## Individual Donors

Lorri Ackerman
Huma Ahsan
Iris Alvarez
Debra Amon
Carolyn Amrein
Margaret Anderson
Susan Anderson
Marilyn Anker
Anonymous
Michael Anton
Vince and Barb Ardery
Manik Arora
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Kathleen Lynch
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Michael Malixi
Mary Maloney
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Lester and Sylvie Mayer
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Christopher McFadden
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Gloria McGowan
Matthew McGraw
Valerie McKinney
Jennifer McLaren
Joe and Mary McLaughlin
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Dominick Messineo
Joseph Micallef
Clare Mickle-Ciconte
Thaddeus Mikulski Jr.
Amanda Miller
Sebella Miller
Zachary Miller
Jennifer Millner
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Susan Moonan
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Elmir Mukhtarov
Michael Muldoon
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April Murakami
Mark Murranko
Anna Murray
John Murray
Meredith Murray
Yolande Nelson
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Heather Newstrom
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Meghan O'Connor
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Kathleen Scotto
Rachel Scriven
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Olesya Shmagun
Adam Sigelman
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Manjeet Singh
Bobby Smith
Delaney Smith
Paula Sollami-Covello
Barbara Sopko
Samual Sortino
Staff at Care One at Hamilton Assisted Living
Naomi Strongin
Jan Sturm
Wyatt Suling
Cary Sullivan
Kelly Sullivan
Kristin Sullivan
Nancy Swaim
Keely Swan
Ellen Swicord
Arthur Sypek, Jr.
Carol Szul
Vincent and Reana Tabora
Elaine Tanimura
John Telencio
Mary Terwedow
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Ann Zang
Mike and Joanne Zapicchi
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Rich Fisher
Jerry Foster
Chris Hall
Karina
Karla Joskowicz
Cathy Samuel Smith
Xander Totin
Benjamin Thornton
Sharon Waters
Alina Withers

## In Memory

Margaret Curlett
Kristie Mayer
Jackson Place
John Reilly
Ryan P. Shute
Jimmy Slavin
Monsignor Richard L. Tofani
Marina Vrahnos

## Institutional and Organizational Support

AADHYATMIK Inc.
Allentown Presbyterian Church
Amazon Smile
American Express Company
American Express Foundation
Anchor House Foundation
Anonymous
Apex Financial Advisors
Arbor Vitae Chapter 40
ARC Foundation Inc.
Archer Public Affairs, LLC
Artena Holdings LLC
David R. and Patricia D. Atkinson Foundation
Bank of America
Bank of America Matching Gift
Bank of Princeton
Barbara A. Peterson Giving Fund
Belli Family Foundation
Blandford Charitable Foundation
Bloomberg
BMS Matching Gift Program
Bristol Myers Squibb
Bunbury Fund of the Princeton Area Community Foundation
Catalyst Consulting Group
Catholic Daughters of the America's Court St Elizabeth
Christine's Hope for Kids
Chubb Charitable Foundation
Church of St. David the King
Church & Dwight Employee Giving Fund
Citizens Philanthropic Foundation, Inc.
Colgate Urban Education Grants
Congruent Advisory Services, LLC
Connelly Foundation
Credit Union of New Jersey Foundation
Daughters of Penelope Atles Chapter #163
Doug McCune Fund of the Princeton Area Community Foundation
Dreams R Us Foundation
Educational Ventures Inc.
First Presbyterian Church Hamilton Square
Genmab
Guardian
Hogan Security
Hopewell Presbyterian Church
Indeed
Investors Foundation
Ivy Rehab Network, Inc.
Johnson & Johnson Foundation Matching Gifts Program
Kiwanis Club of Greater Monroe
Klatzkin & Company LLP
Komjathy & Kean LLC
Lear & Pannepacker LLP
Lutheran Church of the Resurrection
McCarter & English
Curtis W. McGraw Foundation
Merancas Foundation
Mercer County Bar Foundation
Mercer County Education Association
Mercer Street Friends
Mithun Family Foundation
Morrisville Presbyterian Church
MSK Consulting
NJ Principals and Supervisors Association
NJM Insurance Group
Nordson
Northfield Bank Foundation
OceanFirst Foundation
Old Hights Brewing Company LLC
Order of AHEPA Trenton Chapter #72
Otsuka Pharmacueticals
Pierson Giving Fund
PNC Foundation
Positive Solutions
Princeton Area Woman's Club
Princeton School of Public and International Affairs
Prior & Nami Business Systems
ProTech Electronics
Provident Bank Foundation
Prudential
Public Strategies Impact
Renewing the Mind LLC
Rider University-Norm Brodsky College of Business
Rite Aid Healthy Futures
Mary G. Roebling Foundation
Rotary Club of the Princeton Corridor
Rotary Club of Robbinsville Hamilton Foundation
Rue Foundation
Rue Insurance
Ryan P. Shute Memorial Giving Fund
Santander Bank
Security Dynamics Monitoring Corp.
Stark & Stark
Stein Family Fund
Warren and Andrea Stock Family Fund of the Princeton Area Community Foundation
Stono Public Affairs
Target Circle
Team Building Unlimited
Tikun Olam Foundation of the Jewish Community Foundation of LA
Trenton Area Soup Kitchen
Trenton Country Club
Turning Point United Methodist Women
United Presbyterian Church
Walgreens
Walmart
Watson Consulting
West Windsor Plainsboro High School
Women's Prayer Circle
Yardley United Methodist Church

## Government Agencies

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families
Capitol County Children's Collaborative
Mercer County Department of Human Services
New Jersey Department of Children and Families, Division of Child Protection & Permanency
New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Office of Homeless Protection Bridges Initiative
Office of the Secretary of Higher Education
U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Emergency Food and Shelter Program
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

We make every effort to accurately recognize our donors. Any errors or omissions are unintentional. Should you find any, please accept our apologies and notify us at **info@anchorhousenj.org.**

**Please note this list does not include individual Anchor House Foundation Ride for Runaways donors. However, Anchor House gives thanks to the Anchor House Foundation and to all who donate, participate, and support our mission via the Ride for Runaways!**

# In-Kind Donations and Volunteer Activities

We are so thankful for the generosity of those who contributed to Anchor House this year through their time and talents and through non-monetary donations. Here are just a few highlights from 2023:

- Companies like Kenvue (pictured, at right) and Otsuka helped to make the seasons bright for our youth by purchasing gifts and spreading cheer.
- Members of the BMS Clinical Operations leadership team volunteered at our packing party at our Broad Street site as we eagerly await our move to our new Brunswick Avenue location. Members of this team also donated artwork they created from a team building painting activity to Anchor House.
- In addition to a grant, employees from Colgate-Palmolive volunteered at Anchor House, beautifying our grounds and facilities using their gardening and painting skills and making it look festive with decorations for Halloween and for fall.

*Be Kind, a local group that held a laptop and Chromebook collection for our youth.*

- A group of young philanthropists from STEP For A Better World LEO Club donated 65 bags of candy to Anchor House.
- The Morrisville Presbyterian Church collected food around the holidays and donated it once again this year for our Thanksgiving and holiday baskets. Christine's Hope for Kids donated Easter baskets.

## Donate
## Volunteer
## Partner
## Share

# Ways You Can Help

From volunteering with youth, joining a committee, organizing our food pantry/essential needs closet, gardening, or becoming a donor – there's a place for you at Anchor House!

Please visit anchorhousenj.org to learn more about our work and to donate if you can.

For more information and ideas on how you can help, please contact Nicole Cody at ncody@anchorhousenj.org or call 609-396-8329.

## More Ways to Partner

- Monthly Giving Program
- Gifts of securities, IRAs or planned gifts
- Employee Matching Gifts
- Donor Advised Funds

# Donor Spotlight

In December, Anchor House received a sizeable donation from a company in our area. Although we are very appreciative of this generous contribution, it was the story behind this donation that is priceless.

The owner of the company had been at a local convenience store on an extremely cold day and saw a young girl seated on the curb, wrapped in a blanket. She asked those passing by her for help but everyone just walked by her, including our donor. He knew though as he went inside the store that he wanted to help her in some way. This kind gentleman decided to purchase her gift cards for the store so she could buy something to eat. When he came out of the store, she had moved from the curb toward the dumpster. When he asked if she was ok, she said she had no money. This is when he gave her the gift cards.

His generosity could have stopped there. When he went home, he told his wife about the experience and they talked about how they could help others like this young girl in similar situations. That is why they decided to donate to Anchor House. They both believed in our mission and knew that we help youth like this young girl each and every day.

Our Executive Director, Kim McNear, learned of the story behind the donation when she called to thank this donor.

By the end of the call, both were in tears about the plight of this young girl and all those like her, ones that Anchor House has served and ones like her that we hope find their way to Anchor House to receive services or find the help they need elsewhere.

"I shed tears too for the compassion that he and his wife showed," explained Kim. "A seemingly small act turned into great impact for that young lady who in that moment needed help and great impact for those we serve."

## Strategic Plan Goal Progress:

# Mental Health Services at Anchor House and in Our Community

Research shows that youth who experience homelessness, even for a short period of time, are at higher risk for mental health concerns. To meet the needs of our current youth and enable us to serve even more youth in the community who need these services, one of our Strategic Plan goals is to build a clinical mental health department.

In 2023, Anchor House conducted a feasibility study on expanding our agency's mental health services, and findings from the study showed that Anchor House could have a significant impact on decreasing waitlists for mental health services for youth in our community. The study also identified gaps in services, including ones specific to trauma, grief/loss, and parent/child/family conflict, as well as a need for bilingual and LGBTQI+ affirming therapists. Anchor House is in the process of recruiting for these positions, as well as taking steps toward closing the identified service gaps so that we can continue to move forward on this critically important Strategic Plan goal.

**Our work evolves**

Learn more and donate

**www.anchorhousenj.org**

# Hamilton Building Supply Driving for a Cause

Hamilton Building Supply, an area business celebrating its 100th anniversary this year, has an initiative called Driving for a Cause that promotes various causes the company supports by wrapping their newest delivery trucks with a unique theme. The delivery trucks are on the road daily, raising awareness to these causes. Each truck has a QR code that a passerby can scan to donate to the very important cause being featured. Hamilton Building Supply added in late 2023 Anchor House to its Driving for a Cause truck fleet. Our staff and youth were excited to visit Hamilton Building Supply and see the truck they branded with the Anchor House logo and QR code. It is a great way to spread the word about our agency.

Anchor House

*Celebrating 45 Years of Serving Youth*

**IMPACT REPORT 2023**

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**www.anchorhousenj.org**

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