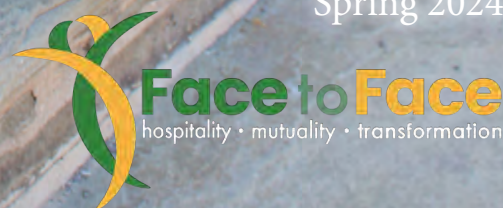


# NAVIGATING

*the barriers of poverty*



Spring 2024



# NAVIGATING HOUSING CHALLENGES

Your *support* helps guests overcome obstacles to a better future



## FACT:

Households are considered **Cost Burdened** when they spend >30% of their income on their rent or mortgage. Approximately half of Philadelphia renters are cost burdened.



*Housing Navigator, Felismina, visits Shirley at her new apartment*

A few months ago, Shirley found herself homeless and with no place to go, she began living in her van. Rising rents, low wages, and gentrification made finding a safe and affordable apartment in Germantown challenging. She eventually moved in with family members but unfortunately, they became abusive and began stealing from her. She did not feel safe in their house but could not find an affordable apartment. It was taking an emotional toll on her, and she felt lonely and became depressed. One day a friend suggested she go to Face to Face for help. When Shirley arrived at Face to Face, she was distraught and emotional. After carefully listening to her concerns, our housing navigator guided Shirley through an apartment search. The Face to Face Housing Navigator establishes relationships with local landlords, so she can connect guests with suitable housing options that meet their personal and financial needs. She and Shirley toured several apartments, and located a newly renovated, one-bedroom apartment

with a private bathroom and shared kitchen that was available. Our Social Services Center helped Shirley get identification, an essential document needed for her new lease. Shirley also met with our Legal Center to assist in recovering funds due to her from an insurance settlement. The Housing Navigator provided additional reassurance, application assistance and friendly support. With her new identification, financial resources, and newfound confidence, Shirley moved into her own apartment. Once she was settled, she felt happy and free. "My new apartment is so peaceful. Now I can enjoy spending time with my friends, relaxing and playing cards. The housing navigator is my guardian angel. I am so thankful for her." Shirley will continue to receive ongoing emotional support, budgeting guidance, and referrals to Face to Face programs. You help create a support system and safety net to encourage housing stability.

## ADVOCATING FOR INSURANCE COVERAGE 😊

Your *compassion* helped give Ivy a confident smile

Some struggles linger and are not resolved. For decades, Ivy battled dental issues that ultimately resulted in the loss of all her teeth. In ongoing conversations with the Behavioral Health Coordinator, Ivy shared her personal insecurities. Together they discussed concrete ways to lessen their power and explore positive solutions. Ultimately, this led to identifying Ivy's desire for dental care. Upon reviewing her dental insurance coverage, they learned only a small portion of denture costs are covered unless they were medically needed. So, Ivy and the Behavioral Health Coordinator met with her physician who determined that her nutrition

and health would improve if she had proper dentures. Finally, after 24 years, Ivy got a full set of dentures with the help from her dentist. She came to Face to Face with the biggest, genuine, radiant smile. The kitchen joined the

celebration by serving a meal Ivy requested. Now, Ivy feels more confident, and relaxed because she knows she will be able to chew whatever food is served.



*Ivy smiles confidently with Behavioral Health Coordinator, Sr Bella*

# GUIDING FAMILIES THROUGH SCHOOL SELECTIONS

Your *compassion* helped Mahaj thrive in a safe school environment.



Last year, Mahaj was excited to start 7th grade at a new school. He was looking forward to making new friends and returning to in person learning. Shortly after the school year started, he was violently bullied, and he could not concentrate in the classroom. His grades fell and he was scared. He knew about the Face to Face Educational Equity (EE) program because his younger brothers attended Mercy Neighborhood Ministries. Fearful of returning to his school, Mahaj and his mom met with the Director of Educational Equity to explore other elementary schools. Since the Director of EE has relationships with many local, high performing schools,



*Mahaj is looking forward to all the opportunities at Cristo Rey*



*Director of Educational Equity visits Mahaj at school and talks about his Thorns (struggles) and Roses (positives) of his day*

she was able to facilitate an efficient transfer to DePaul Catholic School and secure new school uniforms. Once he started at DePaul, the teachers quickly identified gaps in his math skills. For the next year and half, Mahaj attended weekly tutoring sessions at Face to Face to improve his math skills. These tutoring sessions also gave the Director of EE and his mom the opportunity to meet, build trust and learn about the family's needs. These conversations led to a referral to Face to Face Social Services to help with new furniture and school supplies for the younger children.

Thanks to Mahaj's hard work and determination, he thrived in his new school, earned good grades, and

formed positive friendships. Several months ago, the family began to think about where he would go to high school. The Director of EE met with him and his mom to explore their options, assist with applications, and attend school tours. She also advocated for him with the high school admissions directors where he applied. Recently, Mahaj and his mom learned he was accepted to several high schools with scholarships. They are excited he will attend his top choice, Cristo Rey, in the Fall 2024. Mahaj said, "When I graduate high school, I want to go to college and contribute good into the world." Face to Face promises to follow along with Mahaj and his family through college graduation.

## ART PROGRAM 🎨

Every Friday, guests creatively express themselves in the art program.

Zakina painted a large red heart with a black heart in the middle, and another heart inside the black heart. She painted the innermost heart with gold glitter. She said, "That's my heart. When people look at me, they just see someone who might look unhappy but inside that black heart is a sparkly, golden heart!" 🧡

She later attached her painted heart to her jacket zipper so she could wear it.



## Navigating Barriers

Your *support* made a difference in 2023



25,755

MEALS



558

BIRTH  
CERTIFICATES



1425

SHOWERS



450

IDS



Volunteer scheduling is available online. Scan the QR code to create your account and view volunteer opportunities.



Questions? Email  
[Ally@facetofacegermantown.org](mailto:Ally@facetofacegermantown.org)



## Coffee Chat

### COFFEE CHAT

Come in for a tour and hear what's new from our Executive Director. Check the website for future dates.



## Ways TO HELP

BECOME A CASSEROLE COOK

HOST A BIRTHDAY FUNDRAISER

BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR

DONATE ITEMS FROM OUR WISH LIST

CONTACT US TO DISCUSS A LEGACY GIFT

## Wish List

DEODORANT

UNDERWEAR (NEW, MEN'S AND WOMEN'S)

SHORTS WITH ELASTIC WAISTBAND

OLIVE OIL

COFFEE

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mary Kay Meeks-Hank

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