



## A NEW PLAYGROUND FOR PASSAGE COMMUNITY

**Passage Community, a Simpson-owned building** that provides transitional housing for 17 families, received a special gift – a new playground!

The idea came from long-time volunteer Jill King. Her employer, Bright Horizons, offers a Bright Space program to their employees to work with non-profit agencies to create warm, safe, spaces for children to play and experience the joy of childhood.

Jill was first introduced to Simpson by the Bright Horizons Foundation for Children director in 2001. “When we learned about Simpson, we knew the Bright Space program would be a perfect match and that we could help develop child-friendly environments that were educational, safe, and fun for the parents and children to connect.”

Jill has led efforts to help create three child-friendly Bright Spaces for Simpson: two in the program areas of Elliot Park and Passage Community and at the administrative offices. While creating the tutoring and play space at Passage Community, Jill became aware of the dirt lot behind the building and began to

*(continued on p. 7)*



## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



### FALL 2015 NEWSLETTER

#### CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Steve Horsfield  
Elisabeth Loeffler  
Megan Rye  
Erin Wisness

#### PHOTOGRAPHERS

E. Katie Holm  
Michael Moschogianis

#### GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Shelley Moen



#### MISSION

To house, support and  
advocate for people  
experiencing homelessness.

### Dear Simpson Community:

With fall approaching this continues to be an exciting time at Simpson. We began the new fiscal year on July 1st and I am pleased to share that our programs continue to grow in scale and in impact. A few updates:

- Over 100 community members donated nearly 400 backpacks filled with new school supplies to the school age children in our Family Housing programs.
- Due to the success of our Young Parent Program, which helps young parents and children break the cycle of generational poverty and homelessness, we secured funding to serve an additional 11 families, bringing our program total to 45.
- We are preparing to launch the second phase of our mentoring pilot program, which will provide new means of support for middle school aged children in our programs. On page 6 you can read Zanaya's story and her experience with her mentor, Cheryl.
- The shelter continues to be filled to capacity; from Memorial Day to Labor Day, 399 guests stayed at least one night at the shelter.

Emergency shelter space continues to be a critical resource in our community. You may have read in recent news that there is a law that requires emergency homeless shelters to be housed in places of worship. I, along with other shelter leadership, have been working with the Minneapolis City Council to consider changes to zoning language relating to overnight shelter. A modified zoning rule would allow for intentional space design and extended hours of operations. Ultimately, these changes will allow Simpson to design programs and spaces that are more dignified and conducive to rapidly restoring shelter guests to stable housing in the community.

To continue our work to educate and engage members of our community, I would like to extend an invitation for you to join us at a Simpson Connects event. These events are designed to provide more information on the full range and impact of our programs and the vision for our agency. A list of upcoming dates can be found on the back of the newsletter.

I look forward to welcoming you to one of the event dates this fall and I am deeply grateful to work with such an amazing community of supporters. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Steve Horsfield  
Executive Director

# 5K

## WALK | RUN

to end homelessness

### HEALTHY & HOUSED

Race for the Key

**Saturday**  
**October 10, 2015**

**Theodore Wirth Park**  
3300 Glenwood Ave, Minneapolis

**10:00 am**  
(check-in starts at 9:00)



**Register at:**  
**healthyandhoused.eventbrite.com**

Registration is \$30 per person and includes t-shirt, water and snacks. Kids under 12 are free (does not include t-shirt).

For questions contact Elisabeth: [eloeffler@simpsonhousing.org](mailto:eloeffler@simpsonhousing.org)

Healthy and Housed 5K Fun Walk/Run is a collaborative fundraiser  
between five homeless shelters in Minneapolis





Thank you to the Art 4 Shelter committee members who have volunteered over 5,000 hours in five years to make this event possible.



2015 Committee



2011 Committee



# CELEBRATING FIVE YEARS

**Karen Rye served on the board of directors at Simpson from 2008 through 2013 and is the founder of Art 4 Shelter.** From the moment Karen joined the board her mission was to raise funds for the shelter program. That commitment led to a community wide fundraiser that would bring critical dollars to Simpson. Working as a team, Karen and her daughter, Megan Rye, a nationally known artist, came up with a fundraising idea that would directly connect artists and collectors to Simpson's shelter. Donated original



Founder Karen Rye and her daughter Megan

artwork would sell for \$30, roughly the cost to house a shelter guest for one night.

Each year, Art 4 Shelter's dedicated committee members secure over 1,000 pieces of artwork. "Artists have the biggest hearts of anyone I know. I remember one artist who told me, I could never write a check for \$1,000, but if I make 33 small paintings, I can donate that much to the shelter," says Megan.

"Art 4 Shelter is an expression of the passion and social justice that exists within the artists' community. It is wonderful to be able to educate the community about homelessness in Minneapolis and provide an opportunity for people to buy art," says Karen. Karen and Megan's vision has raised a total of \$300,000 in the last five years and provided over 10,000 nights of shelter to people who need a safe and warm place to spend the night.

Thank you to Karen, Megan, the entire Art 4 Shelter committee and the many talented artists for their commitment. We are honored to have the support and talent of Minnesota's creative community to stage a benefit that beautifully illustrates how important an individual artist and an individual collector can be to those experiencing homelessness.

Art installed at the Burnet Gallery, Le Meridien Chambers Hotel. Thank you for hosting Art 4 Shelter since 2012!

## Thank you to the 2015 Art 4 Shelter Sponsors

Mark & Shannon Evenstad | Reiling Family Foundation | Rovick Family Foundation  
Paula & Roger Roe | Barbara Scrimgeour

### 2011-2015 Committee Members

- |                        |                  |
|------------------------|------------------|
| Jenny Albert           | Abby Kordosky    |
| Kelly Bent             | Mark Laliberte   |
| Teri Block             | Jean Leuthner    |
| Kristie Bretzke        | Sandy Long       |
| Lisa Brown             | Betsey McLain    |
| Peggy Burnet           | Cindy Murphy     |
| Kat Corrigan           | Stephanie Ott    |
| Lisa Denzer            | Michelle Paule   |
| Lindsay DiLorenzo      | Jennifer Phelps  |
| Terry Dondlinger       | Ann Putnam       |
| Molly Engelsma         | Jodi Reeb        |
| Diane Fisher           | Kerry Reiling    |
| Claire Forsmark        | Paula Roe        |
| Leslie Goodale         | Karen Rye        |
| Karen Gustafson        | Megan Rye        |
| Jacqueline Hanson      | Kimberly Senn    |
| Laura Hanson           | Lauri Speltz     |
| Kate Heegaard Hartfiel | Lynda Stout      |
| Marya Hornbacher       | Mary Beth Tucker |
| Karen Kirt             | Mary Welsh       |
| Farida Korallus        |                  |

And a special thank you to all contributing artists!

# SIMPSON LAUNCHES THE MENTORING AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



**In February, Simpson launched the Mentoring & Youth Development Program** for youth ages 10-14. Research shows that the number of caring, supportive adults in a young person's life is one important factor in resiliency, a key skill for long-term success. The program pairs middle school students with an adult mentor for weekly meetings for at least one year. Together they work on exploring their community, set goals, and connect with enrichment activities. This program is an exciting step towards Simpson's strategic initiative of offering services to all youth in our programs as a means of ending generational homelessness.

Cheryl and Zanaya are one of the first mentor/mentee pairs in the program. Zanaya, age 12, shared her thoughts about the program. Her family has been working with Simpson's Family Housing Program for two years.

## IN ZANAYA'S OWN WORDS

*When I first met my mentor, I really didn't expect anything. I was hoping we could just have fun. I'm glad she's not a grown-up who is too serious, or acts like everything is a joke. She's actually perfect. I think of Cheryl as a really good friend because I can tell her stuff. I've lately been kind of moody since a tragedy has happened with me and my family, but when I'm with Cheryl, I really can't frown. I'm always smiling!*

*My favorite part of the mentoring program at Simpson is going to the Humane Society because I really love animals and I've only been there once before. Lately we've been going to Open Arms to deliver food to chronically ill home-bound adults. I really like this because I really want to have an effect on people and I want to help. We've been doing it every week on Tuesday. Last*

*(continued from cover)*

wonder how the space could be more functional. "I asked the staff about the idea of creating a playground and learned that the staff had been thinking of how to put in a playground for years," said Jill.

Jill and the staff's dream became a reality when the Bright Horizons Foundation for Children called to inform them that one of Bright Horizons' vendors, Landscape Structures, offered to help fund the playground.

After collaborating on the design with Landscape Structures, Jill, her family, and 36 Bright Horizons employees broke ground and began to assemble the playground in May. Within four days the dirt lot was transformed into a playground. Her favorite memory of the weekend was when two boys who live at Passage offered to help and asked if there could be a bench on the playground so their parents would have a place to sit when they played.

"In that moment, that is in essence what Bright Spaces is about. Having a place in the day for parents and children to connect, remove distractions, and reconnect as a family. That is what I hope the playground will do for the parents and children," says Jill.

The children at Passage have enjoyed their summer days at the new playground, their parents often happily observing from the bench. "We have over 50 kids at Passage, and now

because of the playground we are seeing the kids and families outside more, playing, connecting and building friendships," says Janelle Leppa, Director of Family Housing Programs.

Simpson Housing Services thanks Jill and Jonathan King, Bright Horizons Foundation for Children, Landscape Structures, and all of the volunteers for creating a bright space for families living at Passage Community.



*"Jonathan and I enjoyed helping create a special place for the kids that is outside and connects them to nature. I drive by at least once a week to help maintain it and look forward to seeing how the kids use the playground as the seasons change." - Jill*

*week I couldn't go, and they noticed! It makes me feel like I'm officially Cheryl's "partner."*

*Another activity I have truly loved was going to the bookstore Wild Rumpus. What's irregular but amazing is that they have animals! Without a doubt it is the best bookstore I have ever been to. Next week, Cheryl is going to take me to soccer camp because my dad doesn't have a car and there weren't any soccer opportunities near my house. Even though we have been doing a lot of things, sometimes we just go to a coffee shop and have a smoothie and just talk. I think that's just amazing!*

If you are interested in becoming a mentor, please contact Charlotte Kinzley, Youth Program Coordinator:  
[ckinzley@simpsonhousing.org](mailto:ckinzley@simpsonhousing.org)

## 2014 IMPACT

**3178** PEOPLE SERVED | **PLACED 1000** people into housing

**230** families with **442** children

**3,015**

volunteers

**522**

meals were served at the shelter

**37,164 HOURS**  
equivalent to 18 full time employees



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**MINNESOTA**

# HOMELESS MEMORIAL MARCH & SERVICE

**THURSDAY • DECEMBER, 17 2015**



Honoring those who have died while homeless in Minnesota

## SIMPSON CONNECTS

Join us for a free one-hour event to learn more about Simpson Housing Services' mission to house, support and advocate for people experiencing homelessness. This is an opportunity to explore how supportive housing makes a difference in our community.



**SIMPSON SHELTER**  
2740 1st Ave S, Minneapolis

**OCT**  
**27**

5:30 pm

**DEC**  
**2**

5:30 pm

**PASSAGE COMMUNITY**  
17 E. 24 Street, Minneapolis

**NOV**  
**5**

5:30 pm

To RSVP please contact Elisabeth Loeffler:  
612.455.0865 or [eloeffler@simpsonhousing.org](mailto:eloeffler@simpsonhousing.org)