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YMCA Shelter Services
December Newsletter

December 15, 2020



Seasons Greetings!

This is the time of year when we pause to count our blessings, and our volunteers, donors, and community partners are at the top of the list! Thank you for all you do to help our guests get back on their feet.

In this month's newsletter, we wanted to take a moment to recognize some of the amazing community groups and individuals who have made a difference and impact on YMCA Shelter Services this holiday season. Santa's Workshop kicks off this week and we have some updates about our holiday events this year.

International Volunteer Day

December 5th was International Volunteer Day and now, more than ever, we rely on our volunteers' generosity and support to provide critical resources and services to all our guests. We wanted to take a moment to recognize some of our amazing volunteers whose efforts this holiday season will be the reason there are so many smiles on the guests' faces.



Seeds of Caring- The organization has been partnering with us since last Spring, and empower kids in the community through volunteering. They provide meals to our guests regularly, as well as donating hygiene kits for our guests.

Clifford Family- Katie Clifford and her son recently put together 100 activity bags for the children on the Family Side.

BOSER Enterprise- One of our newest community partners, BOSER Enterprise stopped by a few weeks ago and dropped off over 5,000 face masks for our shelter and others.

BESA- A longtime partner of the Van Buren Center, we don't know what we would do without BESA! They continue to support and enrich our volunteer programming by connecting us with new volunteers. This past Thanksgiving they assembled a group of volunteers to help serve dinner.

Buck-I-Guy- In the fall, one of the most recognizable OSU Football fans gathered a HUGE amount of cleaning items and supplies for the Van Buren Center.

Women 2 Women- Another longtime community partner of the Van Buren Center, Women2Women has always gone out of their way to support our



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mission and we cannot thank them enough for their recent donation to our shelter.

Gilbane Golf Outing- This fall, the annual golf outing helped to spread information and awareness about YMCA Shelter Services and the response and interest in donating to our organization through their efforts was overwhelming and will make a huge impact.

X-Clusive Empowerment- Annually, X-Clusive Empowerment provides meals for our shelter guests, and this past thanksgiving helped to provide lunch to all our guests and on Christmas Day will again provide dinner for our Men's Shelter.

Mid-Ohio Food Bank- A long time valued partner to the Van Buren Center, MOFB has continued to increase its efforts to support our cause. Since March, the food bank has provided 2 meals a day, 5 days a week to our men, and until August did the same for the women who were at our temporary overflow location at the Hilltop YMCA.

These are just a few of the volunteer groups that have made a huge difference in our community, but please know, **there are SO MANY, MANY, MORE** of you out there to recognize. Please, know how important all of our volunteers and partner's support and efforts are to us and their impact. 2020 has been a rough year for everyone and it is because of our amazing volunteers and community partners that we were able to get through it. In the coming year, we will continue to recognize and spotlight all of the amazing volunteers and partners who have made an impact and difference in our community.

Holiday Updates

Holiday Workshop- Tomorrow, Wednesday, December 15th our **Holiday Workshop** opens and we are filled with excitement and look forward to welcoming the families and volunteers. For anyone who is not familiar with **Van Buren Center's Family Side Holiday Workshop**, it is an annual event we put on every year where parents or guardians of the children staying at the shelter have the opportunity to reserve a timeslot in the weeks leading up to Christmas. When they arrive, they are paired with a volunteer who assists them while they pick from a range of items and select



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the gifts they want to give to their children. Once they are done shopping the parent and volunteers wrap all of the gifts together. This year each child will receive 6 new toys, a stuffed animal & blanket, a pack of new socks and underwear, unlimited books, puzzles, coloring books, hats & gloves, and a stocking filled with as much as they can fit inside.

It is one of our most popular events and made entirely possible by our volunteers and donations, without the amazing support of our volunteers the Holiday Workshop would not be possible.

Here is a sneak preview of the room this year for the Holiday Workshop.



Thank you to everyone who has already donated to our Holiday Workshop and those who have reached out to offer their support. Kristian and I, on behalf of everyone at the Van Buren Center, would like to thank you all from the bottom of our hearts for your compassion, generosity, and continuous dedication to give hope to the individuals and families we serve.

If you purchased an item off of our Amazon or Target Wishlist and need a receipt sent acknowledging your donation for gift purposes, please email vbvolunteer@ymcacolumbus.org. We also would love to send you a thank you note for your donation and unfortunately do not receive any information from Amazon including mailing addresses when items are bought.



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Holiday Meals- We still have opportunities available to provide a meal for our Families and Single Adult Women on Christmas Day! In addition to openings on Christmas Eve. Thank you so much to everyone who has already donated funds to go towards holiday meals for our men, women, and families. Visit the link below to find out more, or email

kristian.tucker@ymcacolumbus.org.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050f48aca62ca5fe3-holiday>

Men's Shelter- In November, our men's shelter moved into a new space in order to increase the number of available beds and individuals we can serve in addition to our winter overflow program. As we get settled into the new location, we will continue to add to the services and programming available to our men. Currently, we have weekend meal donations available, and to find out more visit the link below:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050F48ACA62CA5FE3-ymca1>

Stay tuned for more information in the coming year about new opportunities available for volunteers to help support the YMCA Men's Shelter.

This holiday season, each man staying at the shelter will receive a gift of their own including a thermos, hand soap, 2 pairs of new socks, hand warmers, chapstick, cloth facemask, and deodorant.



Staff Spotlight



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Tyler Toles, Van Buren Center Team Lead. He has been extremely helpful during a time of change and transition. He has taken each challenge gracefully! He's a great addition to the team.

Joel Wright, Men's Shelter Team Member. Joel's empathy and sincerity with guests, his attention to detail and ability to anticipate needs and address issues, and his seemingly endless energy and goodwill are greatly appreciated. He is guest-oriented and is always available to make sure everyone around him is comfortable and happy.

Thank you **Tyler** and **Joel** for all you do!

Impact Numbers

AREA OF IMPACT	SEPTEMBER 2020	OCTOBER 2020	NOVEMBER 2020
# of Women Served	271 Individuals	323 Individuals	284 Individuals
# of Men Served	303 Individual	311 Individuals	347 Individuals
# of Families Served	91 Families, or 295 Individuals	86 Families, or 264 Individuals	88 Families, or 285 Individuals



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of Guests
Successfully
Housed

12 Women

4 Men

16 Families

25 Women

6 Men

14 Families

14 Women

11 Men

17 Families