



Welcoming Two New Residents to Dawn's Place!



A Glimpse into Life at Dawn's Place: Emerging from a Health Crisis

Possibly as all of you, we rejoice at being able to go “mask-less” thanks to the vaccinations that staff and residents have received.

Signs of Hope: Along with the signs of hope in moving out of the COVID – 19 pandemic, there are the hopeful signs that Spring has brought; signs of hope in the women residents of Dawn's Place and in our faithful friends who provide special treats for our residents. Recently, a group of women from a local church came to plant flowers around the front of Dawn's Place (pictured above). Our residents enjoy caring for them by evening watering. Our church friends also left a box of goodies for “Movie Night.” In the box were a few movies, popcorn, soda, candy and a Visa card for pizza. The women enjoyed a wonderful evening and are so grateful for the thoughtfulness of their “Movie Night” friends.

Thanks to the generosity of a foundation, we were able to purchase a large gas grill last year. With the arrival of warm weather, we have initiated “Thursday BBQ Night.” The women are enjoying cooking on the grill; it gives them a break from cooking the evening meal in a hot kitchen.

Residents: With the lifting of COVID restrictions, Dawn's Place has welcomed two new residents. There are now five women in residence sharing life and participating in the many programs offered here. They also receive support from our partnering agencies that offer addiction counseling, health services and other assistance.

Staff and Volunteers: Dawn's Place has been blessed with professional and caring full-time staff: Mary, our program director and therapist; Ann Marie, our residential coordinator and her assistant, Brendale; as well as our weekend and evening staff, Sharon, Janet, Linda and Andrea. Our part-time staff: Charmian, the bookkeeper, Joanna, the grant writer and Shevaun, the development director have used their expertise to keep Dawn's Place financially on track. And what would we ever do without our development committee? They recently held a successful virtual wine tasting event and are now sponsoring a virtual art auction.

Because of COVID restrictions, our volunteers who have served Dawn's Place—some for 10 years—had to be suspended. We missed them but we will now begin to welcome them back. They provide needed support for our residents who also appreciate their company.

Program: An update from Mary Shea

Since the last issue, Dawn's Place has seen an increase in referrals to our program and welcomed two new clients into the program in addition to interviewing potential clients. I am also 'graduating' one of the aftercare clients who has done amazingly since she first arrived at Dawn's Place 1.5 years ago. She is happy and thriving in her relationships with her family and has discovered a new sense of optimism for her future.

More good news: We are excited to welcome back the music therapist for onsite groups with our new instruments. We also have a volunteer Trauma Yoga therapist who will be working with our clients for the next two months.

You, our faithful supporters/partners have enabled us to continue the mission of Dawn's Place: helping women to heal from the trauma of the life of commercial sexual exploitation or sex trafficking and working to develop the skills they need to live independent lives. Your concern and support offer hope and healing to our residents as they work through the trauma they have experienced. We are sincerely grateful for your on-going support.

Thank you.

-Sister Kathleen Coll SSJ, Executive Director of Dawn's Place

A word from Shevaun Brannigan, Development Director

About a week ago or so, a Dawn's Place envelope should have arrived in most of your mailboxes. (If it didn't and you would like a copy of our Spring Appeal, please email info@ahomefordawn.org, and I would be happy to send you one!) This letter tells the story of Victoria, a former resident and survivor who, 10 years after departing Dawn's Place, reached out to donate self-care baskets to the current residents. The baskets are pictured below, full of self-reflection items and chocolates. Before COVID-19 hit, Victoria supported herself as the manager of a sanitation division--a stability created in part by the work she did at Dawn's Place. Victoria encouraged us to use her story on the condition that we do so to help current and future Dawn's Place residents. My hope is you will return a donation with the reply card enclosed in Victoria's letter to do just that. Or, consider making a gift at ahomefordawn.org/ihelp.php#donate - your gift will help survivors pay forward the care and healing they receive at Dawn's Place.



Visit our website to learn more about Dawn's Place

SUPPORT SURVIVORS WITH A GIFT TO DAWN'S PLACE!

**Dawn's Place is Devoted to its Residents:
Before, During, and After the Pandemic**



As the end of the pandemic (hopefully) nears, we would be appreciative if you continued your support of our residents. We anticipate increased inquiry and intake numbers, as trafficking has thrived during this internationally challenging time. We are so grateful for your support in empowering Dawn's Place to aid more survivors--thank you. We couldn't do this without you!

[Donate Now!](#)

Legislative and Advocacy Updates

The CSE Institute just released the [2021 Annual Report on Commercial Sexual Exploitation in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#). We have written extensively on the current state of Pennsylvania law regarding prostitution, buying sex, and sex trafficking. Using data from the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts, we've analyzed the arrest and charging data throughout the Commonwealth for charges under 5902(a) ("Prostitution") and 5902(e) ("Patronizing Prostitutes"). Chapter 3 also includes an extensive discussion of our legislative and policy recommendations focusing on those that would implement the Equality Model. Chapters 4, 5, and 6, focus on our theme of *Truth and Justice*. Chapter 4 discusses the necessity of *Justice* for victims, including the importance of charging decisions and the reality of police sexual misconduct. Chapter 5, "Law and Social Change," is about the importance of *Justice* for survivors, including the role vacatur. We also introduce two survivors who are working with the CSE Institute: Jennifer Glatthorn and Cyd Berger. In Chapter 6, we focus on *Truth* dispelling the myths perpetrated by QAnon, the dangers of the "sex work" narrative, and the importance of narrative and purpose in the Christian anti-trafficking movement.

We invite you to read and learn.

*-Shea M. Rhodes, Esquire
Dawn's Place Board Member
Director and Co-Founder of Villanova Law Institute to Address Commercial and Sexual Exploitation*



Healing Stories

I usually end my articles by telling all of you how grateful I am to you and to the donors, volunteers and staff of Dawn's Place. And though I always point out a particular reason for my gratitude, I worry that my words are beginning to sound like so much boilerplate. So today I'd like to give all of you a glimpse into my world pre-Dawn's Place. I became a public defender in the early eighties and almost immediately, I began to represent women charged with prostitution. Just like everyone else, I assumed that these

women were selling themselves to pay for a drug addiction. I was appalled at how many of them spent huge amounts of time in jail simply because they couldn't seem to stay away from drugs. Like many in the criminal justice system, I was mystified by the apparent general inability of our drug and alcohol programs to bring about long-term change in this population.

Then in the early nineties, I was asked to represent Jill* She was a stunning blue-eyed blonde, charged with prostitution, who had been arrested in a high-class massage parlor. To my surprise, Jill, who clearly hated what she was doing, was not addicted to drugs. Indeed, she was both intelligent and highly articulate. I spent a great deal of time with Jill to prepare the defense of her case; and, I became aware that she had been sexually abused as a child. Jill became the key that helped me unlock the puzzle of sexual trauma and commercial sexual exploitation. She led me to look beyond the addictions of my other clients, and when I did that, I inevitably found sexual trauma.

"Eureka!" I wanted to shout, "That's why drug treatment alone doesn't work! These women need to address the underlying issues." But that was decades before "sexual trauma recovery therapy" entered our lexicon. And I was a public defender. Any attempt to discuss these issues was derided as "the abuse excuse" and the inevitable parade of my clients in and out of the jails continued apace.

In the mid-nineties, I was appointed to represent Tamika*. Tamika was another stunningly beautiful woman charged with prostitution; and, she had also operated out of a high-class massage parlor. Tamika was not addicted to drugs. She too was a victim of sexual trauma. My heart broke for her when Tamika told me what she did every Sunday morning. She would dress up in her best "church" clothes and go to church to hear the pastor preach. But every Sunday, Tamika would slink out of the church early, so that she didn't have to shake the pastor's hand after the service. She was terrified that some man would come out of the congregation to denounce her. "I know it's nuts," Tamika told me, "I know that any man, who would say anything, would also be uncovering his own actions. I know that no man would do that. I can't help the fear, but I still really want to go to church. I'm just afraid that the people would find out about me."

Sadly, beyond telling her that God loved her, and that she had no reason to be ashamed for what had been done to her, I had no real help to offer Tamika. This was before sexual trauma recovery was available to my clients. This was before Dawn's Place. And the memory of Tamika is one reason why I am so grateful for our staff, our donors, and our volunteers. Because of you, I will never again be forced to turn away a woman empty-handed. And for that, I offer my profound thanks.

*Not her real name

*-Mary DeFusco, Esquire
Dawn's Place President of the Board
Director of Training, Defender Association of Philadelphia*



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