

## Staying Positive

Teresa has been through a lot. In 2019, she lost her husband. While still grieving, the COVID pandemic began, upsetting everything in the world. Depression set in and she became homeless not long after.

Everyone around her now will tell you that, somehow, Teresa is still one of the most positive people they've met. Read on to see how she maintains her positivity and wants to give back once she's stable in her own home.



**Teresa with her NHH Case Manager Kelsey**

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## Welcome, Ashley McSwain!



**Ashley McSwain**

New Hope Housing is proud to announce that the board of directors have selected Ashley McSwain as our new permanent executive director. Her start date was June 12, 2023.

Ashley has 25 years of experience with nonprofits that provide services and housing for marginalized populations, including 12 years as an executive director and 10 years as deputy director. Please join us in welcoming Ashley!

Dear Friends,

I am happy to say hello and I look forward to meeting you. I want to share a little about myself and one of my goals for New Hope Housing. I am an adjunct professor, a licensed social worker, and a consultant. I have been a leader at several nonprofits, and I enjoy educating and mentoring up and coming leaders.

Much of my nonprofit background is in serving homeless families and women returning home following a period of incarceration. Homelessness is an insidious problem. Trying to move forward without adequate and safe housing can leave a person in a perpetual cycle of stress and hardship. Homelessness affects every facet of your life, from your mental and physical health, to your relationship with family and children, to the way society responds to these temporary circumstances. As for women returning home from prison or jail, its often the lack of housing that puts them on the pathway to recidivism. Time and time again I have run into women who are ready to take control of their lives but just can't find an affordable or safe place to live. That's why I am excited to work for New Hope as we try to address this fundamental need for housing.

While New Hope will be addressing multiple needs of our constituents, I want to share that one of my passions is reading, learning and literacy. I believe that knowledge is power. My mother is an ardent reader and growing up, she required me and my brother to read regularly (even requiring us to read aloud at home and complete book reports during our summer breaks). Today, my brother and I are avid readers and know that reading and learning is the foundation to moving beyond life's circumstances.

Education and knowledge are one of the few things you can't lose to homelessness and crisis. Over the years, I have found that many clients don't see the value of reading, especially when they are in crisis. However, when you don't read you have to rely on someone else to tell you the rules, requirements and regulations, thus limiting your active participation in your own circumstances. Reading and learning will arm our clients with knowledge so they can make solid choices that will lead to their best outcome. At each of the nonprofits I have worked, we incorporated books and learning activities into all of our events and programs. I plan to do this at New Hope, as well as creating a learning environment that will enhance our organizational skills, so our clients will be best served.

As we take New Hope Housing to its next stage, I'd like to know what you think. I want to hear from you and am seeking your partnership to chart our course ahead.

Lastly, I know that in order to reach our goals, our volunteers, donors, and community supporters are the lifeblood of our work. I want you to know that we appreciate you and I look forward to taking this journey together.

Thank you for your gifts, your service, and for believing in this mission to ensure that no one is homeless, and that housing is affordable and safe.

Thank you,

Ashley McSwain, LMSW, MSOD  
Executive Director

Join us for a Virtual Lunch and Learn  
to meet the new Executive Director!  
Wednesday, Sept. 20th, 12 pm

<https://bit.ly/lunchwithAshley>

## Cheers to Summer Volunteers!



Thanks to the Air Force Honor Guard from Andrews Air Force Base for volunteering! This group cleaned up litter and debris up and down Seminary Rd. near Bailey's Shelter & Supportive Housing as part of the Adopt-A-Highway program. We believe in being a good neighbor and we're grateful to our good neighbors in the Air Force for helping take care of our community!

Thank you to The Lake Barcroft Woman's Club for donating \$4,200 to our employment scholarship fund! This was presented to us by Alice Edmondson, President of the Woman's Club, and one of our volunteers. This gift helps shelter clients with work-related expenses and trainings.



Many thanks to Rebuilding Together Arlington/Fairfax/Falls Church and Morgan Stanley for serving at our Max's Place group home. Volunteers tackled yardwork, painted the back deck, and brightened up the kitchen. We're grateful for all of you!

Few things compare to a delicious meal made with love. We are so grateful to Lasagna Love for the meal they made and served at RPC Shelter - and for the smiles as they served! Check out this national organization for people who love to cook - and ways to get involved locally!



**If you want to volunteer this summer by yourself, with your family, or as a group, please contact Liza Feiler at [lfeiler@newhopehousing.org](mailto:lfeiler@newhopehousing.org)**



## Making Her Way

Teresa grew up in North Carolina but came to the D.C. area ten years ago, looking for a change in her life. She quickly found a job, and would get married two years later. From 2015 to 2018, she was a recovery coach in D.C., mentoring clients diagnosed with substance abuse and addiction problems.

Teresa loved helping people, but due to a change in her personal life, she left that work for a time. When she was ready to come back, it was difficult to get rehired. She had the experience, but didn't have the certifications that were now required. She worked elsewhere and started making plans for a recovery center program of her own design.

And then her world – and the whole world – changed. The death of her husband, followed soon after by the life-altering effects of the COVID pandemic caused Teresa to fall into depression and then homelessness on the streets.

Teresa survived for some time on the street. She made friends who all looked after each other, but she knew she couldn't stay there for long. She came to Kennedy Shelter in 2022.

Teresa came to work. Her case manager, Kelsey Astrow, will tell you that Teresa is one of the hardest workers she's seen. Teresa joined the Operation Stream Shield (OSS) team, a partnership with Fairfax County in which shelter clients are hired daily for community clean-ups. She worked for them two days a week and picked up a 3rd day by being selected to

work at an additional site that often leads to permanent employment.

When things were not going well at the shelter or her housing search, she poured herself into her job. "When everything is falling down around you, that was the one thing I was good at, that nobody could take away from me. They couldn't say that I wasn't dependable, on-time, on-point with a job."



**Teresa with her Deloitte coach, Krystal**

Her dedication to her job almost caused her to miss an opportunity. She found a job fair at Dulles, but was worried about missing her day at OSS. She talked to Kelsey who encouraged her to go, saying that you're deciding between \$48 now or a permanent job. Teresa's attendance at the Deloitte Women's Career day (next page) earlier this summer also convinced her to make the decision to go all in for the job fair – and she got a job! On July 14, Teresa started working for United Airlines overnight as a cabin cleaner.

**(continued on bottom of next page)**

## A Career Day for Women

Deloitte hosted a special Women's Career Fair on June 9th, and the women of New Hope Housing were there! Nine NHH clients participated in this event that included resume building, practice interviews, lessons on branding, and setting career goals.

The Deloitte Career Fair included a photographer and make-up artist onsite who created professional headshots for everyone. Thanks to gifts from the Lake Barcroft Woman's Club and Temple Rodef Shalom, each client was able to shop for a new outfit to wear for this day.

"That was awesome! I'm excited every time I think about it," shared Teresa, when asked about the event. She had a wonderful experience and enjoyed meeting the professional women at Deloitte. She told us that one of the interview specialists helped her create appropriate answers to challenging questions about her background. Teresa successfully used this guidance at an interview within a week!

**"Even the pamphlets they gave me were helpful. The whole thing was fun - I felt on fire!" - Teresa**



**New Hope Housing clients and staff with Deloitte volunteers**

Teresa has already planned out her commute. It's two hours long and involves a bus and two trains, but that gives her time to think and work on her five-year-plan. She wants to get her certification to be a recovery coach again. And she wants to buy a small hotel to turn into a homeless drop-in center and recovery program.

Teresa is continuing to work the OSS job while she starts at United in order to see which path of employment will be best for her. One day, she'll have a place of her own to live closer to work, but for now she's using her time to make plans for her future. We're rooting for her!



## Over The Edge Again!

May 5th was a gorgeous and sunny day to go rappelling!

90 friends and supporters went Over The Edge of the 14-story Hilton Arlington National Landing to raise funds for our supportive housing programs. Hundreds of friends, family members, and colleagues cheered from The Landing Zone as each brave rappeller descended 160 feet.

We all want to thank all of YOU for your efforts to help New Hope Housing and all of our homeless neighbors. You helped raise over \$180,000!

Many thanks to the Culture Committee of Keller Williams MetroCenter for once again adopting us as their RED Day of Service partner. Their committee helped to plan and execute this event. KWMC also supplied 40 volunteers to help event day run smoothly!



**Congratulations to Melody Abella,  
our top individual fundraiser.  
Through her dedication and bravery,  
she raised \$10,662!**

Huge thanks also to Hilton Arlington National Landing for being such a great host for our event! It takes a special partner to let you climb down their building and invite us back year after year. They are an amazing partner and we hope you check them out!



**ClearSight Advisors coworkers  
rappelling together!**

## LIVING ON THE EDGE

We were joined by many special people at Over The Edge, including Ryan Alam, an inspiring advocate and fundraiser for research into treatment for NBIA, neurodegeneration with brain iron accumulation. This disease impacts a person's ability to walk, coordinate their movements, and speak clearly. Ryan was diagnosed with NBIA in 2019. To raise money for NBIA research, he created a bucket list of daredevil events including tandem-jumping from an airplane with the U.S. Army Parachute Team, swimming with sharks, and cooking with Gordon Ramsey. Ryan and his friend, Sam Shareef, both rappelled on VIP night, raising \$3,000 for their team: Living Life to the Fullest!



Our friends at The Neighborhood Barbershop celebrate together after a safe landing!

"The amount of courage it takes to go off the edge of a very tall building is nothing compared to the kind of courage it takes for a person to show up and ask for help." - Dmitri Lake, The Neighborhood Barbershop



Ryan and Sam rappelling on VIP night.

14 Stories of  
New Hope!  
**over the  
EDGE**  
new hope  
housing

# THANK YOU SPONSORS!

Greg & Kim Garcia



The Glenn  
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National Landing BID  
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Chick-Fil-A Crystal City

KSA Integration  
USI Insurance Services  
Deloitte  
Wine Gallery 108

Scan here for video  
of Over The Edge!





# Volunteer Recognition - September 14th

Please join us Thursday, September 14th so we can celebrate you! All volunteers and supporters are welcome to join us for drinks and appetizers from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm at the Lyon Park Community Center located at 414 N. Fillmore St., Arlington. Come see who will be volunteer of the year!

For more information, please contact Liza Feiler at 703-799-2293 ext. 11; or email [lfeiler@newhopehousing.org](mailto:lfeiler@newhopehousing.org)



## Welcome New Board Members!

Please join us in welcoming new board members! Benjamin Kong is a desk officer with the State Department and has volunteered at the Bailey's Shelter for several years. Rick DeMilio, Jr., is an account executive with CORT and a long-time advocate for housing and homelessness issues. We also want to give thanks to retiring board members Denise Mackie-Smith and Sean Clark. Thank you for your dedication and service!



Benjamin Kong



Rick DeMilio, Jr.



It's time to rethink homelessness.

Learn More and Get Involved

New Hope Housing

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Alexandria, Virginia 22309

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