



BUILDING CONNECTIONS

..... SPRING 2019

RAINY DAYS TO A SUNNY FUTURE

WHEN IT RAINS, IT POURS. For 29-year-old Courtney, that old adage came true in a painfully real way. As a single mom, Courtney had gotten behind on her rent. “I was a terrified mom,” Courtney shared. “I could sleep in a car or with a friend, but I have a child. I didn’t want her to bounce around.” Since aging out of the foster care system, Courtney has been on her own. She received an eviction notice in late October, just as the weather was turning cold.

Courtney reached out to ECHOS for assistance. Leigh Ann, ECHOS Assistant Director, took that call and became Courtney’s case manager. She shares that Courtney is capable and independent, with a vibrant personality. ECHOS was able to offer rental assistance, but after sending a check into the landlord, Leigh Ann wasn’t able to reconnect with Courtney for follow-up. It was only after six weeks of missed connections that ECHOS learned that the rain was still pouring on Courtney and her daughter.

This young, single mom has a surprising occupation: she’s a roofer! And she’s good at what she does. After an apprenticeship, she’s been successful in this male-dominated industry for years. Unfortunately, at the end of the season, right after ECHOS was able to help Courtney with her rent, she was involved in a devastating accident at work. A palette was dropped from a roof, landing on her and causing damage to her leg and torso. As Courtney recovered, the financial margin she’d been able to build up thanks to ECHOS help dwindled quickly. Unable to pay her cell phone bill and unable to reach back out to ECHOS, Courtney felt completely helpless.

“She just couldn’t catch back up,” Leigh Ann explained. A second eviction

process was started. Courtney’s church family rallied around her to help move her, her ten-year-old daughter, and their belongings in with a friend. But ECHOS was back on the case, and Leigh Ann was already making calls to engage their network of resources to help out this struggling family.

“It was wonderful, it truly was,” Courtney says of ECHOS’ tireless assistance. “Leigh Ann helped me in one of the hardest times in my life.” Courtney and her daughter now have an apartment in Mount Joy, thanks in part to ECHOS help.

Leigh Ann says, “In Mt. Joy, Courtney felt like she was home: back in the town she grew up in. We gave her a window of hope when she could only see the closed doors: the injury which lead to no work, the inability to work which lead to the eviction.” ECHOS provided advocacy with



her previous landlord and new landlord in order to secure housing, weekly phone calls to ensure she had a listening ear, and some new apartment supplies to help her get started.

“I’d never been unable to work,” Courtney says, “and I just wasn’t sure what to do. Leigh Ann offered me so many options. When it rains, it pours. I was scared of what was going to happen. ECHOS was a breath of fresh air, like the sun peeking in on a cloudy day.”

“ECHOS was a breath of fresh air, like the sun peeking in on a cloudy day.”



ECHOS GIVING CIRCLE

We count on our monthly givers! We invite you to give monthly so that we can apply it wherever we need the support. As you can imagine, the seasonality of our services ebbs and flows. Partners investing monthly in our Giving Circle throughout the year would enable us to continue to provide the high-level of service offerings to the many individuals and families—your neighbors—who walk through our doors with a need.

THE POWER OF HUMAN CONNECTIONS

LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DEB JONES

In a crisis, a single smiling face or answered phone call may be the defining moment that allows someone to persevere when things feel bleak. When ECHOS' clients endure life changes and financial challenges, it is often our dedicated staff members who are able to offer a simple gesture of love and care.

You already met Courtney, who felt as if the storms of life were going to overrun her and catch her daughter in their wake, but an outstretched hand from ECHOS—thanks to community partners like you—allowed her to recovery from her injury and get back to living life! ECHOS helps bring out the strength within our clients, offering them a second chance when things feel hopeless.

Our goal is to interrupt the cycle of homelessness and introduce stability for families and individual through meaningful, practical help. In order to better serve those who come through our doors, we have consolidated our offices and moved out of our South Market Street location. We are glad to be housed together at Community Place on Washington located at 61 E. Washington Street, Elizabethtown.

It is with great hope and anticipation for our future partnership that we reach out to you, on behalf of your neighbors, and ask for your help. ECHOS needs partners like you to help our organization survive, grow, and thrive!

With hope,

Deb Jones, MSW, LSW



-
- \$1,
- \$5,
- \$20,
- \$100,
- \$1,000
-

Any amount is vital!



COMMITTED TO CARING FOR PEOPLE

WITH KRISTIN KURJAKA,
MASTER IN SOCIAL WORK INTERN



If you pass by CPOW or other HUB locations in Elizabethtown, take a minute to follow the sound of gently screeching chalk. A community chalkboard project is traveling around this summer, collecting drawings and text that express a “bucket list” goal. Pick your favorite color from the accompanying bucket of chalk and add your hopes and dreams to list! The community chalkboard, which will lead to a better understanding of the many different perspectives of community members was the brainchild of ECHOS’ own Kristin Kurjaka.

“Our clients are very resilient,” Kristin says. “They just need a person to support them. They truly don’t have many supports in their life. Everyone has strength within them, but some people need help to bring it out. ECHOS achieves that because we are person-centered and strengths-based.”

Kristin is a valuable member of the team. “What an awesome social worker Kristin has become,” says ECHOS Assistant Director Leigh Ann. “Kristin comes with a vital set of skills and is open to learning new skills as well, which is what makes her so great. Kristin is able to see through the lens of someone her own age but also has timeless wisdom. Her generosity and kindness shine through as a social worker and as a team member.”

Kristin shares that her own early experiences shaped her desire to help people. “It feels really good to know that I’m making a difference in someone’s life. I know I wouldn’t feel satisfied in a profession that wasn’t about helping. The impact is powerful. I love social work, and this internship has just solidified that.”

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

BRIDGE HOUSE 90: Housing When the Winter Shelter Isn’t a Fit

After the Winter Shelter opened in 2016, the tremendous need and high demand caused the census to grow far faster than anticipated. ECHOS evaluated the ability to keep a shelter open year-round, and it wasn’t feasible. Even the 17 weeks for the Winter Shelter are truly a huge undertaking, using more than 70 volunteers per week. We had to look at another model to meet the need for shelter from April to November.

ECHOS applied for and was awarded a federal grant to operate “Crisis Housing” which we named Bridge House 90, apartments for homeless individuals and families all year round. The program began on December 1, 2018, and that very day, a single mom and her five children moved in. ECHOS quickly expanded to meet the community need, and that one unit grew into what will shortly be five temporary housing units (within seven months of opening) for families or individuals over a 90-day stay.

ECHOS Executive Director Deb Jones shares, “The grant provided seed money but does

not meet our costs. We need community support and donations of cash, house furnishings, dishes, blankets, sheets, and more! This growing program uses landlords who will work with ECHOS and our community partners to provide support directly for family services for those in need. The outcomes for Bridge House 90 are significantly positive, with clients who have multiple challenges.”

Bridge House 90 is unique and focuses on the most vulnerable population, like individuals and families with disabilities that make communal living difficult or impossible. It is designed to help specifically a family facing a physical or behavioral health, for example, a single dad parenting three children, one of whom has a disability.

Deb continues, “We are thrilled to offer this resource in Elizabethtown locally to further strengthen our community. Helping our neighbors allows the whole community to move forward, together!”

It is designed to help specifically a family facing a physical or behavioral health concern.



Elizabethtown Community Housing & Outreach Services

61 East Washington Street, Suite 110
Elizabethtown, PA 17022
717.689.3423 • 717.361.0740
info@ECHOSLancaster.org
www.ECHOSLancaster.org

SAVE-THE-DATE



PLANTING SEEDS
TOGETHER

ONE COMMUNITY
MANY NEIGHBORS

Celebration

Thursday, **SEPTEMBER 26 at 6:30pm**

Melhorn Manor • 977 W. Main Street • Mount Joy, PA 17552

You are invited to ECHOS first annual One Community, Many Neighbors Celebration where we will convene for a delicious meal as friends, partners and supporters. Come share our vision to create a stable and thriving community. Life-changing stories of individuals and families will inspire you to build community connections and plant seeds together. Meet your neighbors for dinner to hear the exciting dream of how, together, we can plant seeds to end the cycle of poverty!

Reservations will be accepted at www.echoslancaster.org beginning June 1, 2019.

For Sponsorship Opportunities contact info@ECHOSLancaster.org.

OUR NEW WEBSITE
HAS LAUNCHED!

Visit our new website to...

- Read about our services
- View our current donation needs
- Make a gift online
- Read testimonials from clients

