



HALEY HOUSE

23 Dartmouth Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

NON PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BOSTON MA
PERMIT No 51544

SAVE THE DATE!

**COVID-FRIENDLY
SOUPER BOWL XIII**

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2020

www.haleyhouse.org/SouperBowl13



HALEY HOUSE ANNUAL NEWSLETTER



2020

DEAR FRIENDS

As we began preparing this newsletter, one small but complex word kept rising to the surface: home.

What does "home" mean at this moment in time? For some, home has remained a sanctuary amidst the storm of a challenging year. For others, the pain of not having a home has never felt more acute, especially as we sink deeper into the harshness of winter. Home may have become a place of isolation for those living alone, and the absence of loved ones who have passed on might make home feel emptier. For those whose families have endured assaults on their lives, dignity, and property for generations, home may be both elusive and tenacious, an ever-evolving concept grounded in connection to past generations and strengthened by community.

In this newsletter, we've gathered stories from across Haley House to explore this theme more deeply and we hope that you will join the conversation. We've enclosed a postcard with this newsletter that we invite you to personalize and send back to us to share what or who provides you with a sense of home. In the coming year, we plan to share these on our social media platforms.

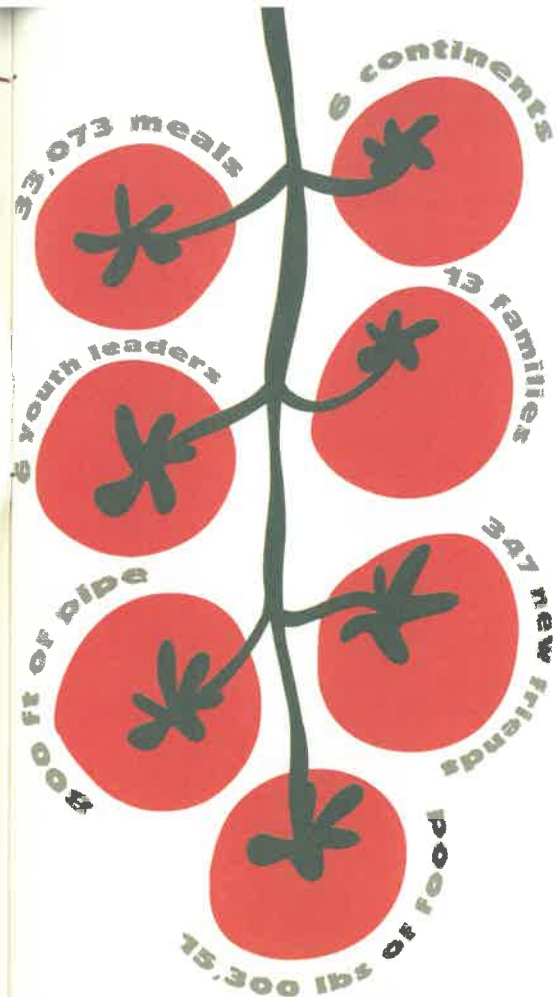
We know that the year ahead will hold many challenges and opportunities as we continue to battle the pandemic, systemic racism, climate change, deep political divisions, and the countless other forces that affect our daily lives. As an organization, we recommit to welcoming everyone and providing a sense of home in all that we do, and to take part in the rebuilding of our community.

The work ahead will be hard, but critical, and we need your help. If you are able, please consider financially supporting this work. We thank you for all the ways you already contribute to Haley House, and look forward to the day when we can once again share food and companionship in person.

Best,



Bing Broderick, Executive Director



Between March 15 and November 15, **33,073 meals** and **5,042 bags of groceries** were distributed through our Soup Kitchen and Food Pantry by **11 amazing members** of the Live-In Community during COVID, and **13,491 meals** were prepared for food insecure families by the Haley House Bakery Café team.

Cuisine from **6 continents** were represented on our rotating menu at Haley House Bakery Café this year (all except Antarctica), as well as **2 Black-owned wineries** (Longevity and Kumusha) and **1 Black woman owned brewery** (67 Degrees).

During this year's growing season, **6 youth leaders** harvested, washed, packed, and delivered more than **800 bags** of farm-fresh produce from our Roxbury farm to **50 Highland Park elders**.

15,300 pounds of food have been distributed during the twice monthly food pantry in our SRO Housing units during the pandemic.

13 families participated in our virtual Take Back the Kitchen series in May, made possible by a partnership grant through the Roxbury Library.

800 feet of pipe and **96 sprinkler heads** were installed across the 6 floors of 23 Dartmouth Street as part of a new fire suppression system.

347 new friends donated to Haley House to support our COVID relief efforts.

year in review

MOMENTS OF

UPDATES FROM THE SOUP KITCHEN DURING THE PANDEMIC

For 50 weeks a year, for more than 50 years, Haley House has offered home-cooked meals, bottomless coffee, and a place of belonging and radical welcome.

In March, however, the world changed. Numbers of the still novel coronavirus were creeping up in Boston, especially in the unhoused community. With determination and not a little sadness, members of the Live-in Community began furiously researching best practices and public health recommendations. They switched service to take-out to keep the guests and themselves safe, while continuing to respond to the need for food that was more present than ever. Sadly, this also meant the suspension of our vibrant volunteer program.

Meals are still made from scratch, with lots of love, but are served through plexiglass barriers to guests who have been waiting in line outside, 6 feet apart. In addition to food, we regularly offer hand sanitizer and masks to our guests. We still operate the food pantry once a week, as well as weekly clothing distribution, which now resembles a personal shopping service. Everyone is welcome, and the lines are longer than ever.

For the first few weeks, one soup kitchen guest asked the same question each day as he received his take-out meal: "when can we come inside again?" And then one day, he stopped asking. For the members of the Live-in Community, that was the moment when it sunk in more fully that this new way of living was here to stay for a while.

In keeping our community safe, an important piece of our mission has become much more challenging: the ephemeral work of building community and offering belonging. Eight months into this pandemic, we are still wrestling with the question of what "home" and "welcome" mean when a physical space to gather is no longer safe.

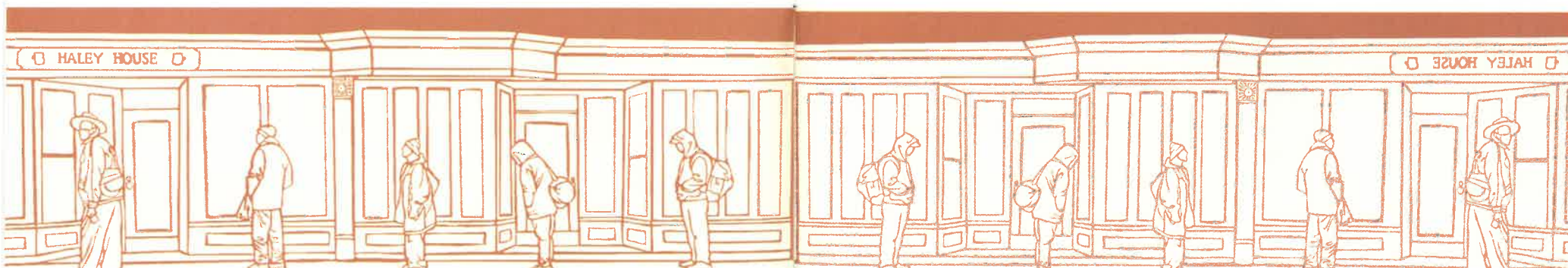
BELONGING

In the meantime, we are grateful for the small moments where the shift is made from someone feeling welcomed to feeling like they are valued and known as an individual. Most interactions with guests are still brief and transactional, but there are also moments each day when the beauty of our community shines through.

A guest who has been quiet for months makes an effort to chat as they pick up their food, cracking a quick joke or mentioning the weather. The simple exchange between a guest and the member of the Live-in community on a particular day about how much cream and sugar they want in their coffee becomes an important moment, offering the guest the freedom to make a choice, when so many other things feel out of control and impersonal. A member of the Live-in Community finds the perfect piece of clothing for a particular guest and everyone's day is made. Another guest mentions that Juan's banana bread hasn't been on the menu for a few days, and is surprised the next day when they can enjoy a slice with their cup of coffee (two sugars, no cream).

As we enter a cold and challenging season, we keep our focus on the light at the end of the tunnel: the knowledge that one day we will all gather around the table at 23 Dartmouth Street again to share coffee, food, and companionship, and return to the critical work of building a community of belonging.

Photo: Members of the Live-in Community Spring 2020



finding connection

AT THORNTON STREET FARM

Haley House's urban farm is a true teacher. This year, as we were asked to physically isolate from each other and harmful feelings of disconnection and loneliness threatened so many people, the farm shouted louder than ever that connection is the natural way of being, and that connection can be found everywhere, especially when we turn our attention to working with the earth. At the farm, we are given beautiful examples of the connection between roots and soil, sun and leaf, bee and flower, and between our breath and the great, green growth of plants.

Early in the spring we heard from neighborhood elders how hard it had become for them to safely get groceries, especially fresh fruits and vegetables. At the same time, neighborhood teenagers wandered onto the land each day, seeking opportunities to engage and support their community without having to constantly be on screens. In response, in partnership with Hawthorne Youth and Community Center (HYCC), and Haley House's extraordinary farmer, Anna Pierce-Slive, the teens helped to launch a COVID-safe produce and grocery gift card delivery program for Highland Park seniors.



Fresh okra from the farm

During the first week of June, the team delivered produce to eight households. Word spread, and the team was quickly making more than 50 weekly deliveries. Thousands of pounds of food grown on less than an acre made its way into dozens of kitchens throughout summer and fall. The six amazing teen leaders who had sought out work on the farm in the spring participated in every step of the process - outreach, flyering, organizing, crop care, harvesting, washing, packing, and delivering.

Every week, during grocery runs, several of the seniors would be sitting in their windows to make sure they didn't miss an opportunity to thank the teen dropping off their delivery. Regular phone calls came in after deliveries asking "What in the world is this herb you sent me?" and neighbors shared recipes using the produce that had been dropped to their doors. The teen leaders even received official citations from the City of Boston thanking them for their service to the city. The network of connections built through this program was truly remarkable.

Despite the pandemic, the farm helped to remedy threats of isolation and disconnection and nourished the bodies and souls of our neighbors in ways we couldn't have imagined. We look forward to seeing the ways these programs and connections continue to flourish in the years to come.

To learn more about our urban farming program or with questions, contact farm@haleyhouse.org.



Teen leaders during their socially-distanced end-of-season showcase with Farmer Anna and Malene Welch of HYCC

re-launching, then re-launching again

HALEY HOUSE BAKERY CAFÉ THROUGH THE PANDEMIC



Ribbon-cutting in February 2020
Photo by John Wilcox

During the first virtual open mic of the HOME poetry series, curated by Boston Poet Laureate Porsha Olayiwola and co-sponsored by Haley House Bakery Café, the series host, Anthony Febo, poignantly reflected: "Finding home sometimes means finding home within yourself and then inviting other people in."

Looking back, this idea sums up this past year at the Haley House Bakery Café. Prior to a joyous relaunch in February, the team had spent a year re-envisioning what they wanted the café to be, and developing a sustainable business plan for the future. Initial community response to the updates was positive and exciting plans were underway to bring artists, changemakers, visionaries, and friends back together over delicious food in our renovated café space.

But six short weeks after the relaunch, COVID-19 hit Boston, and our team, like everyone else, was asked to pivot. The clear first priority at the start of the pandemic was taking care of our staff, and we were grateful to receive PPP funds to cover salaries for the first several months of the crisis while operations were at a standstill. As summer wore on, it became more evident that business would not return to usual in the near future, and our board made the difficult decision to furlough some employees and let some of them go, while doing everything possible to support each employee during their transitions.

Our team has found other ways to connect and continue to serve the community, despite the challenging circumstances. Three days a week, our remaining staff offers take out, delivery, and outdoor dining options for our local community. In September, we were invited to partner with Commonwealth Kitchen, CityFresh, and YMCA to provide 1000 meals a week to food insecure families, all funded by the Boston Housing Authority.

For several weeks in the spring, we partnered with Side Presents to stream concerts featuring local BIPOC musicians on our social media platforms. In November, we began a virtual poetry series that will run through June, offering workshops and readings from slam poets on the first weekend of each month.

Also during the month of November, we were grateful to collaborate with Indigenous Chef Kristina Stanley to create a special menu focused on Native foods and growing practices. This partnership began what we anticipate will be an ongoing community conversation about land, history, and how food and culture intersect to help us find home.

As we continue to build and adjust our menu, we have been excited to showcase dishes from members of our staff who want to share a piece of their own home with our community. The recipe included below was developed by Alima, a member of our staff from Tanzania, and will be on the menu soon. For now, we encourage you to try it and bring a little bit of Haley House Bakery Café into your own home.

Recipe

Chicken Pilau

From the Kitchen of Alima (Tanzania)

INGREDIENTS

- 1.5 lbs (about 4) skin-on, bone-in chicken thighs
- ½ c. butter
- 1 large red onion, sliced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 ½ tsp cardamom
- 1 tsp garam masala
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 1 ceylon cinnamon stick
- ½ tsp cumin
- ¼ tsp cloves
- 2 ½ cups jasmine rice
- 1 tsp salt
- 6 cups water or chicken broth

DIRECTIONS

Season chicken with salt and roast on a lined sheet tray at 325 degrees for 15 minutes, or until internal temperature reaches 160 degrees. While chicken is cooking:

In a large saucepan, melt butter. Sauté onions and garlic until soft and translucent. Add ground spices and cinnamon stick, mix until uniform. (We highly recommend using whole spices, toasting and grinding them yourselves, if that is something your kitchen set up allows for.)

Add rice and salt, coat in butter, spiced onions. Toast lightly. Mix in par-cooked chicken. Add water (or stock) and bring to a boil. Cover pot with tight fitting lid, reduce heat to lowest setting and let cook for 15 minutes, until rice is tender.

SERVES 4

building community through housing

SPOTLIGHT ON JON AND KASEY

During the 1970's and 1980's, as the South End neighborhood became a more desirable location, more than 20,000 rooms in lodging houses were lost, dramatically limiting affordable housing options for low-income people.

In 1992, Haley House had the opportunity to respond to this crisis through the acquisition of two former rooming houses on Columbus Avenue, supported by financing from the Mass Housing Finance Association and the City of Boston Department of Neighborhood Development. Within a year, the buildings were completely renovated and welcomed their first tenants, all people who were formerly homeless. The buildings were named for two long-time friends of Haley House: John Shiels and Mac.

Each building contains 12 Single Room Occupancy (SRO) units, essentially small studio apartments, plus a unit for a resident manager. Residents share bathroom facilities and some residents share a common kitchen. Each resident pays 30% of their income for rent and the balance is covered by project-based Section 8 housing subsidies. The average tenancy for residents in our buildings is more than 8 years. Since opening, each building has been managed by a live-in manager who, among administrative and maintenance duties, helps foster a nurturing and welcoming home for residents.



Kasey Williamson (L) and Jon Klein (R)

Jon Klein and Kasey Williamson are the two current resident managers. Jon was a community organizer in Richmond, Virginia. He was drawn to the Catholic Worker model of community and nonviolent social change. In 2009, he rode his bicycle from Richmond to Boston to join the Live-in Community at Haley House. For three years, he lived in community with others who collaboratively managed all the emergency food, clothing, and meals programs. His deeply embedded sense of service and commitment to simple living led him to remain at Haley House, where he has served as the resident manager for one of our SRO buildings since 2013.

Kasey was introduced to Haley House through St. Stephen's Church 40 years ago. Also deeply committed to social justice, he accompanied youth from his church to help serve Elder Meal. In addition to joining the guests in meals and conversation, the group painted the colorful mural that graced the soup kitchen dining area for many years. Kasey was also a member of the Live-in Community for a time and has been a resident housing manager since 2015.

Both Jon and Kasey are key to ensuring that the atmosphere in each building is one of a communal home instead of isolated, siloed housing. They work hard at it. They support and advocate for all residents. More than that, they are friends to the residents. During "normal" times, they organize Thursday night cookouts and offer a listening ear to anyone in need of one. For the past several years, Kasey has taken charge of a community Thanksgiving dinner and Jon has organized a Christmas feast.

Both admit that while there are many success stories, there are challenges as well, and this year has posed more challenges than usual. Residents are required to wear masks in the hallways and are discouraged from socializing in person, and the resident managers have extra responsibilities to comply with Health Department guidelines.

Still, they have found ways to continue to support the community through outdoor chats and meals shared at the back picnic table or a nearby park, and even hosted a socially-distanced outdoor 60th birthday party for one of the residents on a particularly warm November evening. For Thanksgiving, Jon and Kasey delivered homemade meals to residents in take-out containers.

As we approach the cold, dark, and lonely days of winter, especially during this difficult year, we are grateful for the warmth, light, and accompaniment that Jon and Kasey bring into the lives of all who call Mac's House and John Shiels' House home.



coming home

AN INTERVIEW WITH LAMA ROD OWENS

Rod Owens first came to Boston from Georgia in the summer of 2002 as a part of a community organizing internship. While in Boston, he connected with a member of the Live-in Community, Aaron Goldstein, the founder of "What's Up," an arts and culture magazine that was printed and distributed for people experiencing homelessness to sell.

As soon as Rod connected to Haley House, he felt resonance with the community. He began volunteering in the Soup Kitchen and by the end of that first summer in Boston, he had decided to apply to be a part of the Live-in Community once he graduated from college.

Like many people, Rod's time in the Live-in Community was extremely formative. As he reflects on it now, he realized that being at Haley House offered him, and everyone who walked in the door, a place to belong. "[Being part of the community] was an expansive experience that held everyone without judgment, and gave us all an opportunity to discover our own talents and how they could be used to support the community. Every person I met-- the members of the Live-in Community, the guests, the volunteers, everyone was allowed to be themselves."

Of course, there were ups and downs, and the experience was nothing if not intense, but it was also a crucible of learning that gave him a chance to figure out how to move in the world and helped him to become a better person.

In 2005, the Bakery Café launched in Roxbury and Rod became the first line-cook, training under Chef Didi Emmons. Being a part of the first Bakery Café team was another step on his journey, offering a different kind of learning experience and a new kind of community.

Rod went on to study at Harvard Divinity School and continued on his spiritual journey to become an authorized Tibetan Buddhist Lama. He has written several books and today is invited to travel around the world as a highly respected spiritual teacher.

He sees his current ministry as a continuation of what he learned at Haley House. "My ministry is about helping people to bring

to ourselves

their commitment to justice and their spiritual path together in a way that's liberatory and authentic."

"Many of us have not been 'at home' in our lives. The systems we exist within, like racism and patriarchy, have not been nurturing, and have, in fact, been quite violent. It sometimes feels like the exodus, a time of entering into the desert, where we are confused. We are surrounded by the mystery, but we need to keep moving forward with the promise we'll get somewhere, that we'll find our true Home within ourselves, if we continue to do the work."

Lama Rod is convinced that Haley House is a place where this work can be done with the help of community. "Haley House has always kept that critical balance between responding to people's immediate needs--feeding people and giving people jobs and skills, while also questioning the systems that are creating the inequality and contributing to people being hungry and without work. When someone is not themselves, when they can't access resources, it is both personal and political. It's all of our work to reduce the violence and suffering in the world, and communities like Haley House help us to do this."

*Lama Rod Owens is a full time Dharma Teacher based in Atlanta. His latest book **Love and Rage: The Path of Liberation Through Anger**, along with many other resources, can be found at www.lamarod.com.*



Photo by Nathaniel Taylor

get involved



Photo by Donrick Pond

No matter who you are and what you have on your plate, there's always another seat at our table.

Lend a Hand:

Organize an in-kind donations drive for our most-needed items (more details: haleyhouse.org/give/in-kind)

Join us for a volunteer shift at our soup kitchen, urban farm, or Bakery Café once it's safe to gather again in person (haleyhouse.org/volunteer)

Fund our Impact:

Monthly gifts (\$30, \$50, \$100+) ensure we can sustain our daily operations throughout the year, even when the demand is high and giving is low

Matching gifts double your money and your impact; ask your employer about a matching program

Planned gifts ensure you leave a legacy of service in your will and make your mark on the history of Haley House

Join Us Everyday:

Order Take-out or Delivery from Haley House Bakery Café in Roxbury and get to know our hard-working employees (12 Dade Street, Roxbury)

Let us cater your private events to enjoy great food for a great cause (haleyhouse.org/catering)

Follow us on social media and attend one of our virtual arts & cultural events



@haleyhouseboston



haleyhousebakerycafe



@hhbakerycafe

thank you

Special thanks to all who contributed to this newsletter:

Mary Lou Bozza, Bing Broderick, Brice Due, Brie Garner, Abe Gore, Jon Klein, Noreen Manzo, Grace McEnery, Porsha Olayiwola, Kathleen O'Connor, Lama Rod Owens, Red Sun Press, Anna Pierce-Slive, Eleni Sophocleus, Kristina Stanley, Misha Thomas, Kasey Williamson, and the whole Haley House community!