



## Quarterly Newsletter

Spring 2019

*A Message from the Executive Director*

### **125 Years of Saving One Life at a Time**



For 125 years, Friends In Deed has operated on the principle of faith. Our inception within the congregations of Pasadena, and our continued mission of providing all of our services with compassion, connection, and dignity, embodies our faith. But there's also a second aspect of faith that can be seen in our work and in our mission.

In order for us to feel a sense of hope, and especially for our *clients* to feel a sense of hope, we have to have some element of faith that helping the person right in front of us is actually making a difference in the world. We need ongoing renewed faith, such that we don't grow weary, such that we say that although the struggle is too hard, too large, too complex, too everything... it is solvable.

Over the past century and a quarter, no matter which of our many names we have had, our mission has always been to believe that helping even one person is what we're here to do. There is a teaching in the Talmud - which I know is echoed in other faith traditions - that if you save one life it's as if you save the entire world. And that's what we're trying to do here each day. Save lives, and support the most needy in rebuilding their lives.

Thanks for being a part of the 125-year journey!

Rabbi Joshua  
Executive Director

*Stories from the Programs*

### **Wounds Only Compassion Can Heal**



## Self-Care

For a while now, Denisse (The Women's Room Case Manager) has been facilitating a "self-care" group that meets weekly.

Denisse has found that the group has not only helped the ladies who attend, it has also enabled them to help each other. One person in particular stands out: Josephine, a long-term client at The Women's Room. She comes to the self-care group every week, takes younger and more recent members under her wing, gives them hope, and offers them her wisdom and experience. She lets people know it's OK to cry - and Denisse says the discussions are often so meaningful that many of the group members do, herself included.

## Synthia's Story

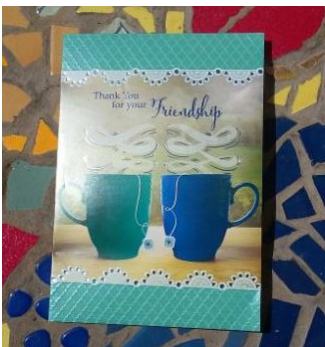
Synthia is 62 years old and has been in addiction recovery for over 12 years. She also has a number of severe health issues, including a history of strokes and aneurysms.

After becoming homeless, Cynthia spent many nights sleeping on benches at bus stops and Gold Line metro stations. She also, at times, went back to the crack house and slept there, all while trying to maintain her sobriety.



Najwa from the Street Outreach team made contact with Cynthia in The Women's Room. Cynthia agreed to let Najwa help her work toward getting housed. It soon became clear that it was important to get Cynthia out of Pasadena where many of the people around her were hindering her recovery. In a surprisingly short space of time Najwa was able to get Cynthia a place in interim housing.

After just one week in her new home, Cynthia had gained some much-needed weight and was taking more care of her appearance. The anger and depression that had been so obvious before had gone.



## Linda's Story

Linda has always reached out to Jane, our TWR Associate, when she needs help and support. Linda has known Jane for a long time, and she doesn't trust anyone else.

Linda has been terribly abused ever since she was a small child. She was forced into prostitution and she has PTSD which causes panic attacks and patterns of obsessive thinking. Since the death of her husband - for whom she is still grieving terribly - she has had no real support system other than The Women's Room.

Recently, Linda wrote Jane a card, quoting the writer Steve Maraboli: "A kind gesture can reach a wound that only compassion can heal," and

adding, "Thank you for your kindness. I don't trust people and I have been hurt since I was a kid, but I feel I can trust you."

It is through your generosity that we are able to provide these programs and other services

DONATE



You're Invited!

May 6

[Second Annual Golf Classic Tournament](#)

May 9

[Mayor's Interfaith Prayer Breakfast](#)

## Volunteer Spotlight

# Family Connections at FID



Marcie

This year Friends In Deed is celebrating 125 years of being part of the Pasadena community. Volunteer Marcie Ambrose is as much a part of that history as anyone. She can remember her parents, Leon and Anita Conerly, being members of the Ecumenical Council of Pasadena Area Congregations (before the organization became known as Friends In Deed) back in the 1970s. They were involved in the project to build Friends In Deed House on the corner of Washington and Los Robles, and they volunteered in the food pantry after it was built.

Marcie herself started volunteering at Friends In Deed about two years ago, after food drives at her church rekindled her interest in the organization her parents had loved. She helps out in the office on Mondays, and in The Women's Room on Wednesdays.

When she's not at FID Marcie spends a lot of her time looking after her grandchildren (see picture!), raising the next generation of volunteers for FID and continuing her family's legacy.

## Cathy

Cathy McCormick had been volunteering at a food bank in Oakland before she moved to Pasadena. Looking for new volunteer opportunities, she stumbled upon the Friends In Deed website and has now been volunteering in the Pantry for



around a year.

An event that sticks in Cathy's mind was the time the five-year-old daughter of a client was thrilled to see toothbrushes and toothpaste on the shelves. "Now we can brush our teeth!" she cried with excitement. As a mom, Cathy knows the struggle of getting children to brush their teeth! This child, who saw it as a privilege and a treat, made a profound impression on her.

[Click here to find out how to volunteer at Friends In Deed](#)

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## *Meet a Board Member*

### **Focusing on the Things She Loves**



Kathy Simpson retired over two years ago and is grateful to have time to focus on the things she loves. She enjoys travel and adventurous sports like skiing and scuba diving, but is also passionate about making a difference in our homeless population in Pasadena. She began helping FID in 2016 and was asked to join the Board about a year later.

Her 30-year career, which focused on business development for training and consulting companies, has given her the background to help FID reach out to the business community for support. She now serves as Development Chairperson, with business outreach being one of FID's major objectives

Kathy says that a moment of her involvement with Friends In Deed that stands out for her is the time two local business leaders visited FID House. Each of the FID program directors discussed their role in the organization. To hear what FID is able to do with such a small staff awed the business leaders and made Kathy very proud!

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### **Bequests**

In addition to supporting our work through your generous cash donations, here is another way you can contribute to the sustainability

of Friends In Deed in the long term.

One of the easiest ways to help Friends In Deed is by naming us as a beneficiary in your will or living trust. A bequest can be for a particular dollar amount or a percentage of your estate. Estate tax savings may be significant.

## *A Message from the Board President*

# Spring into Action!



Taxes, Dodgers, spring break, NBA playoffs: there's lots happening as spring has arrived. But the most important thing of all is Friends in Deed's 125th year of serving our most vulnerable neighbors.

There are two very important events that we would love for you to support next month: our [2nd Annual FID Golf Classic](#) on May 6th and the [46th Annual Pasadena Mayor's Interfaith Prayer Breakfast](#) on May 9th - with Dr. Thomas Rosenbaum, Caltech President, as our keynote speaker. Lots going on; do please continue to support FID, we really appreciate all you do for us!

Richard S. Cheung, D.C.  
Board President

### PROGRAMS

The Women's Room (TWR) Daytime shelter for homeless and at-risk women  
The Food Pantry - Dignified grocery shopping experience for 350+ households weekly  
The Bad Weather Shelter (BWS) Weather-activated shelter offers a hot meal and warm cot for up to 140 guests  
Homeless Prevention Program (HPP) Short- and medium-term rental support to prevent eviction  
Street Outreach - Team of workers on the streets engaging with our neighbors experiencing homelessness and connecting them to services

### STAFF

Rabbi Joshua Levine Grater, Executive Director  
Marty Campolo, Director of Finance and Grants  
Marlene Martinez, Program Director (TWR)  
Tim Nistler, Program Director (Pantry)  
William Shelby, Program Director (BWS), Supervisor (Street Outreach)  
Monica Cardenas-Ochoa, Program Manager (HPP)  
Jane Ambruster, Program Associate (TWR)  
Brandon McGuckin, Program Associate (Pantry)  
Denisse Mirkin, Case Manager (TWR)  
Rev. Donna Byrns, Community Liaison  
Najwa Payton Jones, Street Outreach Specialist  
Scott Desjardins, Street Outreach Worker  
Helen Angove, Administrative Assistant  
Doug Hought, Security & Grounds  
Coty Dietel, Food Pantry Aide

### BOARD

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