

INTERFAITH SOCIAL SERVICES NEWS

PROUDLY SERVING THE SOUTH SHORE SINCE 1947 | INTERFAITHSOCIALSERVICES.ORG | 617-773-6203 | FALL 2013

Arbella Insurance Foundation gives historic gift to Interfaith



Presenting the contribution to Rick Doane, Executive Director of Interfaith Social Services (far right), are John Donohue, Chairman and President of Arbella Insurance Foundation, Elizabeth Kim, Director of Claims and John Yazwinski, President and CEO, FBMS.

THE ARBELLA INSURANCE FOUNDATION has awarded a grant of \$50,000 to Interfaith Social Services as part of its “50 to 25” program. Arbella presented one-time grants of \$50,000 to 25 local charities. “50 to 25” was created in recognition of the Arbella Insurance Group’s 25th anniversary and the important role the Foundation plays in supporting the communities Arbella serves. “This grant personifies Arbella’s culture of corporate responsibility and volunteerism,” said Rick Doane Executive Director of Interfaith Social Services. “Arbella employees conduct food drives, sponsor fundraisers, and regularly send volunteer groups to serve at our food pantry. We are honored to have been selected for this grant and to work beside Arbella as partners in our community. This grant is one of the largest donations Interfaith has ever received.” The funds were designated for capital improvements and will be used for some much needed repairs to Interfaith’s facilities in Quincy.

INTERFAITH SOCIAL SERVICES

A 501(C)(3) NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

105 Adams Street
Quincy, MA 02169
617-773-6203
www.InterfaithSocialServices.org
info@InterfaithSocialServices.org

MISSION: Founded in 1947, Interfaith Social Services is dedicated to improving life for South Shore families and individuals in need. Our unique approach relies on a team of volunteers, donors and community partners to deliver compassionate, client-centered programs focused on hunger, mental health and emergency assistance.

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► MESSAGE FROM RICK DOANE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, INTERFAITH SOCIAL SERVICES



Every day I am blessed to witness something incredible here at Interfaith, our volunteers. Over 100 people currently serve within Interfaith's various programs each week. Last year these volunteers, as well as other corporate and community teams, donated over 22,000 hours of service. It is amazing to witness the camaraderie that develops among the crews of volunteers who serve together.

The volunteers not only sort food and clothing. They answer phones here at the office, they plan fundraisers and food drives. They stuff envelopes and coordinate holiday gifts. They help write grant applications and serve on governing boards. They use the skills and time which they possess to serve others.

Some of these volunteers have been serving together for decades. What do these people have in common? What keeps them coming back week after week? Their ages range from teenagers to "I'd rather not say." Socio-economic factors do not unite them; we have students serving alongside retired attorneys, and stay-at-home moms. The common denominator which brings these amazing people together is community and a desire to serve.

So when you read the various statistics which Interfaith publishes regarding the number of households assisted, food distributed, bags sorted, etc. please remember that an incredible team of volunteers and dedicated staff members make those statistics possible. Behind every stat is a volunteer serving those clients. Our volunteers are wonderful people. We try to recognize their efforts through annual events and awards, but nothing we can do will truly demonstrate how humbling it is to witness their examples of selfless service. Whether you volunteer here at Interfaith or anywhere else in our community, thank you, and keep up the good work!

Rick Doane, *Executive Director, Interfaith Social Services*



Interested in being active, getting involved in the community and making friends? Your face could be here. Interfaith is one of the South Shore's most popular centers for volunteering and community engagement. We have many individual, corporate, church and school volunteer opportunities available. Contact pdaniels@InterfaithSocialServices.org today for more information.

Interfaith's South Shore Walk also benefits Marathon victims

ONLY A FEW DAYS AFTER THE DEVASTATING TRAGEDY in Boston, over 300 local residents participated in Interfaith Social Services' South Shore Walk on April 20th. Since 1974, Interfaith's walkathon has generated funding for and awareness about poverty on the South Shore. This year the event also helped families affected by the Marathon bombing.

"We had already decided that a portion of the proceeds from the Walk would go to Marathon victims," said Interfaith's director Rick Doane. "However, as the suspect was captured that Friday night, our Walk the next morning became an opportunity for people to gather and celebrate the resilient spirit that defines who we are as Bostonians." Walkers enjoyed lunch courtesy of Stars on Hingham Harbor, Tedeschi's Food Shops and Atria Marina Place. For kids, young and old, there was a variety of activities such as raffles, a silent auction, face painting, a bouncy house, a photo booth, frozen treats donated by New England Ice Cream, an inflatable soccer game provided by the New England Revolution, and massages provided by Facilitated Healing Center. This year's South Shore Walk raised \$18,000 for Interfaith's crucial community based programs and The One Fund-Boston.



Above, left, Emerson Harward of Abington, along with Luke and Logan Doane of Randolph, strike a pose at the photo booth which was a popular attraction at this year's Walk. Above, right, Chris and Jeff Weissensee of Cohasset and their kids Thomas and Ben showed their community spirit with over 300 other people who all participated in the Walk.

Children enjoy Halloween thanks to Interfaith's generous donors

Those cute little kids who came to your house trick-or-treating this year may have received their costumes through Interfaith's food pantry. During the month of October, our food pantry distributed over 300 gently used and new costumes to children of all ages. Last year Interfaith's volunteers and staff felt that providing Halloween costumes to children living in some very difficult situations was just one of the ways that as a community we can bring happiness to children's lives. In its second year, the Halloween Costume Drive was a huge success. William, pictured at right with his mom Renee, was so excited to find a racecar driver costume when he came to the food pantry with his mom. Over 300 children received Halloween costumes through Interfaith's costume drive.



OUTREACH VIA GROUP THERAPY



Interfaith's New Direction's Counseling Center and Maria Droste Counseling Services are collaborating to offer free group therapy sessions to South Shore residents. Three different groups will meet from November 2013 thru May 2014.

"A lack of mental health outreach is one of our region's most pressing community health issues," said New Directions counseling coordinator Claire Hagan.

"We conducted hundreds of surveys with Interfaith's food pantry clients and Thrift Shop customers to determine the kinds of mental health issues most commonly unaddressed within the community. That is how we decided what kinds of therapy sessions to organize."

The first group, Effective Coping with Life Stressors, is already completely booked. Participants meet once each week, through the end of December, to learn skills, techniques and behaviors to manage life stressors in a healthy way. A light supper is provided during each group.

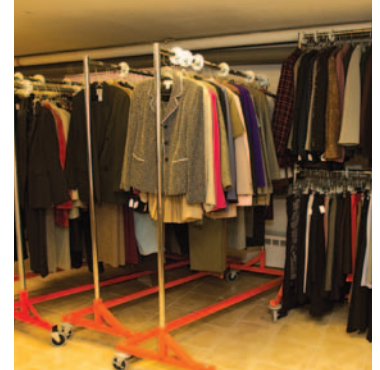
The next group begins in January and will be focused on helping people cope with job loss, unemployment, and what can seem like a never ending job search. Participants will work together in addressing the difficulties associated with this issue while learning how to cope in healthy and effective ways.

The final group begins in March and will focus on the unique issues that women face in their lives. All of these sessions were made possible by funding from the Blue Hill's Community Health Network Alliance. For more information about the sessions please contact Claire Hagan at 617-773-6203 ext. 12.

Haircut leads to job

Every client who receives free professional clothing through Interfaith's Career Closet program also receives a certificate to get their haircut at Allure Spa here in Quincy. This boost of confidence and self-esteem is just what some people need to land employment. Over the past two years Allure spa in Quincy has donated over 90 complimentary haircuts that were originally priced at \$45 each.

A few months ago a bubbly young woman was referred to The Career Closet. She received some clothing for an upcoming interview as well as a complimentary haircut certificate. She was so thankful that when she went to get her haircut she told Allure's staff how confident she felt to be starting a new educational program at Quincy College. The staff also learned that she had a background in cosmetology. They were very impressed by this young woman.



We are proud to report that one of Allure Spa's newest part-time staff members is that same career closet client. Her employment now helps her stay in school to continue her educational program. "She has been a great addition to the team," said Allure Spa owner Sandra Ishmael.

Interfaith would like to thank everyone who supports the Career Closet program: the volunteers who assist clients, the individuals who donate clothing and the charitable businesses who donate. Just this week Dependable Cleaners donated \$1,000 worth of dry cleaning services to Career Closet clients. Together we are helping our neighbors in need obtain jobs and make enduring changes in their lives.

Interfaith partners with the Randolph Senior Center for workshop series

In October, The Randolph Senior Center began a series of workshops and luncheons for local residents. Funded by the Blue Hills Community Health Network Alliance, each workshop is facilitated by two counselors from Interfaith Social Services' New Directions Counseling Center.

The first workshop was called *You're Never Too Old*. Twenty-five participants discussed how to manage the symptoms of depression and anxiety, while learning how to be happier and improve their quality of life. The other three workshops will be held on the following dates. Their themes include:

- 1) *Managing Stress*: December 10, 2013
- 2) *Using Substances to Cope*: March 11, 2014
- 3) *Reminiscences and Memories*: May 13, 2014

All workshops are open to Randolph residents and will be held at the Senior Center on 16 Fencourt Avenue, which is off Union Street (Rte 139).

For more information please contact the Randolph Senior Center at 781-961-0930.

Servings of Education and Outreach now being dished out at the Food Pantry

THANKS TO A GRANT FROM THE Greater Boston Council on Alcoholism, Interfaith's Learning Pantry program has been able to continue offering substance abuse and addiction recovery education to food pantry clients. Like most other food pantries, Interfaith's clients sit in the pantry waiting room until their grocery order is prepared by a volunteer. We view this time as an opportunity to educate.

Anne M. Donovan, LADAC, a counselor with Interfaith's New Directions Counseling Center facilitates discussions with all of the waiting clients two to three days each week. "The clients have really led the discussions," said Donovan, an addiction recovery counselor. "It has been great to see cohesiveness and support develop amongst them even without the normal group environment of confidentiality and privacy."



"We are reaching people who otherwise never might have known how to ask for help with their addictions or how to help loved ones who are suffering."

Clients have discussed many issues, including coping with grief and loss, stress relief, compulsive gambling, alcohol and drug dependencies, gun-related deaths, domestic violence, prescription drugs abuse, medical marijuana and pain management, mental health and physical health issues in relation to the substance abuse, alcohol and its effects on the brain, recovery from addiction via the 12-step philosophy, religion and spirituality, PTSD and suicide.

"During my time in the learning pantry, many clients have asked for referrals to our New Directions Counseling Center," said Donovan. "I have personally worked with a number of them individually."

"Interfaith recognizes the fact that many of our clients may need help in a certain area of their lives but they lack the information necessary to resolve these problems," said Interfaith's executive director Rick Doane.

"It has been a challenge to think on my feet due to the busy environment of the food pantry, with the ever present coming and going of the clients and volunteers," said Donovan. "My twenty-five years of experience in mental health and addiction recovery have served me well in this regard." She added, "This addiction outreach program is reaching people who might never have known how to ask for help or how to help loved ones who are suffering."

The Learning Pantry program coordinates specialists from the community who teach Interfaith's food pantry clients while they wait for their emergency food orders. Specialists that have already presented include nutritionists, wellness advisors, personal trainers, chiropractors, parenting groups and financial advisors.

"Education is the key to breaking cycles of poor health and nutrition," said Doane. "We recognize the fact that one organization can't solve all of the social problems that exist in our society, but a community of providers can."

The Learning Pantry is currently on hiatus until January due to the holiday signups which are being conducted in the food pantry waiting room.

The Learning Pantry is always looking for more community partners to present during food pantry hours. If you are interested in presenting or would like more information please contact Steve Larsen at 617-773-6203 ext. 19.

ESTATE PLANNING ▶ One of the easiest ways to give money to a charity is to name the charity as the beneficiary of a non-Roth retirement account, such as a traditional IRA. The American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 contained a provision that allows direct donations to charities from IRAs. (Note, however, that the provision may expire on 12/31/13 unless it is extended by Congress.) If an IRA or similar retirement account has designated beneficiaries, the assets in it will generally pass directly to those beneficiaries without going through probate. A tax-exempt public charity can withdraw pre-tax monies from non-Roth retirement accounts, such as Traditional IRAs, without paying income taxes. In addition, an estate could take a charitable deduction which would reduce the size of the taxable estate. However, an individual may want to check with his or her attorney and tax professional to make sure that this is the best strategy for his or her situation.

Mayor's Annual Prayer Breakfast benefits Interfaith

QUINCY, MA, MAY 2, 2013 Coinciding with the National Day of Prayer, Quincy's Annual Prayer Breakfast was held on Thursday May 2nd. Almost 300 attendees packed The Tirrell Room in Quincy to hear speakers and faith leaders address the theme of 'Living our Faith.' The event was sponsored by Mayor Thomas P. Koch.

"The Prayer Breakfast has really evolved since we first started," said Mayor Koch. "The participation we see from various houses of worship comprises many faith traditions, and it is a wonderful expression of the rich diversity that exists in this great City."

Program participants and planning committee members came from 18 different faith traditions and houses of worship. From Catholic to Latter-day Saint, Hindu to Buddhist the event focused on the strength communities receive through people living their religion.

Proceeds from the Breakfast benefited both The Esther R. Sanger Center for Compassion/Quincy Crisis Center and Interfaith Social Services. Many more pictures from this and other events can be seen on Interfaith Social Services' Facebook page.



Mayor Thomas P. Koch is flanked by program participants from the Quincy Prayer Breakfast held on May 2, attended by almost 300 people. The program featured faith leaders and members from dozens of local denominations.



Volunteers from Arbella Insurance in Quincy help assemble backpacks for Interfaith's back to school backpack drive. Over 500 children, whose families are food pantry clients, received backpacks and school supplies. From left, Caterina Cardarelli of Braintree, Courtney Foster of Abington, Maria Dunlea of Weymouth, Coleman Lunt of Hanson and Stephanie Chu of Quincy.

Back to School backpack drive is a huge success

Imagine going to school and trying to learn while wondering where your next meal will come from; now imagine that stress compounded by a lack of supplies to do your school work. Interfaith's food pantry tackled this problem with the Back to School Backpack initiative.

"When a family is struggling to put food on their table school supplies can start to seem like a luxury," said executive director Rick Doane. "Our goal was to collect 500 backpacks to help these kids and their families. I was pretty nervous that we wouldn't get enough, but I learned my lesson. Our amazing network of community supporters came through and we ended up distributing more than 500 backpacks."

Two types of backpacks were distributed, for grades K-5 and for grades 6-12. They included loose leaf paper, spiral notebooks, two-pocket folders, #2 pencils and an eraser. For the K-5 backpacks they also included washable markers or crayons, glue sticks and safety scissors. The grade 6-12 backpacks also included a calculator, binder, index cards and pens.

A special thank you to our wonderful corporate volunteer teams

IN ADDITION TO OUR DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS who fulfill weekly assignments we have had some wonderful volunteer teams that have served here at Interfaith over the past few months. Pictured are just a few of the teams including: Arbella Insurance, Atria Marina Bay, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, Boston Financial Data Services, Liberty Mutual, State Street Corporation, Spirit of State Street and St. Agatha's Church.



**THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO VOLUNTEERS AT INTERFAITH.
YOU ARE THE HEART AND SOUL OF OUR ORGANIZATION.**

Happy Holidays



INTERFAITH
SOCIAL SERVICES

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**BEST WISHES FOR A VERY
HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON
FROM INTERFAITH
SOCIAL SERVICES.**

**THANKS TO THE SUPPORT
AND DEDICATION OF OUR
DONORS AND VOLUNTEERS,
WE ARE ABLE TO PROVIDE
THANKSGIVING MEAL
BASKETS TO MORE THAN
800 HOUSEHOLDS,
AND HOLIDAY GIFTS TO
HUNDREDS OF CHILDREN
THROUGH OUR HELP FOR
THE HOLIDAYS PROGRAM.**

► IN THEIR OWN WORDS

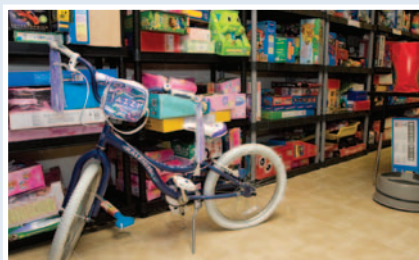
The following quotes are from a few of our food pantry clients. They recorded them when they were registering to receive assistance through our **Help for the Holidays** program where we provide gifts to the children of food pantry clients. This program helps hundreds of households ever year. When asked why these parents needed help this is what they wrote. These are their own words. We fixed some grammatical mistakes but have otherwise not altered these quotes in any way. These individuals are our neighbors, colleagues and friends. We are so grateful that because of support from donors like you we are here to help them. **Happy Holidays.**

"I am a single mother with limited means, and struggle with the holidays, so any help is greatly appreciated."

"It's a hard year and I don't have money."

"I am a single mom of six children and have come from a great job to losing everything, so I have seen both side of living. However, I do not hesitate to ask for help, because while I get back on my feet I still have children who depend upon me. I am very grateful to organizations that extend help to families when times are hard. It is a blessing, and I know the day will come when I can give back and bless a family as I have been blessed. God is good all the time! — Happy Mom."

"Living on a low income, struggle and need all the extra help that organizations like this has to offer. We are so thankful for the community assistance."



"I am guardian of my grandkids, and I have disability and on a limited income."

"They are very helpful and they don't judge you or put you down. Very, very helpful. I am a single parent. I work very hard to give my children a good Christmas and I am unable to."

"I lost my job of 12 years after just returning from maternity leave."

"I am on disability which is a fixed income and not enough to hardly pay bills, let alone buy extra food and presents for kids."

"I am in a domestic violence shelter and I cannot afford gifts for my children."