

bridge
of
hope® | NATIONAL

Supportive friendships for lasting impact

B U I L D I N G H O P E

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Bridge of Hope
NATIONAL

OUR VISION:

To end and prevent homelessness for women and children across the United States by calling churches into action.

OUR MISSION:

To call and equip compassionate people from many Christian faith traditions to exemplify Christ's love to homeless women and children by creating and sustaining thriving Bridge of Hope locations. Bridge of Hope brings together professional staff and trained church-based mentoring groups to empower homeless and at-risk single mothers to attain:

- Permanent housing
- Financial stability through employment
- Life-changing friendships
- Increased self-esteem and growth in areas of holistic living

*Supportive Friendships –
beyond Graduation
– for Lasting Impact*

When Guinn graduated from Bridge of Hope in April 2013, she was living in an affordable rental home, had just purchased a better-running vehicle, and had achieved stability for her family. Guinn was proud to be working a full-time job in her chosen field – as the Director of Nutritional Services with a long-term care skilled-nursing home. She planned to complete her Certified Dietary Manager courses within a few months.

Even after graduating from Bridge of Hope, Guinn continued to connect with her Bridge of Hope mentors through phone calls, dinners together, celebrating her children's birthdays, and the kids' softball games and school events. Her mentoring friends even helped to get her children to school or activities when Guinn could not be two places at once. When a legal issue arose regarding child custody, one of Guinn's mentors was able to connect her with an attorney who was willing to represent her at a reduced rate.

In November 2013 (because of her inability to complete her certification on time), Guinn was asked to leave the full-time position that she'd held for 15 months. With the stress of raising three children and many hours required of her at work, she had been unable to devote the time to her education that she had hoped and planned.

After receiving this news, one of Guinn's first phone calls was to one of her Bridge of Hope mentors. During the weeks that followed, Guinn's mentors surrounded her and her family, helping them to stay afloat until she was offered another full-time position in January 2014. It was a stressful few months for Guinn, but the physical and moral support of her once Bridge of Hope mentors and now true friends was an incredible blessing.



Guinn and family

Guinn shares, *"I have come to accept that it's okay to have friends and support, after many years of feeling I had no one to turn to for a shoulder to cry on. It feels great to be able to talk or visit with my Bridge of Hope friends regardless if it's good or bad. They truly make a difference in my life and the lives of my children. They lift me up with encouragement to strive for my goals and move forward when I feel stuck. I no longer feel alone in this great big world."*

Story adapted with permission from Bridge of Hope @ Hannah's House (IN)

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A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Who You Gonna Call?

Who would be the first people you'd call if you heard that you had 6 months to live? That was a question that came up at my Book Club recently. We were reading the novel *The World We Found* by Thrity Umrigar. It explores the bonds of friendship between four women in India.

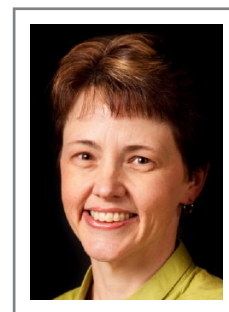
It struck me that who we call and turn to in the face of difficulty are those that we feel confident "have our back" and will stand with us. Guinn's story (lead article), of reaching out to her Bridge of Hope mentors in both good and bad times, captures the true long-term, game-changing role of Bridge of Hope mentors (and the church!) for homeless single mothers and children.

It's why I believe in Bridge of Hope! We all need friends in our corner at our lowest moments! It's why I love the story of Jesus on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24) – and the image of Jesus as a consoling friend who journeys with us and opens our eyes to new ways of seeing our experiences.

Recently another Bridge of Hope mentor shared that, while vacationing in Florida, four mentors had lunch with the now-adult daughters of the family their church had mentored over 20 years ago. The oldest daughter brought her boyfriend along because she wanted him to meet "our mentors." Now in her early thirties, she also insisted on paying the bill for everyone's meal. "It's my turn to be able to do something for you all," she said. Twenty years – that's long-time friendship and impact!

I want to say thank you to the hundreds of churches who have formed mentoring groups over the years for homeless single mothers and children in Bridge of Hope. You are game-changers – impacting families today, tomorrow and for years to come.

If you are interested in helping churches in your community to be game-changers through mentoring friendships – we'd love to hear from you.



With hope,

Edith Yoder

Edith Yoder
Executive Director

Special Thanks for Your Gifts*

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Kathy Beiler	Ben & Janet Beiler
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Fannie & Thomas Yoder	Lucy & Glenn Weber

Valerie Weaver-Zercher (and Amish author **Linda Byler**) will speak at our **May 9 Gala**. Order tickets by April 30. Visit www.bridgeofhopeinc.org for details and an auction listing.



Like our Facebook page and tell us who you are celebrating this Mother's Day.

11th annual Golf Classic to benefit Bridge of Hope National - July 22 at Foxchase Golf Club (Stevens, PA). Thank you to hosts Bomberger's Store and Signature Custom Cabinetry!



A CHURCH-BASED APPROACH TO ENDING FAMILY HOMELESSNESS

Bridge of Hope National ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

"It is an honor to be able to partner with Bridge of Hope National in helping to end homelessness for single mothers and their children. As a mother I know that your greatest desire is to be able to provide for your children and to give them a safe and comfortable place to live. That is why I feel led to sponsor Bridge of Hope; not only are you making a difference in the life of a mother but in the future of her children."

— Missy Hurst, owner of The Old Candle Barn



The Old Candle Barn (Intercourse, PA) is one of two Top Sponsors of the 2014 Gala Luncheon.

MICHELE BEAMER:
graduate of Bridge of Hope Lancaster & Chester Counties (Pa.) and passionate advocate for homeless single mothers

KENT MARTIN:
award-winning business leader, CEO of Signature Custom Cabinetry

REV. PHIL OLSON:
chaplain with Cancer Treatment Centers of America and co-author of *Churches that Make a Difference*

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author, former chair of Habitat for Humanity International and first board chair of Bridge of Hope National

HEIDI UNRUH:
faith-based community development researcher and co-editor of *Hope for Children in Poverty*

As required by the PA Solicitation of Funds Act, a copy of the official registration and financial information for Bridge of Hope may be obtained from the PA Dept. of State by calling 800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.



Our goal is \$10,000 and donors or participants in **all 50 U.S. states!**

Visit www.bridgeofhopeinc.org/Make-An-Impact/SleepOut to Register, Donate, or to view the #SleepOut Map!



Happy Easter!

Photo by Sharon Shipley for *The Republic*

#SleepOut for #BridgeOfHope to #EndFamilyHomelessness!

WHAT: Host a #SleepOut or Donate

WHO: You – and invite family & friends (small group, Sunday school class, youth group, etc.) to #SleepOut or sponsor you

WHEN: Pick a date that works for you – in May or June 2014

WHERE: #SleepOut at your house, church, in your car, or at a gym or campground

HOW: Download #SleepOut materials or Create your own online fundraising page (from our website link)

*Gifts received after March 10 will be listed in our fall newsletter.

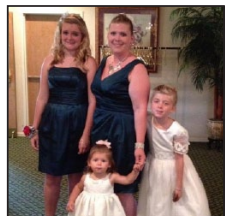
Visit www.bridgeofhopeinc.org and click on "Make An Impact/Join Women of Hope" to view tribute gifts made by **Women of Hope**.



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Inside...

- Supportive Friendships – Beyond Graduation – for Lasting Impact
- Who You Gonna Call?
- #SleepOut to #EndFamilyHomelessness

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