Building Blocks of Success

Reema entered House of Ruth Maryland’s Emergency Shelter when she was 6 months pregnant. Her abuser had physically tormented her throughout her pregnancy and to prevent her from seeking help, he stopped the health insurance coverage she had through his employer. Reema didn’t know her health insurance had been canceled until she attempted to schedule an appointment with her doctor and they told her they couldn’t see her without insurance. Reema had no prenatal care until she entered the Emergency Shelter.

Last year, through partnerships with Johns Hopkins School of Nursing (JHUSON), Healthcare for the Homeless and Jai Medical Systems, 252 victims at the Emergency Shelter received support for basic healthcare needs and help navigating the healthcare and insurance system. “We know that to achieve safety from IPV, women need stability in their lives,” said Janice Miller, Director of Programs and Clinical Services at House of Ruth Maryland. “They need the ability to meet their basic needs for food, shelter, economic stability, and access to healthcare before they can work to create safety in their lives and homes.”

Reema was a beneficiary of all three partnerships in the Lambert Health Clinic at House of Ruth Maryland’s Emergency Shelter. She met with JHUSON nurses onsite to review her medical history and to get basic pre-natal recommendations for care for her and her unborn child. Healthcare for the Homeless connected

Continued on page 2
Letter from Executive Director

Dear Friends,

Do you ever feel as though you’re shouting from the rooftops and no one hears you? I do. I felt that way yet again as I watched the story of the San Bernardino school shootings unfold. The story was all too familiar. One report of the shooting actually stated, “The story police told was as American as apple pie: A rage-filled man taking his wife’s life.” Not only did Karen Elaine Smith die, but an 8-year old in her classroom also died.

The shooting occurred on Monday morning and by Tuesday afternoon, no one was talking about it anymore. Very quickly it no longer was news, as it happens so frequently. On average, in the United States, three women die every day at the hands of their abusers. Over the course of an average week in the US, there are nearly ELEVEN murder suicides, generally men killing their wife/girlfriend with the overwhelming number of these involving handguns.

In a time when outrage has become commonplace, where is our outrage over this? Where are the cries for change? Where is the groundswell to say, Enough! We simply can’t tolerate this anymore? Why, as House of Ruth Maryland nears its 40th anniversary of providing service, are we continuing to turn away more than we can serve and face a seemingly endless line of victims?

I believe the reason is all forms of abuse of an intimate partner live in the shadows. This control and violence is still seen by many as a private matter - a situation we have no place interjecting ourselves. Or, if we do step in, it’s unclear what we should say or what we should do. Too often we judge the victim for decisions she’s making, preventing her from coming forward and talking about it. Silence and secrecy grow.

Even House of Ruth Maryland’s administrative offices are hidden, for the safety of the clients we serve, but still hidden. There’s no visible presence in our community that says intimate partner violence is a priority and we are committed to doing whatever it takes to end it. However - that is about to change.

House of Ruth Maryland is taking a stand to bring intimate partner violence out of the shadows. I’m pleased to let you know that we have recently purchased a new, additional building on N. Charles Street, a location that is highly visible and easily accessible to people who need our help. It will house our education and outreach programs, raising awareness and encouraging the community to confront the attitudes and behaviors that allow abuse to continue. It will make collaboration with our community partners easier, as we come together to end the violence happening behind closed doors and to make a dent in the violence that so often pours out of those homes and onto the streets.

It’s an exciting time. As we collectively raise our voices, unified in the message that our community will no longer tolerate this abuse, we must also take action. All of us need to understand the issue and its dynamics, talk about it, and look to the source of the issue for real change to happen. That’s the work that will be done at N. Charles Street. As we prepare the building and further develop these programs I will share more about our vision for being part of improving our greater community.

I am grateful for all of you, who have advocated and supported us. You have enabled us to invest in the movement to change the conversation around intimate partner violence.

As a community, we are taking the next step in the history of House of Ruth Maryland.

Sincerely,

Sandi Timmins
Executive Director

House of Ruth Maryland thanks George Lambert and family for their funding of the Lambert Health Clinic at House of Ruth Maryland’s Emergency Shelter and our community partners, Johns Hopkins School of Nursing, Healthcare for the Homeless and Jai Medical Systems for their support. To learn more about programs and services at House of Ruth Maryland’s Emergency Shelter, contact Janice Miller, Director of Clinical Services at janice@hruthmd.org
Passed!

The Maryland General Assembly came to a close on April 10th and it was a very busy, successful session for House of Ruth Maryland. Of greatest significance, **HB 294/SB 224**, our lead bill, which clarifies that a defendant who receives probation before judgment for a domestically related 2nd degree assault would be disqualified from possessing a firearm, **PASSED!!** This bill is critically important to victims as the goal is to keep firearms out of the hands of abusers. To the many of you who made phone calls, sent letters and emails, voicing your support of this legislation, we thank you.

We also thank **Delegate Kathleen Dumais**, vice-chair of the House Judiciary Committee, and lead sponsor of our bills. We could not accomplish what we do in the legislature without Delegate Dumais. She is a true fighter for women’s rights. We also thank **Senator Susan Lee**, our senate lead sponsor and **Senator Victor Ramirez** who is always willing to sponsor our important domestic violence bills. We also thank **Senator Bobby Zirkin** who was finally able to move HB 294 in the waning hours of the legislative session.

As always, we couldn’t experience the success we do in Annapolis without the long-time support of our lobbyists Sean Malone, Lisa Harris Jones, and Philip Cronin of Harris Jones and Malone, who provide countless hours of work and support towards our legislative effort.

Below is an abbreviated list of legislation House of Ruth Maryland supported and that was approved during the 2017 legislative session. For a full list of legislative priorities this session, please visit our website at http://www.hruth.org/get-involved/2017-legislative-priorities/.

**HB 294/SB 224 - Public Safety – Regulated Firearms – Definition of Convicted of a Disqualifying Crime** – This legislation clarifies existing law so that a defendant who receives probation before judgment for a domestically related 2nd degree assault will now be disqualified from possessing a firearm.

**HB 293/SB 274 - Family Law – Divorce – Domestic Violence Order** – This bill repeals a provision of the law that states that a protective order is inadmissible as evidence in a divorce proceeding.

**Criminal Procedure - Conditional Release – Electronic Monitoring (Amber’s Law) HB 1163/SB 976** – This bill was significantly amended by the General Assembly. It now allows a victim to request that the court order a defendant be supervised by means of electronic monitoring and gives victims the opportunity to request reasonable protections for their safety.

To learn more about our legislative priorities, please contact Dorothy Lennig, Director, Marjorie Cook Legal Clinic at House of Ruth Maryland, at dlennig@hruthmd.org.

A Bevy of Bargains!

On September 6, the Clearing House Sidewalk Sale celebrates its 27th anniversary! The sale, which exclusively benefits House of Ruth Maryland, has become a destination event for shoppers looking for a bargain! “We have shoppers who come every year, some from as far away as New Jersey, to get a deal,” said Lisa Hudson, co-owner of Clearing House and House of Ruth Maryland Board Member. “We encourage you to get here early for the best selection and I’m sure you’ll walk away with amazing deals,” said Hudson.

The sale features items that have been donated by consignors to the Clearing House and at the sidewalk sale, all items are priced at 50% off the ticketed price. While specific merchandise varies each year, you can always count on fine china, linens, artwork, home furnishings and jewelry to be part of the sale.

“It’s hard to come to the sale and not leave with something fantastic!” said Hudson. The sale has raised over $150,000 for House of Ruth Maryland over the last 10 years.

The sale begins at 10 am on September 6, just outside of the Clearing House, located at 200 West Padonia Road. It is a rain or shine event, cash or check only.

To learn more about the Clearing House Sidewalk Sale or other great events, please contact Faith Savill, Community Relations Manager at House of Ruth Maryland at fsavill@hruthmd.org.

2017 Upcoming Events:

- July 13 Crabaret
- September 6 Clearing House Sidewalk Sale
- September 23 Jessica Meredith Jacobsen 10th Annual 5K
- October Domestic Violence Awareness Month

For more information about upcoming events, visit www.hruth.org/events.
Special Thanks

• To **WPM Real Estate Management** for organizing another Ruth’s Closet shopping spree for their employees with RC gift certificates as incentives.

• To **Ruth’s Closet Volunteers Ana Lucia Porter, Susan Simonette, and Dolores Warner**, along with Jan Swartz at Silo Point, for hosting a B-More Bags sales event April 20.

• To **Cathy Fries-Sierra** for sorting and organizational help and for transporting Ruth’s Closet’s never-ending incoming donations to our processing facility and excess items to charity.

• To **Gwendolyn Gray** and Linda Silvern for donation processing and organizational help and for transporting excess items to charity.

• To **Ibello & Co. and Hall & Col.** for donating beautiful fabrics to B-More Bags.

• To **students at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, School of Nursing, and School of Public Health**, for their productions of the Vagina Monologues, which benefited HRM.

• To **Beyond the Walls Christian Ministries**, for working with our clients to create inspirational vision boards.

• To the **Women’s Bar Association at UMD School of Law**, who spent time with our families this spring, bringing crafts and snacks.

• To the members of **Alpha Chi Omega Alumni Chapter** who helped our families to welcome Spring with stories, crafts, and fun activities.

• To **Loyola Student Government Association**, who threw a St. Paddy’s Day party for our families.

• To **Baltimore Feminist Killjoys**, who hosted a Tampon Drive at Ottobar – thanks for making sure our clients have what they need.

• To the **Junior League of Baltimore**, for helping us with spring cleaning – deep-cleaning our childcare and digging up weeds in the garden.

• To the **Young Professionals at House of Ruth Maryland**, who organized a hugely successful Easter Egg Hunt and party for our families.

• To the **Imani Sister Circle**, who put together 60 Mother’s Day gifts for our clients, making sure they had items to pamper themselves with on their special day.

• To the **Friendly Daughters of St. Patrick**, who hosted a “Shop for Mom” for the children in our Emergency Shelter, so that each child had gifts to give to their mothers on Mother’s Day.

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MICA made it happen!

More than ten years ago, the B-More Bags project started at House of Ruth Maryland. The project goal was two-fold: to give volunteers who were skilled seamstresses an opportunity to use their skills to create a variety of bags and then sell those bags to support programs at House of Ruth Maryland. Along the way, B-More Bags has grown and needed the support of marketing materials that promoted the work and told the story... but there was no money to do that.

Enter Dan Meyers, an instructor in the Graphic Design department at MICA. Meyers worked with House of Ruth Maryland on a prior project and thought this was a perfect fit for his Photo Imaging course. “Collaborations like this provide a vital, real-world experience for students to exercise their academic training,” said Meyers. “Not only are they using their knowledge from the classroom but they are learning valuable lessons in time management, how to be responsible to team members and the client, and balancing their creative ideas within the demands for a practical solution.”

After many meetings, photo shoots and designs, the group presented the final brand design to House of Ruth Maryland. “We love the new design,” said Jen Talbert, Social Enterprise Manager at House of Ruth Maryland. “We love the new design,” said Jen Talbert, Social Enterprise Manager at House of Ruth Maryland. “The new brand and marketing materials give us flexibility for social media marketing, print products and event marketing. We truly appreciate the work the students did on this project!”

House of Ruth Maryland thanks MICA for their commitment to support the local community and the individual students who were involved: Anna Morse, Janet Shim, Jenna Trosien, Alyssa Ziobro, Esther Jian, Kai Karrasch, Elena Seaton, Peter Tak and their professor, Dan Meyer. To learn more about this project and B-More Bags, please contact Jen Talbert at jtalbert@hruthmd.org.
Pampering Power

On Saturday, May 6, the women of the National Association of Mothers and Daughters United Worldwide held their annual Mother’s Day event at House of Ruth Maryland’s Emergency Shelter. The event is a pampering event for the women in our shelter where NAMADUW volunteers did nails, makeup, set up a “store” with dresses and gowns for women to pick out items for themselves - and every woman left with a crown.

The pampering didn’t end there, as NAMADUW provided a catered lunch and child care so the mothers in our shelter could truly enjoy a moment of calm. “The opportunity to serve, pamper, empower, and be a change agent in the lives of the women of House of Ruth Maryland each year is an absolute blessing. We have connected with each group in a special way. Seed of Hope Foundation, from Chicago, IL has partnered with us along with several volunteers/donors to make this day extra special. We are all honored to make a difference in the lives of women and children in need. We look forward to this event every single year; the smiles, the laughter, the confidence, the hope in their eyes and tears of joy of these beautiful ladies, has left a long-lasting impression on our hearts,” said Representative from NAMADUW.

To learn more about volunteer opportunities or how you can make a difference in the work House of Ruth Maryland does, visit our website, www.hruth.org/get-involved.

Spring Success!

“It takes a village,” said Victor Rivas Rivers as he spoke to nearly 500 attendees at House of Ruth Maryland’s annual Spring Luncheon. Rivers spoke of the abuse he suffered at the hands of his father, the abuse he watched his mother endure and how he survived tumultuous teenage years in a gang. He credited his rescue from a life that repeated the cycle of violence to the “angels” in the community that saw something in him and guided his journey to triumph over trauma.

Other program speakers included House of Ruth Maryland Executive Director Sandi Timmins, Director of Training and Education, Lisa Nitsch, and House of Ruth Maryland Board Member Jeri Hawthorne, who shared her personal story of surviving a childhood where she and her sister witnessed the abuse of her mother at the hands of her father. Rivers and Hawthorne spoke to the power of the community to break the cycle of IPV and are living testaments that victims and their children can heal if they have access to the services and support provided by organizations like House of Ruth Maryland.

This year’s event raised over $150,000 and we thank the many attendees, guests and sponsors for their support!

To learn more about special events at House of Ruth Maryland, contact Andrew Primrose, Director of Development, at aprimrose@hruthmd.org.

2017 Spring Luncheon Sponsors

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Join us for one of Baltimore’s signature summer events, Crabaret, in the BMA’s Sculpture Garden, to benefit House of Ruth Maryland. Feast on Chef John Shields’ crabby concoctions complimented by a selection of fine wines and craft brews provided by Key Brewing Company. Dance under the stars to the music of the Swingin’ Swamis.

15th Annual Crabaret
Thursday, July 13, 2017
6:30pm – 10pm • Gertrude’s at the BMA

Co-Chairs: Joyce Ann Burman and Julie Hopkins
Price: $100 before June 30, 2017 • $125 starting July 1, 2017
To purchase tickets go to www.hruth.org/crab

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House of Ruth Maryland would like to extend special thanks to Gertrude’s for hosting Crabaret.