



Pine Street Inn
Ending Homelessness

Fall 2010

Innsider

News from Pine Street Inn

Helping Veterans Find Their Way



Pine Street Inn's new Veterans' Services program connects homeless veterans like Earnest Shorts with vital services.

Earnest Shorts proudly recalls his service during the Vietnam War as a petty officer in the U.S. Navy. Though his tour of duty left him with permanent damage to his knee and emotional trauma from witnessing an accident that killed several of his crewmates, he nevertheless feels that he owes a great deal to those years.

"I was proud to serve — I learned a lot about self-discipline and how to be a reliable person," Shorts recalls.

But when the sister he lived with in Brockton moved across the country, he was unable to afford the rent. He became homeless and turned to Pine Street for help.

Shorts' story is not unique — while veterans only make up 9 percent of our nation's population, they represent 23 percent of homeless Americans. *(Continued on page 4)*

Bringing our Guests Home

For the past 26 years, Pine Street Inn has successfully provided permanent housing with on-site support services for formerly homeless men and women. Currently, Pine Street operates 29 sites in Boston and Brookline, housing more than 550 tenants.

While the majority of Pine Street tenants have annual incomes of less than \$10,000, they do pay 30 percent of their income for rent. Case managers at each house assist tenants with no income in accessing benefit programs and/or connect them with job training and employment programs.

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From the President

In prior newsletters, I have written about Pine Street's ongoing efforts to place men and women in permanent housing with the support services needed to keep them housed. When I tell people that Pine Street's goal is more housing and less shelter, they are often curious about just what this means.

Last year, Pine Street Inn closed down 10 percent of our shelter beds. When I say that, people usually become very concerned. Then I tell them we shut down shelter beds because we opened up more housing opportunities, and we didn't need those "temporary" beds anymore.

I am pleased to report that with this strategy, we are making measurable progress toward our goal of ending homelessness in Boston. In fact, statistics gathered through the city of Boston's annual census show a 24 percent decrease in the shelter population over the past three years.

Pine Street Inn has worked closely with the Mayor's Office, the MA Department of Housing & Community Development, and many private donors, focusing our energy on housing and placing people who have been homeless the longest into housing with counseling and support services.

We know this is working because close to 90 percent of

"Last year, Pine Street Inn closed down 10 percent of our shelter beds...and opened more housing."



Lyndia Downie

these people, many of whom came right off the streets, have remained housed. Once people are housed we can address their daily challenges.

We can make substantial progress in solving one of the Commonwealth's most difficult social problems if we stay the course. We now have data that confirms that in addition to most people remaining housed, we are saving approximately \$9,000 (in health care and public safety costs) for every person we place in housing.

This makes good business sense — *and* it is the right thing to do. We ask you to stay with us as we make progress toward the ultimate goal of *ending homelessness*. ❖

Welcoming Pine Street's New Leadership

Pine Street is delighted to welcome **Corinne Ferguson** as Chair of the Board of Directors. A member of Pine Street's Board since 2002, Ferguson became Board Chair in June 2010, succeeding **Mary Jo Bane**, who served as Chair for three years. She has extensive experience on the boards of numerous organizations, including as Board Chair for City Year Boston.

The Inn is pleased to also welcome **MaryEllen Walsh** as Chair of the Council for Pine Street Inn. Walsh has been involved

with Pine Street as a volunteer and donor since 1996. She is the Vice President of Human Resources at Fidelity Investments and a resident of Watertown.

Pine Street expresses its gratitude to all the members of the Board and Council for their service, leadership and vision. ❖



Corinne Ferguson

Outreach: Walking with Purpose

Jean McCarthy spends the daytime walking through the streets of Boston, backpack on her back. If you watch her for just a few moments, you realize that she is not meandering aimlessly. In fact, she is walking with a very specific — and critical — purpose.

McCarthy is a Neighborhood-Based Outreach worker. Her job is to seek out homeless men and women living on the streets, and to help them begin to put their lives back together.

“I build relationships with people with the goal of moving them toward housing,” says McCarthy, whose territory includes the South End and South Boston. “We’re like roving case managers,” she adds.

Her day starts at her computer, where she checks the report from the overnight Outreach van. “That lets me know if there are specific people I need to check on. So much great work happens at night, but there’s also only so much you can do at 3 a.m. because offices and agencies aren’t open,” she explains.

As she sets out on the streets, armed with her backpack, McCarthy checks in with agencies on housing applications, doctors’ appointments or missing social security cards.

“I work 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., but every day is different,” she says. “One day I might spend all my time taking guests to appointments — to the doctor’s, then to public records to get a copy of a birth certificate. Another day, I’ll be on the street checking in with people, inching them toward housing.” It’s painstaking work.

“Oftentimes, the men and women I meet will tell me they’re not interested in coming in off the street. But you never know when they’ll change their minds. There was a man I’d seen on the streets for a while...he’s a Vietnam vet and had been homeless for a long time. I’d ask him about housing and he’d say, ‘I’m fine.’ Then one day he asked me about finding a place to live. Now he lives in senior housing and is doing very well. That’s what keeps you going.” ❖

What is in an Outreach Worker’s Backpack?

T PASSES

“We carry a supply of one-ride T passes that we give to guests who need to get to doctors’ appointments or meetings at the housing office.”

CELL PHONE

“I can call a van to transport someone to the hospital, follow up on guests’ housing and benefit applications, or connect them with another agency that can help them with a specific concern.”

SEWING KITS

“Surprisingly, we get asked for these a lot by guests. They need to mend holes in their clothes like everybody else.”



HOUSING APPLICATIONS

“When guests are ready to move off the streets, I’m prepared. I always have pens and blank applications for housing or to get copies of social security cards or birth certificates.”

PERSONAL CARE ITEMS

“Lip balm, sunscreen and mosquito repellent in the summer, hand warmers, gloves and hats in the winter — anything that provides relief from extreme weather. I also always carry hand sanitizer and Tylenol.”

Serving Up Change



On a busy night at Bouchée, an upscale French brasserie on Boston's Newbury Street, Executive Chef Frank van Overbeeke would serve 250 people. Now head chef at Pine Street Inn, he feeds 2,500 — plus oversees the food service job training program and *Abundant Table*, Pine Street's food service social enterprise.

"I was looking for the next thing in my career," says van Overbeeke, explaining his move in May from high-end dining to social enterprise. "I trained in Europe, was a pastry chef, moved into cooking and opened a restaurant." He found the prospect of heading up Pine Street's food services "intriguing" and calls his first few months on the job "very satisfying." "Everyone here is so passionate about what they do — volunteers and staff."

As part of the kitchen operations, Chef Frank instructs homeless students in the Food Services Training Programs (FSTP). A third of the 2,500 meals go to the clients of *Abundant Table*, which prepares and delivers nutritious meals to non-profits, schools and other organizations, with plans to expand into corporate catering.

"Chef Frank runs an awesome kitchen," remarked Jo-Ann Nelson, a FSTP trainee. "He makes it fun, and he encourages us all to work as a team."

To learn more about *Abundant Table*, visit: www.pinestreetinn.org/abundant-table ❖

Help Us Bring Homeless Veterans Home

Pine Street is renovating a home in Dorchester to create housing for 16 homeless veterans; however, substantial renovations are required before occupancy can begin.



Hartford Street

Your contribution will directly support the Hartford Street project and homeless veterans.

To learn more, please visit: www.pinestreetinn.org/HousingforVeterans or contact Julie Lima at: julie.lima@pinestreetinn.org or 617.892.9182

(Helping Veterans, continued from page 1)

This year, Pine Street Inn began offering specialized services for veterans, connecting individuals who have served in the U.S. armed forces with veteran-specific housing opportunities, employment, counseling and community services.

The Veterans' Services staff meets with veterans at offices in Roxbury and the South End, in weekly visits to shelters around the city and through outreach to the community. Their goal is to help veterans find the stability and support needed to rebuild their lives and to move forward in civilian society.

"Our clients don't always have copies of the records needed to receive veterans' benefits," said Riccardo White, Veterans' Services case manager and an Army veteran himself. "Often, they need our help in documenting a disability or reviewing their status in order to receive those benefits. And sometimes they simply don't know about the programs that are available to them."

Shorts has met with White, who helped him access disability benefits for his knee injury, therapy resources for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and connections to housing resources. He is in the final stages of the housing application process, and expects to be housed soon.

"Riccardo found resources for me I had no clue how to connect to," Shorts said. "He was my guide at a time when I felt lost." ❖ [4]

Give Hope this Holiday

Pine Street Holiday Cards



Send holiday wishes while supporting the men and women of Pine Street Inn. Large quantity and custom orders available.

These and more designs available at:
www.pinestreetinn.org/holiday

(Bringing Our Guests Home, continued from page 1)

Once someone moves into a residence, s/he works with a case manager to develop an individual plan, determining goals which promote stability and movement towards more independent living. Case managers also help tenants access appropriate services, from health care to mental health counseling to job training. Approximately 20 percent of tenants work; a number of residents have a physical or mental disability and may attend day programs or go to appointments with health care providers.

While some tenants come from emergency shelter, others are placed directly from the streets. “Our goal is to get those individuals who have been homeless the longest into housing — then to provide intensive support services to keep them housed,” says Ralph Hughes, Director of Permanent Housing. “This approach has proven very successful, with close to 90 percent of those placed remaining housed,” he adds.

At each residence, staff work to build a sense of community as residents reintegrate into the larger neighborhood around them. From landscaping to light bulb replacement,

Honor Family, Friends and Clients This Holiday Season

Looking for a holiday gift with meaning? Below are a couple of ideas you may want to consider as the holiday season approaches. We are most grateful to our friends who think of Pine Street during this busy time of year.

- A donation made in someone’s name can be the perfect way to honor a family member, friend, client or colleague. A specially designed holiday tribute card will be provided to you, or Pine Street can send the card directly to the honoree.
- In lieu of holiday office parties, businesses and their employees may make a donation to support work that aligns with their business, such as sponsoring a meal or furnishing a room at a Pine Street residence. We can help you with the details.

To learn more, contact Shauna Helton at shauna.helton@pinestreetinn.org or 617.892.9179. To make a gift online, go to: www.pinestreetinn.org/donate

Pine Street endeavors to create a comfortable, secure home environment for tenants and to be a concerned and involved neighbor in each community where our tenants reside. ❖

Who lives in Pine Street housing?

69% are male; **31%** are female

Average age is **50**

89% have a physical and/or mental disability

65% have incomes of less than \$10,000

3–4 years general length of stay (some move into more independent housing, reunite with family or relocate out of the area)

Friends of the Inn

Racing to End Homelessness



The Invest In Others 5K Run/Walk begins.

The Invest in Others Charitable Foundation, a public charity that supports the philanthropic and volunteer efforts of financial advisors across the country, contributed more than \$30,000 to Pine Street Inn through its Second Annual 5K Run/Walk event in Boston. The donation will be directed towards Pine Street Inn's new Hartford Street project (see page 4), a housing program for homeless veterans that Pine Street Inn will open this fall. Our thanks to Invest in Others President Kandis Bates and Chairman Robert Morre for their support.

Young Professionals & Tenants Cook Out



Members of the Young Professionals Advisory Board

In June, Pine Street's Young Professionals group held their 2nd annual housing barbecue. Despite the rain, more than 50 tenants and volunteers came together for this special event combining great food and friendship. The Young Professionals Advisory Board thanks everyone who attended and participated in the fun.

To learn more about Pine Street's Young Professionals group, contact Eric Monty at eric.monty@pinestreetinn.org or 617.892.9173.

Ending Homelessness One Stitch at a Time

Put your knitting needles to use raising funds for Pine Street Inn. The fourth annual Knit-a-thon will be held on Sunday, November 7 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the Massachusetts State House. The Knit-a-thon raises money to benefit Pine Street Inn's supportive housing program. Participants knit nine-inch squares that are sewn together to create afghans for Pine Street's tenants. The Knit-a-thon, started by Pine Street Inn Council member Farley Sullivan, has raised over \$70,000.



Rosie the Knitter, the Knit-a-thon mascot

To learn more, contact Eric Prileson at eric.prileson@pinestreetinn.org or visit: www.knit-a-thon.org

A Novel Way to Help

Since kindergarten, Sanaa George has expressed a deep desire to travel the world and help homeless men and women. At the age of eight, Sanaa wrote a self-published book titled *Delicious Cake*. She decided that by selling this book, she could raise money to support organizations that are working to end homelessness. This summer, Sanaa donated \$100 from book sales to Pine Street Inn.



Sanaa George and parents

In Insider

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