



MOMMAS Inc.
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Board of Directors

Patricia Fitzgerald
Joseph Bottner, MD
Thomas Lilly, Esq.
Joan Phillips, MSW
Hilary Becker, CPM
Mary Gilroy-Dooan, MD
Joan Durso Serra
Mary McCaffrey
Kathleen Blake

Director: Patricia Shea

www.mommashouse.org

Fall-Winter 2007

Message from the Director:

Dear Friends,

What can you do to feel really good during this Christmas/Holiday season? How can you find true happiness – not the kind that comes in a gift box with ribbons; but deeply satisfying joy? The only way I know to receive this gift of happiness is by giving it to someone else. Receiving love by giving love is the by-product of the gift of giving.

This past year, there has been an outpouring of support by our many volunteers and we are so grateful for their gifts of time and expertise. Some come for an event or project; others have been with us for years. All are welcome and encouraged to find their niche. Some are as young as 13, and others as “young-at-heart” as 80. All are greatly appreciated. We could not possibly do what we do without them.

My journey of volunteering started in college at St. John’s Home in the Rockaways. Following that I went to Mary Immaculate Hospital in Jamaica. I was assigned to the Emergency Room. Totally out of my element, I volunteered for clerical help in Triage on Friday nights, which could have been a forerunner of the current TV series “ER”. It was not uncommon to be confronted with gunshot wounds, drug overdoses, stabbings, pregnant women with toxemia, etc. - people who were seriously in need of help. This experience, as all of my volunteer experiences, has given me a sense of awe at the resiliency of the human spirit.

After graduation from St. John’s University, I spent the summer in San Juan Nuevo, Mexico, on a project with Maryknoll Mission Mexico. If you ever want to understand how fortunate you are to be a United States citizen, or part of a loving family or economically stable, just visit a slum outside Mexico City or a town devastated by a volcanic eruption a generation earlier. The most basic items were unavailable and I craved them: fresh food, toilet paper, orange juice, e.g. I became ill with chronic amoebic dysentery but was able to be treated after returning home. I left many behind who had no access to medical treatment. The three months spent there were a life altering experience for me.

Where is this all going? Right now, right here on Long Island, there are women and children who do not have the basic necessities, nor access to proper medical care. Every day they call for help and it is soon obvious that their problems are very complex. To be solution oriented, the common denominator of staff and volunteer is to care enough to make a difference.

As the old saying goes, “Many hands; make light work”. The volunteers in our MOMMAS House family serve on the Board of Directors, provide transportation, emotional support, collect basic necessities, raise funds, etc. They present workshops on parenting, financial literacy, health, etc. They make it possible for the social workers, house managers and child care staff to do their jobs. With very limited funds, we could not exist without these generous souls. God bless everyone who shared an hour or a dollar with us.

Recently, I experienced the tragic, sudden loss of two men, who died before their time. Each left their homes in the morning unaware that it was to be their last day on earth - deeds, left undone, words intended - unsaid. Do not let this be your eulogy. Make each day count as if it were your last and never be afraid to show you care. If you are unable to give time, please remember us in your prayers and where possible, share your treasure.

Volunteer orientations are given every month. Please contact the office by phone or email mommas86@optonline.net.

MOMMAS HOUSE

A Real Choice For Life

Tributes Received

Please remember in your prayers:

Evelyn Dangelo

Robert Grogan

Kay Harrison

Dahlia Lauto

Robert Prochilo

Eleanor Ruder

Michael V. Tepedino MD

* Living

** Anniversary

What's Happening Around MOMMAS House

House Updates

East Massapequa – 2nd floor apartment completed, MOMMAS “grad” Narousse and her son Matthew are now in residence at their first apartment!

Hempstead – Finally our Hempstead residence has opened and the mothers and babies have moved in. How wonderful to see all our hard work finally coming to fruition and this beautiful house becoming a home. Our thanks to Nassau’s Common Sense for Common Good initiative and The Greater Hempstead Housing Development Fund Corp. for enabling us to provide another beautiful home for our mothers and babies.

Jericho – Four mothers in school, with two of those about to graduate, and another one working. All else is status quo, unless of course we report drivers licenses obtained and maintaining 4.0’s in school! You go girls!

Glen Cove – Another facelift, this time in the daycare room, front hall and staircase – outstanding job by Nassau Community College Interior Design class once again.

Glen Cove & Jericho houses have been competing in the **Newsday Stock Market Game**, as part of the Financial Literacy Workshop taught by Kate Nowack. They are in competition with various groups and are doing extremely well.

DRIVE TO THRIVE

Is there a single thing more important to independence than being able to transport yourself? Without a license and car one is very limited in where they can choose to go to school and more importantly, where one can accept a job. On top of that, commute times are often doubled on public transportation. This is why our Transitional Living worker, Joan Phillips, has spearheaded our new program, *Drive to Thrive*. This program focuses on enabling the young mothers of our residences to obtain their driver’s licenses. The process is long and takes a lot of effort. Just gathering enough identification to qualify for a Learner’s Permit is difficult enough, with young women who have moved around so much, often losing their personal belongings along the way. However, once this is accomplished the next step is to take driving lessons. Joan has arranged for driving schools to come to the house and pick the mothers up for their lessons. Once they take their five-hour course and feel comfortable behind the wheel, they can schedule their road test. Since we have started this program we have had two mothers earn their driver’s licenses! Three more will likely be taking their road tests in January, and others are still taking lessons.

Of course all of this is expensive, and without our assistance these mothers probably would never have been able to take on such an endeavor. We have been so lucky to get some sponsors for this program: **Long Island Fund for Women and Girls** and the **Albert J. Schaufler II Memorial Foundation (a.k.a. Attapepper)**. Programs like this would not be possible without the support of groups and organizations like these. We must continue to seek support for this program if we want to reach our goal of getting **every** resident a driver’s license before she leaves! If your family, group or organization would be interested in sponsoring a mother in this program please



Narousse, now with license, sits in her “new” car donated by the Rieger Family

Fundraising Report...

On November 2, 2007 we held our 13th Annual Dinner Dance at the Garden City Hotel. Marianne and Constantine Iordanou were the esteemed honorees. No two people were more pro-active honorees; between that and our wonderful chairladies, Marianne Trani, Marilyn DiRenzo, Beth Mahon (Journal), Marcia Stadler and Joan Durso-Serra (Silent Auction) who along with committee ensured our most successful event to date.

Grant Update

Sincere appreciation to the trustees of the following for Grants received: Long Island Fund for Women and Girls and The Albert J. Schaufler II Memorial Foundation (driving sponsorship), Roslyn Savings Foundation, FUND FOR THE POOR, Arthur J. Gallagher Foundation, WE CARE (Nassau County Bar Association), Kate Nowack for her generous stock donation and The Hackett Foundation for making it possible to purchase new bedding for all.

Capital Fund Campaign Update

The current status of the Capital Fund Campaign is making progress. We have pledges and/or payments totaling \$203,600. We can envision half our new house but now we need the other half. **Please** consider investing in the future of MOMMAS House and the women and babies we serve.

We would be most grateful if you would consider hosting a reception at your home/business or anywhere feasible to accommodate an intimate gathering. Light refreshments only, as the main purpose is to have a platform on which to explain what MOMMAS House is and what it hopes to accomplish. There will be no high pressure tactics used, only the distribution of information and ways one might help if so inclined.

Her Story

My name is Lisa Davis, I am 21 years old and I have a three year old son named Parris. When I got pregnant four years ago I was going nowhere with my life. Just hanging out on the streets with friends. No school, no work, nothing productive. When I told my grandmother I was pregnant she had enough and I had to leave her house. I moved in with the father of my child and thought things would be ok. Unfortunately my son's father passed away from a heart condition and suddenly I was completely on my own. I know now though, that even if my son's father lived, I was still doing nothing with my life. With no family to stay with I ended up in Covenant House, a temporary shelter in NYC. There I found out about MOMMAS House and called to get an interview. I met with Pat Shea and she agreed to accept my son and me into the program. We moved into the Jericho House in August of 2006. I won't say that it was a smooth transition, it had it's bumps. I was not used to being in such a structured environment, having to follow so many rules. But I knew that I had to stay and take advantage of everything this program had to offer. The first thing I did was begin classes at Nassau BOCES to prepare for my GED. I realized then that it would have been much easier had I just finished high school when I was in it. But when I passed my GED it was one of the happiest days of my life. I had put my mind to something and accomplished it! And I haven't stopped there. Right after getting my GED I enrolled in Hunter Business School. With straight A's, I am about to graduate and have gone on several job interviews. I have been offered a great position and will start working soon! In addition to all this I have been developing a greater relationship with my son and learning how to be a better parent. He has been thriving at MOMMAS House as well. I am thrilled at what I have been able to accomplish. I never would have done any of this if I had not come to MOMMAS House. With the help of Pat & Deirdre Shea and all the staff at MOMMAS house I know I am now going to be a suc-



We Salute...

- We welcome **Lauren LeFrance**, social work intern who comes to us from Molloy College and bid fond farewell to **Marief Goren**, a C.W. Post L.I.U. Mental Health counseling major for interning with professionalism and dedication.
- Kudos to our great **social work team** who go above and beyond in order to give their clients the very best chance possible, including supervising tomorrow's professionals.
- Our Social Worker **Daniela Richards** arranged scholarships at Adelphi University for each of the mothers to attend a parenting seminar featuring the great **Dr. T. Berry Brazelton**. Additionally, the moms were treated to an *individual* audience with this famous pediatrician and author. Daniela observed the mothers validation by the respect and kind words offered by the gentle doctor.
- **Joan Philips** arranged and accompanied the mothers for workshop/reception at **Kellenberg Memorial High School**. **Pam Stenzel**, with her humor and uncanny ability to connect, was the guest speaker. Her topic "Teen Sex and Character Building" was well received, one young lady responded, "No one ever spoke to me about this."
- Please recognize these accomplishments were in addition to their regular work of counseling, scheduling workshops, family court, hours at Social Services, etc. etc. GREAT JOB!
- **Long Island's Jr. League, Rotary Clubs, Churches, Synagogues, Kiwanis, St. Rose of Lima Church, Massapequa and Scouts**, most recently **Eric Kaminsky** who did an awesome job with his Eagle Scout project; to all, for extending your arms and opening your hearts. Special thanks to **North Shore Community Church**, Oyster Bay for committed monthly support.
- Our Guardian angel, **Vincent**, who consistently does random acts of kindness for us.
- **St. John's University** for continued support volunteering service/learning hours, in addition to some clubs/sororities doing their thing to help. More and more colleges/universities are establishing a win-win relationship with us. They are practicing what they are learning, be it: public relations, speech therapy, early intervention etc. benefiting us both.
- **Nassau Community College Interior Design** students of Professor Roseanne Scarpelli continue the **awesome** job they funded and began at the Glen Cove house – this time the daycare room, entrance hall & stairs have been transformed. GREAT JOB!
- **Detective Steven and Honorable Patti McDonald** for their loyal and immeasurable support!
- To our many **workshop instructors** who offer their time and expertise gratis to MOMMAS' residents, giving them a real chance at successful living.
- The **North Shore Pops**, for performing the annual Christmas Concert benefiting MOMMAS House. Thanks again for a wonderfully entertaining evening for all!
- To our "brothers" at the **Bellmore Knights of Columbus** for once again hosting our Christmas party in their reception hall, proof that Santa Claus does exist! Ensuring this enormous undertaking's success, in addition to the hard work of **Joan Phillips, Mary Jean Murphy** and the committee, was much good will! Thanks go out to **Copper Rose band** for providing the entertainment. And the party wouldn't have been possible without the culinary talent of **Rosemarie and her daughter Nicole Davidson**, along with funding from the **Massapequa and Wantagh Kiwanis Clubs**, we all enjoyed a feast for kings. Toys/gifts were once again supplied by **Verizon Telecom Pioneers, St. Frances de Chantal, St. William the Abbot, St. Joseph's (Garden City), St. Catherine of Sienna (Franklin Square), St. Raymond's (East Rockaway), Manhasset Community Church, TWEEZERMAN Corp., Syosset Hospital, prophet.com** and many private individuals (please forgive any sins of omissions).
- To all of our other **volunteers**: those that rock our babies, drive to doctor appointments, sort clothing, pick-up furniture, make fundraising events memorable and profitable, write grants, keep the books, "camera-ready" Journals, make up our Board of Directors...you know who you are and what you do, we hope you know how grateful we are!

PHOTO ALBUM



A ladybug and bumble bee come out for the Halloween Party at our Jericho Residence



Dinner Dance Honorees Dinos & Marianne Iordanou being presented by Patricia Shea



Pumpkin Picking enjoyed by all the residents!



New member of the family, Lavenia, born 8/12/07 with a full head of hair!



New resident Kyshawn meets his baby sister for the first time after his mom is able to take her out of foster care since finding a home for them



Former families of MOMMAS House return each year for the Annual Holiday Reunion party

Volunteer Spotlight... Kay Albright

Kay has volunteered at MOMMAS House for many years, her passion is the little ones. She is very involved with her children and grandchildren, but recognizes everyone is not so blessed. So every week you will find "Kay-Kay" with a tot in her lap reading a story, practicing colors/ numbers/letters. I wonder how many little lives have been touched by her love.

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 A new report finds that volunteers live longer, think smarter, and show less tendency to depression and heart disease. Dr. Stephen Post, a School of Medicine Professor says "There is now a convergence of research leading to the conclusion that helping others makes people happier and healthier." Some pertinent facts: volunteering contributes to lower depression rates; heart attack survivors who volunteer report less despair reducing mortality in post-coronary patients; volunteers over 70 were healthier, more mentally alert and lived longer than contemporaries who didn't volunteer; 100 hours per year, or around 2 hours per week, is the optimum for significant health benefits. A full Report can be found at http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/07_0506_hbr.pdf

UNWANTED CAR?



Donate to MOMMAS House

With the success of our *Drive to Thrive* program (see article on page 2), many of our mother's are obtaining their driver's licenses and are now in need of some wheels!

If you have a working car you're looking to get rid of, please consider donating to MOMMAS House. The car will be given to any resident who has obtained her driver's license and begun working. All donations are tax deductible, and this would be a wonderful gift for one of our young mother's just starting their careers.

Please contact the office at 516-781-8637 and leave a message about your vehicle, etc.

And the winner is

We are pleased to announce the winner of the **New Year's Get-Away Week at Gurney's Inn** vacation week this year was **Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Hoey**. Congratulations!

Interested in getting a chance yourself? See below!

Gurney's Inn

Need a break? Tired of the maddening pace?
 Take a chance of winning a week at

Gurney's Spa and Inn

We have available a lovely oceanfront room for two, the week of **March 7 -14**. I am told there isn't a more restful spot on earth.

Raffles are \$10 ea. 3 for \$25

At Your Service

Do you need an **extra set of hands** at your next party or family/corporate gathering? We have trained some of the young mothers to provide this service and I am sure you will be pleased by their conscientiousness. They will set up, serve and clean-up. Please give them a chance to earn some money, while they attend school and parent their children. Contact the Office at 516-781-8637 if you are interested in this service.

GURNEY'S INN Chance

NAME: _____

Phone #: _____

Address: _____

GURNEY'S INN Chance

NAME: _____

Phone #: _____

Address: _____

GURNEY'S INN Chance

NAME: _____

Phone #: _____

Address: _____

What's on our Wish List?

GOODS

- MiniVan in good running condition - late model for a reasonable price.
- A used **WORKING CAR** for newly licensed mothers
- **METROCARDS***** - this is how our girls get to school, work, doctor's appts., and counseling.
- Paper goods for all houses: paper towels, napkins, toilet paper, tissues, baby wipes, diapers (all sizes especially 4 & 5), copy/printer-paper
- All Cleaning Supplies – kitchen, laundry, bathroom
- Toiletries - toothpaste/brushes/floss/mouthwash, liquid/bar soap, Band-aids/antiseptic, shampoo, children's "Tylenol", Pedia-Lyte, baby health/first aid kits
- Bed in a Bag sets - twin size
- Solid color Knit Crib Sheets!!
- Gasoline / Phone Gift Cards
- Small tabletop copy machine
- We are NOT in need of infant clothing at this time, but if you are having a drive or baby shower, we could use **new TODDLER** size clothing 2T-4T.
- New / Upgraded Credit Card Machine for office.
- Plastic shelving (sturdy) / storage bins
- New house at Hempstead requests: new vacuum, 3 dust mops and 5 wheeled 3-drawer plastic containers

SERVICES

- Driver's Education teachers to help our moms obtain their driver's license
- **VOLUNTEERS!!** Clerical work - mail assembly, filing, maintenance of mailing list; minor house repairs / maintenance & yard work, help sort donations, build some storage shelves, etc.
- Child care volunteers during the day & evening, especially in Glen Cove!
- Join existing Fund-Raising Committees
- "A few good men" with a truck/van to pick-up and deliver donations, especially furniture
- Minor house repairs/maintenance
- Seasonal gardening – all houses renewal (clean-up, bushes, flowers)
- Sponsor a young mother for driving lessons - \$500-\$600, perhaps your family, group or organization can raise the funds for this purpose.

Your support for all events is greatly appreciated. There are many ways to contribute to MOMMAS and we hope you will choose one of them:

1. Join our volunteer staff – greatest need, the fundraising committees
2. Donate on the Internet - **Guidestar.com**
3. If you are a **federal employee**, donate to MOMMAS, Inc. through the **LI Federated Campaign** payroll deduction Designate **MOMMAS #3061** as the recipient
4. Employer offer "Matching Gifts Program"? Choice of Monetary or Time & Talent offered by some corporations.
5. Commemorative Cards Available – Memorials, Births, Anniversary, Birthdays – any occasion worth remembering, make your gifting "meaningful"
6. **Internet Shoppers** – Make purchases through **iGive.com** and MOMMAS will get a percent of every sale from 600+ retail participants. Go online to register or call office for details.
7. Information available on how to remember MOMMAS when involved with **Estate Planning**
8. Place the enclosed envelope where you pay your bills so that you will keep us in mind when contribution is possible
9. A 2006 law makes charitable giving from Individual Retirement Accounts (IRA) tax-free. People 70 1/2 and older can gift assets from an IRA to a qualified organization without it being taxed as income. Please remember MOMMAS House!

Light our way...

Please give now as the need is great and the options are few. There are many ways to support our mission - to help pregnant or parenting young women on their journey to become good parents and self-supporting individuals.

Please help in any way you can



Support upcoming events



Volunteer your time and share your gifts.



Designate MOMMAS as a recipient of your Federated Campaign contribution



Include MOMMAS, Inc. in your estate planning



I would like to make a Monthly donation of \$ _____



I would like to make a One Time donation of \$ _____



I would like to purchase _____ chances for the week at Gurney's Inn totaling \$ _____.
(Details and chances on pg. 5)



I would like to make a pledge of \$ _____ to the Capital Fund Campaign for MOMMAS to purchase a new home to house homeless mother and their children. **OR** _____ I would be interested in hosting a reception at my home to encourage others to pledge support for the Capital Fund Campaign - please send more information.



Jericho Resident Elijah all dressed up for Halloween

We accept checks made payable to MOMMAS, Inc. or Credit Card Payments (complete information below). You can send this page and your contribution in the self-addressed envelope provided. Thank you for your support!

Name _____ Phone Number: _____

Address _____

I wish to make a contribution of \$ _____ for my choice of support indicated above.

Charge Card ___ Visa ___ MasterCard ___ American Express ___ Discover

Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____

___ I wish to charge my donation of \$ _____ monthly / one time (circle one)

Signature _____ Date _____

MAILING LIST UPDATE REQUEST

We are pleased to have over 7,000 individuals, groups, businesses and families on our Mailing List. We strive to keep our supporters informed and involved in MOMMAS House. However, the cost of printing and postage for such a large list is cumbersome. We ask that you please let us know if you are no longer interested in receiving the newsletter. Please let us know if you have moved and your mail is being forwarded, so that we may update your contact information.

GO PAPERLESS!

Are you environmentally conscious? Or maybe you just hate the paper you've got piling up around the house? Well now you can choose to have your MOMMAS House newsletter sent to you electronically! Just email mommas86@aol.com with the subject "Email Newsletter" and inside please indicate your **Name and Address** where you currently receive our Newsletter. We will stop sending you paper newsletters, and instead you can get the newsletter emailed to you in PDF format 4 times a year! This would really help MOMMAS House cut down on the costs of printing and mailing!

Attention Internet Shoppers

Today we received our third award check from www.iGive.com – talk about effortless giving! First, for signing up your designated charity will receive a \$5 bonus, even if you never make any purchase. However, if you like me habitually shop on-line, **many** (see site for listing) well-known stores (SEARS, J.C. Penney's, Home Depot, STAPLES, etc.) offer rebates to your charity of choice on all on-line shopping. I personally have now earned \$78.18 of the \$170.23 currently raised for MOMMAS House - in less than one year. The potential is enormous, and it's easy. If this method of giving appeals to you, you may register on-line or we will gladly furnish you with additional information at the office.

-Sarah, Admin Assistant

EMAIL ADDRESSES

We'd love to be able to keep our friends and supporters up to date on MOMMAS events in between our newsletter mailings. Please email us at mommas86@aol.com with the subject: "Keep In Touch".

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Address Correction Requested

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