



# Jeremiah's Times



Fall 2015

## More Changes at the Inn

Here at Jeremiah's Inn, we believe in continuous growth & improvement. Thanks to your support, we've been able to strengthen the Social Model Recovery Program, which has resulted in a higher completion rate. This means more men are finishing the program & leaving with a steady source of income, a safe place to live & connections in the community, which are the foundation for recovery.

We've been able to expand our programming & turn the food pantry into a Nutrition Center. We have significantly increased both the amount of food we give to each client at each visit (50-60 items/visit), as well as the percentage of fresh food we distribute. We've partnered with Cooking Matters to run 14 grocery store tours, aimed at teaching people how to read labels & cook healthfully on a budget. We are collaborating with UMass Extension to hold periodic cooking demonstrations & have just finished the first year of our new community garden program, which provided free garden beds to 50 people.

We've continued to make improvement to the building, too. We've upgraded our technology, replaced the roof, the phone system, all 47 windows & 3 exterior doors, painted the inside of the building & installed new flooring in the staff offices & library. Soon, we'll have a new parking lot, a 15-passenger van & back-up generators, too! Future plans include replacing the heating system, installing electronic key pads & painting the outside of the building.

At our recent strategic planning retreat, the board & staff identified the following priorities for 2016:

- \* Create a sober house
- \* Strengthen the intern system
- \* Increase/improve communication
- \* Develop an alumni program
- \* Reassess use of space on 1<sup>st</sup> floor
- \* Implement Electronic Medical Records

By December 1<sup>st</sup>, we will have written work plans to help us implement these changes over the next year. We're excited where the Inn is headed & want to thank all of you who provided us

with input by submitting a survey or participating in a focus group! We've been able to grow so much over the past three years – we couldn't have done it without you!

If you'd like to get involved, let us know!

### Mission & Vision

JEREMIAH'S INN uses a Social Model to provide residents with a safe environment in which to begin recovery. We foster a sense of community & mutual aid through partnerships, volunteerism & our Food Pantry. Our vision is to help people better their lives in order to better the community.

### Kenny's Story

Kenny P. "loves to laugh & enjoy life." He's also very family-oriented.

When he was 18, Kenny was stabbed. He was given prescription pain medication for a long time, during which he developed a habit. Soon his dependency shifted to "street" opiates.

## Kenny's story (cont'd.)

Kenny was doing high pressure sales & was very successful; however, he was always short of money because he spent it all on drugs. Describing his addiction, Kenny says, "I was in my own hell. Addiction changed everything for me, because it controlled my life." Kenny hit bottom when he overdosed twice in one day.

"I put my family through hell. I crashed my brother's car. My family didn't trust me. At the same time, they were scared to death I'd die. It was constant misery for them." If he had to define one moment that contributed to his realization that he needed help, it was when his grandfather told him that his love for his family needs to be expressed through actions, not just his words.

Kenny made the decision to get clean on April 10th & has stayed clean ever since. After being at Jeremiah's Inn 5 months, Kenny believes that Jeremiah's Inn is the best choice for recovery in Worcester. He remembers thinking when he first arrived that "[his] higher power sent [him] here."

He still believes that now. "There have been times when I could have failed, but just coming back into this house has felt like I have a safe space & because of that I can keep going." Thanks, Kenny, for sharing your story with us!

## 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Food Drive Results

Thanks to you, this year's Food Drive was a big success! Run from July 6-11, the Food Drive brought in 1,826 pounds of food, \$5,666 in donations & \$6,200 in sponsorships for a total of \$11,866! That's more than double than last year!

We'd like to thank our Lead Sponsors, Unibank & UPS; our Platinum Sponsor SpenserBANK; our Gold Sponsors, Commerce Bank, Stop & Shop & Wegman's; our Silver Sponsors, Millbury Federal Credit Union & Southbridge Savings; & our Bronze Sponsors, AAA & Millbury Savings. We received in-kind support from Nuestro Heurto, Price Chopper, the T&G & WTAG/ WSRS. Millbury Federal Credit Union (Webster Square), SpenserBANK & Unibank also held food drives, which brought in another 1,196 pounds of food.

If you missed the Food Drive, you can drop off food or funds any time of year during normal business hours at Jeremiah's Inn (1059 Main Street). Your contribution will help feed hungry people in our community!

## Farewell Bob, Hello Jeff!

On Friday, October 2, we bid a temporary farewell to Program & Clinical Director Bob Siemaszko, who is on leave. We are lucky to have Jeff Busby here to serve as Interim Clinical Director while Bob is taking care of his health. Jeff has a long history of working in the field & has been working with Bob for the past few weeks to learn the ropes. While we'll miss Bob, we know we're in good hands with Jeff on board!

## Meet the Staff

Over the course of the past two years, the staff at the Inn has changed quite a bit. We thought it'd be a good idea to introduce you to the members of our fantastic team who work hard to keep the Inn humming!



**Scot Burns, Case Manager**  
Scot joined our staff as House Manager about a year ago & recently transitioned to Case Manager. Scot says, "I

feel like I have found my purpose in life; to help other addicts." Scot is working on his Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor (CEDAC) certificate. He believes "...that the [Social Model Recovery] works best. I am so motivated by what we are trying to do as a program."



**Betsey Kennedy, Case Manager**  
Betsey was initially a part of our team as an intern from Quinsigamond Community College. Immediately following her

internship she was hired as relief staff & then as a Case Manager. She believes this is the field she is destined to be in. "I get to be myself here. Who I am here is who I am out

there." Betsey loves her job because she gets to do what she was born to: help people. She likes the Social Model because the "staff learn and grow from residents as they do from us."



**Jason Lavalley, Case Manager**  
Jason was working towards an Addiction Counselor Education (ACE) degree when a friend told him about Jeremiah's Inn. Jason started in a per diem position but soon became the weekend/overnight Case Manager. He became a full time Case Manager in January 2014.

"When I first started working," he said, "I thought I was going to help everybody; soon I realized that this job comes with a lot of failure. There will be relapses no matter how much you try." What drives him, he says, is knowing that what he does saves the lives of those who may not have had the chance otherwise. Jason believes that he is good at his job because he has experiential knowledge, which allows him to provide guidance for the guys at the Inn.



**Bhumika Regmi, Communications Coordinator**  
Bhumika was an intern in the fall of 2014. After graduating from Clark University last spring, she returned to her

native Nepal to work as an intern in the Parliament. She is now state-side again & working as our new Communications Coordinator! Bhumika says, "When I took this position, I knew that I wanted to see the organization grow. As an intern, I recognized the passion the staff here had for the work they did. I feel the same way and have a vision for Jeremiah's Inn that I hope to see through now as a staff member."

We'll feature four more staff in our next newsletter!



## Guys Just Wanna Have Fun!



In August, the staff, residents & their families took a trip to Six Flags. It was great to get out of the city, relax & have some fun!

### AROUND THE INN



## A Shout Out to Price Chopper

The Price Chopper on Cambridge Street has been providing invaluable support to the Inn. They collect food for us year-round, have hosted the past few Food Drives & allow us to run our grocery store tours on site. A big THANK YOU to **Price Chopper** for their generosity & support!

## Board of Directors

A big thank you to our Board of Directors, who work hard to serve Jeremiah's Inn & the community:

Trish Davidson, President  
 Francine Harrison, Vice President  
 Jeff Kristoff, Treasurer  
 Melinda Hillock, Clerk  
 George Brown  
 Richard Higgins  
 Joe LaConte  
 Jack Maroney  
 Jack Reardon  
 Joe Stiso

**If you're interested in becoming a board member, let us know!**

## HOLIDAY WISH LIST

### For the Men

Winter jackets  
 Scarves, hats, gloves  
 Winter boots  
 Long underwear  
 Gift cards: Target, Walmart, TJMaxx, etc.

Pillows (new)	Sheets (twin)
Pillow cases	Blankets (twin)
Quilts (twin)	Bath towels
Wash Cloths	Socks
Underwear	Undershirts
Deodorant	Soap/Body Wash
Shampoo	Razors
Shaving cream	Toothpaste
Toothbrushes	Dental floss
Water bottles	Laundry detergent

### For their kids

Children's books & toys

### For the Inn

SNOWBLOWER  
 Carpet cleaner  
 Deli/meat slicer  
 Convection oven  
 Toilet paper Paper towels  
 Dish soap Brooms  
 Mops Dustpans  
 Plates Mugs  
 Bowls Cups  
 Silverware

## Happy Holidays?

The holidays can be a difficult time for people in recovery – it can be hard to attend parties where alcoholic drinks are being served, they may not have fond holiday memories, and/or may be separated or estranged from family & friends.



While we don't want to be like those big box stores that start pushing the holidays before Halloween, we need to start planning now so we can provide our residents with the happiest holidays possible. *And we need your help!*

You can help make the holidays happier by:  
 \*Picking items from our **Wish List** & dropping them off at the Inn.

\*Making a donation online or by check – please be sure to indicate that it's for holiday gifts!

\*Organizing a **Secret Santa** or **Giving Tree** project at work or at your place of worship. If you'd like to do this, please contact Bhumika to get a specific list of items that the men need. (508)-755-6403 or [bhumika@jeremiahsinn.com](mailto:bhumika@jeremiahsinn.com)

**Thanks in advance for helping to make the holidays happier for the men we serve!**

## Cultivating Vegetables & Friends

This summer, we partnered with Nuestro Huerto to build & manage a 50-bed community garden program, designed to provide South Worcester residents with space in which to grow their own healthy food. All 50 beds were utilized; 12 by Nutrition Center clients, 4 by our residents.



## Walking our Walk



Prevention Works • Treatment is Effective • People Recover

On September 26, many of the residents & staff & friends of Jeremiah's Inn took part in & enjoyed the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Worcester Cares about Recovery Walk & Celebration. We are proud to be part of & to support the recovery community in Worcester!

### Bank for Our Bucks!

We are so grateful to the local banking community for their support! We recently received checks from (L to R) Avidia Bank, Bay State Savings Bank & Commerce Bank. Funding from Avidia will be used to support the Social Model Program, while Bay State & Commerce funding will support Nutrition Center operations. We couldn't do what we do without them!



### Calling all Cooks!

We need help feeding the 29 men in our care. We are grateful to those of you who prepare & drop off occasional meals, but we also need individuals, groups & families to sign up for a specific night each month to provide dinner for the guys. If this is something you're able to do, please contact Bhumika: (508)-755-6403 or [bhumika@jeremiahsinn.com](mailto:bhumika@jeremiahsinn.com)



We have a day for giving thanks. We have two (Black Friday & Cyber Monday) for getting deals. **GivingTuesday** is a day dedicated to giving back. On **Tuesday, December 1**, charities, families, businesses, community centers & students around the world will come together for one common purpose: to celebrate generosity & to give. We hope that you will support Jeremiah's Inn this year by making a donation on line (<http://www.jeremiahsinn.com/>) or mailing a check to: PO Box 30035/1059 Main Street, Worcester, MA 01603. Together, we can continue to make a difference in the lives of men struggling with addiction & neighbors struggling with food insecurity & hunger.

### Join Us Online!

If you'd like to receive an electronic version of our newsletter, please head over to [www.jeremiahsinn.com](http://www.jeremiahsinn.com) and opt-in. We also invite you to follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Jeremiahs-Inn-71929730072/>



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