



# THE HAVEN

WELCOME. HOUSE. CONNECT.

FALL 2023

HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE HAVEN.

## Honoring Laura's Legacy at The Haven *by Anna Mendez*



Preparing for panel facilitation at last summer's National Alliance to End Homelessness conference in Washington, D.C.

**T**he Haven is grateful for the support shown to our guests and staff in the wake of the murder of Laura DeLapp, our Day Shelter Manager. Laura began serving as Day Shelter Manager in 2020 and quickly became the heart of that team. She welcomed all who found their way to The Haven with radical hospitality, grace, and good humor. Her confidence was contagious and she made run-

ning a low-barrier day shelter look easy (though it is anything but!).

Laura was a fierce community advocate standing up not only for the dignity of those experiencing homelessness but also leading the creation of a tenant's union at her apartment complex to make sure her neighbors were fully informed of their rights. Moving forward without Laura feels incomprehensibly difficult, but we also know that doing so is how The Haven best honors her and her legacy.

While Laura was the leader of our Day Shelter, her personal passion was housing people. Laura intuitively understood that people who are merely sheltered are still people who are experiencing homelessness. In recognition of Laura's commitment to the principles of the Housing First model, we have decided to rename the Haven Housing Fund to the Laura DeLapp Haven Housing Fund. This is a fund The Haven uses to help community members exit homelessness or prevent them from experiencing homelessness.

Jamey Rush, who served as Assistant Day Shelter Manager during Laura's tenure, has agreed to step up as the next Day Shelter Manager. His commitment to The Haven is unparalleled. In turn, The Haven

### THE HAVEN BOARD MEMBERS FALL 2023

- Michaela Accardi
- Reverend Brenda Brown-Grooms
- Richelle Claiborne
- Marequiz Johnson
- Apostle Sarah Kelley
- Paul Martin
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- Lorie Strother
- Ella Washington-Jordan
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- Moriah Wilkins

Learn more and connect with us at [thehaven.org](http://thehaven.org).

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*(Honoring Laura's Legacy, continued)*

is committed to providing him the support he and the Day Shelter team need to launch the next chapter of the Day Shelter's history as successfully as possible. They are already off to an amazing start!

The amount of support we have received from the community is so great we could not possibly list by name everyone who has helped us. We are grateful for all the love, understanding, and solidarity shown to us and the grace we continue to receive as we build a new normal.

If you're concerned that you, or someone you care about, may be experiencing domestic violence, please know that you are not alone. Locally the Shelter for Help in Emergency (SHE Shelter) provides crucial support services including a 24-hour hotline that can be reached by calling (434) 293-8509.

## She welcomed all who found their way to The Haven with radical hospitality, grace, and good humor.



Clockwise from top left: Laura with former staff members Reggie and Isaiah at Haven summer cookouts, a beloved tradition Laura initiated in her role as Day Shelter Manager; Laura proudly rocking her "Imagine a City Where No One Sleeps Outside" shirt in front of The Haven.

# Moving Forward with Care

Alongside grief, we've welcomed change and growth in all of our departments. Here's a window into each.

## DAY SHELTER

In our **day shelter**, we've increased compensation along with higher expectations for staff. We've made a big investment in professional and leadership development for the team and have celebrated staff members flourishing in new or expanded roles: Jamey Rush as Day Shelter Manager and Theresa Williams, whose role has expanded to better facilitate guest movement between the services provided by the Day Shelter, Coordinated Entry, and Housing Department.



## KITCHEN

In our **kitchen**, we've made compensation more competitive, helping us welcome new staff and develop a fruitful partnership with Sylvania Farms, now donating a staggering 1,000+ eggs per week. We're at work searching for a kitchen sponsor, allowing us to invest in new equipment.



## CES

With our growing **Coordinated Entry System (CES)** team, we are now in full operation of the Homeless Information Line (HIL). At the helm, our CES Manager Shayla Washington has expanded her work to lead the community's collaboration in reaching "functional zero" for veteran and chronic homelessness.



## HOUSING

In our **housing department**, we're celebrating new funding for two major programs helping to end homelessness in our community. We've expanded the Laura DeLapp Haven Housing Fund with the help of our largest private gift ever. New support from the Virginia Housing Trust Fund has bolstered our Rapid Rehousing program, allowing us to bring on new staff and help more people exit homelessness.



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT

Our **Community Engagement** efforts have been focused on strengthening our Day Shelter volunteer program and increasing access to healthcare services at The Haven, including a UVA Women's Clinic and Naloxone distribution effort through the Virginia Department of Health. To ensure a more financially sustainable future to support these efforts, we've promoted Kay Comer, previously our Financial Associate, to be our first ever Development Manager!





## Join us: Housing First and Homelessness in Charlottesville

On November 13th from 7:00–8:30 p.m., we'll gather in our sanctuary to learn more about Housing First and Homelessness in Charlottesville. Our Executive Director Anna Mendez will share what we know about homelessness locally and expand on the Housing First model: what it is, the successes we've seen, and the challenges we face implementing this evidence-based approach in our community.

Scan the QR code below to register for the free event and find additional information on Housing First.



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