



Special Edition

NEWSLETTER



CLAIRVAUX FARM

ENDING HOMELESSNESS ONE FAMILY & ONE CHILD AT A TIME



Our Mission Groups, Local Churches, Supporters & Volunteers are the life blood of Deep Roots. You are the ones who send the money, the volunteers', the supplies and the prayers that enable us to do what we do. Deep Roots has a 10-year history of amazing donors who have given of their time, talents and resources to end homelessness one family & one child at a time!



Child Homelessness: A Growing Crisis and Often Is Under-estimated

"While progress has been made in recent years in reducing chronic homelessness among single adults, the opposite is true for families." said Ellen Bassuk, M.D., author of America's Youngest Outcasts: A Report Card on Child Homelessness.

Becoming homeless is potentially traumatizing for people of any age, but it is important to recognize that, when young children experience trauma, there is a relatively short window in their developmental process to address the trauma before it becomes a serious problem that affects them as adults. "At Deep Roots we recognize this problem and that is why our children's programs are a priority. We are investing in our children by having fun events on and off the farm. We provide homework help, tutoring, and academic training coupled with arts and games in a class room setting to increase the skills of our homeless children" said Don Henderson, Board Chairman

51% of children who experience homelessness are under the age of six. Domestic violence, sexual abuse, and other types of interpersonal violence are widespread among this group of women; 90% have experienced severe trauma.

"My husband was physically and verbally abusive. I went from having a house to sleeping in an abandoned car overnight... I was walking around in winter with nowhere to go with my kids. Then I came to Deep Roots... and I've literally changed everything." - homeless mother of two children

Unfortunately, many of today's homeless shelters available to families contribute to the destabilizing trauma experienced by children, according to Dr. Bassuk. Family shelters are often large, older houses where the entire family stays in one room with a shared bathroom. Generally, there is no privacy or safe place for children to play. Many of these homeless children will face almost insurmountable obstacles as they become adults and are often trapped in a cycle of poverty, ill health, and significant social disadvantages. At Deep Roots, we have made a commitment to be a community, not JUST a shelter. The Board of Directors recently approved the rehab of our apartment style rooms with private bathrooms and we are currently looking into the possibility of individual private Tiny Homes to replace our group house.

With the help from our supporters, churches and businesses we can finally breakdown the barriers these families face while living with us at Deep Roots. They can feel at home in a safe and secure environment while we help them transition to a home of their own.



LOST

A poem by a current Deep Roots Resident



*Lost in this world, felt all alone, looking for a spot for us to call home.
Felt like my time was running out and my patience was running thin.
Couldn't rely on anyone, my road coming to an end.
Drinking every day, going from house to house.*

Food stamps cut off no way to put food in the kids mouths. You see I got betrayed by the love of my life he couldn't handle the pressure so we started to fight.

Black eyes and missing teeth became the new me seven years later I decided that this just couldn't be. I have two kids to raise and not just me.

I WALKED AWAY!! SAVED BY GRACE!!!

I heard from a friend of a friend about some place "they take families with kids" he said and my heart started to race. This is the help that I needed for God to save my place, in this world, I knew this wasn't the end of my story but when the drinks were involved I couldn't keep my eyes on the glory.

Now my babies are in school and I'm becoming a better me - Deep roots is more than a shelter it's like home to me!

“Investing Done Well” by Rev. Carl Mazza

Whoever saves one life, it is considered as if he saved an entire world. - The Hebrew Talmud

I saw a lot of stuff in that little time of my life, painfully scarring stuff; I can touch the pain still today, it is real and always will be if we don't do something to change the world.

I could see the things going on and all the while knew it didn't have to be the way it was. - **Tracey McCaw, reflecting as a 12-year-old girl experiencing homelessness**



Deep Roots was founded by two girls, Laurie Smith and Tracey McCaw, who as twelve-year-old in 1988 were in yet another homeless shelter with their families. Only this time the shelter was Clairvaux Farm, and it was different. At the Farm, interaction was encouraged between the children experiencing homelessness and visiting youth mission trips from churches of all denominations. They played games together, worked together, and in the evenings after supper would gather and talk. It was in those conversations that the girls experienced something akin to an awakening, as they underwent a rebirth of their power to imagine.

It was through things as simple as realizing that doing well in school could lead to a summer job, then on perhaps to getting their own apartment... they visualized their inner strength to achieve, no longer seeing themselves as helpless victims of the mistakes of others. One realization led to another and they began to blossom, led by their young imaginations which were flowering in, of all places, a homeless community.

Fast forward to 2012. These two girls are young women, now with their own children, and no longer homeless. They were instrumental in founding “Deep Roots,” a new organization committed to ending homelessness in the lives of individual children. Its heart and soul was to be Rooted in their own Deep personal experience. When this new group took over the mission of Clairvaux Farm, the women insisted on doing far more than simply providing shelter, meals, and supporting services. They demanded that the program emphasize the Spiritual, equipping children and their families to visualize a new and vibrant future – evoking the same path out of homelessness they had discovered as young girls, and they proposed a three-fold course of action to achieve this:

1. Engage the children in a supporting community, encouraging a vibrant sense of belonging, including a lively interaction, sharing work, play and conversation with other youth from visiting church mission trips.
2. Undergird the children’s dreams for the future by establishing relationships with trained and vetted volunteer adult mentors who can offer practical guidance, tangible resources, and other help.
3. Inspire the children to imagine a new and welcoming world of opportunity through a supervised program of field-trip learning experiences involving role models from all walks of life – from business and community leaders to a member of congress. It could be something as simple as to see the ocean for the first time, or through an environmental hike to understand how important their own life is as an indispensable part of all creation.

The desire of two once homeless girls remains at the core of Deep Roots: “One Child at a Time” – changing the world by changing their inner world and permanently ending their homelessness.



Investing in Deep Roots is important not only for the future of homeless children, but also, for our own future world – as a beloved community, a thriving place for all children.

And, yes, dare I say, it is among the most sacred of all the investments we can make.

The path from homelessness to hope is here. Every family and every child who comes to Deep Roots is our neighbor. We're committed to help them get back on their feet. That's what good neighbors do!

Dear Friends of Deep Roots:

Thanks to the many donations, supplies, and hundreds of volunteer hours from our supporters, local businesses, and churches, we continue to do the Lord's work and open our hands to those in need.

As you know, Deep Roots' mission is to break the cycle of homelessness once and for all. We can only damage that cycle if we offer permanent solutions that begin with housing, coupled with supportive programming available for all families in need, especially those with young children.

Our founder, D. Carl Mazza, charged us with the responsibility to meet the needs of the homeless in our community by understanding the root causes and ending homelessness with one family and one child at a time. He also trusted us to be good stewards of our resources and your kind donations which we will.

The Deep Roots Board remains committed to making a real difference through new initiatives, strategic collaborations, and responsive efforts. We feel confident we can continue our excellent work and look for ways to become even more substantial for decades to come.

God Bless,

Don Henderson, Board Chair



Can you believe Christmas is just around the corner?

Last year local businesses and churches provided Christmas Gifts for 56 homeless families and 155 children.

If you would like to collect items for our children's

2022 Christmas Wish Lists

contact Jessica Stone:

volunteer@deeprootsinc.org

(410) 275-2194



Deuteronomy 15:11 "For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore, I command you, 'You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.'"



From Our Executive Director

Homelessness is one of the most troubling of all the issues facing our society today. Yet, while Deep Roots is not a faith-based organization, God has continued to bless us. We know those blessings result from all the prayers our supporters, churches, and mission groups offer.

God's calling is powerful and influential, and I have no doubt he brought me to Deep Roots as part of his overall plan. According to the Bible (especially Exodus 3-4), God takes the initiative in our relationship and leads us where he wants us to go.

Ola Boswell, Deep Roots previous Executive Director, felt the same way. After four years of service to Deep Roots and leading our organization through some troubling times, Ola felt God was leading her to other things. She thought she was part of God's plan when she came to Deep Roots and eventually retired last October. "I believe God brought me here," Ola said. "And I was listening to Him again, so I know it's time to say farewell," Ola admitted that even though she was executive director, she was not in charge. "Above all, I know it's under His wing. What better hands could it be in?" she said.

After arriving at Deep Roots, I realized that this must be something God was calling me to do, but I had no idea if that was true or not. Even though I was raised in a Christian family, I had no idea what it was like to have God tell me to do something. I was not even looking for a job at Deep Roots. I went to their website to volunteer and help feed homeless families for Thanksgiving. When I landed on their site, a prominent notice flashed that they were looking for an executive director. While it caught my eye, I immediately thought - I have no experience working with homeless families. Well, here I am, and eight months later, I have been immersed in the plight of homeless families and the horrible situation these wonderful children have to endure!

Supporting the homeless is a spiritual work of compassion and a beautiful way to serve Jesus and share his love with those in need. But, we all must work together and think outside the box. We do that, first, by changing the overall pervasive negative attitude towards the homeless. Remember, they are people, just like you and me. They are our neighbors, not numbers, nor criminals, and the children are just kids!

I know we have a lot more work to do, and I pray you will find a way in your heart to become involved with the Deep Roots community and help, no matter what or how small, as we take on this serious issue of homelessness. Jesus commanded us to love our neighbor, and we can do that by showing up in people's lives who need us most. After that, the rest will come naturally.

John Thompson

Buy a BRICK Impact a LIFE

Healing gardens are good for your soul and morale. They can improve mood and help with depression, and they have even been proven to increase our physical wellbeing.



Deep Roots is currently in the planning phase of the **Deep Roots Healing Garden** project. We envision four major sections to the garden with several smaller areas where our homeless families and their children can reflect, relax, and start healing their mind, body and soul while in this transitional stage of their lives.

The Central Patio Garden will serve as a space where families can socialize or take a class such as meditation and relaxation techniques, tai chi, yoga and other special events. Comfortable seating will be available so they can relax and enjoy the fresh air.

The Children's Treehouse Gathering Area will be a special area designed just for the children to relax, read a book or just spend some quiet time with their parent in a style just for them.

The Prayer Garden will be designed to offer our families a quiet retreat to re-collect and re-connect with God's creation, restore a sense of calm to their life in transition, and allow God to speak to their soul. It will be designed to respect the privacy and sanctity of the garden.

The Zen Meditation Garden will be designed with perfectly placed rocks to emphasize simplicity and structure. Meaning will be conveyed less through plants and more through rocks and gravel. This garden will serve as a meditative place, free from distractions and conveying a sense of infinity and emptiness. Our families can personally meditate or rake the sand as part of meditation or reflection with their children.

Tracey Lea McCaw Community Center

Central Patio Garden - A Social Family Area & Outdoor

raised planter with flowers

Children's Treehouse-gathering area

bench

Sitting area

Bench

Native grasses

Zen Meditation Garden

Herb garden

Prayer Garden

Deep Roots Family House

Please Support the

Deep Roots Healing Garden Project

You can impact the life of our homeless families and children while honoring a special event, a person or pet in your life with the purchase of a brick, a tree, a bush or bench which will be installed along the pathways throughout the garden. This provides a unique opportunity to pay tribute to someone's love of the community, church or memorializing loved ones.

You can also become a naming sponsor of one of our garden areas or even volunteer to plant a tree or work with us as we start building out the garden.

VISIT - www.deeproootsinc.org/healing for more information and supporting opportunities.

(410) 275-2194

Did you know....? That donating money to Deep Roots is as easy as shopping with **Amazon Smile**? Amazon donates 0.5% of your Amazon Smile purchases to Deep Roots when you shop at smile.amazon.com. Designate "Deep Roots Inc." as your charity of choice!

Please send checks to:
Deep Roots, Inc. P.O. Box 113
Earleville, MD 21919
or to donate online, please visit the Donate page on our website:
www.deeproootsinc.org

