



Interfaith Hospitality Network of the Main Line

An Affiliate of 
Ending Homelessness One Family at a Time.

March 20, 2020

Dear Community,

You may be asking yourself how is Interfaith Hospitality Network of the Main Line responding to the COVID-19 virus. Let me tell you about Jasmine:

“Defeated, Jasmine pushes her wobbly-wheeled clothing cart into the back supply room at Goodwill and punches out. Earlier this afternoon, the store manager made the announcement Jasmine had been hoping would not come – the store would be closed until further notice due to the COVID 19 virus. This job is her family’s only source of income and this isn’t the first blow Jasmine and her family have recently faced. Last week she received a message that her children’s schools would be closed for two weeks. This sent Jasmine scrambling, calling one childcare center after another to find coverage for 6-year-old Anna and 9-year-old Caleb so she could keep working. Every dollar she makes goes to pay basic living expenses and food – they are barely scraping by. If it weren’t for the free school breakfast and lunch for Anna and Caleb, they wouldn’t have enough to eat. And now that is also gone. As she walks the five blocks back to the IHN-ML Day Center, the fears of being out of work and the kids not having daily access to food overwhelm her. Her strong resolve finally cracks, the weight is too much to bear, and the tears of desperation flow... “I just want to make sure my kids are safe. I don’t want to be homeless forever,” Jasmine cries.

Jasmine’s experience is not the exception, it is an example of the families we are serving and the experiences we hear through the endless calls our staff has been answering over the last two weeks.

IHN-ML remains committed to helping families like Jasmine’s. While normally our network of partnering congregations host families overnight, we now must shelter all of our families at our Day Center in Norristown. Many costly adaptations have been made, and our needs continue as we work to ensure safe accommodations for our families. Meanwhile, we are responding to an unprecedented number of calls from panicked program graduates and community members, providing them with emotional counseling, connecting them to available resources for food, childcare, and basic needs, and helping them adapt to new routines. Many callers need immediate financial assistance to pay their phone bill, purchase daily necessities, and pay their rent. They are all asking us hard questions: “What do I do when this is over, and evictions can legally take place? I won’t be able to catch up on bills even if I return to work. I will be behind on all my bills.”



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We need your help now to keep vulnerable Montgomery County families safe and our doors open.

Please consider making a donation today.

- Your \$250 gift will cover increased water bills at the Day Center for one month as we shelter families in place – laundry can be washed, children can bathe, and spaces can be cleaned.
- Your \$500 gift will cover increased electricity bills at the Day Center for one month as we shelter families in place – the refrigerator will keep running, appliances will keep working, children can keep up with school through the Internet.
- Your \$1,000 gift will support our increased operating costs as staff works overtime and we shelter families in place at our Day Center.
- Your \$1,500 gift will help bridge the financial gap for families who have lost a job.

IHN-ML has been overwhelmed with emails and calls of encouragement from our caring friends and neighbors. Those that have sent supplies, we say thank you. We know this community is compassionate and can mobilize to help impact the lives of families like Jasmine.

Your gift can be mailed to: IHN-ML 1449 DeKalb Street, Norristown, PA 19401 or you can donate on line at www.IHNcares.org by clicking on the donate button.

This is a moment in history, yet there remains a bigger picture that we must not lose sight of – our community needs you. Your philanthropic support will truly change lives.

Stay well, stay safe, as we join together to meet today's challenges.

Allegra Cressman
Executive Director