As a matter of practice, we stay in touch with our families for up to a year after they depart from the program. We recently checked in with Carmen and her daughter, Jamilah, who stayed at the Sixth Street Shelter last year along with Carmen’s four other children. From the moment they arrived at the shelter, it was clear that they wanted to take advantage of all the resources we had to offer in order to set themselves up for success. They worked incredibly hard to keep up with their responsibilities in the program while Carmen went to work and her kids went to school. All of their efforts paid off when they were able to save money and move into a place of their own last December.

Jamilah, in particular, has demonstrated a remarkable capacity for resilience. Despite the stress of homelessness, and even when she, her mother and her siblings were sharing a hotel room, she kept her grades up. “Everything was much better when we came to the shelter,” Jamilah shared. “We had space to spread out in our apartment, and I could focus better on my school work.” She said that keeping her dreams about the future in mind helped to get her through the hard times. “I’ve wanted to be a veterinarian since I was 8 years old, when I spent a summer on a farm.” Jamilah’s mother and siblings share her love of animals and they are happy to have reunited with their two dogs, both of which had to stay with friends while they were at the shelter.

As the oldest, Jamilah is setting a wonderful example for her four siblings. Her diligence in school has meant that she can take her pick of six colleges this fall. “I think it will be either Delaware Valley or Penn State,” she said. Both schools have excellent veterinary programs. Jamilah plans to minor in Business and open her own veterinary practice. When asked about the future, she is clearly excited about her goals. “My mother inspires me to keep going. She worked so hard when we were struggling, and it makes me want to do well.” We are so grateful to be a part of Jamilah’s success and wish her and her family all the best as they continue on their journey.
We were touched to receive a gift from an anonymous donor a few months ago in support of our transitional housing program. It was her late mother’s wish that 20% of the inheritance left to her children be used to support organizations that serve the least advantaged. The donor was moved to give to our program and shared a heartfelt message with us, taken from her mother’s memorial service:

“The beautiful thing about this generosity is that as Mom became less mobile, with lots more time sitting and thinking, her mind would often go to how she might share some of her money with someone not as well off or someone maybe facing hard times of a different sort (always with loving thoughts and never with any judgment about them or their situation). It was actually just four years ago (while recuperating from a hospitalization) that she said to me, ‘I’ve been thinking…’ (an often prelude of Mom’s) and she went on to say she had decided on five people she believed could really benefit from a boost in spirit, as well as a monetary gift…would I send each a note from her, along with a check? Her joy in thinking about and then doing this was her God of love flowing through her grateful heart.”

This caring mother’s generosity has continued through her children in a wonderful way. The positive effect on our families is beyond measure.

DONOR SPOTLIGHT: A MOTHER’S LEGACY

Recently our Ferry Street Apartments Counselor, Roslyn, attended a graduation for two of her residents, Brianna and Felicia. On the big day, they were clearly proud to have completed Penn State Lehigh Valley’s Licensed Practical Nurse Program. The two found each other during their respective stays and immediately struck up a friendship, helping each other with homework and childcare in the months leading up to graduation. Both felt that they would not have been able to do it without each other and our transitional housing program.

What is a transitional housing program? At Ferry Street Apartments in Easton and Turner Street Apartments in Allentown, we address family needs through a more in-depth plan that focuses on long-term solutions and results in lasting, positive change. To qualify, participants must be pursuing some kind of educational or vocational training program. For example, ESL classes, GED classes, community college, or university. The program is not for everyone, applicants are screened prior to acceptance to make sure they are committed to success. Felicia and Brianna had the deck stacked against them in many ways. Although they had their counselor available to offer support and they did not have to worry about a place to live, these women had to work hard to meet the demands of school, work and parenthood during their stay. Without a network of family and friends, they leaned on each other for support. We are so proud of the way that they helped each other succeed. Brianna and Felicia have now started new jobs and they both plan to continue their education (and friendship) in the future.
In honor of Dr. King, we were joined by three volunteer groups: Quakertown High School, The Swain School and PA Cyber. Collectively, they contributed more than 60 hours of volunteer time in just one day!

**Gardening Season** - The Master Gardeners are gearing up for spring, with lots of plans for our gardens. Let us know if you would like to be added to the work schedule.
YOUR DONATION MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE!
Interested in providing a monetary gift to the shelter? Read on for more information about how you can support our program.

MATCHING GIFTS - Go to https://doublethedonation.com to find out if your employer will match your donation.

PLANNED GIVING - Estate Planning and Charitable Gift Annuities are long-term options for those thinking about sustaining a legacy after they are gone. Sixth Street Shelter can recommend a broker for advice on these options.

CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP - We are offering a competitive package of benefits to qualifying sponsors.

AMAZON SMILE - go to https://smile.amazon.com/ and choose Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley to have .5% of the total of your Amazon purchases donated to our organization.

FACEBOOK FUNDRAISER - Invite friends to donate for your birthday, anniversary or in honor of someone else.

IN-KIND GIFTS - a list of items that we need at the shelter can be found at http://sixthstreetshelter.caclv.org under “Get Involved”.

STOCK DONATIONS - This option allows you to give more and could offer additional tax benefits for those who qualify.

NEW RED BRICK SOCIETY - any donor giving $1,000 or more to the shelter will be counted among our special Red Brick Society and receive a specially handmade pin as recognition.

Please contact Heather Pritchard at hpritchard@caclv.org if you are interested in finding out more about any of these options, or if you have some fundraising suggestions of your own- we’d love to hear from you!

SIXTH STREET SHELTER STAFF
Kristine Blasco, Director
Maria Ares, Office Administrator
Megan Brehm, Turner Street Apartments Counselor
Giselle Garcia, Shelter Counselor
Roslyn Kuba, Ferry Street Apartments Counselor
Heather Pritchard, Development and Volunteer Coordinator
Dave Queen, Shelter Counselor
Caretakers: Maritza Elmi, Faye Quarterman, Telia Smith

WE ACCEPT
New and Gently Used:
Household items | Microwaveable dishware | Plates, bowls, cups, glasses | Plastic utensils and dishes for children | Small kitchen appliances | Utensils | Pots and pans

New ONLY: Towels | Pillows | Twin sheet sets | Blankets or comforters | Non-perishable food | Baby supplies (wipes & diapers - especially size 5) | Mops | Brooms & dust pans | Tall kitchen trash cans | Tall kitchen trash bags - 13 gallon size | Toiletries | Cleaning supplies

Sixth Street Shelter
219 North Sixth Street
Allentown, PA 18102
610.435.1490
SixthStreetShelter.caclv.org

The Sixth Street Shelter is a program of Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley (CACLV). CACLV is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, contributions to which are tax deductible to the fullest extent permitted by law. The official registration and financial information of CACLV may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.