



Third Street Alliance for Women & Children provides a safe and healthy space for women, children, and families to live, learn, and thrive.

A Passion For Caring

Spring 2018

Mahpareh Fakhraie switched career paths a few times before landing in senior care 19 years ago.

With a degree in chemistry, Mahpareh didn't foresee herself working with an aging population. Along the way, she worked as a teacher and accountant. Her first experience in adult day care was working at the YWCA in Bethlehem.

Mahpareh was inspired to work with seniors after watching her parents care for her grandparents and great-grandparents.

"It was in my heart to work with the aging population," she said.

When she started on the path of caring for seniors, for the first few months Mahpareh was moved to tears each day over how Alzheimer's and dementia could take a person's life from them. After a few months she stopped crying, and realized that she made each day brighter for those she served. Those tears turned into a smile, because she was able to bring them happiness.

For 11 years, Mahpareh's caring has been the heart in the Sharing the Caring program at Third Street Alliance. She strived to bring the best possible care to her clients. As director of Sharing the Caring, Mahpareh's vision for the adult day care program was to provide high quality services and an interactive place where seniors with Alzheimer's, dementia and other disabilities could spend their days.

Over the years the program has had many visitors, such as musicians and therapy dogs, and many events, including Senior Prom. Mahpareh said she brought the idea from the YWCA and it was a success for the STC program.

"They provided good bonding times between the caregivers and the clients. They loved it," she said.

On June 30, after 33 years of service, Sharing the Caring will close.

Mahpareh's goal each day was to serve each client with dignity, respect and love. Many times, if a caregiver was having problems with anything related to caring for their loved one, Mahpareh assisted them in finding the resources or answer, often times going above and beyond what the clients families expected.

"If you don't have a heart, this job is not for you," she said. *"I know I have impacted them, and brought happiness to them. If they are happy, I am happy."*



Mahpareh Fakhraie, Director of Sharing the Caring.

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A Note From the Executive Director's Desk

Honoring Sharing the Caring

In reflecting on the impact that our Adult Day Service program has had, a quote by Ralph Waldo Emerson comes to mind: "...To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded."

Mahpareh, Yvonne, Lori, Brenda and other staff members have made the lives of our clients, their families and caregivers easier, richer and more vibrant. Their selflessness, compassion and care have meant so much to so many families and we owe them a huge debt of gratitude for their service.

The joy they spread has been felt by clients and care givers, and also by hundreds of young children from our Learning Center who visited the Adult Day Program on a weekly basis.

The smiles, the laughter, and the learning enriched the lives of elderly, children, staff, volunteers and families.

Launched in 1985, our adult day program has cared for hundreds of seniors, constantly striving to bring the most innovative ideas to support families who were dealing with the challenges of aging in place. The program provided a nurturing and safe environment to seniors and respite and comfort for caregivers.

It has been our honor to serve these families for over 30 years and it is with great sorrow that we bring this program to a close. While these services will end, we will carry with us the example set by the program staff: professionalism, compassion and joy.

Thank you, ladies. Your caring has transformed many lives and you will be greatly missed!

A Special Message From the Board

Over the past several years, the Adult Day Services program offered at Third Street Alliance has been struggling to operate without resulting in annual budget deficits. In 2014, the Board of Directors initiated an in-depth examination to understand the financial sustainability of this program.

At that time, the Board agreed to extend the program for a period of two years, with the hope that we could develop a model that would ensure financial sustainability for this program.

Unfortunately, we have not been able to achieve that goal, as the program has been unable to maintain enrollments required to balance the budget. In addition, we continue to experience declines in the level of government funding designated for adult day care programs including funds contracted through Northampton County's Agency on Aging and the Pennsylvania Waiver Program.

What's more, as the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania transitions to Community Health Choices (a mandatory managed care model for state funded adult day services) we recognized we are not in a position to manage the administration of a managed care program.

For these reasons, in March 2018, Third Street Alliance Board of Directors announced the closing of our Adult Day Services program as of June 30, 2018.

A Lifetime of Caring For Others

Sharing the Caring Staff Reflect on Time at TSA

If you add up the number of years of experience that staff of Sharing the Caring have, it totals about the average age of their clients: 86.

Like the name of the program, STC staff have demonstrated their dedication to providing quality and loving care to their clients.

“Not a day goes by that I don’t laugh,” says Yvonne Toth, Activities Coordinator for Sharing the Caring. *“This became like a second family for the seniors. We and the seniors have laughed and cried together over the years and they have done the same with each other. It was a great support system for them that they had others who they could relate to.”*

Yvonne has always worked with people in some capacity, starting as a teenager, volunteering with the American Red Cross and then the Northampton County Blind Association, eventually becoming an assistant to the activities coordinator at a nursing home. In her role as activities coordinator of Sharing the Caring, Yvonne has invited many community groups and businesses into STC to enrich the lives of the seniors including yoga studios, henna artists, martial arts studios, butterfly experts and therapy dogs.

“I’m comfortable working with people. No matter what I do, I’ll work with people,” Yvonne said.

With 37 years experience working with seniors, Lori Klimko has enjoyed working in STC for the past five years. Lori has been inventive, creating impromptu games for the seniors to play with boxes, balls, pool noodles and other objects.

“I enjoy working with the population, getting to know them, building a relationship with them and learning what they need,” she said. *“I respect the elderly, and I truly believe that how you treat older people will be how you are treated.”*

Brenda Walker joined the team about a year ago after working in hospice care. After moving to the area for her husband’s job, Brenda began as a volunteer in STC and soon was welcomed as staff. Brenda’s knowledge of Spanish has been helpful in conversing with bi-lingual clients who would at

times forget to speak English.

While there are many happy memories, working with a senior population is difficult, especially when dealing with sickness or the death of a client. That’s when Yvonne, Lori and Brenda have learned to rely on each other for support and they learn to leave anything negative outside of the center.

“The clients know when you’re not 100 percent there. They see it on your face, and they ask about it,” Yvonne said.

Through it all, the staff has shown their clients respect. They know they are caring for the Greatest Generation, and they have affection for each of the seniors in their care.

“There can often be little dignity in growing older; many seniors suffer a lot of losses including their health, mental abilities, life-long friends and sometimes even their children. It’s important to help them feel dignified,” Yvonne said. *“No one thinks about it, but if you’re lucky, you will be old, too.”*



Brenda, right, sits and talks with former STC client Maria.



Lori sits and plays an inventive game with Ed. Lori has been serving seniors for 31 years, with 5 years at STC.

Bistro Breaks Records

The Simon Mansion provided a stunning backdrop to the Bistro, Springtime in Paris. Transformed from a Victorian mansion into the streets of Paris, guests enjoyed French-inspired food and had the opportunity to support Third Street Alliance through bidding on silent, live and fund-a-need auctions. Earl the Accordionist greeted guests as they arrived at the mansion and other music for cocktail hour and dinner was provided by the jazz group the Chris Cummings Trio.

Led by second-year committee co-chairs, Leslie Alfieri and Cathy McCormick, The Bistro committee organized an event that raised more than \$62,000, exceeding past events, including \$11,000 in fund-a-need support of homeless services. Established by chef and caterer Elizabeth

Mulrine, the Bistro was born out of her desire to assist the women and children needing the services provided by Third Street Alliance. Each year Elizabeth uses her talents to provide an abundance of gourmet cuisine, many dishes which are eagerly anticipated by our guests.

The gym was beautifully transformed by Dave McCormack and Dru Thomas into a spring Paris theme, complete with Eiffel Tower and dogwood branches. Bo Koltnow of 69 News led the program as Master of Ceremonies while auctioneer Ray Hartzell lent his talents as auctioneer in the live and fund-a-need auctions.

Inspiring support for the fund-a-need auction, Sandee shared her story of becoming the caretaker of her mother at an early age and other challenges and poor choices, which resulted in years of emotional and drug abuse. She spoke of the support and assistance she received at TSA.

Photos of the Bistro can be found on our website, thirdstreetalliance.org/bistro. Thank you to all of our guests, sponsors, auction item donors, our Bistro committee members, volunteers and all those who helped to make the Bistro a success.

To be part of the 2019 Bistro, contact Kim Rose at krose@thirdstreetalliance.org to discuss opportunities based on your interests and talents.

Thank you for your generosity and making this year's Bistro a successful evening of fundraising.



The Bistro sold out with more than 200 attendees for the first time in its history.

Third Street Alliance for Women & Children

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To receive the newsletter electronically, please contact londrusek@thirdstreetalliance.org. Visit our website to find an enhanced version of the newsletter at www.thirdstreetalliance.org/newsletters-reports.

April was National Volunteer Month

Thank you to all those who volunteer their time and talents to Third Street Alliance!
You truly make a difference at the Mansion With A Mission.



STC holds a 'special place in our hearts'

"We were blessed to have a loving and supportive mother. She was our biggest cheerleader. But as time went on we started to notice subtle changes. My siblings and I thought she was losing her hearing, but we soon discovered she was dealing with the onset of dementia.

"Our roles quickly reversed and I was no longer just her daughter; I was her caretaker. I started working at Third Street Alliance and soon after enrolled our mom into Sharing the Caring. The program's title is so appropriate – because they assisted my family in caring for our precious mom.

"Mommy thought she was going to school every day and she was so excited to see her friends. On our drives home she would tell me about lunch, critique the cook's culinary skills, giggle about play dates with the children and brag about her master pieces she made during art. She belly laughed so much as she told us about her day at Sharing the Caring.

"The staff not only gave me peace as I worked, but they gave all of us something that was fading so quickly, they gave us our mom back.

"Mommy is no longer with us, but STC will always have a special place in our hearts. Navigating the treacherous waters of Alzheimer's is difficult, confusing, frustrating and scary. But the amazing staff stood close by and rode the waves with us. The Cookley/Thomas Family will always be grateful for not only caring for our mom, but for loving her as well." -Janice Thomas, Director of Homeless Services



Janice's mother shows off a craft project she completed during an art lesson in Sharing the Caring.



You're Invited!

School-Aged Summer Art Festival

August 24

Time: TBA

Join us to celebrate the end of summer with The Learning Center summer students art festival. Students will display their work inspired by field trips, visitors and activities from the summer months.

All are welcome to attend this free event.

For more event information,
visit www.thirdstreetalliance.org/events