



Laurel House Summer Newsletter

Dear Friends,

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These last three months have been incredibly challenging, seeing the devastating effects that the COVID-19 crisis has had on our nation, community, and clients. We are grateful to have been able to help our clients stay safe and provide the resources they needed during this time. As Montgomery County enters into a new safety phase, Laurel House will continue to monitor the situation and do our best to maintain the safety of our staff, clients, volunteers, and community. Throughout the last few months, we have maintained all of our supportive services and programs through increased safety measures and social distancing.

To ensure that anyone who seeks or currently receives counseling services from Laurel House had access to crisis, group, and individual counseling sessions, we implemented telehealth services using a virtual platform as well as phone & text options. Our 24-Hour confidential hotline has continued to be available, offering safety planning, resource referral, and support services. Our Advocates have assisted the families in our Transitional Housing units with their children's virtual learning and school assignments. Due to safety measures, we have not been able to accept new clients at our shelter. However, we have been able to make safe hotel accommodations for them and their children, with shelter staff members continuing to provide supportive services to these families.

The Domestic Abuse Response Team (DART) Advocates have been working remotely and continued to take calls 24/7, providing safety planning, Protection From Abuse assistance, and legal advocacy, as well as emotional support by phone and text. They have also been dropping off needed supplies several times each week to clients through no contact measures. Our Attorney and Paralegal were also working remotely with both current clients and new referrals. The Community Educators have hosted virtual trainings for middle schools, high schools, and colleges on safe dating and friendship fundamentals.

Thank you for supporting us throughout this difficult time as we work to serve our clients. I hope you and your loved ones are staying safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Beth Sturman
Executive Director

Nicole's Place Virtual Fun Run a Success!

Nicole's Place held its Annual Fun Run virtually on June 13th. Due to safety precautions, participants were encouraged to run or walk their 5k at locations of their choice this year while maintaining social distancing.

There were 68 people who participated virtually and shared pictures of themselves on social media. It was a great success and helped us raise just over **\$1,300!**

Thank you to everyone who came out and joined us virtually to raise money for our satellite office in Huntingdon Valley.



Laurel House Supports the LGBTQ Community

In honor of June being Pride Month, Laurel House has added new information to our website explaining the supportive services we offer to the LGBTQ community.

Sadly, members of the LGBTQ community often suffer in silence as their abuse is not talked about as much as heterosexual domestic abuse. To help combat this problem, we offer the same supportive services and programs to these victims as we do to all of our clients. Our confidential hotline is available 24/7 to help all victims of domestic abuse.

While we aren't able to offer our emergency shelter to men at this time, we do provide alternative safe haven arrangements for male victims of domestic abuse. We are excited to announce that we have acquired a new building for our emergency shelter, with plans to renovate it over the next several months. Once it is open, it will allow Laurel House to accommodate male, female, and non-gender conforming individuals who are in need of safe shelter all within one location. Go to www.laurel-house.org to learn more.

Virtual Giving Gala Far Exceeds Goal!

Thank you to everyone who participated in our first Virtual Giving Gala Auction! Although we had to hold our Annual Silent Auction virtually this year due to the COVID-19 crisis, that didn't stop it from being a huge success!

The Virtual Giving Gala Auction was held June 8th-14th and allowed for general donations, Bid for a Cause donations, and of course, auction items! The items ranged from liquor packages, to museum memberships, restaurant gift cards, fitness class certificates, and much more.

We initially hoped to raise \$20,000 but ended up raising over **\$30,000** thanks to the generosity of our supporters!



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Laurel House turns 40!



Laurel House recently celebrated its 40th birthday! It was on May 28th, 1980 that our emergency shelter first opened its doors, offering safe shelter to the women and children who were fleeing their abusive homes. What began as an emergency shelter and hotline has grown over the last 40 years to become a comprehensive domestic violence agency.

We will be celebrating this momentous occasion all year long by sharing testimonials from our volunteers, staff, clients, and supporters.

Visit us at www.laurel-house.org/anniversary to learn about our 40 years of history and more!

Cut It Out Virtual Training



During these last few months of being in quarantine, Laurel House has been working with salon owners, stylists, and beauty professionals to offer *Cut It Out: Salons Against Domestic Abuse®*.

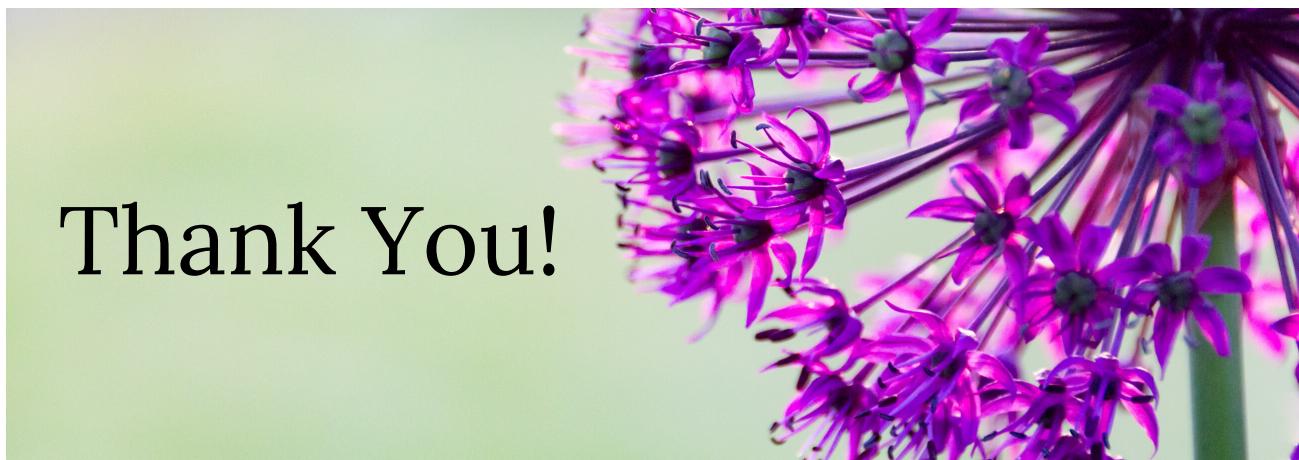
This free, virtual training helps to enhance the professionals' response to clients and coworkers who are experiencing domestic violence. Through this training, we have been able to reach a wide audience in Montgomery County, and even provided a training for the national chain, **Sport Clips!** This event was live-streamed over Facebook and viewed nearly 2,000 times!

We are happy to be able to offer this important training to help those who work in the beauty industry as they begin returning to work.



Laurel's Loft & Marian's Attic are now open!

Our two thrift shops, Laurel's Loft in Lansdale and Marian's Attic in King of Prussia, are now open! Both shops have been closed since mid-March due to the COVID-19 crisis, but are now re-opening with reduced hours and new donation guidelines. Customers will be required to wear face masks and maintain social distancing guidelines while shopping. Both Marian's Attic and Laurel's Loft will be following all of the recommendations made by the Centers for Disease Control and the Pennsylvania State Health Department. Learn more information at www.laurel-house.org and come pay the shops a visit!



We would like to say thank you to all of our amazing supporters! Since asking for your help in mid-March, we have been able to give out over **\$17,000** worth of gift cards to our clients and their families! We have also received countless pantry items, toiletries, children's activities, face masks, cleaning products, meal deliveries from local restaurants, and so much more! All of these generous donations (some of them shown below!) have been dispersed to our clients to assist them and their families during this difficult time. None of this would have been possible without your support. Thank you so much!



Mark Your Calendar: Upcoming Events



Our Annual Walk a Mile In Her Shoes®, an International Men's March Against Rape, Sexual Assault, and Gender Violence, will be held virtually on **Saturday, September 12th**. We can't wait to see all of you in your red high heels! Go to www.laurel-house.org/events for more information.



Due to the continuing public health concerns, our 5K DASH Against Domestic Violence will be held virtually this Fall. We will have more details coming soon on the changes to this popular event. Stay tuned!



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