



LASTING FREEDOM

Successful former client says her life started at Bethany House

Quietly crying on a park bench, Barako felt hopeless, scared, and alone. A woman slowly walked up to Barako and asked her what was wrong. “I have problems,” said Barako. The woman pulled a piece of paper out of her purse and wrote down the phone number of Bethany House. The woman instructed Barako to call the number for help.

One week later, Barako was sitting in the office for an intake interview to enter the Bethany House program. One month after meeting the woman in the park, Barako was moving into a Bethany House shelter with her children.

After seven years of abuse from her husband, Barako had fallen into depression and felt she had nothing to offer to anyone.

“My ex-husband made me so scared of the police about my immigration [status] that I didn’t drive for seven years,” Barako said. “My life started the day I arrived at Bethany House.”

The moment Barako entered the shelter, the staff member told her the shelter was her house.

“Bethany House gave me a home,” Barako said. “They gave me so many things looking back.”

With the support of Bethany House, Barako started taking driving lessons.

“I couldn’t drive because I was scared, but Bethany House paid for my lessons,” Barako said. “I have confidence to drive because of Bethany House.”

During Barako’s stay at Bethany House, she started to feel less and less afraid.

“I was so scared when I arrived,” Barako said. “But I left feeling very good.”

Through counseling, Barako was able to process through the hurt and confusion deep inside herself.

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Bethany House of Northern Virginia is a non-profit, faith-based organization serving women and children who are homeless and destitute as a result of domestic violence.

Our CFC Code is 89071. Our United Way and CVC Code is 8268.

LASTING FREEDOM: *Client says life started at Bethany House*

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Photo Illustration

"I had so much guiltiness inside me and I was empty inside," Barako said. "Now I have my self-confidence back. I am free from shame and guiltiness."

Bethany House helped Barako restore her life so she could invest in her children.

I can see my future with my kids doing good things," Barako said. "My daughter is going to college. If I didn't have Bethany House I don't know where I'd be or where my kids would be."

"The roots of my success are from Bethany House. Bethany House is family to me. I always come back because that's where my life started."

- Barako, Former Bethany House Client

For the past several years, Barako has been working full-time and even started her own business on the side.

"The roots of my success are from Bethany House," Barako said. "Bethany House is family to me. I always come back because that's where my life started."

For Barako and her children, Bethany House is a sweet chapter in their lives.

"I'm so grateful that I came to Bethany House," Barako said. "Bethany House taught me anything is possible when trusting God."

Individuals who support Bethany House are still important to Barako.

"Women like me who are abused don't know where to go, but Bethany House opened the door for me to start my life," Barako said. "They gave me a chance and because of [donors] we are now where we are."

Barako has come far from her day years ago crying on a bench in a park. Yet all it took was one person to notice her and hand her a phone number to the Bethany House Helpline. What a difference one person made in the life of Barako and her family.

"She was my angel," Barako said.

A WORD FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

My goodness, we have moved through spring so quickly this year! We went from shoveling snow right into 80-degree weather. That same quick pace is seen in our shelters, too, where, for example, the desire for a job is suddenly met or a court case finally concludes.

In this economy, finding a job has been challenging, but we are seeing hope. **Two of our beautiful women recently found jobs, and two more finished vocational training that will lead to in-demand careers.**

One of the areas that we continue to struggle with is transportation. Finding a job is only half the battle – you also need a way to get to the job and home again.

If you are in the market for a new car, **will you consider donating your used car to Bethany House?** These cars are donated to our clients at no cost, and it is a tremendous help to them as they struggle toward healing and independence. The car must be able to pass inspection, but that's about the only limitation we have.

If you are able to provide a monetary contribution, as well, a return envelope is included with this newsletter. Thank you for your generosity and support of our clients. **We could not "be" Bethany House without you.**



Catherine Hassinger,
BHNV Executive Director

Peeking into the lives of staff

Yolanda Wingate: *Sharing life with families*



Yolanda Wingate, BHNV Staff

Fleeing from an abusive situation with her toddler, Yolanda felt like a kindergartener leaving the comfort of home to go to the first day of school. As her savings dwindled and her due date to give birth drew closer, she had no friends or family to turn to because she had left everything behind. Yet God assured her He would take care of her no matter what—and He did.

1) What brought you to Bethany House?

I was in a job training program looking for employment and was instantly drawn to Bethany House when they said it was a resource to women and children of domestic violence. I knew it would be easy to humble myself because I've been there—unsafe, unsure, without family, and completely starting over.

2) What does Bethany House mean to you?

Opportunity. How many jobs can I have that I can establish a sense of work and family? It's okay to pray at work and ask my co-workers to pray for me. I can still be silly me, but I can be me.

3) What is your role as a House Manager?

I manage four families at once, but it is more than managing a house. It's not just about what needs to be accomplished, but making sure their heart is right before they leave. I try to make everyone feel like family.

4) Why did you choose to work at Bethany House?

It suited me. I could give as much of my best as I could and it fit what I was looking for. I treat it as more than a job, but go above and beyond. I offer my time, energy, and laughter to help that person get through the next step. They know I've been there and dealt with it.

6) What do you hope to be doing 5 years from now?

Affiliated with Bethany House in some way, but spending lots of time counseling youth. We need to prevent domestic violence from happening. I want to focus on middle and high school age youth.

7) What is your most memorable experience working as a House Manager?

The day a client came to me and said she'd been in a lot of shelters, but this one feels like home. Her children told her how happy they were and wanted to know if they were staying. I almost cried because that was my goal—to make it not feel like a shelter.



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MOTHERS PAMPERED



Noah Shunfenthal

For most women, a day of pampering is a way to treat yourself. For the women at our shelters, they were reminded others care about them.

Often women experiencing domestic violence are isolated from the outside world and do not think others care about their pain and situation.

The Duffy House and Burke United Methodist Church partnered with Bethany House to provide a day of pampering to the women last month.

The women received free massages, manicures, pedicures, facials, make-up application, business attire, relaxation sessions, spiritual counseling, lunch, and physical therapy consultations.

The children spent the day playing games and engaging in fun activities with other children while their mothers relaxed.

A day to relax and have someone treat them was welcomed, but unexpected.

"I haven't had someone take care of me in a really long time," said a Bethany House client.

The opportunity to spend time with other women, away from their children allowed the women to recharge.

"I feel lovely!" said an aftercare client after receiving some of the pampering services.

5 WAYS TO HELP THIS SUMMER

You can make a difference by purchasing:

- 1) Gift cards to grocery stores (\$25 or more)
- 2) Rice cookers
- 3) Dishware sets
- 4) Toilet paper
- 5) Household cleaners



"For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me."

- Matthew 25: 35, 36

MOVING TOWARD HEALTHIER LIFESTYLES

By: M. Kornbau & J. Wassermann

Many homeless women and children who are victims of domestic violence lack the nutritional and financial resources to buy healthy foods. This population often suffers from food insecurity resulting in unhealthy eating behaviors due to limited resources.

“Food can be expensive, and if we don't plan well we might only have enough money at the end of the week for cheap, unhealthy foods —like the 99 cent value menu,” said Heather Katcher, a nutritionist with a doctorate from Pennsylvania State University. “Budgeting helps to ensure that we have the money available for healthy foods at all meals.”

Dr. Katcher has prior experience teaching nutrition, providing educational cooking demonstrations, and designing and implementing healthy diets for individuals.

“I hope that after the program the women will be more conscious of how their food choices affect their health and the health of their children.”

- Heather Katcher, Nutritionist

Bethany House developed a nutrition education program to improve clients' knowledge of nutrition and assist them in food budgeting. Designed by a team of Public Health graduate students with input from Dr. Katcher, the program comprises two hour and a half sessions.

BHNV residents will learn proper nutrition and its correlation with favorable health outcomes. They will practice meal planning and budgeting, and participate in cooking demonstrations.

Individual nutritional counseling will be provided as needed. Children will receive instruction focusing upon the USDA food pyramid. Adult participants will receive a “tool kit” – including recipes and tips for healthy eating and food budgeting.

“I hope that after the program the women will be more conscious of how their food choices affect their health and the health of their children,” Dr. Katcher said.

BHNV's nutrition program should mitigate the food insecurity clients confront. By engaging children and parents, the program will reinforce healthy eating behaviors among families.

After leaving BHNV, clients will continue practicing their new skills, improving their health status and reducing their risk for chronic disease.

At the conclusion of the program, participants will:

- Articulate the relationship between unhealthy eating and poor health outcomes
- Interpret nutrition labels and identify healthy foods
- Practice meal planning and food budgeting using grocery store promotions
- Children will make food choices based on the USDA food pyramid

Ongoing feedback from participants, volunteers, and staff will guide the evolution of the program.



Photo Illustration

DRINK TEA TO RAISE FUNDS

This summer you can drink tea and raise money for Bethany House at the same time!

Afternoon Tea on the Hill interviews a speaker on an important issue while supporting a good cause. Current speaker topics include:

- *Why a faith based not on good works leads us to do good*
- *What is manhood?*
- *How music points to our need for something outside ourselves*
- *How Christian theology addresses dietary choices*
- *Living with and caring for someone with chronic pain*

The teas are held on weekend afternoons from 3-5pm for \$25. For more information visit:

www.teaonthehill.com