

UPDate



We are running out of space at the Family House and need to raise \$200,000 for a renovation project to welcome more transplant families home.

The Family House is an important place for transplant families far away from home, especially during the holidays. We understand how crucial it is to visit loved ones in the hospital and to be by their sides, and to have a safe place to return to after long, difficult days. We are proud to be a "home away from home" for transplant patients and their families—families like Norma's.

"I don't know anyone in Philadelphia," Norma says. She and her family live over three hours away in the Bronx. "But from the moment I walked into the Family House, I received nothing but smiles. Everyone here is so helpful, friendly, and patient...I can't say enough. I don't know what we would've done without this place."

Norma's six children have been in and out of the House to take care of and spend time with her as she recovers from a double lung transplant. Her son, Deon, says: "It's nice to have a place like this to take care of my mom while adjusting to a new routine of helping her with her medication. I used to sleep at the hospital with her

and those were some uncomfortable days. It's reassuring to know that [we all] have a safe place to come to while going through this."

WE WANT TO HELP MORE FAMILIES LIKE NORMA'S, but we need more space for them to stay.

When our doors opened in 2011, we made a promise to never turn a family away because they could not afford our nightly fee—and thanks to generous people like you, we are proud to have kept that promise. However, many nights the Family House is at full capacity and we have been sending families away at an alarming rate because we do not have rooms available for them.

This year alone, we've had to send transplant families away over 500 times. This is a problem and we need your help. **WILL YOU SUPPORT OUR "ROOM FOR MORE" CAMPAIGN TO HELP PROVIDE MORE FAMILIES A COMFORTING PLACE TO CALL "HOME?"**continued on Family House page 2

Sending families away is something we never want to do because we know that means there are transplant families feeling anxious about how they'll afford to stay in a hotel, concerned about how they will be able to take care of their loved ones, nervous about navigating through busy Philadelphia, unsure where to find a hot meal, and perhaps alone because there is no one to talk to who can relate to their worries or experiences.

"When families are forced to stay at a local hotel because of our heightened occupancy levels, they become isolated and alone and miss out on those important networks that help to carry them on their journey," our social worker, Talia, says. "They're left feeling anxious, confused, and frustrated, and sometimes they don't know how to find the resources they need on their own."

Ken, a past Family House guest, agrees: "To be turned away is difficult," he says. Ken stayed at the Family House on and off for three months in 2015 while his wife. Denise, awaited a liver transplant in the hospital. Now, they make a 125 mile trip from their home in central Pennsylvania for Denise's follow-up appointments, hoping the Family House has a room available for them.

"We always try to find a hotel that allows us to cancel our reservation at the last minute in case there is a room available for us at the Family House, but it can be very stressful and time consuming." Denise adds. "There aren't a lot of options and they are always more expensive. When we are turned away, we have to spend more money on a place to stay and finding a meal, and we don't get that comforting atmosphere the House provides."

Ken also adds: "We also remember what is was like before [my wife's] transplant, and we felt so comforted having a place to go and people to talk to."

"I wonder how [either of us] would have gotten through this without this place," Denise says. "This is our home away from home."

We want to continue helping people like Norma, Ken, and Denise, but we can't house guests where we don't have rooms.

WE NEED YOUR HELP.

You stand with us in our mission to be a "home away from home" for transplant families, and with your continued and generous support, we can find room for more families in need.

We need to raise \$200,000 this holiday season to convert already existing space here at the House into at least two new guest rooms and additional dining space, allowing us to welcome many more families home to a place of



will provide 730 more room nights per year!

Our transplant families rely on all of us for support on this difficult, uncertain journey. When you give a gift to our "Room for More" campaign, you will be doing more than just helping us create at least two new guest rooms and more dining space. You'll also be giving the gift of the services we provide to more families, including access to our full-service kitchen and pantry, safe lodging to return to at night, transportation to and from the hospital, a licensed social worker with a specialty in transplantation, and other families who are also on the transplant journey. You'll be giving them peace of mind.

The Family House serves all eight transplant centers in and around Philadelphia. That means there are always families like Norma's and Ken and Denise's calling to ask:

Does the Family House have room for us?

We want to say yes as often as possible, and with your support, we can welcome more transplant families home.

"What a gift to stay here," Norma says. "This is such a great place to heal."

To make a contribution to our "ROOM FOR MORE" CAMPAIGN, please use the enclosed envelope or visit GiftofLifeFamilyHouse.org.

Gifts postmarked by December 31st are tax-deductible in 2018.

UNDRAISING ON FACEBOOK is easy, effective, Left: Celine Brunetti, Family House Guest Services Fellow with her father, Michael Brunetti With his son Jonathan

to support the Family House right from your own Facebook page?

We've seen an overwhelming increase in the amount of Facebook fundraisers our community has been hosting for the Family House and we want to take the time to say thank you!

FOR MORE ROOM

Will you support our "Room For More" campaign on Giving Tuesday?

Mark your calendar now for #GivingTuesday on November 27th. On this national day of giving, we invite the Gift of Life Family House community to participate in the annual 40 Hours for the Family House online fundraiser. All proceeds will support this winter's launch of a new "Room for More" campaign to raise \$200,000 to convert already existing space here at the House into at least two new quest rooms and additional dining space, allowing us to welcome many more families home to a place of comfort and hope each year.

More and more families are traveling to Philadelphia for transplant care and could use a place like the Family House to call "home." However, because we have only 30 rooms, there are many times when we have to send families away because we don't have any available.

This #GivingTuesday, help raise money to create more guest rooms in the Family House to welcome more transplant families home. We never want to send families away because we know that means they'll be worrying about how to take care of their loved ones.

Please join us by putting your compassion into action! Use your social networks to support this important campaign!

We hope you'll join us, either by yourself or with a team. Register online at GiftofLifeFamilyHouse.org and on #GivingTuesday, raise as much money as you can in just 40 hours by sharing your page-and why the Family House matters to you—with family and friends through email and social media. It's really easy!

The fun starts at 8:00 a.m. on November 27th — and only lasts 40 hours!





Some people give up their birthdays and ask their Facebook friends to donate to our cause in lieu of gifts, and others fundraise in honor or memory of a loved one. Whatever the reason, we are extremely grateful for every person who has gone out of their way to share the importance of our mission with their family and friends.

Michael Brunetti recently gave up his birthday to support Gift of Life Family House on Facebook. He became an active member of the Gift of Life community after his younest son, Jonathan, lost his battle with spinal muscular atrophy (SMA). Also, his daughter, Celine, now works full time at the Family House as our Guest Services Fellow!

"This is a special place in my family's heart. We became active members of the Gift of Life community 21 years ago when our son lost his battle with SMA. Now you also have the pleasure of Celine working for the Family House—it's a full circle! It is my pleasure to help keep the work you do, and you are well supported in our hearts," Michael says.

Thank you so much for your support, Michael! We are so grateful to know our transplant families are on your mind!

WANT TO CREATE YOUR OWN FACEBOOK FUNDRAISER THIS YEAR? Setting one up is quick and easy. Simply click the "Fundraisers" link in the left menu of your Facebook newsfeed and follow the prompts. Your friends and family will see your fundraiser when they log on and can donate in iust a few clicks!

You can help provide our transplant families with a safe, comfortable place to stay, a warm meal, and transportation to and from doctor's appointments and hospital visits. Your efforts will go a long way!

'Transplantation isn't high on people's list of priorities until they need one. Your gift will help far more than you know."

—Steve Gradijan, past Family House guest



Caregiver Lifeline Spotlight

Gift of Life Family House Social Worker

Gift of Life Family House QUALITATIVE RESEARCH STUDY

Assessing the impact of a hospitality house dedicated to transplant patients and their families

Recently we conducted a research study to evaluate how well the Family House is supporting the families who stay here. We called upon an independent, doctorate-level researcher to interview guests, caregivers, staff, and volunteers about their experiences at the Family House.

We're proud to share with you that the study found:

 Our services positively impact the physical and mental health of the patients and families who stav here:

 The Family House provides a way to strengthen the resilience of family members as they navigate the difficult territory of the transplant journey;

 Transplant patients and family members consistently expressed an increased appreciation for the need for organ and tissue donation; and

 They became advocates of organ and tissue donation as a result of their experience at the **Family House.**

Here's what some of them had to say:

"If there was no Family House, that would mean devastation—to a lot of families. There's no way that they could feel comforted. Financially—it would just devastate the family."—Caregiver

"I wouldn't know what to do if this place was not here. I feel **safe here.**"—Caregiver

We're also proud to announce that we've shared these findings at two national conferences and one international conference, allowing us to spread our mission throughout the country and abroad.

To read the full executive summary of this qualitative research study, please visit GiftofLifeFamilyHouse.org.

If you have any questions about the study, contact Talia Giordano, Family House Social Worker, at 267-546-9817.

This research study was supported in part by TD Charitable Foundation. We are thankful for their partnership and generosity.



Charitable Foundation



What a beautiful day we had for our 14th Annual Kidney Open Golf Outing! We really sank a "hole-in-one" for our transplant families and made the outing a huge success!

Thanks to the participation and generosity of our community, we raised more than \$108,000 to support our Adopt-A-Family Program, which will help us continue carrying out our mission to care for transplant families in need, even to those who cannot afford our nightly fee.

Thank you so much!

Remembering the words of Steve and Audrey, our guest speakers and past Family House guests: "The Family House provides you with what you need to get through transplant...and they give you a family. You feel like you belong."

It is your support that helps us remind those undergoing the transplant journey they are not alone. While Steve was recovering from his lung transplant, Audrey was able to stay by his side here at the Family House. Whether you joined us for a day of golf, sponsored part of our outing, or volunteered to support our staff, you helped make more experiences like Steve's and Audrey's possible.

Left to Right: Putting Contest Winner, David A. Pierson, PhD, Gift of Life Donor Program ning Board chair, Bill Soloway, heart recipient and Family House Advisory Board



nteering at the Family House in honor of Mason's birthday.

TWO FAMILIES JOINED BY LOVE AND LIFE IN THE **FAMILY HOUSE KITCHEN**

This past summer, two families not only came together to cook a warm, home-cooked meal for our guests, but to also celebrate the life of toddler Mason Hess, an organ donor who saved four lives. The two families were Mason's own, and the family of the little boy who received Mason's lungs, Bryson Palmer.

Kellie and Adam Hess regularly volunteer at the Family House as Home Cook Heroes as a way to keep Mason's memory alive. When Bryson Palmer and his family flew from their home in Ohio to visit the Hess' in New Jersey, everyone thought it would be a great idea

We'd also like to thank all of our sponsors for supporting this event! Thanks to your help, our transplant families will be well taken care of!

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CLOSEST TO THE PIN CONTEST

Crozer Chester Kidney Kimmel, Carter, Roman, Peltz, & O'Neill Transplant Program Crozer Chester Kidney Transplant Team

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to cook a meal together at the Family House. The only volunteer

Mason's mother, Kellie, says, "It was such a moving experience to cook with the family of one of Mason's recipients and see how far both families have come..." Read the full story at GiftofLifeFamilyHouse.org

THANK YOU to all the Home Cook Hero volunteers who prepared home-cooked meals for transplant patients and their families at Gift of Life Family House!

Recognizing Home Cook Heroes Volunteers April-August 2018

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BOLD = Home Cook Hero All Star groups who provide a meal to Home Cook Heroes program at

Home Cook Heroes team photos are available to view on the Family House's Facebook page at Facebook.com/GiftofLifeFamilyHouse. While you're there, don't forget to like our Facebook page, tag yourself and your teammates, and share your photo - in doing so, you're helping spread awareness about the Family House mission!

TO OUR MOST GRACIOUS CONTRIBUTORS:

Thankyou

for your loyal support and continued generosity in helping us care for transplant patients and families at Gift of Life Family House.

Contributions of \$50 or more received between APRIL 2018 – AUGUST 2018

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The Legacy Garden

Paver Program

an engraved paver

Anthony Penna

The Friends and Family of

Sylvia Johnson

The Patients & Caregivers HUP

Lung Transplant Support Group

Marie Mascena

Dominick Vangeli Jr.

Thank you to those who dedicate

Hon, Jon M. Bramnick in memory of

Amy and Tim Tyson

Thank you to our volunteers in the community for coordinating fundraising events, wish list drives, and online fundraisers to support the mission of Gift of Life Family House.

Fundraising Events

10th Annual Bensalem Township Charity Challenge **10th Annual No Shower Happy Hour** hosted by the David Nelson Jr. Memorial Fund Camp Canadensis Values Day Event

"Denim Day" hosted by The Graham Company "Dress Down Day" at Weis Store #240 coordinated by Kathy Miller

Group Fundraiser coordinated by the Glenhardie Swim Team Group Fundraiser coordinated by Brightwood Career Institute

Jackson's 14th Annual Mulligan on Life hosted by the Heller Family and Hennion and Walsh, Inc "Magical Monday" event coordinated by the Leong Family in memory of Gavin Leong issance Philadelphia Hotel Grand Opening Event

Ryanstrong 5K St. Luke's University Health Network - Bethlehem & Monroe Community Event at Skylark Diner hosted by MTFbiologics in memory of Jonathan Baksh

Team Matt collection benefiting Gift of Life Family House Wish List Drives coordinated by:

Caroline's Crusader Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Kesha and Gayle Citizen's Bank Burholme Branch Robert A. Coutts

Timothy Evert

Isaiah's Angels Foundation The Leake Family/ McGinty and Brusich Fa Mt. Holly Elks #848 Order of the Eastern Star of New Jersey

Parkland High Schoo Lynne Peel Rashnika Patel In honor of Willow Short and Family Colleen Swingle Temple University STHM

To make a contribution to Gift of Life Family House,

The official registration and financial information of Transplant House d/b/a Gift of Life Family House may be obtained from PA Dept. of State by calling toll free 1 800 732 0999. Registration does not imply endorsement

please visit GiftofLifeFamilyHouse.org or use the enclosed envelope.

Debra MacCannell

