

June 30th 2017

Dear Friends of Sarah's... an Oasis for Women,

With this letter, we introduce Sarah's Strategic Plan 2017-2020. This plan contains strategies written by Sarah's Strategic Planning Committee which met several times between July 2016 and March 2017. Sub-committees also convened at various points in the planning process around the strategies, the mission and vision statements and the values.

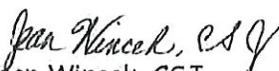
As Sarah's leadership and the leadership liaison between Sarah's and the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, St. Paul Province, we endorse and affirm this plan. We look forward to seeing the work plans the staff will develop and implement in the next several months. We are confident that this plan will focus the work of the staff in the areas of greatest need at this time. We know that the women who find their home at Sarah's will benefit from the staff's commitment to the strategies in the 2017-2020 Plan.

We note that the strategies in this plan range from broadening support for Sarah's for years to come, to diversifying Sarah's sources of income, to growing community partnerships that will promote the accomplishments of residents' individual goals. This is the time to give the broader community a greater opportunity to provide the sustainable support for Sarah's. We look to new ways to advocate for the residents in accomplishing their independent living goals.

Finally, we thank the committee for developing a clearer mission statement and more defined vision statement which we are putting into action immediately. Thanks to you as well for your support and interest in Sarah's Strategic Plan and in Sarah's work going forward.

Sincerely,


Cheryl Behrent
Director
Sarah's... an Oasis for Women


Jean Wincek, CSJ
Province Leadership Team
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet



Sarah's...
an Oasis for Women

*A ministry of the
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet
St. Paul Province
since 1996*

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Mission

Sarah's... an Oasis for Women is a home dedicated to safety and dignity for a diverse community of women where they can begin new and productive lives.

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR SARAH’S... AN OASIS FOR WOMEN 2017 - 2020

- 1. Broaden the community awareness of Sarah’s... an Oasis for Women**
 - CSJ community
 - Schools (primary, secondary, university)
 - Neighbors
 - Local faith community

- 2. Diversify Sarah’s... an Oasis for Women’s sources of funding to increase fiscal sustainability**
 - New donors
 - Annual campaign (recurring donations, holiday mailing, fundraising events)

- 3. Grow community “partnerships” to support the residents of Sarah’s... an Oasis for Women individual goals**

***Overall work plan goals and objectives will be added by Sarah’s staff on or before August 31, 2017**

FROM THE DIRECTOR — Cheryl Behrent

Over 20 years ago, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, St. Paul Province (CSJ) living in Derham Convent began to receive and house homeless women from nearby neighborhoods and Sarah’s... an Oasis for Women was born. Since that time over 650 women from 70 different nations have called Sarah’s home. The reality of homelessness, for immigrant and refugee women in particular, is greater now than ever before as women all over the world are often forced to relocate without warning. Thankfully, Sarah’s is still a home dedicated to dignity and safety for women who are seeking a better life. With continued support from the CSJ community and other stakeholders, Sarah’s is prepared to respond.

HOUSE MANAGEMENT

Sarah's... an Oasis for Women (Sarah's) works in a seamless partnership with the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, St. Paul Province (CSJ) for care and maintenance of the house which is located at 520 S. Warwick Street in St. Paul. In the last couple of years, Sarah's has installed new carpet in the hallways and bedrooms and updated cabinetry and appliances in Sarah's kitchen. Some areas in the home still need improvement such as the water heater and large refrigerators, and we will work with the CSJ Province maintenance team to plan for these and other improvements.

The Province provides general maintenance for the grounds and gardens surrounding the house. Sarah's vibrant volunteer program engages school and community groups for additional projects such as weeding, washing windows and other types of outdoor clean-up activities. The residents of Sarah's maintain a large vegetable garden in the backyard, and we partner with community gardens such as Celeste's Dream. The two labyrinths on Sarah's property are low-maintenance and tended to by staff and volunteers when necessary.

PROGRAM AND SERVICES

Each woman meets with the director 5 times per year to discuss her goals and any barriers she is experiencing in realizing them. Through problem solving and referrals the woman and the director work collaboratively to continue moving forward. Each year we have a Saint Joseph Worker who assists the residents with employment skills such as job searching and resume writing. The Saint Joseph Worker also helps the women with educational attainment by assisting them in enrolling in English classes and job training courses. Sarah's is honored to be a collaborator with over eighty different service providers in our community. An evaluation of Sarah's by Molly Sullivan revealed that many former residents were underemployed, working on call or part-time positions and seeking full-time employment. While we recognize many systemic and structural issues at play in this problem we will strategically target this area by deepening our relationship with the organizations we partner with for job training and placement

SARAH'S RESIDENTS

The process for living at Sarah's begins with a potential resident or her representative calling Sarah's housing line. Each woman who calls is triaged by Sarah's St. Joseph Worker and Sarah's Director. Sarah's does not have a formal waiting list for housing, rather we work with each woman to connect with needed resources whether they become a resident at Sarah's or not. Sarah's primary focus remains connecting current residents to resources and support through off-site service providers, programs, and professionals. We keep and update resident records through

our case file database. This process provides the necessary tools to evaluate our program, and to seek additional networking and mentoring opportunities for residents.

Another area of focus is increasing the probability that the women who apply for residency at Sarah's are the best fit for the services and support that the program provides, and maximizing the strengths of our staff in this process. A work plan will be developed based on our 2017-2020 strategic plan. Given changes in the current political environment, we will consider strategies and policies that may alter our daily work in different ways. Sarah's considers this both a challenge and an opportunity to accomplish Sarah's mission with renewed focus and zeal.

WHO LIVES AT SARAH'S

1. Women age 20+ and not currently parenting
2. Women of any ethnicity, creed, religious affiliation
3. Women for whom no other resources are currently available
4. Women who do not need licensed agencies
5. Women who are medically independent and chemically (addiction) free
6. Women with a willingness and ability to live in community in a group setting where space, food preparation, household, grounds-work and living are shared
7. Women whose transition is ordinarily completed within 1 to 1.5 years

We will communicate with callers to the housing line about their eligibility for living at Sarah's. Our definition of who we serve will remain broad and diverse so that we can continue to respond to the needs of our time.

BRIEF HISTORY OF SARAH'S

During the last 20 years, Sarah's has served over 650 women from 70 different nations. Transition is different for every woman who comes to Sarah's, but every woman has the goal to heal and restart her life. Sarah's was founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, St. Paul Province (CSJ) and is funded in part by the Sisters and the Sisters of St. Joseph's Ministries Foundation. At Sarah's, we honor and affirm the Sisters' commitment to social justice and their mission of "loving God and the dear neighbor without distinction." Sarah's program is a community-based model where Sarah's is the home, and residents are connected with a variety of service providers offsite. The residents live with dignity and in peace at Sarah's while restarting their lives. Once they leave Sarah's, they take the support of their service providers with them so they maintain important connections in the community.

For the past 20 years, Sarah's leadership, staff, advisory council and volunteers have been honored to walk with the women who come to Sarah's. Residents leave Sarah's self-empowered

to live their lives with a stronger sense of direction, safety and possibilities for their future.
There is no other program like Sarah's in Minnesota. Our community is blessed by the dedication of time and energy that so many people have contributed to this outstanding program.

MISSION: Sarah's... an Oasis for Women is a home dedicated to safety and dignity for a diverse community of women where they can begin new and productive lives.

VISION: Women healing from trauma continue vibrant, meaningful lives and contribute to the common good.

VALUES:

- Beauty
- The Common Good
- Community
- CSJ Mission
- Diversity
- Healing and Hope
- Opportunity and Possibility
- Respect
- Responsibility and Accountability
- Right Relationship
- Self-Empowerment
- Sharing Lives and Changing Lives
- Simplicity

MANTRAS:

- You are a good woman. You can do it!
- You come to Sarah's in order to leave.
- Sarah's will always be your home.
- One day at a time. One Woman at a time. One lesson at a time.
- May peacemaking prevail on Earth today!

SAINT JOSEPH WORKER (SJW)

Sarah's has been a host site for the SJW program for 13 years. Our SJW works closely with Sarah's residents, assisting their efforts in locating and connecting with resources for employment, education, and housing. Additionally, she may use Sarah's van to accompany a resident to an appointment or to transport residents for occasional field trips. Organizing and hosting events for residents as well as field trips in the wider community are organized bi-weekly by our SJW. Our SJW makes sure that residents are aware of current events or changes happening within or outside of the Sarah's. Signs promoting recycling and sustainability are updated often as we see results of the procedures and processes in place. Our SJW also updates our job and job-training information board and community information board on a regular basis.

SARAH'S ADVISORY COUNCIL (SAC)

Sarah's Advisory Council (SAC) is a volunteer body of 12-14 members who serve as strategic thought leaders, collaborators and catalysts for action for the mission, ministry and work of Sarah's. Membership rotates in three year terms. In addition to supporting the staff and residents of Sarah's, the Advisory Council works to promote and embrace a diverse community and to network with other community leaders. The council includes members who are Sisters of St. Joseph, CSJ Consociates, representatives from partner organizations, and members of the broader community.

TRENDS FOR 2017 AND BEYOND

Sarah's remains on the cutting edge of the continuing need for temporary housing. The lengthy and arduous U.S. asylum process results in women waiting many months, even years, for a credible fear interview, thus increasing the need for the kind of support Sarah's provides. In the coming years, **Sarah's will strengthen and deepen its relationship with the CSJ Justice Commission** which will provide legislative advocacy for Sarah's as well as opportunities for current and former residents to visit lawmakers at the state capital. Through this important partnership, Sarah's will be able to provide more opportunities for staff to learn about human rights and legal issues pertaining to immigration and homelessness. We will also plan annual presentations to our residents about our government, their rights, and responsibilities.

Expanding our community based service model remains a priority. Additionally, building on well-established relationships with stakeholders like Soroptimist International, Sarah's Advisory Council and the CSJ Consociates, Sarah's will expand networking opportunities for our residents and cultivate new relationships and supporters.

Submitted and Approved by Sarah's Strategic Plan Committee, June 30th 2017:

Members:

Sarah Brenes, SAC Chair-Elect
Mary Hunt, SAC Chair, CSJ Consociate
Sue Reaney, Friend of Sarah's
Betty Schindler, SAC member, CSJ Consociate
Jill Underdahl, CSJ
Jean Wincek, CSJ, CSJ Leadership Team

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Athena Adkins, President
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