



Daily Bread Newsletter | DailyBreadinc.org SPRING 2024

OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE



For 35 years, Daily Bread has grown to keep up with the increasing need in our community and to live out our mission to our hungry and homeless neighbors. On November 14th, Melbourne’s City Council made it possible for us to provide the ultimate solution to unsheltered people. In a 5-1 vote, the Council awarded Daily Bread \$3 million and three acres of city-owned land to build Providence Place – 120 units of housing with the critical wrap-around services necessary to successfully transition a person out of homelessness.

“Providing a place for people who have no place...this is a dream come true for those of us, staff, volunteers, and supporters, who have walked with people experiencing homelessness at Daily Bread.”

—Dr. Jeffrey Njus, Executive Director, Daily Bread & Providence Place

2023 IMPACT REPORT INSIDE!

**inside
this issue**

- 2 • MEET KRYSTAL
- VIDEO: PROVIDENCE PLACE TRANSITION
- 3 • EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: RAY LUCAS
- DAILY BREAD CHAMPION: KAY NOWAK
- 4 • 2023 IMPACT REPORT
- 5 • LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
- 6 • YOUR GIFTS TO DAILY BREAD
- 7 • YOUR DONATIONS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

MEET Krystal



Krystal and her daughter, Kya

Krystal is a 41-year-old mother of three children, who for ten years, lived the life of a typical stay-at-home mom. She and her husband enjoyed the comforts associated with middle to upper-class life: owning their home, cars, and a boat, and enjoying regular vacations. When Krystal's marriage ended, she found employment and started working toward a degree in health sciences and administration. She came close to earning that degree, but the cumulative circumstances of her life started to take a toll.

Krystal was juggling the care of her kids, work, and school with the added challenges of untreated bipolar and attention deficit disorder. This was compounded by the unresolved trauma of losing her mother in a violent murder at an early age. Eventually, it became too much, and Krystal started finding occasional relief in the drugs that were sold right outside the backdoor of the only home she could afford in a rough neighborhood. It started casually every other weekend when the children were with her ex-husband but Krystal's addiction progressed. She started using more until she lost her job and was eventually evicted. At that time, the kids went to live with her ex-husband permanently.

This was the beginning of a seven-year stretch of misery where Krystal bounced from couch to couch and then to the streets and woods while receiving services at Daily Bread. Krystal first came to Daily Bread in 2020, where Ray Lucas, a Peer Support and Recovery Specialist, helped her access food stamps, Medicaid, and a phone. At that time, Krystal says she was using drugs but hadn't yet escalated to heroin. According to Ray, Krystal's appearance at that time didn't give the slightest hint of being unhoused, but over time, he watched her decline as her addiction took over and she experienced a violent assault.

During the period that Krystal was unhoused, she had several bouts of short-term sobriety but said, "It's impossible to get and stay clean on the streets. It's lonely and everyone around you is escaping their wretched circumstances with drugs and alcohol." What ultimately pulled Krystal out of addiction was an overdose where she left her camp in

the woods in the back of an ambulance surrounded by paramedics. After a brief stint at Circles of Care, Krystal's oldest daughter, Kya, took her in to live with her and her 18-month-old grandson, Javian. Krystal credits her daughter for providing what she needed to achieve a clean life – a roof over her head and tough love. She says, "My daughter has always supported me, and now I can't imagine not being there for her and my grandson." Krystal lost her 17-year-old son, Giovanni, in September and is committed to staying clean and available for her family.

Krystal recently celebrated six months clean, enjoyed the holidays with her 12-year-old son, Syler, earned her driver's license back, and is looking for employment. Her ultimate goal is to become a Certified Peer Counselor, like Ray, and walk alongside other individuals coming out of addiction and homelessness.

A common assumption is that there is a unidirectional pathway between drug use and homelessness. In other words, people become homeless because of their drug use. While that was true for Krystal, her drug use escalated for adaptive reasons, such as to stay awake or to sleep as needed or simply to adjust and cope with the trauma of homelessness. Many times, the association between homelessness and drug use is bidirectional, and homelessness itself plays a role in drug use and overdose risk. Krystal is an example of this.

"It's impossible to get and stay clean on the streets. It's lonely and everyone around you is escaping their wretched circumstances with drugs and alcohol."

Once open, Providence Place will offer the first critical element Krystal needed to get clean during her years on the streets: long-term housing stability. Additionally, addiction and behavioral health will be provided through an on-site Brevard Health Alliance Clinic and other local addiction-related providers. Providence Place will provide a broad scope of services to meet each individual where they are and help them in making the transition out of homelessness.

The Providence Place logo seen on page one of this newsletter is a visual representation of what Providence Place will be. Each piece of glass in the mosaic represents the individuals and services that come together to form the "Providence" community. Each piece plays a vital role in completing the overall image of a house, representing the shelter and sanctuary that Providence offers. The light shining through the mosaic mirrors our purpose of illuminating the lives of our residents with opportunities, health, and a fresh start.



Watch a brief video about our transition to Providence Place here!

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: *Ray Lucas*

When Ray speaks to a person experiencing homelessness, they often lean in a little further and listen a little closer because Ray communicates with the authority and empathy that can only be earned through shared experience. Ray is a person who has achieved long-term sobriety and was also homeless, and he brings that knowledge to his role as Daily Bread's Peer Support & Recovery Specialist providing support, help, and encouragement for others who are also working their way toward wellness and housing. Dr. Jeffrey Njus, the Executive Director of Daily Bread says of Ray, "Through his experience, Ray provides a specialization that meets people where they are in their addiction and recovery journey. Ray has the certifications required of a Peer Support & Recovery Specialist but what he offers our clients goes far beyond his training. Ray can honestly say, 'I've been through this and can walk with you.' It profoundly speaks to a person searching for hope."

Ray's path, like many who experience homelessness and addiction, defies the stereotypes often associated with unsheltered people. He was a strait-laced kid who graduated from the University of Florida with a B.S. in marketing and ran a successful business before the genetics of alcoholism caught up with him and what started as social drinking spiraled out of his control. Following a decade of active addiction, Ray ultimately got sober through Vivitrol (a medically assisted treatment) and counseling at Circles of Care. Further contrary to common stereotypes, Ray's homeless experience didn't begin until he was sober and made the hard decision that the living options available to him at the time wouldn't be conducive to his success.

After nine long months of being homeless, Ray found housing with the help of a subsidy, and a Circles of Care counselor, with whom he made a positive impression, recommended a program where he could earn his certification as a Peer Support & Recovery Specialist. Today, Ray feels blessed to have found what he considers his true purpose. He says, "This is not a job. It's not like going to work. It's a privilege to serve humans in a dark place with my experience and share hope. I am proof that real enduring change can happen." Ray adds "Daily Bread's client base needs us, but I need them too. They are a regular reminder of much I stand to lose."



Krystal returns to Daily Bread to share her recent successes.



Kay with her husband, Dave (who is also a valued volunteer) and grandchildren

DAILY BREAD CHAMPION: *Kay Nowak*

Before becoming a Licensed Mental Health Counselor in 2017 and a Qualified Supervisor in 2023, Kay Nowak lived a lot of lives. Among her many roles, she was the stay-at-home mother to three kids, an EKG tech, and an accountant. Following the death of her brother and mother, Kay had the type of clarity that many people experience following a loss or serious illness - that life is short and precious. She decided in 2011 to make a major life change and become a counselor, a career that had always intrigued her and what she now knows is her late-life calling.

In addition to seeing individuals, couples, and families in her private practice, Kay began volunteering her services at Daily Bread in 2018. As someone who has seen two family members experience homelessness as the result of mental health issues and addiction, she understands that homelessness is a systemic problem and many people do not have the support or access to services that may have prevented their homelessness.

Jeffrey Njus, Executive Director of Daily Bread, says, "We all know there is an intersection of people experiencing homelessness and mental health issues. Even if an individual's particular situation isn't acute, people who live on the streets have patterns of thinking that aren't healthy due to the alienation and isolation of their circumstances. Kay is vitally important in helping people overcome trauma and PTSD and become aware of their strengths and resources in a very challenging situation."

Thank you, Kay, for sharing your time and talent with our neighbors in need. Your presence every Thursday makes a difference.



DAILY BREAD

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LEADERSHIP

Executive Director

Dr. Jeffrey Njus

MISSION

To ensure that no one faces hunger or homelessness alone.

MAILING ADDRESS

Daily Bread Inc.

Melbourne, FL 32901

321-723-1060

www.dailybreadinc.org

A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the division of consumer services by calling toll-free 1.800.455.7552 within the state. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval, or recommendation by the state registration #cb1772. 100% of the new proceeds benefit the mission of daily bread inc.

2023 Impact

Every number has a story. Serve.

3,430 unique individuals served in 2023.

1,101 hours of case management provided to 145 unique individuals.



13,934 total showers provided.



65 individuals, on average, received healthcare weekly in the Brevard Health Alliance mobile unit.



155 unique individuals received \$8,984 in prescription assistance



3 cold shelter nights for

82 unique individuals.



Impact Report

Feeding Melbourne since 1989.

1.5 million

pounds of food donated to 25+ other local agencies.



Daily Bread serves a hot and nutritious meal 365 days each year.



49,920

total meals served.



41,382

volunteer hours provided by 1405 unique volunteers.



80%

of those housed remained permanently housed after one year.



Emergency Rental Assistance provided to

104

households.

LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear friends of Daily Bread,

We have been on quite a journey together in this last year. It has been a journey to fulfill the dream of addressing homelessness in a comprehensive way for hundreds of our

neighbors in need. Homelessness is the kind of challenge that can only be addressed when the whole community comes together. And our community is coming together in a beautiful way to provide a special place for people coming out of homelessness, Providence Place.

The problem of homelessness is pervasive throughout the country. Cities and towns throughout the country are looking for solutions. It is difficult for a community to say yes to a comprehensive solution like Providence Place... and easy to say "no" or just "not in my backyard." Our community said yes to fundamentally addressing homelessness when Melbourne City Council voted to give 3 acres and \$3 Million to build Providence Place. This is the fulfillment of a dream and an answer to prayer. As I sat in the City Council Chambers on the night they made their decision, I silently prayed that God would provide a place for people who have no place to go. Many of you have been praying for Daily Bread for years and particularly in this past year. Thank you for your prayers. We thank God for inspiring our community to provide Providence Place.

In this newsletter, we share more about our plans for Providence Place, more about the people who will make it so special, and more about the people who will benefit from this housing resource. Every day at Daily Bread, people ask us about where they can go to find a place to live. Today as I walked across our parking lot on the way to the dining hall, five different people stopped me to talk about how and where to find a solution to their homeless situation. I am so happy that our community is providing an answer to this pressing question for our homeless neighbors.

The journey continues...we are not there yet. Please continue to pray that God will bring this beautiful dream to fulfillment in our community.



Jeffrey Njus

YOUR GIFTS TO DAILY BREAD SUSTAIN OUR MISSION:

To ensure that no one faces hunger or homelessness alone.

RECOGNIZING DONATIONS OF \$1,000 OR MORE IN 2023:

Robert & Martha Adams
Air Force Chaplain Corps
The Albert E. and Birdie W.
Einstein Fund, Inc.
Richard Anderson
Charlene Armenti
Ascension Catholic Church
Richard & Mary Ann Bansemer
and Ms. Linda Johnston
Cynthia Barbosa-Santos
Jill Barlow
John Barreiros
Joslyn Barroso
Gary & Susie Baxter
Ginny Berlinrut
Virginia Biedron
George Blackwood
Priscilla & Martin Blyseth
James & Cathy Bouck
Eva Bowles
Dorothy Brett
Joseph & Debra Brooks
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Byrd-Borland Foundation
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Melbourne, Inc.
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Community Chapel of
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Palmdale Presbyterian Church
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Spacecoast Freewheelers,
Bicycle Club, Inc.
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St. John's Episcopal Church of
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Suntree United Methodist
Church
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Kelly Thayer
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Tropical Haven Morning
Worship
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TRUIST Financial Corporation
United Community Bank
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W&J Construction
The WAWA Foundation
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Association, Inc.
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Give with Confidence!



Candid's Gold Seal recognizes philanthropic organizations that demonstrate a deep

commitment to transparency, accountability, and inclusivity and operate from a position of strong financial health.



Margie Wilson, who is 90 years young, makes hundreds of beanies a year to keep our unhoused neighbors warm.



Thank you to our friends at DRS! They send a team to volunteer in our kitchen once a month and conducted an underwear drive leading up to Christmas.



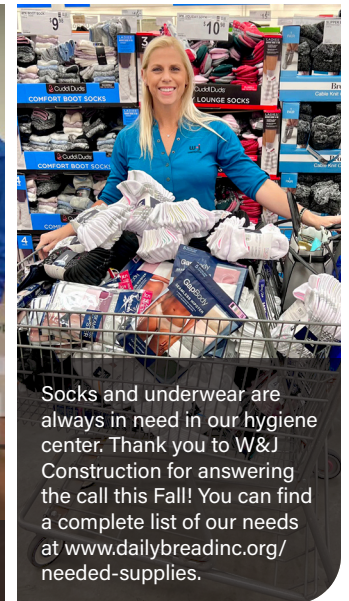
Embraer's Human Resources Department gave a hand in the kitchen in November.



Daily Bread is proud to partner with Streetside Showers. As we transition from an outreach center where services are limited at our Fee Avenue campus, to reaching unhoused individuals all over our community, Streetside Showers will play an important role in making sure that our neighbors in need have access to hygiene.



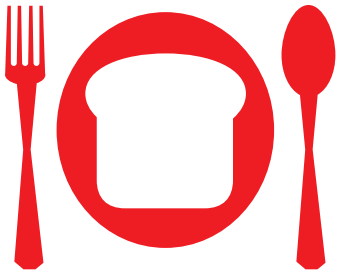
Thank you to the Zeta Phi Betas for delivering needed food and hygiene items.



Socks and underwear are always in need in our hygiene center. Thank you to W&J Construction for answering the call this Fall! You can find a complete list of our needs at www.dailybreadinc.org/needed-supplies.

Thank you to the generous sponsors and attendees who made our World Dignity Day Breakfast a success! Save the date for this year's event on October 17th.





DAILY BREAD

815 E. Fee Avenue
Melbourne, FL 32901

Non-Profit Organization

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*Don't "bale" on us!
We need your help!*
•
*All proceeds benefit
the operations of
Daily Bread.*

Get your boots on and c'mon down to Front Street for
Daily Bread's First Annual Chili Cookoff!
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2205 Front Street, Melbourne, FL