

# Spring Greetings...

from our house to yours!



May 2013

425 Shane #18, Houston, TX 77037  
(281) 445-9696 /FAX: (281) 445-8891  
www.angelahouse.org



## A MESSAGE FROM MAUREEN

The past months have found us continuing to expand and grow our program in anticipation of our move to a new facility. In February, through our collaboration with Healthcare for the Homeless Houston, we added a wellness dimension to our weekly schedule. We are scheduled to participate in a 5K walk at the end of April and have been preparing through exercise, healthy cooking and healthy food choices. The women are so proud of their weight loss (total of 100 lbs.) and we are thrilled by their success.

We are in the final stretch with regard to the renovations at the Reed Road property. Our plan to be in our new space by fall is still the goal. We continue to be touched by the generosity of so many of our supporters who have already pledged bed room furnishings, office furniture, and carpet.

We have an Eagle Scout project scheduled for the courtyard so thanks to you, our many friends, we truly are a "work in progress".

*Maureen O'Connell, OP  
Executive Director*

## A VOLUNTEER'S PERSPECTIVE

A new Angela House volunteer had the opportunity to meet with several of our residents and would like to share her impressions. "The individuals I have met are remarkably optimistic and willing to work hard to turn their lives around. Everyone I spoke with appreciates the love and support they receive at Angela House, along with the knowledge that the staff and volunteers "have their back" when they need it. Angela House gives them a new beginning, providing them with a home-like environment, structure, and the feeling of being part of a family for those whose ties to their own families have been broken. Also important are the many programs, resources, and activities in which to participate to learn new life skills, create new patterns of behavior and how to respond to people and situations."

## THANK YOU FOR A VERY HAPPY THANKSGIVING AND MERRY CHRISTMAS!

The women of Angela House would like to say a sincere thank you to each of you who gave food and gifts throughout the holidays. Because of you, we were able to provide our women with a holiday many have never had an opportunity to experience. Thank you to all who purchased gift cards so that the women could purchase gifts for their children. Thank you to the many generous individuals and groups who donated gifts to Angela House that our women excitedly opened on Christmas morning. Thank you also to the numerous groups who helped to make the holidays warm and comforting by spending time with our women over wonderful meals and conversation. St. Michael's provided a delicious Thanksgiving meal for the Women. The Sims Family from Mt. Rose Church of God In Christ brought an array of goodies for a holiday dinner. Our therapist, Teresa Doyle, continued her tradition of cooking a special holiday breakfast with the women. Life Skills Coach, Tanya Tolbert hosted a holiday luncheon and companionship with the women ...a community celebration of gratitude.

## UPDATE

Since our last newsletter in July, twelve residents have graduated and are successfully living independently. Our prayers are with them as they take this next step toward a new life. Currently, twelve women reside at Angela House and are at varying stages of the program. Several residents are employed part-time and are working their way toward a full-time position.

The mission of **Angela House** is:  
"To successfully transition women into  
society after incarceration."



### THE ANGELA HOUSE PLAYERS

Angela House was blessed to be the project of four Girl Scouts from St Cecilia Girl Scouts troop # 18073 to earn their Silver awards. This award requires 50 hours of service. The girl scouts came to Angela House every Tuesday from September 2012 through March 2013 to participate in the drama class. They also organized a supply drive and organized the clothing closet for easier access to the clothing. Their help was invaluable to Angela House and the residents were touched by their dedication. Many thanks to each and every one of these young women.

The Angela House Players, led by St. Cecilia School drama teacher, Diane Andrews, performed their third annual theatrical production on December 11, 2012. The skills that the residents learned from their weekly drama class were on display the night of their performance, which included a reenactment of the birth of Jesus.

Thanks to Diane, the St. Cecilia Girl Scouts and to our guests who attended this production. It was a wonderful evening enjoyed by all. We are proud of all of our Angela House Players!



### JOB READINESS TRAINING PROGRAM

Juliana Ashley, mother of a Duchesne Academy graduate and a colleague, Jackie Verity continue to facilitate a Job Readiness Training program for Angela House. The residents truly benefit from the abundance of information provided by these two very generous professionals. Thank you, Juliana and Jackie, for helping our woman prepare for future employment.

### STAFF HAPPENINGS

This month, Tammie Brown, our Program Coordinator celebrates her eleven year anniversary as a valued employee. Since joining this ministry, Ms. Brown celebrated the birth of her third child and began studies for a degree in Human Services. Her oldest daughter will soon graduate from High School as an NROTC cadet and will join the U.S. Navy in the fall. Tammie's commitment to our residents and her desire to share her wisdom and experience is one of the many reasons we are grateful for her presence with us.

### ANGELA HOUSE CELEBRATES 11 YEARS OF EMPOWERING WOMEN

Angela House opened its doors to our first resident on April 4, 2002. So many lives have changed since then, as God works miracles daily. We continue to serve the women who so desperately need help to integrate back into society after incarceration. Many women face challenging struggles as they work very hard to make the necessary changes in their lives. We are very proud of the progress Angela House has made over the last eleven years. We are also proud of our courageous women who have taken the first step in finding their place in society. Of course, none of this would be possible without the generous support of our faithful donors and volunteers. We sincerely thank each of you for your continuous support. We look forward to many more years in this important ministry.



### BIBLE STUDY

The residents look forward to their Thursday afternoon bible study with newly ordained Deacon Joe Wright. Congratulations to Deacon Joe who was ordained on January 26, 2013. Deacon Joe is continuing his services with us and is joined by Deacon candidate, Peter Oliver and Deacon candidate, Bradley Hoover. Thank you! We sincerely appreciate this special time and your dedication to the women of Angela House.



### CONGRATULATIONS

Susan recently completed her program at Angela House and is living independently in her new apartment. Susan writes, "Nine months ago, I didn't have anywhere to go. I was accepted at Angela House. Wow!!! It was not just a place to stay, but a place to call home. I recently took my step and moved out. Tammy, Sister Maureen, Denise and Teresa have changed my life. I have friends now, my new family.

Susan called the other day to report that she has been hired in her dream job as a groomer assistant at a local "doggy day care". We are thrilled for Susan and know that the animals are very fortunate to have her.



## IN THE COMMUNITY



### **WORKFAITH CONNECTIONS**

Several of our residents graduated from the employment training program at WorkFaith Connections. We are grateful for our continuing partnership with WorkFaith as our residents consistently graduate from their program and feel prepared to begin the job search process. Their case managers provide consistent support to each participant after graduation, providing job leads and encouragement as they complete applications and attend interviews. Residents who graduated from WorkFaith's program are now employed and we are so proud!



### **ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES**

The staff and residents are humbled by the generosity of contributors who invite our women to community spaces for enrichment activities. There are many generous local community arts venues, such as AD Players and Ensemble Theater, who regularly provide our women with donated or deeply discounted tickets to plays around Houston. The Houston Astros Charity Ticket program also regularly donates tickets to our residents to attend baseball games at Minute Maid Park. Many of our women have never had the opportunity to be a part of our community in this way, and it is a breathtaking experience for them to realize that they are welcome in our community. Through enrichment activities, our women also learn productive ways to spend their free time.

Without a doubt, the most enjoyed enrichment activity for our residents was to be able to attend St. Cecilia's 8<sup>th</sup> grade production of *The Wizard of Oz*. This was a wonderful play that featured all four of our Girl Scout volunteers. A current resident, Angel shared, "The auditorium was charged with high spirit and enthusiasm. The play itself, beyond the critic's reach." Following the play, the women were treated to a luncheon hosted by St. Cecilia mothers. Thank you for allowing Angela House to be a part of this wonderful experience!

We are always looking for ways to expand our enrichment activities! Please contact us if there are venues for Angela House to explore for our residents.



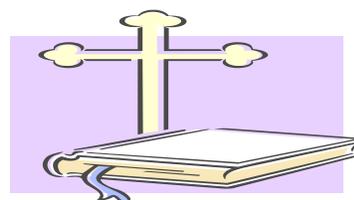
### **ANGELA HOUSE WEBSITE!!**

Please visit our website at [angelahouse.org](http://angelahouse.org), which is complete with pictures of activities at Angela House, news concerning our residents, and articles and links to information on the many issues that surround a woman's re-entry into the community from incarceration. We invite you to visit our site and take a look around. We hope it will serve as an interactive forum for you, our contributors and volunteers, and others interested in serving women as they attempt to turn their lives around. If you have any suggestions on information to post to the site or feedback please contact our Advancement Assistant, Denise Barcelona-Miller, at [denise@angelahouse.org](mailto:denise@angelahouse.org). We also have a donation link that is easy and convenient to use. As always, Angela House sincerely appreciates your generosity,



### **JOYCE MEYER AT LAKEWOOD CHURCH**

On February 9, 2013, the residents had the opportunity to attend a special speaking engagement by Joyce Meyer at Lakewood Church. Kimberly writes, "As residents, we are given many opportunities to enrich our spiritual lives. When we arrived at Lakewood Church, we felt the air crackling with excitement and anticipation. For many of us, we find wisdom and comfort in Ms. Meyer's words. Her message on this night was to turn up the brightness of our lights that we can be in this world, by loving each other and walking with dignity and purpose in our Godly paths. I believe I speak for all of us when I say that our hearts were prepared to give and receive the love that God intended for us all. We would like to express our gratitude for the opportunity of a lifetime to be able to attend Lakewood Church and experience this powerful message."



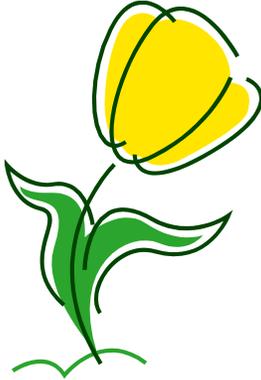


Angela House  
425 Shane #18  
Houston, TX 77037

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# Welcome, Spring!



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

## ANGELA HOUSE IS STILL...

# Going Green!

For those who have already submitted your email address, thank you. We have it on file, no need to send it again. If you have not provided us with your email, it is not too late to sign up! The E-newsletter will be sent over a secured server, so you will not receive a flood of emails from us. ***We will still be mailing our paper version to those of you who are not interested in receiving the E version.*** If you are interested in helping us save paper, please provide your email address on the enclosed envelope. You can also email our Advancement Assistant at [denise@angelahouse.org](mailto:denise@angelahouse.org) or call us at 281-445-9696 with this information. Thank you for helping us to Go Green!

## WISH LIST

### Gift Cards

- Grocery Stores
- Wal-Mart or Target
- Long Distance Calling Cards
- Walgreens or CVS
- Metro Bus Cards
- Movie Gift Cards

### Miscellaneous

- Postage **STAMPS** (*Forever*)
- Women's cotton underwear (sizes 7, 10, & 12)
- Women's ankle socks
- Appointment Books
- Journals
- Umbrellas
- 13-Gallon Trash Bags
- Bathroom Tissue

Thank You!