

opening doors

WINTER 2025



resident spotlight



My name is Erin, and my journey took a transformative turn when I arrived at Angela House on January 11, 2024. After a long period of writing letters from prison, praying for the chance to start anew, I am deeply grateful every day for the opportunity to be here. For 20 years, I wrestled with addiction and the consequences of my choices, but I had come to terms with my past.

Since joining Angela House, I feel like a new person, achieving more than I ever thought possible. I've immersed myself in a wide range of classes and support groups, including Shame and Resilience, meditation, and enriching Bible studies. I earned my GED and took a bold step by enrolling at Houston Community College to work toward my LCDC certification. To my astonishment, I even made the Dean's List during my first semester! The person I used to be would have never dreamed of reaching such milestones.



Today, I'm thriving in a fulfilling job at Mod Pizza, my recovery program is stronger than ever, and I've established an incredible bond with my family. My mother has been my unwavering support through thick and thin. My greatest hope is to give my daughter the same love and encouragement, ensuring she never faces the hardships I once did.

Celebrating Christmas with my family was truly magical. The joy of sharing quality time and witnessing their happiness on Christmas morning reignited my commitment to sobriety and reminded me of what's truly important.



For the first time in my life, I genuinely love myself. The hard work I've put in to change has been monumental, but I owe so much to God and the compassionate team at Angela House. They've created a nurturing environment that has allowed me to rediscover who I am, define my aspirations, and evolve into the best version of myself. The journey isn't easy, but it is infinitely rewarding, and I look forward to what lies ahead!



from our executive

Valencia Lewis

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Greetings from Angela House!

As we step into the New Year, I find myself reflecting on the incredible way we closed out 2024, all thanks to the unwavering support of our of Angela House Friends! We have been the recipient of so many blessings. Your generosity helped us achieve our Giving Tuesday fundraising goal on December 3, 2024, we have implemented a new program specifically for our alum, provided support for their academics, and assisted several residents with certifications. Which will completely change the trajectory of the lives of each of our residents.

Our Angela House Emergency Assistance Program, (EAP), has provided direct financial support to five of our alumnae. EAP was created to support our alums when they are encountering challenging times. Angela House This holiday season, we were truly blessed. Donors provided thoughtful gifts for our residents and their children, while others came together to decorate Angela House and spread holiday cheer. Volunteer groups brought lunch, shared presents, and hosted delightful games. The joy and warmth within Angela House were palpable, a testament to the remarkable power of community and compassion.

As the year came to a close, we celebrated the accomplishments of 27 new women who joined Angela House. Collectively, they contributed an impressive 685 hours of community service and volunteer work. Their individual achievements are just as inspiring:

- 2 residents completed GED programs
- 18 residents found employment
- 27 residents experienced reunification with their families
- 27 residents obtained their IDs
- 9 residents earned Food Handler Certifications
- 5 residents became Peer Recovery Coaches

We are thrilled about the bright futures ahead for each of these women. Additionally, Angela House is growing! We are excited to welcome three new team members. A special congratulations to our very own Sarah Mabry, who has accepted the role of Aftercare Manager.

Thank you for being part of the Angela House family. Together, we continue to create a space where hope thrives, and transformation is possible.

Blessings,
Valencia Lewis
Executive Director

A LEGACY OF GIVING

ANGELA HOUSE ESTABLISHED A SOCIETY TO RECOGNIZE THOSE WHO HAVE INCLUDED ANGELA HOUSE IN THEIR ESTATE PLANS. THROUGH THESE GIFTS, YOU ENSURE THE FUTURE OF ANGELA HOUSE AND HELP CONTINUE THE LEGACY OF SUCCESSFULLY TRANSITIONING WOMEN INTO SOCIETY AFTER INCARCERATION.

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
CONTACT VALENCIA LEWIS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
AT 281.445.9696 OR [VLEWIS@ANGELAHOUSE.ORG](mailto:vlewis@angela-house.org)

from our board chair

Gregory Schockling / Board Chair



I am graciously honored to have been chosen to be the new Board Chair of Angela House. My name is Greg Schockling, and I have been on the board of directors now two and a half years, serving as Treasurer for the first two years. I was asked to come on the board by Maureen Graf and Sister Maureen last year after volunteering at Angela House for many years with my wife Judy. How can anyone say no to Sister Maureen!

Before this, I served 12 years on both the Board of Directors at Saint Agnes Academy as Treasurer, and as Board Chair for the Saint Agnes Foundation as well. My first introduction to the women of Angela House came through meeting Sister Maureen at a Saint Agnes function. Prior to this I was an energy trader at several Houston based company, and I retired from Sequent Energy Management, a Southern Company affiliate in 2017. I am also actively involved with the Knights of Columbus at our parish at Saint Laurence Catholic Church in Sugar Land,

no surprise I currently serve as Financial Secretary for our council.

If you've never had the opportunity to visit Angela House, I can't encourage you enough to stop in, set up a tour with the team there and I know you will come away with a mix of emotions that will touch your heart. Sadness, empathy, change, hope, there are so many different feelings you get from being involved that it truly is life changing. You can't help but root for all these women to succeed after being around them and talking to them.

Valencia and her team are doing amazing work, and I encourage you to take the time and set up a visit and see how lives are being changed at Angela House, and who knows maybe you will find a way to step in and volunteer! My wife Judy has an organized group of ladies from all over the city who go down once a month religiously on a Sunday and just play bunco for a couple of hours with them. They have been going down there for close to five years, and when they first started the women are like, what's this game I've never played, now? They LOVE IT and look forward to the monthly game day! I must admit I have gone several times, and it really is a great way to talk and laugh and give these women the encouragement they need.

At Angela House, these women are in a fight, to gain their lives, their dignity, their families back and the members of the board are committed to give Valencia and her team the tools they need to continue this great work. The success stories are touching, and to just help do a small part in helping them accomplish this kind of turnaround in their lives is fulfilling.

IF you have been a donor or partner with us currently or in the past, THANK YOU! If you want to learn more or contribute to Angela House , there is ways for you to do this in this newsletter.

Again, thank you for your support of these amazing women and Angela House.



staff spotlight



Please join us in celebrating Terri Powell's incredible 5-year work anniversary as House Manager at Angela House!

To know Terri is to know that acts of service are her love language—and she demonstrates that in everything she does. Whether she's procuring meals for our residents through the Houston Food Bank and local grocery stores or ensuring that there's always a warm, nourishing meal on the table, Terri's dedication is unwavering.

Beyond providing meals, Terri is a mentor, teacher, and encourager, always available to share valuable life skills and offer a supportive word when it's needed most. Her journey is a true testament to the power of second chances—first as a resident 6 years ago and now as a leader who embodies the mission of Angela House.

Terri, your commitment, strength, and compassion make a lasting impact every day. Thank you for five years of service and for being a living example that the Angela House program works for those willing to do the work!

new staff spotlight

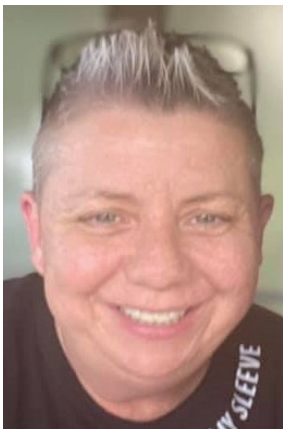


My name is Daniella, and I'm thrilled to join Angela House as the new Case Manager! From a young age, I've been deeply passionate about mental health and helping people navigate difficult emotional terrains. My commitment to mental health led me to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Psychology at Texas A&M University, providing the groundwork for my career in this field. Following graduation, I began working in a psychiatric hospital, where I gained valuable experience and learned firsthand the profound impact of empathy and compassion.

Outside of work, I enjoy expressing myself through painting, challenging myself physically with training Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and Muay Thai, and finding inner peace with doing yoga. I also cherish spending quality time with my pet labrador and cat.

My life experiences, education, and unwavering commitment to supporting others have led me to this fulfilling opportunity. I am truly honored to contribute to the valuable work of Angela House and make a positive difference in the lives of the individuals we serve.

staff spotlight



We are thrilled to announce Sarah Mabry's new position as the Aftercare Case Manager at Angela House! After six successful years as the Lead Case Manager, she will now focus on providing dedicated support to our LEVEL 3 residents and graduates.

Sarah's journey is a true testament to resilience and growth. She graduated from Angela House in 2014, served on the board for two years, and went back to school to complete her certification as a Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor. For the past six years, she has been dedicated to serving the women of Angela House.

Sarah understands the power of second chances. After overcoming adversity, she transformed her pain into purpose, using her experience in substance abuse, advocacy, and counseling to empower others on their reentry journey. Her story and her rise within Angela House prove that investing in justice-impacted women can lead to limitless possibilities. We are excited to see the continued impact Sarah will have as she leads the Aftercare Program into the future.

therapeutic write-up



What is Shame? According to Brene Brown, “Shame is the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing we are flawed and therefore unworthy of acceptance and belonging.” (I Thought It Was Just Me (but it isn’t) pg. 5). Shame keeps us stuck and we feel powerless to change or do things differently. We all experience shame and unfortunately there is no vaccine to prevent us from feeling shame. However, Shame Resilience can be learned and practiced helping us to navigate our way through shame in healthier ways.

At Angela House, I facilitate a Shame Resilience class based on Brene Brown’s aforementioned book. No one really wants to talk about shame because it can be extremely painful and requires us to be vulnerable. Vulnerability is frightening because it asks us to take a risk and trust someone or in the case of the class at Angela House a whole group! Learning how to reach out and trust someone is the process of the group and individual

therapy at Angela House. It sounds simpler than it is.

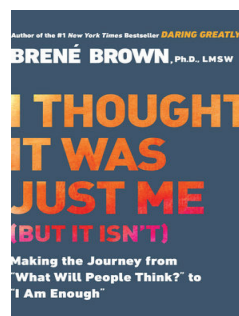
The first element of Shame Resilience requires us to Recognize shame when we experience it and then to recognize our shame triggers. Shame is initially experienced in our bodies and then we need to find ways to identify the feeling. Most of the women at Angela House have spent a lifetime learning how to distance themselves from their bodies and feelings so they do not have to feel the pain or shame of past experiences of trauma. They have worked hard at not feeling most often using drugs or other compulsive behaviors and now we are asking them to feel and to talk about their feelings. That is a big ask on our part. And it is amazing and humbling to watch as they do take a leap of faith and start talking about deeply painful experiences of shame/trauma.

The second element of Shame Resilience is Practicing Critical Awareness. This element asks us to look at the bigger picture of shame and where the shame messages are coming from and who benefits from these messages. Most importantly, it teaches us that we are not alone in this process and all of us are susceptible to living our lives trying to measure up to some unrealistic version of perfection. The third element of Shame Resilience is Reaching Out. This is probably the hardest step of Shame Resilience because again it requires us to take a risk to share what our experiences of shame have been. We need to learn how to establish healthy relationships so we have a safe circle of people we can reach out to. This takes time and trust and can result in disappointment in this process. But we can do and must do it.

The fourth element of Shame Resilience is Speaking Out. Now that we have reached out to someone we must learn to identify and talk about feelings AND then ask for what we need. This too is no easy task. These four elements of Shame Resilience require us to trust and to be vulnerable. Most of us believe that being vulnerable is only for the weak person. Most of us would rather do anything than look weak! However, being vulnerable requires Courage. This type of courage most likely isn’t in our everyday vocabulary. But courage is required to share our innermost feelings, especially those feelings of shame. Identifying our feelings, reaching out to others, and sharing our feelings are the basic tenets of Shame

Resilience. We can learn these steps and practice them every day so we can become more Resilient to Shame. That is what the women of Angela House are courageously learning to do every day.

Teresa Doyle, MA, LPC, LMFT, LCDC



thank you spotlight

Margaret O'Brien-Nelson

Angela House had the privilege of attending The Glassell School of Art Presents: The Inaugural Director's Choice Exhibition, curated by the school's director, Paul Coffey. This debut exhibition showcased the exceptional work of Margaret O'Brien-Nelson, whose art beautifully embodies the spirit and vision of the Glassell School of Art.

"For some, a figure floating face down in water may provoke anxiety; for others, it conveys tranquility. Water covers about 71 percent of the Earth's surface. Floating is a parable for life. Water is where we find balance and the expression of life as a series of buoyant experiences." — Margaret O'Brien-Nelson.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Margaret O'Brien-Nelson for this incredible opportunity. The ladies had a truly wonderful time and were deeply inspired by the experience.

BODIES OF WATER MARGARET O'BRIEN-NELSON





New Years Eve Vision Boards



Christmas lunch with Catholic Daughters of America



Sober Dates on the back of our T-shirts



Jelly Roll Concert



Mandy and Erin



PSP Christmas Movie Event



Angela House Staff Christmas



Mandy's Christmas Gift



Night at the Wortham Opera



Sister Maureen @ Friendsgiving



Wildfish Christmas Production at Angela House



Ugly Christmas Sweater Musical



Victorious furnishing her new apartment @ The Furniture Bank



Christmas Morning Santa Bags



LightHouse Church food donation

volunteer spotlight



My name is Irma Billette, formally “de la Garza”, from the Rio Grande Valley just North of the Mexican Border. I graduated from Texas Woman’s University with a Home Economics major and a degree in Education. While teaching Home Economics at Houston ISD High School, I continued my education at the University of Houston and completed a master’s degree in counseling. I worked as a school counselor for over 20 years. Three years ago, I retired from the Michael E. DeBakey High School for Health Professions where I provided academic and college counseling along with psychological support.

My retirement has allowed me to travel more and spend quality time with my husband, family and friends. I have also made the time to pursue my interests. I am now an active member of the Dominican Family of Houston. Through the Dominican Family,

I was introduced to Angela House. For about a year and a half now, I have had the pleasure of spending fun time with the residents of Angela House. Through our weekly Arts and Crafts meetings, I have enjoyed watching them create lovely crafts. I have witnessed their strength and courage on their journey to a new beginning. Getting to know them as we chat and sing along with their favorite music has always lifted my spirits. In addition to volunteering at Angela house, I am also a member of the Watercolor Art Society of Houston. I enjoy gardening, playing with our two dogs and two cats, visiting with friends, bird watching, listening to music and walking on the beach. I am blessed beyond words, and I thank the staff at Angela House for their friendship and support.

intern spotlight



Hi everyone! My name is Sol Sebastian, and I am excited to be part of Angela House as an intern. I am a student at the University of Houston-Downtown, pursuing a bachelor’s degree in social work, with plans to earn my master’s at Angelo State University. During my time here, I have witnessed the incredible commitment and engagement Angela House brings to each individual. Outside of my studies, I enjoy going on road trips, listening to music, collecting miscellaneous items, trying selective new foods, and occasionally reading. I look forward to continuing to grow, applying the skills I am gaining, and integrating them into my education. Thank you, Angela House, for this amazing opportunity!

intern spotlight



Mo Neesha Sampson-Boxie is a non-traditional Senior at Texas Southern University, earning a BS in Administration of Justice with a minor in Communication Studies. She plans to further her education by obtaining the Professional in Human Resources (PHR) and SHRM Certified Professional (SHRM-CP) certifications, along with completing an MA in Human Resources after her bachelor’s degree.

She also aspires to have extensive experience involving employee recruitment and retention, performance management, dynamic resource deployment, conflict resolution, compensation strategy, HR policy development, training and development, change management, and legal compliance.

partner spotlight



The Houston Emergency Opioid Engagement System (HEROES) recognizes that addiction affects not only the individual but also their family, friends, and other loved ones. Gaining a deeper understanding of addiction and developing effective management skills is crucial for those supporting friends or family members in their journey toward long-term recovery.

HEROS has been continuously funded since 2018 and has enrolled more than 1,500 individuals, distributed more than 4,000 units of Narcan across the state of Texas, provided educational programs reaching nearly 12,000 and has served over 30,000 in all awareness,

education, primary prevention, and treatment efforts.

HEROES offers support and resources to residents of Angela House through a weekly group meeting focused on substance use disorder. This session is led by skilled staff from UT Health Houston, who are well-versed in the recovery process and provide valuable insights to those in attendance.

community partnership



The Women's Resource empowers women and girls to make informed choices that lead to financial independence, stability, and productivity. Through their programs, participants gain essential financial knowledge, skills, and confidence to make sound decisions that improve their lives—both for themselves and for future generations.

For the 2.8 million Houstonians experiencing financial distress, The Women's Resource provides training and coaching, meeting women and girls where they are. Their mission is to inspire financial change, improve financial health, and enhance overall well-being for individuals and families. They envision a future where every woman and girl has the knowledge and hope needed to achieve her financial goals. Angela House has been proud to partner with The Women's Resource for the past five years. Their invaluable services have supported our residents on their journey of recovery, providing them with the financial tools and education necessary for a fresh start.

resident accomplishments



Irene received her birth certificate and her HOT ID.



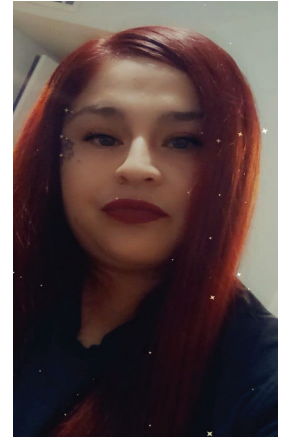
Dru finished her college semester on the Dean's list



Deloris received her HOT ID and is getting a whole new smile from HHH Dental



Stacy leveled up to level 2 and is currently looking for employment



Danielle started her new job at Wag N' World as a dog handler.



Heather Capen’s journey with Angela House began in July 2022, culminating in her graduation in March 2023. While residing at Angela House she secured employment at Katz’s. Heather started as a waitress, but was recognized for her hard work and dedication and was quickly promoted to Manager. Since then, Heather has achieved significant milestones: she has joyfully reunited with her younger daughter, moved into her own rental property, and diligently worked to improve her credit score. Demonstrating incredible financial responsibility, she also paid off all her probation fees, a total of \$8,000. Looking towards the future, Heather plans to register for college part-time to further her career in business management. We are incredibly proud of all she has accomplished and the positive influence she continues to have on our current residents. Next time you are in the area, please swing by Katz’s on Westheimer and share an encouraging word with Heather!

Angela House Grads

As our residents reach the significant milestone of their 18-month graduation, we experience a mixture of joy and bittersweet emotions. It’s heartwarming to see them prepare for the next chapter of their lives, yet it brings a sense of sadness to know they won’t be walking the halls of Angela House everyday. We genuinely hope that as they move forward, the lessons they’ve learned, the connections they’ve made, and the inner strength they’ve developed remain with them.

May they carry the spirit of Angela House in their hearts, always remembering that the most meaningful adventures await them when they embrace life with courage and an open heart. In the past two months, we have been proud to witness four residents transition out on their own: Victorious, Ashlee, Vallerie, and Santana. We are excited to celebrate their achievements at the Lunch with a Graduate on February 26, where we will hear about their unique journeys, experiences, and the steps they’ve taken in their recovery. If you would like to attend Lunch with a Graduate please call Sarah @ 281.445.9696 or email her smabry@angelahouse.org.

Lunch with A Graduate

February 26, 2025

We would love to have you join us as we celebrate our recent graduates

- Victorious S.
- Ashlee R.
- Vallerie B.
- Santana J.

If you are interested in attending please email - smabry@angelahouse.org



“My experience in recovery at Angela House has been a deeply personal journey of growth, marked by challenges and triumphs. I actively worked to develop coping mechanisms, built a strong support system and prioritized my mental and emotional wellbeing. Doing this, is leading me to a more fulfilling life free from the constraints of addiction. I now have a relationship with my son again, too!”

Vallerie B.

“Angela House has changed my entire life! I would not be where I am at today without this program or the amazing staff that have loved me and helped me grow from day one! I am so sad to leave but more excited to see how the next chapter of my life unfolds.

Ashlee R.



Honoring Sister Maureen O’Connell, OP

Angela House was founded in December 2001 by Sister Maureen O’Connell, OP, in honor of her late sister-in-law, Angela M. Schneider-O’Connell. With a career dedicated to service and justice, Sister Maureen spent 13 years as a police officer in Chicago before transitioning into social work, where she served for 17 years as both a Clinical Service Coordinator and a Victim Assistance Coordinator. Through these roles—and her volunteer work—she witnessed firsthand the lack of compassion within the system toward formerly incarcerated individuals. Determined to address this need, Sister Maureen established Angela House, creating a comprehensive program to support women as they reentered society. She rooted her mission in Catholic social teaching, embracing its seven core themes: the life and dignity of the human person; the call to family, community, and participation; rights and responsibilities; the option for the poor and vulnerable; the dignity of work and the rights of workers; solidarity; and care for God’s creation.

Born and raised in Chicago, Sister Maureen embodied the motto “To Protect and Serve” during her tenure as a police officer from 1966 to 1977, spending much of her career in the youth division before becoming a detective in the vice division. Inspired by her aunt, an Adrian Dominican Sister, she felt called to religious life after witnessing the deep suffering caused by poverty and a lack of access to resources. She entered the Adrian Dominican congregation in 1977, professing her first vows in 1980. Sister Maureen arrived in Houston in 1982, where she earned a Master’s degree in Social Work from the University of Houston. She went on to serve as manager of the child sexual abuse program and Clinical Services Coordinator at The Children’s Assessment Center, as well as a therapist for the Family Service Center.

In 2001, she founded Angela House, a transitional housing program in southeast Houston that provides formerly incarcerated women with a safe place to heal and rebuild their lives. At the same time, she served as the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston’s first Victim Assistance Coordinator from 2002 to 2018.

Many of the women at Angela House suffer from untreated mental health issues, addictions, and long histories of trauma. Her vision and compassion continue to inspire Angela House’s mission, ensuring that every woman who walks through its doors has the support she needs to transform her life.



Save the Date!

**Opening Doors Luncheon
Benefitting Angela House**

Tuesday, April 22, 2025
The Junior League
1811 Briar Oaks Lane
Houston, Texas 77027

We look forward to seeing you!

**For more information email
lhubbard@angelahouse.org**

\$19,500

HELPS PROVIDE
TRANSITIONAL HOUSING AND
SUPPORT SERVICES FOR ONE
FORMERLY INCARCERATED
WOMAN FOR ONE YEAR

42

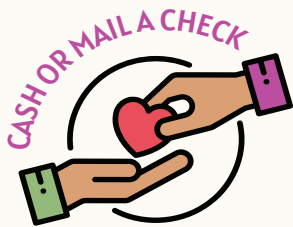
is the
average
age of our
residents.

592 women served

8111 VOLUNTEER HOURS



Giving at Angela House



You can donate
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card or mail.



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essentials.
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