

### From the desk of the Executive Director:



*Julie Ann Avin, President*

So much has happened at MIRCI since our last newsletter in November 2016, I'm not sure where to begin with giving you an update! With plans for our new youth and young adult programs, we needed more space. As luck, or divine intervention, would have it, we were able to purchase an office building at 1408 Gregg Street – right across the street from the facility that is now our Youth Drop-in Center. Before the end of November, the administrative and operations staff moved into this new building; and the Friendship Center returned to its previous location at our Rosewood Drive facility.

The month of December was spent installing a commercial kitchen and updating our facility at 1433 Gregg Street to become the Youth Drop-in Center. On January 26th, we held the grand opening of this new Drop-in Center. Over 100 supporters came out to join us in the grand opening, and to celebrate the efforts to address homelessness early and prevent it from becoming chronic.

As I so often tell friends and associates, I'm honored to work for such a progressive agency. That progression starts at the top, with our Board of Directors that has proven time and time again to be willing to step up and lead the way in addressing critical issues in our community. The leadership and support of this group of volunteer Board members made it possible for MIRCI to open its Youth Drop-in Center.

The Youth Drop-in Center will be OPEN every day of the year. It will be OPEN to any youth seeking safety. It will be OPEN to provide a nurturing environment, free of judgment. It will be OPEN to meet young people where they are and help them escape the cycle of chronic homelessness and prevent the trauma of homelessness from developing into a lifelong emotional or mental health struggle. Our youth are our future, and MIRCI is OPEN to equip our youth to embrace their future and make our community as strong and progressive as it can be.

With so much accomplished over these past few months, I'm eager to continue our development of even more programs that will be OPEN to serving youth and young adults. Watch for news of MIRCI's progress in the coming months as we develop housing alternatives for the youth in our community – for our future.



Thank you to everyone who attended the Grand Opening on January 26, 2017

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## Wish List for Youth Drop-in Center

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- ◆ Notebooks
- ◆ Notebook paper
- ◆ Socks
- ◆ Backpacks
- ◆ Kitchen Knives
- ◆ New Commercial Washer
- ◆ New Commercial Dryer
- ◆ Gently used scrubs
- ◆ Laundry baskets
- ◆ Laundry drying rack
- ◆ Towels
- ◆ Washcloths
- ◆ Bathmats
- ◆ Lotion
- ◆ Facial moisturizer
- ◆ Shower shoes
- ◆ Spikeball set
- ◆ Cornhole set
- ◆ Board games
- ◆ Playing cards
- ◆ Gently used books
- ◆ Gaming systems, controllers, and games
- ◆ Streaming movie player
- ◆ Movies



All donations can be dropped off at  
**MIRCI'S Youth Drop-in Center**  
**1433 Gregg Street**  
**Columbia, South Carolina 29201**

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The poster has a green background with white swirl patterns. In the center is a white circle containing a stylized green logo of a person with arms raised, with the word "WINDOWS" in green below it. Below the logo, the text "An Evening of Art" is written in a white, elegant serif font, followed by "to Benefit MIRCI" in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. At the bottom, a dark green horizontal bar contains the text "\$75 per person | \$125 per couple" in white, and below that, "Advance Tickets Available through [www.mirci.org](http://www.mirci.org)" in a smaller white font.

Featuring the Art of:  
Megan Carn, Walker Covin,  
Bill Davis, Alicia Leek,  
Lisa Puryear Gibson,  
Alice Klaas, Miles Purvis,  
Kevin Smith, Jan Swanson,  
Jackie Vazquez!!

Thursday, MAY 11, 2017  
701 Whaley  
6:00-9:00 PM

## Client Story



### No Place Like Home

Chronic homelessness was not something Rodney thought he would experience. He had lived on a fixed income of SSI for many years following a disability application in his early twenties. From time to time he struggled with symptoms, but he had not experienced homelessness until he moved from North Carolina to South Carolina in 2005 to support his mother when she was ill. When she recovered, she became

*“I stayed with family and friends but that don’t last long.”*

connected with public housing which has restrictions on visitors, so Rodney was not able to stay. “I stayed with family and friends but that don’t last long.” After some time living in abandoned houses and on porches, he got a bed at Transitions shelter. He worked through the program. “I did okay there, and then found a place with a friend, but it didn’t last. When I tried to get my own place, they said I had to make double the amount of rent. I only have my disability, so that didn’t work.” Eventually, Rodney returned to Transitions again, and engaged with MIRCI’s outreach team. After eleven years of instability, Rodney moved into his own apartment on September 2, 2016. He expresses his relief and gratitude, “I got a roof over my head! Now I have to take care of other essentials. My biggest problem right now is trying to find a dentist”, Rodney quips. All jokes aside, he is taking his recovery from homelessness very seriously. Upon receiving permanent housing, he entered into MIRCI’s Representative Payee Program for assistance with budgeting; remains focused on his treatment, and attends groups several times a week. “I won’t go back to that life,” Rodney states. I found out the hard way, but people need to know anybody can become homeless.”



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH **GIVE LOCAL AMERICA!**

**Tuesday, May 2, 2017!**

By giving to MIRCI through Midlands Gives you can help more people just like Rodney. All funds raised will support the housing and homeless programs of MIRCI. MIRCI impacts the community by helping individuals with mental illness break the cycle of homelessness. 85% remain housed at least one year.

**MIRCI Donors:  
November 2016—January 2017**

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**In Honor Of:  
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**In Honor of Sally Turner, Mike Herring, &  
Michael & Tracey Avin**

Steve Von Hollen & Julie Ann Avin

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Frank Clark, Jr.

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**In Honor of Buck Free & Jeanne Selander**

Jenny & Danny Scott

**In Honor of Ross & Lindsay Shelnett**

Jenny & Danny Scott

**In Memory Of:  
November 2016—January 2017**

**In Memory of Addy S. Price**

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**In Memory of Ted A. Crosby, Ruth J. Saun-  
ders, & Ruth P. Tilley**

Ruthie P. Saunders, PhD

**In Memory of Katherine Matthews**

Glenn Matthews, III

