

From the desk of the Executive Director:



Julie Ann Avin, President

As we are putting together this edition of our newsletter, we are also working on our first evaluation of the federal grant that is funding our new Youth Drop-in Center. I have to say I have been amazed at how quickly this new program has not only become operational, but also how much greater the need for it is than we even imagined. Since our grand opening on January 26th, we've had 70 youth to use the Drop-in Center. Based on data from previous point in time homeless counts and other youth serving agencies, we projected the Center would have 75 annually use the facility. Obviously the need is much greater than expected.

All of the folks using the Center have been entered into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) which places them on the Coordinated Entry System for perhaps qualifying for financially assisted housing.

Of those using the Center, 23% are now in housing – either permanent or transitional. A few are staying in homeless shelters, but 69% are unhoused. In our April Steering Committee meeting for the Youth Drop-in Center, which is comprised of partner agencies addressing youth transitioning from homelessness, the number one need identified in our community is more youth specific shelter and housing.

When MIRCI applied for the federal funding to develop the Youth Drop-in Center, we committed to achieving two main goals. Goal #1 is to deliver recovery based services to homeless youth, with emphasis on behavioral healthcare, housing services, employment/vocational services, and education. Goal #2 is to expand and enhance the local Columbia Metro infrastructure to improve and enhance service delivery for homeless youth.

We have over 20 partner agencies committed to providing various services, behavioral healthcare, employment/vocational services, and educational services. We have partner agencies that provide financially assisted housing and housing services. What we do not have is enough housing or shelter. This is affirming of the 3 Year Strategic Plan adopted by MIRCI's Board of Directors in January 2016. This plan includes goals and objectives for MIRCI to develop housing options for youth age 17 to 24.

At this time, we've received notification from HUD of a new grant award that will allow MIRCI to voucher youth into conventional apartment units. We are almost through the design phase for the development of a 10 bedroom home for youth/young men transitioning from homelessness on our 1813 Washington Street property.

We've learned that United Way of the Midlands, as the lead agency for the Midlands Area Consortium for the Homeless (MACH), along with the member agencies of MACH, will be receiving dedicated technical assistance from HUD to develop a detailed plan for addressing youth homelessness, including the development of housing options.

While the challenges appear great, I must admit I'm encouraged that our midlands community began planning to address the needs of youth homelessness; that we have strong community partner agencies; that we have committed support from the City Columbia; and that we have leadership from United Way of the Midlands. The work will be hard, but with ALL of us working together, we WILL find the ways and means to assist our youth – our future.

Inside this issue:

From the E D	1
52 Windows / Volunteer	2
Client Story / Midlands Gives	3
Donors	4



Like us on
[Facebook.com/MIRCISC](https://www.facebook.com/MIRCISC)



Follow us on Twitter
[@MIRCISC](https://twitter.com/MIRCISC)



Follow us on Instagram
[@mirciydc](https://www.instagram.com/mirciydc)



52 WINDOWS An Evening of Art



An Evening of Art

to Benefit MIRCI

701 WHALEY • 5.11.17 • 6:00-9:00 PM • MIRCI.org

Celebrate the beauty of art that supports the minds of those in need.

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

Tickets on Sale Now!!!

For more info visit www.miric.org



There are many ways to get involved to help MIRCI with its mission to provide community based services to individuals recovering from severe mental illness or emotional disorders in the Midlands of South Carolina!

To learn more about volunteering with MIRCI

Please visit www.MIRCI.org

Client Story: The Dickson Family: Love Will Keep Us Together

Marshall Dickson reminisces of his and Tonia's meeting thirty one years ago. "I was at the dispatch center when Tonia called in to report her sister having an accident- I'm the one who helped her save her sister's life." They met in person at the hospital when Marshall went to visit her sister. Marshall gave Tonia a ride home that day, and they've been together ever since.

Marshall had a long career in the field of security, fire, and rescue until health conditions created a need for him to apply for Social Security Disability. The family lived in a small house in Columbia at the time, so the family income was decreased. Tonia reflects on what brought them to MIRCI. "We just left our house because we couldn't afford the rent, and the electric bill got so high we felt like we couldn't stay there any more so we went to Transitions." While in Transitions, MIRCI's outreach team made contact and worked with the couple toward entrance into MIRCI's permanent supportive housing, and services for Tonia.

Four years later, the Dickson's continue to enjoy their apartment, and have now both participated in therapeutic services from MIRCI. They are valued members of their church, and participate in community activities as well as special projects through church. Their son, Neil, makes regular visits to his parents' home on weekends, and Marshall and Tonia visit their daughter, Amber regularly at her group home, as well.

Tonia states, "I hope we don't ever have to go through something like living in a shelter again." Marshall and Tonia's story examines the rapid pace at which one can become homeless. However, this couple has managed to keep their faith and keep their family together throughout their struggles, and is thankful for the opportunity to share their experiences with others.



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH **GIVE LOCAL AMERICA!**

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

By giving to MIRCI through Midlands Gives you can help more families just like the Dickson family. 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: January 2017—March 2017

Pete Bailey
Reed & Shannon Biggers
Christ the King Lutheran Church WELCA
Corey & Joanna Biggers
Jason Bristol
Helmut Cawthon
Dennis Cook
Walker Covin
Bill Davis
Kathy Edwards
Nathalie Eison
Frances Everingham
Katie Fessler
Marion & Rosemary Frick
Justin Frierson
Shirley Furtick
Gene & Lois Green
Sarah Boyd Horne
Kristen & Chad Horne
William Horsman
Zealy Jenkins

Betsy Johnson
Eric Kemp
Maria Madeo & Jeff Koob
Christel & William Lamb
Pamela Lawrence
Dolores Macey, PhD
Councilman Bill Malinowski
Don & Jenn McCalister
Beth Argent & Shane McName
David Melnyk
Woody Moore
Stefanie Seebauer
Shareece Rivers
Jenny & Danny Scott
Phillip & Cindy Smith
Lebanon Presbyterian Church
Lesia Smith
Charmelle Staples
Kerry Stubbs
Shannon Tallent
Ritchie Tidwell
Bill Tindall

Lee & Jackie Walburn
Laurie Walden
Anastasia Walker
Jane Wannamaker
Richard Widdifield

In Memory of Donors:

In Memory of Dena Bank

Herbert & Barbara Frank

Corporate Donors:

Blackbaud Cares Center
Colliers International SC, Inc.
Dial, Dunlap, & Edwards, LLC
Leesburg Road Convenience
Loose Lucy's

