

New Beginnings News

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Winter 2017



SAVE THE DATE:

New Beginnings 2017 Annual Dinner

Wednesday
April 26, 2017

Martindale - Auburn, ME

Contact Rachel Spencer-Reed for sponsorship info: (207) 795-4077

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“The best phone call I ever made”

Today, Katie* is a 20-year old single mom working her way through college. But just 5 years ago, she was a scared 15-year-old from central Maine, pregnant, on her own, and feeling like her dreams were slipping away. After she found out she was pregnant, Katie moved in with her adult sister who was able to help her with the baby so she could stay in school.

But by fall of her senior year of high school, things began to unravel. Katie found herself spending more hours at work and less time at school to keep a roof over her head.

“I just couldn’t keep up with school, work, and my daughter,” said Katie, “and my sister and I couldn’t keep up with the rent.”

At age 18, Katie and her 3-year-old daughter became homeless. When the eviction notice came, Katie turned to her high school guidance counselor for help. Together, they made the phone call to New Beginnings.

“It was the best phone call I ever made. I didn’t know if they could help me but I had nothing left to lose,” said Katie.

**Youth’s name changed to protect confidentiality*

Since she was 18 and had a child, Katie was eligible to live in a New Beginnings’ Transitional Living Program (TLP) apartment for parenting youth in Augusta.

When she came to the TLP, Katie was struggling to find the balance between home, work, school, and parenting her daughter. She knew that she wanted to become a nurse one day, but she couldn’t see the path to get there as a teen parent.

Katie worked with her case manager on a

focus on my education, job, and raising my daughter” said Katie.

Katie graduated from high school with honors. She was able to complete her CNA certificate through her high school, and was offered a full-time CNA position at a local nursing home after graduation.

Katie received enough scholarships and financial aid to pay for most of her first year of college at the University of Maine. Her case manager helped Katie research nearby child care—once she knew

Thanks to New Beginnings, I learned that I could juggle being a mom, student, and start a career.

I don't know where we would be without them.

plan with a series of achievable goals: to graduate high school, start college, enroll her daughter in preschool, and to find a job as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) and keep it.

“When we put the plan on paper I could finally see that—when I wasn’t so worried about a roof over my head—I could

her daughter was safe and well cared for, Katie was able to focus on her job. Within three months of starting, she was awarded employee of the month.

With stable employment, Katie was able to save up money and buy a reliable car, allowing her the independence to work more and take her daughter on outings and to medical

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The best call, *continued from page 1*

appointments without having to rely on other people for rides. During her second year of college, a change at the University's Nursing Program resulted in Katie receiving much less financial aid. Katie was able to apply to the New Beginnings' Dot Larrabee Youth Development Fund for a scholarship to cover her books so she could stay in school.

After successfully completing her 18-month stay at the TLP, Katie decided

to move to be closer to her extended family. Katie and her daughter are now living and paying rent for their very own 2-bedroom apartment, her daughter is in preschool, and Katie works full-time as a CNA while pursuing her dream to become a Nurse (RN).

"Thanks to New Beginnings, I learned that I could juggle being a mom, student, and starting a career," says Katie, "I don't want to think about where we would be without them."



In December 2016, New Beginnings' Board of Directors elected **Julie Buffington** as a new member (pictured above at a recent Board dinner at the Transitional Living Program). Julie is the Senior Vice President and Chief Retail Officer at Androscoggin Bank in Lewiston, and she is excited to be involved and serving an agency focused on helping vulnerable youth. Welcome, Julie!

Thank You to our 2016 In-Kind and Holiday Drive Donors:

Your donations of holiday gifts, household goods, food, hygiene items, socks, gift cards, services, & more have made a huge difference for New Beginnings youth over the past year. **Thank you**— we couldn't do all we do without you!

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|--|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Agren Appliance | Elizabeth Durand | Susan & Fergus Lea | Prince of Peace Parish youth |
| American Legion Post 135 | Mark & Sheila Ferguson | Del Leonard | Lisa Pugh |
| Bates College Library staff | Michael Foglietta | Sharon Lewis | Heidi Pushard, Esq. |
| Bath Youth Meeting & Skatepark | Forage Market | Lewiston HS STEP Program | Rainbow Bicycle & Fitness |
| Becket House Residential | Michael Fralich | Lewiston Eagles Club | Rainbow League at UMF |
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| Dr. Josephine Conte | Hip Nana Creations | Paychex | Shaws, Great Falls, GenNext Group, & Lewiston Bates Mill |
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| | | Linda Prescott | Avery Wolfe & Riley Hopkins |

Agency News Briefs:

Annual Campaign Success:

We love our supporters! Over 200 dedicated and new donors gave generously to exceed our \$30,000 goal for the 2016 Annual Fund! Special thanks to Carolyn Burke, Rainbow FCU, Mechanics Savings Bank, Owen Larrabee & Melissa Albertson, Dr. Kurt Oswald, Candy & Dwayne Sanborn, Northeast Bank, Liberty Mutual Insurance, our anonymous major donors, and everyone who contributed—every gift makes a difference. Thank you!

New Hires: New Beginnings is pleased to welcome Michael Suter, TLP Program Coordinator; Sophie Roblin, TLP Youthworker; and Christopher Balderas, MeTLC Program Coordinator to our team!

Annual Meeting: The Board of Directors will hold their annual meeting and election at 5 pm on April 26, 2017 at Martindale in Auburn, immediately prior to the Celebration Dinner.

Prevention Conference: We are once again co-sponsor for the 12th Annual Maine Comprehensive Sexuality Conference on April 7, 2017 at the Augusta Civic Center. Details and prevention trainings info at www.newbeginmaine.org.

Wish List

Can you help the Drop-In clinic by donating any of the following?

Medical-grade standing adult scale

Infant scale

Rolling Doctor's stool

Metal tool cabinet on wheels with locking drawers

If you can help, please call

207-795-4077

to arrange a donation drop-off.

Questions? Contact Dr. Josie at contejo1@cmhc.org

Volunteer Spotlight: Dr. Josephine Conte

“Dr. Josie,” as she likes to be called, has transformed an office at the Drop-In Center into a welcoming, quiet space with warm lamplight, curtains for privacy, a cozy rug, and the gentle bubbling sound of a tabletop fountain. The only clues that this is an informal clinic are the women’s health charts on the wall and the treatment table with a paper runner topping a handmade quilt.

An osteopathic physician and integrative medicine faculty member at Central Maine Medical Center (CMMC) Family Medicine Residency, Dr. Josie has been volunteering at New Beginnings for the past year to improve youths’ access to health care and wellness. “I first heard about New Beginnings from our residency faculty who’d been doing volunteer projects like painting and landscaping for years,” she said, “Once I knew about your mission and services, I thought—*how could we help with healthcare too?*”

For the past six months Josie has come weekly to the Drop-in Center to be a medical “eyes and ears” for youth from any of New Beginnings’ programs.

“My focus is relationship-informed care. If there aren’t kids here to see me, I help out in the kitchen and get to know people,” says Josie, “I want to become a familiar face so they’ll feel comfortable.”

She’s had 40 visits so far with youth who’ve had musculoskeletal, skin, or respiratory complaints or

questions about mental health, substance abuse, reproductive health, or follow-up care after an injury or hospitalization. About half don’t have a primary care provider; the rest that *do* have a doctor can’t see them due to cost or the challenges of being homeless.

Josie’s services support New Beginnings’ harm reduction philosophy – nearly all the youth she sees wouldn’t have been checked otherwise. Going to see Josie offers a non-threatening way youth can get help *before* things are bad enough for urgent care or the ER.



Seeing me here weekly lets them know that I'm a safe person.

My goal is to make a connection.

Their stories need to be heard.

Josie also provides preventative care. “One of the things I have been offering are Epsom and essential oil foot soaks,” says Josie. “These young men and women are on their feet all day, every day, in poor footwear and their feet really take a beating. The soaks feel good, and let the youth know that they’re important and their body is worth taking care of. Plus, we can talk while they soak if they want.”

“Unlike in a traditional clinic, here I can spend as much time as we need. At first they may ask about a sore throat, but later on they begin to talk about a mental health issue. I’m glad to be able to help with both! It’s a privilege to hear people’s stories, especially young people who are scared or don’t usually have people they can trust.”

“I find young people fascinating and full of life, and I really want to be of service. Kids have an amazing ability to heal and be resilient. I hope that by offering earlier screening here, we can reduce their incidence of future problems as they become older adults.”

Eventually, Josie would like to see a full clinic at New Beginnings, but for now her Drop-In hours (Thursdays 4:30-6:30) are helping. When youth need additional treatment they can easily see Dr. Conte at CMMC’s Family Medicine Clinic nearby at 76 High Street.

“I want to ‘walk the talk’ of helping people who are underserved,” says Josie. “I love volunteering here. We’re all working to teach people that they have a voice in this world.”

NEW BEGINNINGS, INC.
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Annual Celebration Dinner
April 26, 2017
Martindale - Auburn, ME

Get great visibility for your business while making a difference for homeless youth!

Call 207-795-4077 or get details at WWW.NEWBEGINMAINE.ORG

New Services for LGBTQ Youth

Do you know of a youth ages 18-21 who is at risk for homelessness and identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer?

As part of the Maine Transitional Living Collaborative (MeTLC), New Beginnings now offers comprehensive case management and housing specifically for LGBTQ youth in Androscoggin, Kennebec, & Franklin counties.

For more information or to make a referral, please contact Program Coordinator Christopher Balderas at 207-795-6048 x 226 or topher@newbeginmaine.org.



NEW BEGINNINGS IS HIRING!



Want to make a difference?

Join our staff!

Our dedicated staff play a critical role in the lives of the youth we serve. If you care about making sure that vulnerable young people have the **safety, connections, and growth** they need to thrive, please check out our current job openings at [www.newbeginmaine.org!](http://www.newbeginmaine.org)