



# HYACINTH'S PLACE: 2013 ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2013

*Breaking the Cycle of Homelessness . . . . Starting on the Path to Independence.*

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### A Note From Our Executive Director:

It has been two years since Hyacinth's Place opened its doors to homeless women with a mental health diagnosis. Our four level olive green building stands majestically amidst a mixture of small businesses and residential homes. As land-owners for the past nine years, we have seen significant growth in this community. There are new housing complexes where once there were abandoned buildings and a sense of rebirth in an area now marked for development. At Hyacinth's Place, there is as similar sense of progress.

We have created "something good" in Hyacinth's Place. I never dreamt I would be working with eighteen volunteers. So many have opened their hearts, their wallets, and have given unstintingly of their time. People have reached out to Hyacinth's Place from all corners of the tri-state area and from every discipline. This display of the kindness of the human spirit is invaluable for the women of Hyacinth's Place.

2013 at Hyacinth's Place has been marked by "unexpected acts of kindness." At the beginning of the year, a young man from Finland, and the husband of an energetic American woman who volunteers for us, assumed control of Hyacinth's Place website and continues to do a sterling job. His wife also organized a "Happy Hour" at a local restaurant/bar to raise funds and promote our work. A mother of disabled children, with health challenges of her own, produced a number of well written grants on behalf of Hyacinth's Place. A Pastor who is also a psychologist provided counseling once a week to our women. By year's end, we had a volunteer chef for each day of the week. Savory aromas permeated our building on a daily basis. A twenty-something year old student from Gallaudet University came anytime we called to provide sign language services for one of our hearing impaired women - and I can go on and on. However, the Big Bang that ended 2013 was a 28 year old Marine who arrived on Christmas Eve with 15 huge gift bags, one for each woman of Hyacinth's Place.

In 2013, we opened Hyacinth's Place to the wider community for a "Day of Appreciation and Empowerment of Women". Our guest speaker Greta Kreuz, ABC7/WJLA-TV, had everyone captivated with her passionate presentation. Community representatives and officials in attendance commended Hyacinth's Place for its unique approach to addressing the issue of homelessness and mental illness.

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*I owe a great deal of gratitude to the staff and volunteers of Hyacinth's Place. Without their dedication, commitment and kindness it would have been extremely difficult to keep our doors open.*

*Ladies & Gentlemen: I appreciate you and I thank you.*

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*"I shall pass this way but once; any good therefore that I can do, or any kindness that I can show; let me not defer nor neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."  
Etienne de Grellet (1773-1855); Quaker Missionary*

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The challenge with which one is presented sometimes test the limits of endurance and one's ability to continue to function efficiently. In 2013, we had our fair share of such challenges, but we endured. The funding market for public charities such as Hyacinth's Place was limited to the extreme. One government grant that was awarded in early 2013 has not yet been disbursed. When money became an issue, Grace and Mercy stepped in and our doors remained open. Our women continued their rehabilitation unaware of our precarious plight. We began our supportive services program, the Behavioral and Therapeutic Services Program, without disruption to the women who remain happily oblivious of how near we were to the abyss of financial shutdown.

As a public charity, Hyacinth's Place approaches 2014 with confidence, optimism, and realistic plans to sustain itself and move our women towards the future they have defined for themselves. The lessons of 2013 have taught us to "walk in faith, and not by sight, while doing what we know is right." The year in review has reinforced my faith in the kindness of others. It has justified my belief that adopting basic humanitarian principles will result in positive outcomes.

Many thanks to all our friends, volunteers, and supporters for your continued interest and prayers for the work of Hyacinth's Place.

Urla Barrow

Executive Director

Hyacinth's Place, A Project of the Institute on Urban Living.

### A Reflection on How Things Came to Be

At the age of 17, I was diagnosed with Bipolar Disorder and severe mood swings. If I took my medication, I managed to stay very stable. I tried to build a home with men that I thought loved me, however, my relationships failed. I did not always take my medicine and there was a lot of abuse. I turned to alcohol, and for years I stayed in relationships that were abusive but there was always a lot of alcohol. I kept and lost jobs. I kept and lost homes. But I stayed away from my family because I was ashamed of who I had become.



Hyacinth's Place Dining Room

Eventually, I could no longer keep a home, a job, or a man, and I ended up on the streets for a very long time. I didn't want to go to a shelter, my life was a mess and I had a lot of hurt. None of my relatives or my children knew where I was. I met a lot of men and women like myself during this period of my life, and sometimes, we helped each other. There were many days I did not eat; I was a very different person. I am sure my family would not have recognized me if they saw me and I really did not care if I lived or died.

"Sometimes I felt like I knew every street in DC. I have walked and slept on these streets in good weather and in bad."

*Dee Dee – Hyacinth's Place Resident*

One day I collapsed in the streets and woke up in the hospital. I was very sick for a long time. I had pneumonia and other complications. A social worker started working with me when I was feeling better, to get my life back together. I still would not allow her to contact my family. She helped me to register with a mental health agency and I was discharged to a shelter

where I made myself a promise to get back on my feet and stay there.

When I came to Hyacinth's Place, I made contact with my family. I am working on rebuilding my relationships. The years of living on the streets, bad relationships, and alcohol has left me more fragile than I first realized. I cannot explain my lost years to my family and they cannot understand what happened. I am taking my medication now and I am doing better – I have not touched alcohol for three years. Having my own unit is a beautiful thing because it allows me the time to heal and fully understand my illness. I now visit my mother who is living in a retirement home and she visits me sometimes. I speak with my daughter often and I am hoping one day that I can make sense of what happened with my life. I attend groups at Hyacinth's Place that allow me to discuss some of the feelings I cannot understand. I know my road back to my own apartment is long but I feel as if I have the help to get myself back there.

*Dee Dee, Hyacinth's Place Resident*



### I Do Not Have A Mental Illness

Her thick wavy hair was pulled back in a puffy pony tail and her face was plain without any make-up. No lipstick, no earrings, nothing. She was dressed in a T- shirt and slack fitting blue jeans. She appeared to be about thirty years of age.

Lucille was interviewing for one of Hyacinth's Place affordable housing units in this supportive living program. The interviewing team explained the criteria for residency. "You must be homeless and you must have a mental health diagnosis." Her face turned bright red. "Oh!" She said, "I live in the shelter but I am not mentally ill .... I don't have a diagnosis."

Having received the referral from a licensed social worker at the shelter, we decided to follow through with the interview. Less than five minutes in, when asked a simple, non-intrusive question, Lucille just sat quietly while her huge eyes welled up and the tears began to flow. Once that flood gate opened, there was no stopping it.

This has been our only interview where the candidate spoke to us from beginning to end through tears. Lucille was the oldest of four girls from a middle-class suburban family. She was the only unmarried daughter. Her sisters all had the white picket fence homes, husbands, kids, and 'perfect lives'. Her mother was a retired airline employee who had moved out of state after Lucille's alcoholic father died.

Lucille held three different well-paying jobs over the years. One was with the federal government and she had her own apartment in a high end neighborhood. She walked out of all three because whenever confronted with a challenge she would hear voices. One was her mother's, and she would be yelling, "I'm working this crappy job so you will never have to take crap from anybody!"

When asked if she was ever abused, Lucille's tears were her answer, the words could not pass her lips. We decided to end the interview. The social worker slipped her a card and said, "Please go to this address, they will give you your diagnosis."

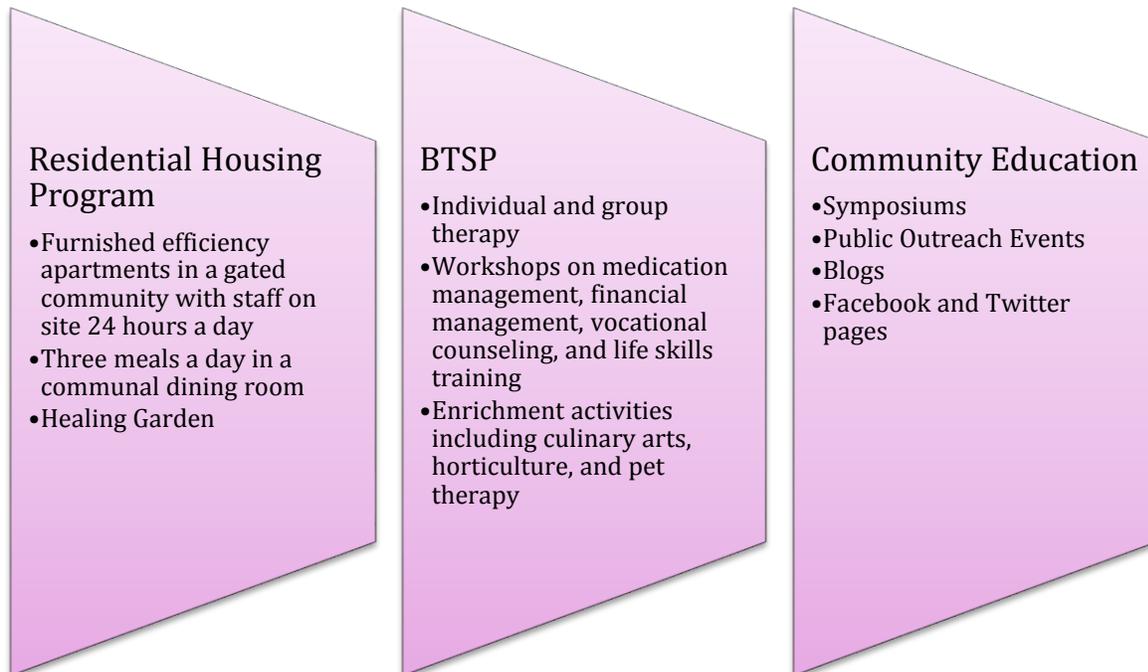
Lucille was admitted to our program. After one year she stabilized emotionally and she is now in the final phase of completing a very intensive training program which promises to place her in an internship and then a job.

Urla, Executive Director

## Our Services

### DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

We believe that every person has a purpose. Our desire is to see our clients soar unencumbered by their mental illness, housing crisis, and social stigma. Without these impeding factors, our clients are able to achieve their life purposes. Hyacinth's Place provides a way to eliminate these distracting factors through the following three means. Our **Residential Housing Program** provides the necessary platform of safe, affordable housing so that our clients are able to focus on their emotional issues. We are proud that our Residential Housing Program meets the best practices set forth by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. We instituted the **Behavioral and Therapeutic Services Program (BTSP)** to provide our clients with the necessary therapy and skills to assist them in becoming productive members of society despite their sustained histories of abuse and mental illness. Our **Community Education Program** is offered through the BTSP. Our purpose in initiating this portion of the BTSP is to combat the stigma associated with mental illness, homelessness, and domestic abuse. We developed the BTSP in accordance with the recommendations from the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration regarding supportive services provided in a permanent supportive housing setting.



## SERVICE HIGHLIGHTS

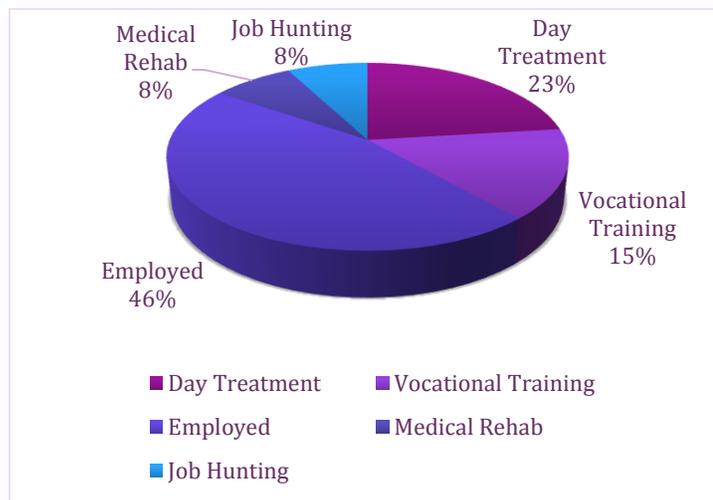
**Residential Facilities:** This year our residential program provided housing to twenty clients and over 9,000 meals to our residents. Some highlights of this year are:

- Ninety percent (90%) of our clients have remained in permanent housing.
- Expansion of the Healing Garden to include 8 evergreen trees and 1 Japanese maple.

**Behavioral and Therapeutic Services Program (BTSP)** blossomed this year:

Highlights include:

- 92% of our current residents are either working, in a day treatment, vocational training, or medical rehabilitation program



- 60% of our current residents have become mentally stable enough to work and are either working part time or are in a vocational training program.
- 90% of our clients are medication compliant while attending our program
- 90% of our clients in 2013 were able to be successfully treated in an outpatient mental health setting
- 95% of our clients were able to break the cycle between homelessness and arrest while attending our program
- We provided over 540 hours in therapeutic and enrichment services:
  - over 390 hours of individual and group therapy (our 2<sup>nd</sup> therapist came on board Fall 2013)
  - 30 hours of substance abuse counseling (this service began Fall 2013)
  - 50 hours of financial management training
  - 50 hours of pet therapy
  - 20 hours of nutrition and culinary training
  - 40 hours of horticultural enrichment activities

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We began our **Community Education Program** because we want our residents to go out in a world that does not stigmatize them for their mental illness. Our program entirely is staffed by volunteers. In the six months since it started, we accomplished the following:

- Created and maintain our organization website, blog, Facebook, and Twitter pages (approximately 130 subscribers)
- Blog updated weekly
- Facebook is updated biweekly and Twitter updated is updated daily.
- Sponsored a well-attended Women's Empowerment Symposium (60 community leaders, residents, and community members)
- Started the District of Columbia Creative Coalition – collaboration between Hyacinth's Place and surrounding businesses to provide community education and project income.

### WOMENS' SYMPOSIUM

It was a hot day in September. The sun was bright and merciless. The chairs were nicely arranged in a semi-circle, cool jazz echoed from a PA system and a multitude of bright colored balloons floated along the fences. Ribbon balloons were bunched around lamp poles along the street and around the corner, offering directions to our first annual "*Day of Entertainment, Education and Empowerment of Women.*"

Collectively, board members, volunteers, and staff wanted the larger community to hear our message and celebrate our women. There were songs and poetry; there were prayers of thanksgiving. Guest speakers included a former homeless person who is now a staff person at Consumer Advocacy Network, a Director of Behavioral Health from one of the metropolitan Washington D.C. area hospitals, inspirational speakers, and other non-profit leaders. We spoke about the stigma that is attached to mental illness, about overcoming adversity, and about the cultural and socio-economic implications of the issues that brought women to a place of homelessness. We addressed the challenges of the work we do, the availability of resources and the need for more public awareness. Our keynote speaker, an anchor person from Channel 7, had everybody's attention as she told her story and encouraged the women to stick with their course of recovery.

We toured Hyacinth's Place, we ate, we laughed, and we shared stories. It was a good day. As we prepare for our 2014 Symposiums, our outreach will again be to those whose misconceptions about homelessness and mental health will be changed from this experience.



Participants and guests at September 7<sup>th</sup> Women's

Christmas Eve 2013



Clockwise from top: Ms. Urla Barrow and Ms. Maureen Fredericks; Ms. Dynise Coogler; Ms. Fredericks and Friends

# HYACINTH'S PLACE: 2013 ANNUAL REPORT

## Our Finances

12:18 AM  
02/04/14  
Accrual Basis

### Hyacinth's Place-IUL Balance Sheet As of December 31, 2013

	<u>Dec 31, 13</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>	
<b>Current Assets</b>	
<b>Checking/Savings</b>	
Cash-in-Bank M&T	2,842.35
Cash-in-Bank Operating PNC	293.02
<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	<u>3,135.37</u>
<b>Accounts Receivable</b>	
Accounts Receivable	76,350.00
<b>Total Accounts Receivable</b>	<u>76,350.00</u>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	79,485.37
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	
Furniture and Equipment	169,747.99
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<u>169,747.99</u>
<b>Other Assets</b>	
Other Assets	1,000.00
<b>Total Other Assets</b>	<u>1,000.00</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<u><b>250,233.36</b></u>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	
<b>Liabilities</b>	
<b>Current Liabilities</b>	
<b>Accounts Payable</b>	
Accounts Payable	11,493.00
<b>Total Accounts Payable</b>	<u>11,493.00</u>
<b>Other Current Liabilities</b>	
Accrued	141,333.16
Line-of Credit M&T	21,526.02
<b>Total Other Current Liabilities</b>	<u>162,859.18</u>
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	174,352.18
<b>Long Term Liabilities</b>	
Other Liabilities	29,413.21
<b>Total Long Term Liabilities</b>	<u>29,413.21</u>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	203,765.39
<b>Equity</b>	
Unrestricted Net Assets	44,489.64
Net Income	1,978.33
<b>Total Equity</b>	<u>46,467.97</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<u><b>250,233.36</b></u>

### Our Volunteers

It takes a “*village*” for Hyacinth’s Place to fulfill its mission in challenging times. We are extremely grateful to our dedicated cadre of volunteers. Our dedicated volunteers have allowed us to provide increased services during this difficult financial time.

- Our BTSP volunteers provided over 540 hours of services this year including individual and group therapy, substance abuse counseling, and website and social media development.
- Our Residential Program volunteers provided over 260 hours of service this year.
- Our development and marketing department received over 100 hours of volunteer service.
- Our administration department received over 200 hours of volunteer service.

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We thank our volunteers for their time, talent, and energy. They are the life blood of organization.

Some of the services that our volunteers provide include:

- Mental Health Monitoring
- Individual and Group Therapy
- Substance Abuse Counseling
- Financial Management Training
- Event Planning
- Culinary Arts and Horticultural Training
- Pet Therapy
- Web Site Development and Management
- Social Media Development and Management
- Fundraising and Grant Writing Expertise
- Marketing and Public Relations Assistance
- Office/Administrative Assistance



*If you want to  
touch the past,  
touch a rock. If  
you want to  
touch the  
present, touch a  
flower. If you  
want to touch  
the future, touch  
a life. ~Author  
Unknown*

### Our Future Plans

HP enters 2014 with optimism and anticipation at all levels. **As we think of what's next-** we think about getting our women to their identified goals. We focus on providing our women with the tools needed for their mental health recovery, the skills needed to get and maintain a job, and the self-confidence to reunite with family. We are not content to settle for our present success. This year, we will fine tune our Behavioral and Therapeutic Services Program and expand the program to include those on the waiting list for housing so they can be better prepared.

**As we think of what's next** - we think about our beautiful building. Our volunteers are designing both a *green roof* and additions to our *healing garden*. While our chefs see herbs and vegetables on our *green roof* and balcony, our landscapers see shady trees and vines that attract native birds to our *healing garden*.

**As we think of what's next-**we think about financial stability and sustainability for the organization. Our development activities continue to increase; that means more grant writing and innovative fundraising efforts, such as our eBay auction store. We continue to look for opportunities to collaborate with other organizations to maximize our resources.



Our Current Healing Garden

**As we think of what's next** - we will refine and grow our outreach efforts to educate the community about the intricacies of mental illness and homelessness. While our chefs plan tasting events to draw in the community, our development team is planning a monthly e-newsletter highlighting current events at Hyacinth's Place and educating the public on topics related to mental health, homelessness, and abuse.

**As we think of what's next** - we seek volunteers with energy, commitment, and imagination who want to join us as we strive for excellence. Together, we can have a positive impact by reducing homelessness and ameliorating the stigma surrounding mental illness.

**Above all we will work diligently to convince policy makers and funders that at Hyacinth's Place, we are changing lives - one woman at a time -focusing on quality of service leading to successful results versus quantity of service leading to recurring homelessness.**

## How You May Help

Support the work of Hyacinth's Place as we take homeless women with a mental health diagnoses from a place of homelessness to independence.

**Donate:** Private gifts make all the difference in our ability to serve the District of Columbia's most vulnerable women and allow us to assist these at risk women, even in the midst of our nation's economic recession. Hyacinth's Place relies on unrestricted gifts to ensure that the homeless women we serve receive the highest possible level of care. Because of our low overhead costs, you have the confidence of knowing that your contribution will go to help those most in need. All contributions to Hyacinth's Place are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Donate monthly through our automatic deduction program or donate your spare change – every little bit helps.

**Purchase a Stepping Stone for our Healing Garden:** Our Healing Garden is a place of serenity for our women to relax and meditate. Support the work of Hyacinth's Place as we take homeless women with mental health diagnoses from a place of homelessness onto a healing journey to independence. There are 15 commemorative stones available. Memorialize that special person or event by purchasing a stone. There's always a reason to commit a person or a time to history; to cherish a memory or celebrate an event. Your generous donation to this project is appreciated.

*"We have the know-how in the world to house everyone. We have the resources in the world to house everyone. All that's missing is the WILL to do it." - Millard Fuller*

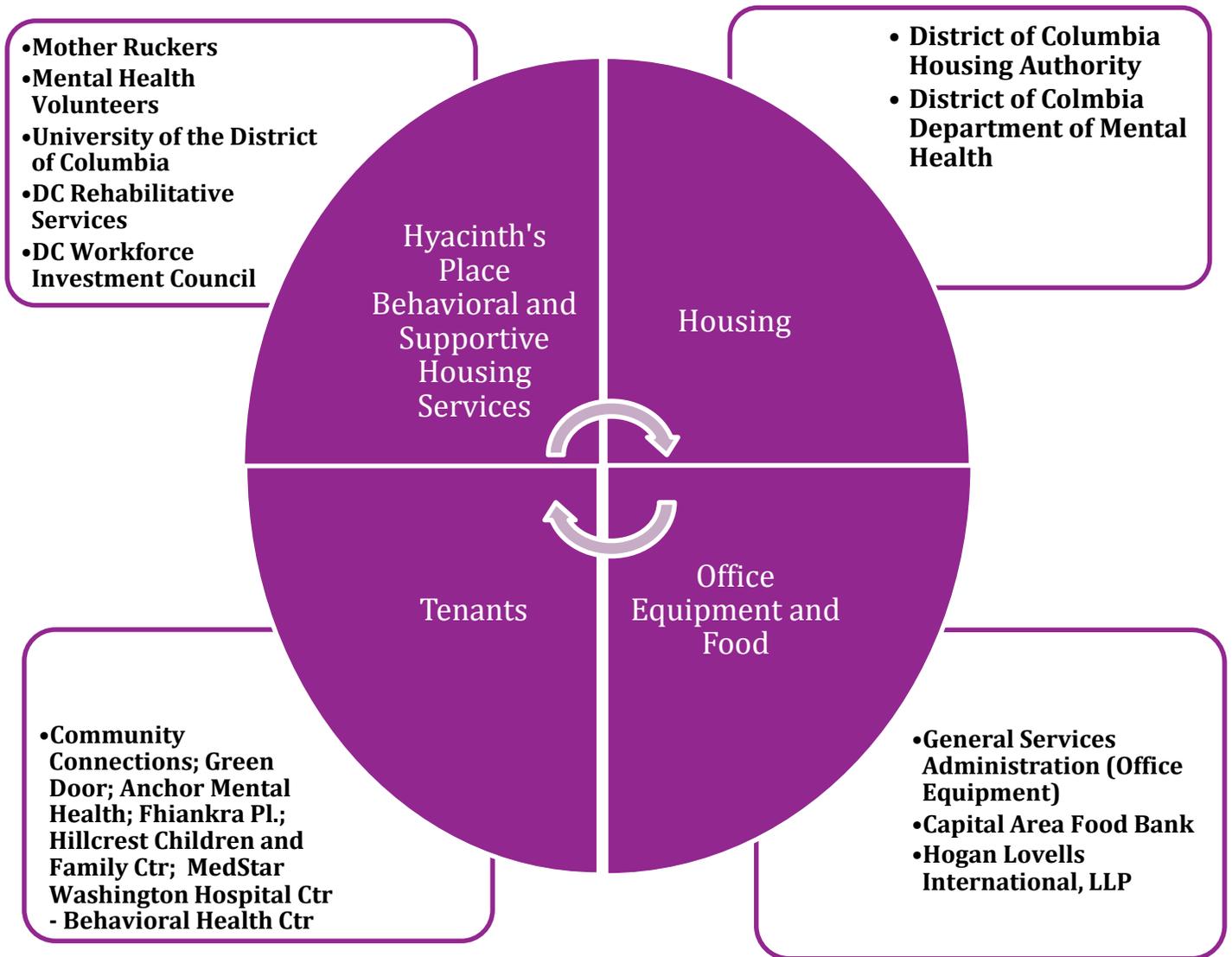
**Volunteer Your Time:** There are many volunteer opportunities available in our organization for those that want to assist homeless women on their path to independence. In particular, we have volunteer opportunities in our Hyacinth's Place Behavioral and Therapeutic Services Program, Residential Program, community outreach, and

administrative services.

**Provide Needed Items:** Organize a supply drive at work, school, church, or civic organization. We can always use household supplies such as toilet paper, paper towels, paper napkins, liquid laundry detergent, dishwashing liquid, cleaning supplies/disinfectants, toilet bowl and bathroom cleaning supplies, furniture polish, air fresheners, kitchen towels, dish cloths, sponges, scrubbing pads, and any personal care items.

**Our Partners**

As illustrated below, Hyacinth's Place collaborates with many non-profit organizations, Core Service Agencies, and local businesses to achieve its goals.



We thank all of the organizations that collaborate with us to provide our clients with the quality service that they need and deserve. Through our joint efforts, our clients are able to move above and beyond their environment and personal circumstance and prepare themselves for life-long self-sufficiency.

## Our Board of Directors and Key Staff Members

### OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Grantson (President)  
Caryl Bryson (LCSW) (Board Member)  
Dr. Charles Howard, PhD (Social Work) (Board Member)  
Tamarah Teixeira MA:NCC:LPC: LCPC – Clinician (Board Member)  
Dr. Kweku-Muata (Board Member)  
Mr. Darren D'Ateno (Board Member)  
Laura Ehlepp (Board Member)

### OUR KEY STAFF MEMBERS

Ms. Urla Barrow, Executive Director  
Ms. Tracy Spivey, Program Manager  
Mr. Gaster Hunter, Financial Manager  
Ms. Glenda Birch, Behavioral and Therapeutic Services Clinical Manager  
Ms. Joi Roberson Nolen, Development Coordinator  
Ms. Beth Ceryak, Social Media Coordinator  
Mr. Mika Rautiainen, Web Site Developer and Manager

“Enlightened leadership is spiritual if we understand spirituality not as some kind of religious dogma or ideology but as the domain of awareness where we experience values like truth, goodness, beauty, love and compassion, and also intuition, creativity, insight and focused attention.”

**Deepak Chopra**

# HYACINTH'S PLACE: 2013 ANNUAL REPORT

## Our Donors

### Individual Donors

Ruby Barrow  
Claudette Johnson-Berry  
KwekuMuata-Bryson & Beverley  
Cambridge  
Annette Campbell  
Aubrey Charles  
Victor Chase  
Linda Clark

Ann Daniels  
Darren D'Ateno  
Ramona DeGrace  
Laura Ehlepps  
Megan Fredericks  
Dr. Emmanuel & Ellie Grantson  
Jeyi Green

Elda Lamberg  
Camille McKenzie  
Ms. Susan Packal  
Tamarah Teixeira  
Martha Thompson  
Ms Mairead Viegas  
Arlene White

### Churches: Foundations: Corporations/Businesses

Brentwood Business Center  
Cornerstone Foundation  
District Of Columbia - State  
Mental Health Planning Council  
Frank Ewing Foundation

Gifts for the Homeless  
Hogan Lovells Law Firm  
My Girlfriend's House  
Redeemer Lutheran Church -  
McLean VA

St. Albans Church  
St. Michael's Lutheran Church  
United Methodist Church  
Ziff Brothers Investment LLC

### Day of Empowerment, Education & Entertainment Contributors

Rev. Dr Jalene C. Chase-Sands  
Dynise Coogler: Hyacinth's Place  
Ms. Greta Cruz: ABC 7/WJLA-TV Anchor  
Dr. Raquel Gordon: Director of Behavioral Health at a Major Metropolitan  
Washington D.C. Area Hospital  
Marilyn Kresky Wolff: Executive Director: Open Arms Housing Inc.  
Ms. Vicky McNeal: Psychometrist: DC Government  
Ms. Effie Smith: Executive Director: Consumer Action Network

We are extremely grateful to all our donors. They epitomize the quote, "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." - **Winston Churchill**

### Volunteers

Jeffery Bolding  
Janika Briscoe  
Pastor Glenda Burch  
Janella Casey  
Beth Ceryak  
Sharde'Dantzler  
Ramona Degrace  
Randy Fullard  
Rose Hackett

Benjamin Hirschman  
Phyllip MacNeil  
Vicky McNeil  
Pauline Mahero  
Mareni Melo  
Mateo Monroy  
Quantina Pringle  
Tamara Raspberry  
Mika Rautainen

Joi Roberson Nolen  
Anna Roblin  
Katherine Schappert  
Michael Smith  
Diane Tafazoli  
Allison Tintenfass  
Tammy West

## Contact Information

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1060 Bladensburg Road, NE  
Washington, DC 20002  
**Tel** 202-618-3345  
**Fax** 301-494-5219  
**Website:** [www.hyacinths.org](http://www.hyacinths.org)



"THE QUEST FOR A PLACE TO LIVE: IT'S AS BIG AS THE CRISIS IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING, AND AS SMALL AS THE FIRST STEP TOWARD A HOME OF ONE'S OWN." -HOUSING FIRST, A SPECIAL REPORT, NPR NEWS

## WHO WAS HYACINTH?

Hyacinth's Place is named for Viola Ernestine Barrow, *aka* Hyacinth, a teacher who believed that education, hard work, and sacrifice were the ticket out of poverty.

Hyacinth raised and taught many children throughout her life and opened the doors of her home to those in need.

Her desire to provide shelter and care to those who need it lives on today in Hyacinth's Place.



Viola "Hyacinth" Barrow