

# InTouch

With our Donors, Volunteers and Friends



## Common Ground

helping people move  
from crisis to hope

We listen, we care, we help...24-hours a day, 7 days a week

FALL, 2013

## Indoor Vegetable Garden Provides Tasty Nutrition for Common Ground Staff, Persons Served

Taking the next step in Common Ground's Wellness initiative for employees and people receiving services, the agency is testing a process that could regularly provide fresh vegetables to consumers as well as staff members. The Telegraph Administration building and Hendrie, the Crisis Residential Unit, were selected to receive aeroponic Tower Gardens as part of a pilot project in early September and the results have been encouraging.

Aeroponics is the process of growing plants in an air or mist environment without the use of soil. It uses both water and air to produce more colorful, better tasting, better smelling, and incredibly nutritious fruits and vegetables. Tower Garden is a state-of-the-art vertical aeroponic growing system. It takes up little space, is easily maintained, recycles water and because it is used mostly indoors, does not require pesticides.



"We believe there are many health benefits to teaching people what is good to eat and why," said Vickie Krigner, vice president of Business Operations, who brought the idea to the agency after learning about it from a friend. "What goes into your mouth affects your mood and your well-being and we also thought the tower gardens would provide something beautiful to look at, listen to, and eat," she added.

Because wellness is a *core value* at Common Ground, there have been efforts over the past year to develop a program for persons receiving service and staff to interact and have fresh produce year-round with minimal work. "It allows for conversation and discussion around physical and mental health—from having something beautiful and alive to take care of, harvesting, creating and sharing, to how the food directly affects how they feel," explained Rita Patel, board member, professional Health Coach and Wellness Strategist.

The timing was perfect to try the Tower Gardens according to Krigner. "Common Ground has been working to positively impact peoples' health by serving more nutritional food to our guests and staff. We decided to try two locations: The Administrative Offices and our Crisis Residential Unit because we felt this would give us different perspectives—one from the people we serve and the other from staff."

Everyone was surprised at how tasty the freshly picked vegetables tasted. And judging from the response from both staff and clients so far, the Tower Garden is a big hit.

During *Harvest Friday* a few weeks ago at the Telegraph building, a big salad was made from the harvest and leftovers were bagged and offered to anyone interested. "The greens tasted very rich and the variety was exciting," said Patel. "Eating them woke up my palate!"

Art Therapist Kristen Lambert says the vegetables were a hit at Hendrie too. "We all snack on them throughout our days and we had a delicious salad that was made by a client and shared by all. Staff and clients declared the salad the best they ever had!"

The goal is to install Tower Gardens in each facility/program by next year. For information about Tower Gardens, contact Vickie Krigner at 248-451-3750.



## Mark Your Calendars for Common Ground's Coming Events

**Survivors of Suicide Open Group —CORRECTION:** Open groups run the **1st and 3rd Monday of the month from 7-9 p.m.** This group offers comfort, strength and hope in an open setting with fellow survivors and peer facilitators and meets at our administrative offices. Contact Amelia Lehto to register or for more information at 248-451-2613 or [alehto@commongroundhelps.org](mailto:alehto@commongroundhelps.org).

**Individual sessions of Survivors of Suicide Support Groups** are offered by appointment only. Contact Amelia Lehto to register (see above).

**Crisis to Hope Presentation**—Please join us on **Thursday evening, November 21 at Common Ground's Administrative Offices at 1410 S. Telegraph from 7-8p.m. or Thursday, December 12 from 4:30-5:30pm at the same location** to learn how Common Ground helps people move from crisis to hope. For more information, contact Cheryl Rossman at 248-451-3732 or visit [www.commongroundhelps.org](http://www.commongroundhelps.org) then click the Crisis to Hope button to register online.

**Mental Health First Aid Training**—This one-day training saves participants time but still provides all the information needed to provide the initial help to someone showing symptoms of mental illness or in a mental health crisis. The next session, scheduled for **Thursday, December 19**, will be held at our administrative offices located in Bloomfield Hills from 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Register online at [www.commongroundhelps.org](http://www.commongroundhelps.org) by clicking the MHFA button in the lower right corner or call Joan Roberts at 248-451-3733.

**The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's 15th Annual International Survivors of Suicide Day** event—sponsored by Common Ground, is **Saturday, November 23**. If you have lost someone to suicide, please join us for this FREE healing and hopeful day at **Kirk in the Hills Presbyterian Church at 1340 West Long Lake Rd., Bloomfield Hills from 9am-4pm**. For information, contact Amelia Lehto at 248-451-2613 or [alehto@commongroundhelps.org](mailto:alehto@commongroundhelps.org). Walk-ins are welcome, but pre-registering will aid our planning efforts. Visit [www.surveymonkey.com/s/QFYTQF2](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/QFYTQF2) to pre-register.

## Holiday Cheer: Adopt-A-Family and Provide a Happy Holiday for a Local Family

The Adopt-A-Family program matches struggling families with individual or group sponsors to provide for their tangible needs during the holidays. Without the benefit of an adoption, these families would be facing a very grim holiday.

When an Adopt-A-Family match is made, the family information and wish lists are sent to the sponsor, allowing a month of shopping time. Common Ground ensures that the family receives the gifts before their holiday celebration. The gifts could include toys, clothing, household items and gift cards are welcome as well. Sponsors are asked to provide two or more new gifts for each family member.

Common Ground thanks all of our Adopt-A-Family sponsors for their concern and generosity and welcomes new sponsors. If you are interested or know of someone who is interested in being an Adopt-A-Family sponsor or would like to apply for assistance, contact [Crossman@commongroundhelps.org](mailto:Crossman@commongroundhelps.org) or at 248-451-3732.

Important dates to remember:

- Family and sponsor sign-up deadline: November 4, 2013
- Adopt-A-Family match made and wish lists sent to sponsors: November 8, 2013
- Wrapped gifts due to Common Ground's Administrative Offices: December 13, 2013
- Gifts distributed to families: week of December 14, 2013



## Happenings in and Around the Grounds

### New Board Members Appointed for 2013-14 Fiscal Year

With the beginning of the new fiscal year October 1, Common Ground's Board of Trustees welcomed six new Board members. These new members bring enthusiasm, new ideas and unique experiences and expertise that will be a great asset to the agency.

Seth Faber is a primary care pediatrics physician at Beaumont Hospital. He brings that experience as well as his experience as a medical home designer to his new role on Common Ground's Board of Trustees.

Cindy Gawrych was initially a client at Common Ground so from personal experience, she knows how important the agency's programs and services are to the community. She is honored to join the Board of Trustees and hopes to give back for all the services her family has received.

Adam Joseph got involved with Common Ground when his older sister became a Peer Mentor at The Sanctuary. He was inspired to follow in her footsteps and became a Peer Mentor also. He is currently a full-time student at Harvard University and a part-time researcher. Adam brings youthful energy and creativity that will help the Board develop programs and services that help get our message to young people.

Susan Murphy is vice president at United Way for Southeastern Michigan. She has more than 15 years of experience in the non-profit sector and brings a wealth of experience to the Board, including strategic planning, program development and evaluation, governance and community relations.

Chris Ruen is a long-time Common Ground supporter who has been a volunteer on the crisis line, a victim's advocate and Legal Clinic advocate. She brings a deep commitment to the community and to the mission of Common Ground.

Kevin Williams learned about the agency as a result of a family member's mental illness. He says Common Ground was key in getting help for his daughter. An Operations manager at the United States District Court, Kevin is also a build volunteer at Habitat for Humanity and brings knowledge of the courts system and compassion for those suffering from mental illness.

## PRO BONO

### Justice Marilyn Kelly Honored as 2013 Champion For Justice

Each year, the State Bar of Michigan celebrates Pro Bono Month in October. Organizations throughout the state host events to promote and recognize the efforts of those in the legal profession who have provided legal assistance to underrepresented members of the population.

Common Ground Legal Services and the Family Law Assistance Project (FLAP), a partnership between Lakeshore Legal Aid and the Thomas M. Cooley Law School, work together to help people find the solutions they are seeking through free legal advice, support, referral and direct representation.

This year's Champion for Justice luncheon was hosted recently at the Thomas M. Cooley Law School and was a great success. Award recipient Justice Marilyn Kelly was honored for the work she has done throughout her career to help families in Michigan find solutions to the legal challenges they face. Proceeds from the event will support the programs and services of Common Ground and FLAP.



2013 Champion for Justice honoree Justice Marilyn Kelly (right) is congratulated by Birmingham attorney Henry Baskin.

Common Ground extends a special thanks to the committed and generous volunteer attorneys, students, paralegals, and other members of the community, who all come together to make the free weekly legal clinics possible. For information about volunteering in Common Ground's Legal Services department, contact John Kuzmich, Legal Services manager, at 248-451-3753 or at [jkuzmich@commongroundhelps.org](mailto:jkuzmich@commongroundhelps.org).

# *In*Touch

4

## Third Legacy of Hope Breakfast Highlights Common Ground's Value to the Community



Common Ground's third Legacy of Hope Breakfast was held last month at the Oakland Hills Country Club. More than 250 guests enjoyed a complimentary breakfast, heartfelt testimonials from staff, clients and volunteers and a video produced especially for the event.

This is the third year the agency has embraced a relationship-oriented model to engage those who have a passion for the services Common Ground provides the community. To build and nurture that passion, one-hour Crisis to Hope Presentations were held monthly throughout the year. Hundreds of people attended these presentations and were in turn invited to the breakfast.

The theme of this year's breakfast, Seeds of Growth, explored ways that Common Ground can extend the reach of its message of helping people move from crisis to hope. One of those ways is to educate the community about mental health by facilitating Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training sessions.

Guests at the breakfast were treated to a short role-play and preview of the kinds of techniques taught during MHFA training sessions. Don DesNoyer, crisis intervention specialist and certified MHFA training instructor, conducted the demonstration with Peer Mentor Dalila Mujagic.

Many guests were moved by the presentation to become Sustaining Partners and Legacy Society members. All pledges and funds received during the breakfast will be used to support the agency's efforts to continue helping people move from crisis to hope.

There are lots of ways to support the work of Common Ground. Check below for ways you can get involved!

### Welcome New Legacy Society Members!

#### *Legacy Leaders*

Tom & Carol Beeler  
Jane Dallas  
Dean P. Darby  
Marjorie Decapite  
Sandy & Michael Hermanoff  
Ann Hartzell-Kneen  
Connie & Len Johnston  
Ellen Kock, PhD  
Reuben Levy  
Scott Murphy  
Christine & Dennis Ruen  
Jim & Cindy Scoggin  
Gail & Michael Whitty

## Here's How You Can Support the Important Work of Common Ground

With your help, Common Ground will continue to help members of our community move from crisis to hope. There are a number of very convenient ways that you can support the important work of Common Ground:

Become a Common Ground Ambassador  
Donate online at [www.commongroundhelps.org](http://www.commongroundhelps.org)  
Direct withdrawal from your savings or checking account  
Write a check or use your credit card

You can also remember Common Ground in your estate, with a charitable bequest and/or a matching gift. Contact our director of Advancement and Donor Relations Cheryl Rossman at 248-451-3732 for more information.

# InTouch

5

## Veteran Agency Employee Steve Overstreet Retires



Steve and Judy Overstreet

Topping off 35 years of dedicated service to Common Ground, Steve Overstreet, director of the agency's Residential Services, bid farewell to co-workers, clients and friends during a retirement party at the Redford theatre recently. Joined by his wife Judy, Steve beamed as he received many well wishes from a continuous stream of guests.

As Steve reflected on his years with The Sanctuary and after the 1998 merger, with Common Ground, he said going to work never felt like a job. "The Sanctuary always felt like home," he said. "I've never dreaded going to work in 35 years—it's been a blessing and I put a lot of my heart and soul into that place."



Friends and colleagues gather at the Redford Theatre to give Steve a proper send-off into a happy retirement.

A graduate of the University of Detroit, Steve started as an intern in Common Ground's counseling department. Then he was hired for a position at the Sanctuary in 1979. Years later he helped with the planning and processing of the merger between The Sanctuary and Common Ground in 1998.

Steve has been present for many changes at Common Ground over the years and was on hand when the agency celebrated its milestone 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2011. He developed the agency's internship program, strengthened the volunteer program and made a positive impact on countless numbers of young people during his career. "There are not many jobs where you can impact children and families for the better and feel like you're making a difference in people's lives," he explained. "That's what I was cut out for."

Steve and Judy plan to do lots of traveling over the next few months, and he will keep busy with his new duties as vice president of the Redford Theatre board, rental agent and a member on several committees. But don't be surprised if you run into Steve at The Sanctuary in the weeks and months ahead. "I'll be stopping by sometimes—I can't imagine my life without Common Ground."

**Administration and Community Programs**  
1410 S. Telegraph Rd. Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302  
248-456-8150

**Crisis Intervention & Recovery Team**  
1063 Professional Dr. Suite D-4  
Flint, MI 48532  
810-496-4935

**Resource and Crisis Center**  
Doctors Hospital, Seminole Building, Suite 100  
461 West Huron, Pontiac, MI 48341  
1-800-231-1127

**Crisis Residential Unit**  
(Call the Crisis and Resource Center for admittance).

**Sanctuary Youth Shelter**  
1222 S. Washington, Royal Oak, MI 48067  
248-547-2260

**A Step Forward and Graduated Apt. Program**  
1228 S. Washington, Royal Oak, MI 48067  
248-399-9795

**Youth Street Outreach Program**  
1228 S. Washington, Royal Oak, MI 48067  
248-399-9795

For Common Ground information, call the 24-hour Resource & Crisis Helpline at 1-800-231-1127 or visit [www.commongroundhelps.org](http://www.commongroundhelps.org); text us M-F, 4-10pm @ 248-809-5550

**COMMON GROUND  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Cathy McNamara, *Board Chair*  
 Kay White, *Chair-Elect*  
 Judy Christie, *Secretary*  
 Laurie Marshall, *Treasurer*  
 Don Campbell, *Immediate Past Chair*

Rebecca Cox • Eric Dobrusin • Seth Faber  
 Fred Fehheimer • Myron Frasier • Cindy Gawrych  
 Bob Horstman • Paula Jorné • Adam Joseph  
 Dr. James Kohlenberg • Sharon McMurray  
 Susan Murphy • Rita Patel • Chris Ruen • Al Sasson  
 Colette Stimmell • Kathy Walgren  
 Kevin B. Williams • Doug Wright

Tony Rothschild  
 President & CEO

**COMMON GROUND  
ADVISORY BOARD**

Richard Astrein • Maggie Allesee  
 Sheriff Michael Bouchard • Edith S. Briskin  
 Jerry Cavallier • Joe Donovan • John Erb  
 Maxine Frankel • Eugene Hartwig • Howard Hertz  
 Helen Holmes • Sheila Kasselmann • Rita Margherio  
 Hon. Fred Mester • Jerry Mocerri • Hubert Price  
 John Roberts • Shelley Roberts • Hon. Edward Sosnick

**COMMON GROUND  
LEGACY SOCIETY FOUNDING MEMBERS**

**LEGACY PARTNERS**

Rita Margherio  
 Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc.

**LEGACY LEADERS**

Maggie Allesee  
 Debbie & Richard Astrein  
 City of Birmingham  
 Donald & Susan Campbell  
 The Chadwick Group, P.C.  
 Howard and Judith Christie  
 William Cousins  
 Gary Dembs & Jan Weiss  
 Dembs  
 Dr. Shari & Eric Dobrusin  
 Debbie & John M. Erb  
 The Fred A. & Barbara M. Erb  
 Family Foundation  
 Fred Fehheimer  
 Myron Frasier  
 Dr. Howard & Pola Friedman  
 The Harold & Marion Gordon  
 Family  
 Jeanne P. Hackett  
 Sylvia & Edward Hagenlocker

Dr. Paula Jorné  
 James Kohlenberg, M.D.  
 Vickie & Rhein Krigner  
 LymTal International, Inc.  
 Steven & Sara Majoros  
 Mike & Cathy McNamara  
 Mara McNeill  
 The Honorable Fred Mester  
 Jerry & Deborah Mocerri  
 Tom & Lisa Nardone  
 Patterson-Bryant  
 Healthcare Solutions  
 Heather Rae  
 John & Julie Roberts  
 Tony Rothschild & Mona Scott  
 Michael & Karen Valentino  
 Kay White  
 The World Heritage  
 Foundation



*We listen, we care, we help 24-hours a day*

Our Core Purpose is:  
 Helping people move from crisis to hope.

1410 S. Telegraph Road  
 Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302  
 Administration  
 248-456-68150  
 24-hour Crisis and Resource Helpline  
 248-456-0909 or 800-231-1127  
 Web Site  
[www.commongroundhelps.org](http://www.commongroundhelps.org)  
 In Touch Editor  
 Lenda Jackson,  
 Director of Communications

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non Profit Org.  
 U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
 Royal Oak, MI  
 Permit No. 853

