

Larsletter

Executive Director
Nancy Graham, LCSW-C

LARS was organized in 1987 by a group of religious leaders and lay people who came together to develop a consolidated approach to helping those in need. Any religious (or civic) organization that supports LARS with a minimum donation of \$1,000 annually, and is located in Laurel, is eligible to appoint a representative to the LARS BOD.

The following congregations currently have representatives on the Board of Directors:

Bethany Community Church

Community of Christ

Emmanuel United Methodist Church

First Baptist Church

First United Methodist Church

Laurel Presbyterian Church

New Hope SDA Church

Oaklands Presbyterian Church

Oseh Shalom Synagogue

Our Savior Lutheran Church

Resurrection Catholic Church

LAUREL ADVOCACY AND REFERRAL SERVICES, INC. Serving the community since 1987

LARS WINS SUBSTANTIAL CDBG AWARD

LARS will be awarded a **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) from Prince George's County** totaling \$42,500 in the 2008-2009 fiscal year. This grant will be used to assist Laurel families (from Prince George's County) who are facing eviction, foreclosure, or who qualify for assistance for their first month's rent and/or their security deposit to secure housing. This grant would not have been possible without the support and advocacy of **Thomas Dernoga, District 1 Councilman**. Mr. Dernoga is a long-time supporter of our work, and has created numerous opportunities that have offered financial resources, such as this one, in order for LARS to continue our work.

The Home Builders Care Foundation

LARS was (miraculously) approached by **The Home Builders Care Foundation** (HBCF) with an offer to help us resolve our "space issues."

With the addition of two new programs that include the hiring of a Spanish-speaking outreach worker and the permanent housing program that serves six individuals who are chronically homeless (not on site), LARS is bursting at the seams. Our food pantry is overflowing into our conference room, and we are simply out of space, and unable to look at other programs we would like to explore to benefit the community.

HBCF is currently evaluating our space issues, and will propose a plan to either renovate and expand our current facility or demolish and rebuild on our current site. HBCF has done great work in the community and we are honored that they approached us for this partnership. LARS would also like to thank **Mayor Moe** and his staff at The City of Laurel for supporting LARS in our effort to improve our facility and services through this partnership.

If you believe in prayer . . .

As the Executive Director of LARS, I meet many amazing people in this community, but I would like to mention one young man, **Luis A "Tito" Rosa Valentin**. Several weeks ago, **Pastor Mir** of **Primera Iglesia Bautista de Laurel** (a congregation that worships at First Baptist Church of Laurel) brought Tito and his story to my attention.

Tito is a 25-year-old Army sergeant who was on his second tour of duty in Iraq when he was hit by a roadside bomb on April 25, 2008. Tito sustained injuries that caused his permanent hearing loss and rendered him a triple amputee. Pastor Mir invited my family to worship with his congregation on Sunday, July 6th. During the service, in which Tito was honored, Tito told his story, which was one of courage, honor, and remarkable faith. Many people in this community have reached out to Tito and his family, including the Kiwanis Club (and one member in particular). Kiwanis is doing extensive renovations to Tito's family's home to make it more accessible for his needs, as well as replacing the carpet and repainting. Tito will not permanently return to his home for some time, but continues his recovery at Walter Reed Medical Center in Bethesda, MD.

If you believe in prayer, Tito and his family will need life-long prayers. If you would like to forward words of encouragement and support to Tito, they can be sent directly to Walter Reed Hospital, or call First Baptist Church of Laurel at (301) 725-1688 for more information.

Nancy

So long, Farewell

It is with a heavy heart that we say good-bye to our long-time friend, supporter, and employee, **Linda Stone**. Linda began as a volunteer for LARS more than 10 years ago. As an employee, she was the first case manager for the **Transitional Housing Program**. Linda left LARS several years ago to start a therapy practice. During that time, she continued to volunteer for LARS. About 18 months ago, she returned to LARS as a part-time employee.. Linda will continue to work with us on projects for LARS, including the 2008 holiday program. Thank you for your work, Linda! You will be missed.

What an Opportunity

The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation awarded LARS a \$90K grant over a two-year period to hire a Spanish-speaking outreach worker. With this opportunity LARS will be able to better serve the members of our community who speak Spanish as their first language. We are extremely thankful for the opportunity, and to **Senator Jim Rosapepe** who brought the resource to our attention.

Way to Go

Donny Phillips, a long-time member of the LAR staff, completed his MSW at The University of Maryland this past May. Congrats to the graduate!!!

St. Mary of the Mills Catholic Church

St. Nicholas Catholic Church

St. Philip's Episcopal Church

LARS also receives financial support from congregations that do not have Board representatives at this time. If your congregation would like to consider joining our mission, please contact Nancy Graham.

STAFF

Don Phillips
Director of
Emergency and
Homeless Services

Ruth Blake
Case Manager
Emergency Services

Steve Millard
Office Manager

Linda Stone
Case Manager
Emergency Services

Lori Timlin
Case Manager
Transitional
Housing and
Employment Services

To be added or removed from our mailing list, please contact smillard@laureladvocacy.org

Help the Homeless Walks

It's time for local schools and congregations to schedule their Help the Homeless Mini-Walks in Sept/ Oct. Last year, a total of 1,602 people walked on behalf of LARS, raising \$61,253 through the **Fannie Mae Foundation**. Your help is needed more than ever this year. If you can't take part in a walk, please consider donating to cover the \$15 registration for youth walkers. Numbers count in helping LARS qualify for a \$25K bonus. Call Donny Phillips at 301-776-0442 for more information.

Holiday Program

LARS will begin taking client applications for the 2008 holiday program on **Monday, October 6th**. If you would like to apply to receive gifts/food through LARS' holiday program, please call after September 22nd to schedule an appointment. If you can contribute Thanksgiving food and/or December holiday food and gifts for a family in need, we need your help. To obtain a donor application, please call Ernestine Gibson at (301)776-0442, ext.30. Or contact her at egibson@laureladvocacy.org.

The New Kid on the Block

LARS would like to thank **Revere Bank** for making us the recipient of the cash ribbon worth \$400 that was used at their ribbon-cutting ceremony marking their grand opening. Welcome to the neighborhood!

PNC Supports LARS

The PNC Bank branch on Main Street assisted LARS in receiving a \$4,000 grant from the bank corporation to support our work in the community. A special thank you to **Jan Able** and all the staff at the Main Street branch office. Although the bank was known as Citizens' National Bank (CNB) before its' name was changed to PNC, many of our long-time friends from Citizens, including Jan Able, are still there to help us.

Silent Auction Raises Over \$9,000

LARS' third annual Dinner and Silent Auction, held at Laurel's American Legion Post 60 on April 26, was a great success. **Casey's Crab Co.** catered a marvelous dinner. Thank you, **American Legion, Post 60**, for providing the hall. We'd also like to thank all the businesses and individuals who donated auction items.

A Very Special Thank You

LARS received a \$4,000 grant from **The Washington Area Women's Foundation** (WAWF) in December 2007 to purchase four new work stations and computers for the LARS community computer lab. The equipment was purchased and installed in June. Thank you WAWF for this tremendous community resource.

School Supplies Needed

LARS will be collecting school supplies during the month of August to distribute to local children in need. Call LARS to schedule an appointment or for info (301) 776-0442.

DONATING
On
LINE
IS QUICK & EASY!

Visit the LARS
Website

www.laureladvocacy.org

CLICK ON
"GIVE DIRECT"
under
DONATE NOW.

100 %
of your
donation
will
go to
LARS!

**HERE COMES THE
BRIDE**

Lori Timlin, the LARS
Transitional Housing
Case Manager for the
past 4 years, was
married to Christopher
Proietti in a beautiful
Harbor side ceremony
on June 28th.

**Congratulations to
Chris and Lori!**



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Donate on the web!

Visit us at:
www.laureladvocacy.org

Trotting Along...

Thanksgiving morning will mark the **4th Annual 5K Run/1Mile Fun Walk Turkey Trot** to benefit LARS.

The First United Methodist Church of Laurel created this event to raise awareness in the community about our work. **Casey's Crab Co.** has been on board as a platinum sponsor from the start, and they signed on for the same early this year. Information has been included with this mailing for sponsorship of the event, and participant registration. Last year 329 people registered for the race or walk, and \$13,000 was raised for LARS. Our goal is to register 430 people this year, and to raise \$17,500. Please check our website www.laureladvocacy.org for more information or to register online (available around August 15th). We hope that you will bring out all of your family and friends and make the race a part of your Thanksgiving tradition.



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