

Branching Out

SUMMER

What's Coming Up

Hunger Doesn't Take A Vacation

Now - August 31

Operation Fill-A-Backpack

August 1 - 22

Touch A Truck

September 27

Moorestown Progressive Dinner

October 17

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A Place to Call Home

Everyone deserves a decent affordable home to live in, raise a family, build a life and enjoy a future. Unfortunately, the words "affordable" and "housing" often do not fit together, especially for those with special needs. On the night of January 28, 2014, 13,900 homeless men, women and children were counted across the state of New Jersey during a "point in time" count which gives a snapshot of the homeless population. This was an overall increase of 1,898 persons, or 15.8%, compared to the 2013 count.



Forty percent reported some type of disability, with more reporting mental health issues (20.4%) than any other type of disability. Many individuals affected by mental illness fall well below the minimum income level required to obtain adequate housing but often don't know where to turn for help. Inadequate housing can lead not just to homelessness, but also lengthy hospitalizations, frequent visits to psychiatric screening centers and ERs, and involvement in the criminal justice system. Without a home to live in dignity, it is nearly impossible to move toward wellness and recovery.



We understand the critical need to provide housing that is not only safe, permanent and affordable but also accessible to community resources and transportation. Twin Oaks currently houses and provides essential behavioral health services to 448 people in 114 supportive housing residences and 47 group homes in 46 communities throughout New Jersey. In addition, our PATH (Projects for Assistance in Transitioning from Homelessness) program in Camden County places adults with a serious mental illness who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in appropriate housing and links them to formal mental health treatment.

New Jersey is one of the costliest places to live in the country, and we owe it to the most vulnerable members of our community to put affordable housing within reach. Treatment and housing services can mean the difference between a person lost and a full meaningful productive life. By working together, we can help everyone attain the simple dream of "having a place to call home."

Respectfully,



Bob Pekar
Chief Executive Officer

OPERATION FILL-A-BACKPACK

Every child deserves a great first day of school!

August 1 – 22

OPERATION
Fill-A-Backpack

 **Twin Oaks**
COMMUNITY SERVICES



A new school year is right around the corner! Many children in the region will pick out new gear such as pencils, notebooks and more to fill their brand new backpacks. Unfortunately, many parents of children in Twin Oaks programs cannot afford new backpacks and the essential supplies for the upcoming school year.

YOU can help a child start the school year off on the path to success!

1) Drop off donations at any of the following locations:

TWIN OAKS OFFICES

770 Woodlane Rd.,
Suite 16, Mount Holly
128 Cross Keys Rd., Berlin
499 Cooper Landing Rd.,
Cherry Hill

TWIN OAKS THRIFT SHOP

697 Haddon Ave.,
Collingswood

MOORESTOWN MALL

Mall Management Office

STARBUCKS

Delran, Fairview Blvd.
Cherry Hill, Haddonfield Rd.
Mount Laurel, Centerton Rd.
Moorestown, Main St.
Cherry Hill, Evesham Rd.

2) Run your OWN drive! Get your co-workers, classmates or community involved.

3) Make a monetary donation online at www.twinoakscs.org or by mail in the attached envelope.

Questions? Call the Development Office at 609-267-5928 x99836 or email keyanna.turner@twinoakscs.org.

DONATION IDEAS:

- ✓ Backpacks
- ✓ Lunchboxes
- ✓ Three ring binders with papers
- ✓ Calculators (solar and scientific)
- ✓ Spiral bound/composition notebooks
- ✓ Pens, pencils, erasers, pencil cases
- ✓ Crayons, markers, colored pencils
- ✓ Highlighters
- ✓ Protractors, rulers
- ✓ Scissors
- ✓ Glue sticks
- ✓ Pocket folders
- ✓ Index cards
- ✓ Book covers

The Santa Barbara Tragedy – Steps for Families and Communities



On May 23, 2014, our nation was deeply saddened to learn of the tragedy in Isla Vista, California where Elliot Rodger killed 6 people and wounded 13 before taking his own life. The media coverage following the event once again sparked discussion about the need for a stronger mental health system. Although facts are still emerging in this case, it seems police officers were required to make decisions as first responders that should have been made by mental health professionals.

It is clear that we need to advocate for additional funding and improve the quality of mental healthcare in America. We should also understand that the overwhelming majority of individuals living with mental illness are not dangerous. In fact, individuals with mental illness commit only a small fraction- 3 to 5 percent- of violent crimes.

Our focus must turn to reducing stigma and ultimately increase the use of services. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) recently issued basic steps for families and communities:

- Fill the gaps in our community mental health care systems. This includes the creation and promotion of crisis services and partnerships between mental health professionals and all first responders.
- Improve communication between mental health professionals, individuals receiving care and their families. Mental health privacy is important, but privacy laws should not stand in the way of coordinated information and action in a crisis.
- Talk about it within families as well as with teachers, clergy, students and community leaders. Encourage conversation about mental health, about what we are experiencing and what we can do to help. By doing so, we create and promote the space for open and honest dialogue that saves lives.

Community Scrapbook



Thank you to Girl Scout Troop 24470 for holding a fantastic "Baby Bundles" drive to support our Mt. Holly Food Pantry.



Pam Collins, Twin Oaks Chief Development Officer, recently received the Burlington County Regional Chamber of Commerce's Outstanding Young Professional Award at the Voice of Business Dinner.



Twin Oaks Archertown Group Home hosted a Mother's Day Flower Sale to raise money for summer field trips. Thank you Jim Dunphy's Landscaping, A Plus Lawn Service, Home Depot, ShopRite Supermarkets of Cherry Hill and Murphey's Markets!



Shop and Support this Summer!

SHOP

The Twin Oaks Thrift Shop is the place to find fantastic clothing, jewelry, accessories, household items and more! All proceeds from the shop will benefit Twin Oaks programs.

SUPPORT

Support our cause by donating items to the shop! Donations accepted during business hours. Items should be clean and in good condition.

DONATION IDEAS

Men's, Women's and Children's Clothing, Jewelry, Accessories, Shoes, Household Items (dishes, lamps, cookware, etc.), Art/Collectibles, Mirrors, Seasonal Decorations



Visit us in beautiful
downtown Collingswood:

697 Haddon Ave.
Collingswood, NJ 08108

Hours: Tuesday-Saturday,
11:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.



VETERANS HAVEN:

Serving Those Who Served Our Country

After serving our country, many veterans face difficulties when they return to civilian life. Without structure and support, many of these men and women feel lost and may face hardships such as homelessness, unemployment, hunger, addiction or mental illness.

Since 2008, Twin Oaks Community Services has partnered with the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs to provide services for homeless or at risk veterans through the Veterans Haven program. The program provides transitional housing for veterans and emphasizes sobriety, employment and reintegration into the community. The Treatment Team, comprised of Addiction Specialists, Social Workers, RNs and Vocational Counselors, offers group therapy, job readiness, relapse prevention, health and wellness programs, life strategies, anger management, computer training and a Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) group.

In 2013, The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey awarded Twin Oaks a \$24,000 grant to expand the Veterans Haven program to include administration of the Beck Depression Inventory for all residents. These funds will allow us to implement more targeted services designed to address clinical depression efforts and ultimately reach our goal of reintegrating retired military personnel into their communities.

During our 5 years with Veterans Haven, the number of residents has increased from 55 to 95. **While there is still work to be done, Twin Oaks is dedicated to serving those who served our country by ensuring all veterans in our area have a roof over their heads and receive essential services.**



Meet Ben

Ben spent 8 years in the United States Air Force honorably serving our country. After returning home, he found work as a car salesman and although he did not find the work fulfilling, it helped make ends meet. It wasn't long however, before Ben lost his home through divorce proceedings and he soon found himself depressed, homeless, struggling with addiction and out of work.

Ben entered Veterans Haven in May of 2013 determined to build a more stable life. In addition to the staff support provided through his treatment plan, Ben shares, "The staff at Vets Haven truly care about us. They listen to us, give us advice and help us leave as a better person." In fact, last year Ben had to have a bi-lateral hip replacement. Ben's brother suffered many complications after having his own bi-lateral hip replacement, so, understandably, Ben had many fears about his upcoming surgery. He reached out to a Twin Oaks staff member who was able to guide him through the surgery process and ease his anxieties.

While Ben continues to work through his addiction issues, he maximizes his time, diligently working on his certification in A+, Cisco and Juniper network engineering programs. In his own words, Ben explains "My time spent at Vets Haven gave me a great opportunity to restructure my life. I now have the tools to be successful."

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Get Your Family in GEAR!

Saturday, September 27

10 am - 3 pm • rain or shine
Moorestown Mall parking lot

Beep
Beep!

Kids
FREE!
Adults \$5.00

Fun For The Whole Family
Face Painting Food
Games Moon Bounce
Music and More!

Trucks to
Explore

Ambulance
Bucket Truck
Bookmobile
Construction
Vehicles
D.A.R.E. Car
Fire Truck
Krispy Kreme Cruiser
Tow Truck
Tractor Trailer
...And Many More!

TOUCH A TRUCK



Explore.

Touch.

See.

Get involved! There is still time to sponsor or bring a vehicle to the event!
Contact Jennifer Gaynor at 609-267-5928 x99835 or jennifer.gaynor@twinoakscs.org.
To learn more visit www.twinoakscs.org.



770 Woodlane Road
Mount Holly, NJ 08060

Nonprofit Org.
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PAID
Permit No. 521
Bellmawr, NJ

Twin Oaks Community Services provides behavioral health and social services to vulnerable children, adults and families throughout New Jersey.

If you or someone you know needs our care, please call our confidential point of entry: Access Center 1-800-963-3377

Stay Connected with Twin Oaks www.twinoakscs.org    



Don't miss any of our **UPCOMING EVENTS!**

**Operation Fill-A-Backpack,
August 1 - 22**



**Touch A Truck, September 27
Moorestown Mall**

**Moorestown Progressive
Dinner, October 17**



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