



# Always Home

PREVENTING  
FAMILY  
HOMELESSNESS

*Serving Communities Since 1998*

## October 2026 E-News

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### Kindness, Dignity, and Compassion



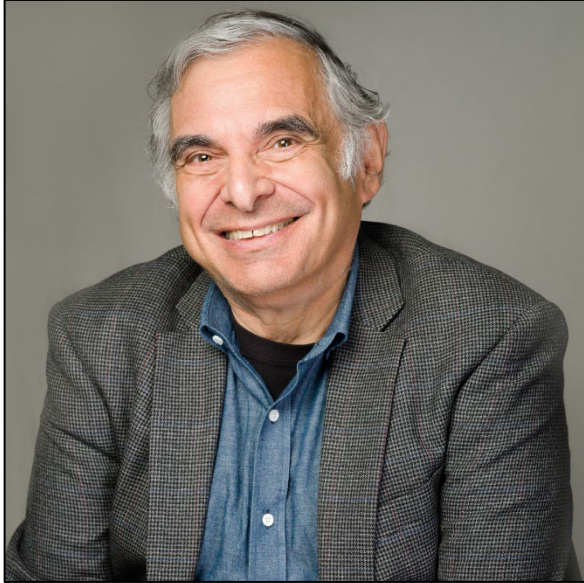
When the phone rings at Always Home, it's usually a family reaching out for support during a difficult moment. They may be behind on their rent, dealing with car troubles, or struggling to pay for childcare. They're often scared, frustrated, and embarrassed to ask for help.

For Tiffany, who needed assistance paying for a car repair, the way she was treated was as important as the help she received. She recently shared,

*"I don't take this program or the resources you provide for granted. Throughout my time with Always Home, you have never made me feel ashamed for asking for help. Instead, you've treated me with kindness, dignity, and compassion. As a single mom, I work hard every day to provide the best life I can for my children, and your support reminds me that it's okay to ask for help when it's needed."*

At Always Home, we are committed to empowering families to build housing stability and create a brighter future for their children. Your support makes this possible. Thank you!

## AH Board Welcomes New Members



*Mark Gold*

**Mark Gold** is a retired attorney who practiced for more than 50 years in Berkshire County, Massachusetts, advising businesses and nonprofit organizations on governance, strategic planning, and organizational challenges. In 1988, he co-founded Louison House, an organization providing shelter and support services to homeless and at-risk individuals and families, and served as its first President. He has held numerous nonprofit leadership positions, including Chair of the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation and board member of Community Legal Aid. Most recently, he co-founded and served as the first President of Second Street Second Chances, an organization helping formerly incarcerated individuals successfully reenter their communities. Now retired in Mystic, Connecticut, he enjoys boating and continues his commitment to community service.

Mark believes, *"Having a safe and stable place to call home is fundamental to the well-being of every family. I admire the work Always Home is doing to prevent family homelessness, and I'm pleased to have the opportunity to contribute to those efforts."*



*Margarida Martins-Querido*

**Margarida Martins-Querido** is a Connecticut and Rhode Island Realtor with Century 21 Shutters & Sails, and an active community leader in Southeastern Connecticut. Her commitment to housing and community service is deeply personal, shaped by her family's experience leaving economic and political oppression in search of stability, opportunity, and a better future. In addition to her real estate career, Margarida serves as President of OpSail Connecticut and is involved with several local organizations focused on community, youth, military families, and economic opportunity, including The Riverfront Children's Center, Norwich Rotary Club, and the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Connecticut's Military Affairs Council.

Margarida shares, *"I am honored to have the opportunity to serve on the Always Home Board. The mission is especially meaningful to me because I believe stable housing is about much more than having a roof over our heads. It provides dignity, security, and a foundation from which individuals and families can move forward. I look forward to listening, learning, and contributing wherever I can."*

## Farewell to Reverend Lonnie Brown



At Always Home's Board of Directors' Annual Meeting, members expressed their gratitude to outgoing member, Reverend Dr. Lonnie Brown, Senior Minister of Union Baptist Church. Lonnie has served on the Board for eight years, providing leadership as a former Board President, historical continuity as a representative of the church, and a strong passion for our mission.

Tricia Cunningham, Always Home's Executive Director, shared, "Lonnie has been an important person to me, someone I could talk to about any burden or joy. Knowing he is just across the parking lot has always been a comfort."

The Board and staff deeply appreciate the time and effort Lonnie has invested in advancing Always Home's mission. Though Lonnie's presence on the Board will be missed, he will continue to be close by and an important part of our lives.

## Partnering for Children's Well-being



We are excited to share that Always Home has received a grant from the [Rotary Club of Groton](#) and we are dedicating the entire grant to helping families whose children attend The Riverfront Children's Center in Groton.

There is a strong need for Always Home's programs at The Riverfront Children's Center, where 39 percent of the enrolled children live in single-parent households and 28 percent of the families earn an income below the federal poverty level. For these families, a gas gift card from Always Home's Wheels to Work program will help cover a week's worth of commuting costs, allowing parents to bring their children to daycare, attend work, and earn the income needed to pay the rent.

This partnership not only addresses families' transportation emergencies, but also ensures that children will receive the ongoing care and early childhood education essential to their development.

# Helping Families Turn Housing into Home



When a family is moving into a new apartment, they often lack the essential everyday items that help make the space feel more like home. At Always Home Essentials, families find towels, bedding, pot & pans, dishes, flatware, cooking utensils, and so much more. Everything is new and available at no cost.

"Our hope is that families who "shop" at Always Home Essentials find items that bring them comfort and joy", shares Tricia Cunningham, Always Home's Executive Director. "We made the choice to provide only new items, giving families who typically can only access second-hand goods the experience and dignity of owning something fresh and new."

We're constantly adding items to our shop to keep the shelves filled. If you would like to help us keep Always Home Essentials stocked, we've created an online shopping registry at Walmart. All donations can be shipped directly to our office. To get started, [CLICK HERE](#).



Before the Connecticut Sun played one of their last games at the Mohegan Sun Arena, Always Home stepped onto center court to accept a generous donation from Connecticut Sun Guard Saniya Rivers.

We are truly grateful to Saniya for personally selecting Always Home to receive a \$2,000 donation on behalf of Yale New Haven Health. We also appreciate that the Connecticut Sun Foundation generously matched the gift.

We wish the team good luck as they make Houston, Texas their new home.

# Thank you to the following funders!

AHEPA Norwich Foundation; Anderson-Paffard Foundation, Inc.; Bob's Discount Furniture Charitable Foundation; Brownington Foundation, Inc.; Connecticut Sun Foundation; George A. & Grace L. Long Foundation, Bank of America, N.A., Co-Trustee; Groton Rotary Club; McPhee Foundation; Town Fair Tire Foundation, Inc.; Wireless Zone Gives; Yale New Haven Health



**Join us at The Hounds in Stonington for  
An Evening in Support of Always Home!**



The Hounds (769 Stonington Rd. Stonington, CT 06378)  
Learn more, see FAQ and get tickets: [mysticriverjam.com](http://mysticriverjam.com)



## Coming Soon - OMV Events that Benefit AH



## Save the Date for our 2027 Gala



Planning is already underway for Always Home's next **Heart to Heart Gala, scheduled for Friday, April 9, 2027 at the Marriott Hotel & Spa**. The Gala Committee has been holding monthly meetings, and last week, Always Home's Tricia Cunningham and Ashley Lane met with Michael O'Farrell, who will once again take on the role of our Gala auctioneer. We are grateful for Mike's passion for our mission, Preventing Family Homelessness, and his inspiring enthusiasm throughout the gala. Be sure to save the date and join us for an unforgettable evening where you can truly make a difference.