Dear Friends and Supporters of HAP:

As we move into fall, while the city and homeless providers gear up for winter, it’s a good time for a HAP update. HAP staff and volunteers continue to inspire us with their work for Philadelphia’s homeless population. As some of you know, we lost a sizeable grant last year as a result of the State’s budgetary cutbacks. Meanwhile, as a result of the economic recession and welfare cuts, the need for HAP’s services has increased substantially. HAP is serving 50% more clients than it served just three years ago and doing so with fewer staffers.

HAP has responded to this challenge with renewed commitment to its mission. Our staff and volunteers are working harder than ever to serve the needs of homeless individuals and families through our Adopt-a-Shelter program, our Veterans Project, our SOAR Project, and our Children and Families Project. We have expanded some of these programs, including the addition of our newest clinic at Broad Street Ministry (supported by Drinker, Biddle & Reath). And our list of success stories - lives of people made better by the work of HAP staff and volunteers - continues to grow.

We have also taken strong measures to grow and professionalize our institutional and fundraising efforts including the recent adoptions of a five-year Strategic Plan for 2013-2017 and a new Fundraising Plan. In implementing the fundraising plan, HAP upgraded its fundraising software, renewing focus on outreach to individual and corporate donors. That’s just the beginning - there is much more to come.

HAP is doing so much for homeless men, women and families in our communities, but there is much more to be done. With all of us pulling together, we can make a difference. As Sister Mary Scullion reported at a recent board meeting, the problem of homelessness in our society can be solved, and HAP is working to make that happen.

Thank you for all you do to support HAP.

Sincerely,

Stephen G. Harvey
Board President

HAPpy Developments

HAP is pleased to announce the launch of its SOAR Re-entry Project (see inside for details) with seed money from the Samuel S. Fels Fund. HAP is grateful to Fels for helping to launch many of HAP’s most successful programs including HAP’s Children and Families Project (CFP), HAP’s Veterans Program and HAP’s Shelter Advocacy Project. HAP was excited to learn this month of new 3-year federal award that will enable us to secure disability benefits for more than 200 homeless adults who will be referred by the Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania. As well, HAP is thrilled to be named a recipient of the 2013 GlaxoSmithKline Community Impact Award for its successful SOAR Project.
HAP launches new SOAR Re-Entry Project

HAP recently launched its SOAR Re-Entry Project, representing psychiatrically impaired prisoners in securing federal Supplemental Security Income (“SSI”) disability benefits and SSI-related medical assistance coverage prior to prison release. HAP is partnering with the Philadelphia Prison System and Philadelphia’s Re-Entry Mental Health Court to bring rapid SSI benefits to these severely mentally-ill inmates as part of comprehensive prison discharge planning.

Approximately 20% of incarcerated men and women diagnosed with serious mental illness were homeless in the months leading to their incarceration. Unless they can access a stable source of income, these individuals often become homeless again after release into the community. Former offenders experiencing homelessness are substantially more likely to return to prison than those who obtain stable housing.

HAP’s new SOAR Re-Entry Project establishes SSI eligibility and a source of income for these former inmates, thereby expanding their access to recovery programs, housing, behavioral health treatment and other supportive services. Partnering with the Philadelphia Prison System and with Mental Health Court personnel, who supervise inmate re-entry, will enable HAP to utilize SOAR as a means to prevent homelessness, reduce recidivism and enhance public safety. HAP’s pilot program is targeted to assist 25 currently incarcerated individuals, and HAP is hoping to significantly expand the program and broaden its impact over the next few years.

HAPppy Outcomes - Volunteer Success

Margie Morris, HAP board President-Elect of Reger Rizzo & Darnall, met her client Mr. H (age 46), at the Eliza Shirley Clinic where he indicated he needed someone to help him obtain Social Security disability benefits. Mr. H had previously applied for benefits and had been denied. This client was in a unique situation because he became homeless to get away from family members abusing drugs at home. He had been consuming alcohol since age 9 and hard drugs since 13 and was desperate for recovery. He knew his only chance at sobriety was to leave his home and his family.

The client initially applied for disability benefits based on a physical disability, but was denied for lack of sufficient medical evidence. During intake with the client, Margie realized that Mr. H was struggling with mental health issues, but he was not inclined to trust people and it was difficult for him to discuss his medical problems. Talk or discussion regarding his mental disability caused him to shut down.

Margie knew that in order to have the client open up to her, she would have to gain his trust. Margie met with the client on numerous occasions just to talk and assure him he was not being judged. As he became more comfortable, she eventually gathered more relevant medical background information. She reached out to his caseworker, who validated her assessment that mental health issues were preventing him from gainful employment. In fact, there were medical records, albeit for only a few months, that supported a diagnosis of anti-social behavior and anger management issues.

Prior to the hearing, Margie spent significant time prepping the client so that he was ready for questioning and comfortable with the fact the hearing would revolve around his mental health. Margie arranged for his sober coach to be present to prevent the client from the temptation of relapse if the appeal was denied.

The line of questioning at the hearing was precisely consistent with the preparation and the client did very well under immense pressure. The Judge granted the client’s application for benefits and also awarded back benefits. Mr. H now has the income necessary to move off the streets into stable housing and the medical insurance so he can obtain proper treatment - thanks to Margie’s efforts and thorough preparation.

HAP’s Adopt-a-Shelter Program

HAP collaborates with the following law firms, corporate legal departments, and law schools.

Broad Street Ministry - Drinker Biddle & Reath
Caton Village - Schnader Harrison
Covenant House - Duane Morris
Eliza Shirley House - Regger Rizzo;
Blank Rome and Lincoln Financial Group
HELP Philadelphia - Villanova University Law School
Home for the Brave - Archer & Greiner
House of Passage - Pepper Hamilton
Impact Services - Pepper Hamilton
Our Brother’s Place - White & Williams
The Perimeter - Saul Ewing; DLA Piper and Cigna
Project HOME - Reed Smith and Merck
RHD Woodstock Family Center - Morgan Lewis and Exelon Corporation
Salvation Army’s Red Shield - Dilworth Paxson and Montgomery McCracken
SOAR DHS Project - Drexel Law School
St. Francis Inn - Dechert and Temple Law School
St. John’s Hospice - Dechert and Kehler Harrison
Station House - Cozen O’Connor;
Hogan Lovells and NFI Industries
Stenton Family Manor - DLA Piper and Pep Boys
Sunday Breakfast Rescue Mission - Ballard Spahr and Comcast
Traveler’s Aid - Gibbons; Hangley Aronchick and Drexel University
Trevor’s Place Next Door – Obermayer Rebmann
University City Hospitality Coalition - University of PA Law School and Michael LiPuma, Esq.

Our Mission

In the fall of 1990, a group of concerned members of the Philadelphia bar and the homeless services community created HAP to address the unmet legal needs of the city’s homeless population. HAP was founded in the belief that homeless people have unique and complex legal problems that often are not adequately addressed by traditional providers of legal services to indigent and low-income individuals. Homeless individuals often lead transient, unstable lives, and are often debilitated by mental illness, substance abuse, and inadequate education. They frequently lack an understanding of their legal rights and the ability to make effective use of the network of advocacy and service organizations that is available to assist them. Living in crisis, often without income or resources, homeless persons are less likely, and less able, than other indigent clients to make use of Center City-based legal services programs.

To ensure that homeless people had access to legal services, HAP’s founders created an organization designed to deliver legal services directly to them in the places where they live and eat. Since its inception, HAP has conducted legal clinics in shelters and soup kitchens throughout Philadelphia. By recruiting and training volunteer attorneys, legal assistants and law students to staff these clinics, HAP is able to leverage its resources to provide free legal counseling and representation to a population not adequately served by other legal services programs. HAP is the only legal services organization in Philadelphia that conducts such direct outreach to the homeless population.

HAP collaborates with shelter providers, homeless advocates, community service providers and the legal community to provide homeless clients with legal representation and to connect them with other social services. HAP currently holds legal clinics at twenty-five homeless shelters and soup kitchens. Since HAP’s first legal clinic in December 1990, HAP’s 350 volunteers have helped more than 32,100 homeless people. To date, HAP’s volunteers have provided more than $45 million worth of free legal services to homeless clients.
HAP’s 2013 April Benefit!

The Homeless Advocacy Project held its Annual Benefit on April 11, 2013. All proceeds of the silent auction and cocktail party benefited HAP. The 2013 benefit raised over $215,000 for HAP.


AMBASSADOR: Cozen O’Connor, DLA Piper, Jack Foltz, Fox Rothschild, Lexis Nexis, Pepper Hamilton, The Reliable Companies, Saul Ewing

DIPLOMAT: Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney, PC, Reed Smith, White and Williams LLP


BENEFACTORS: Kathryn Bird & Thomas Eubig, Duane Morris, Carol Nelson Shepherd, Feldman Shepherd, Gibbons, Hogan Lovells, Klehr Harrison, Montgomery McCracken, Post & Schell, Reilly Janiczek, Saltz Mongeluzzi, Stacy & Russell Paul


* A special thanks to Class Action and The Orpheus Club of Philadelphia for their live performances this evening!

YES, I'd like to help HAP...

Name: ____________________________________________________________

Firm/Affiliation: ___________________________________________________

Address: ___________________________________________________________________

Phone: _____________________________________________________________________

Fax: ________________________________________________________________________

Email: _____________________________________________________________________

Area of Interest: ____________________________________________________________

I would like to make a donation of: □ $25 □ $50 □ $100 □ $250 □ $500 □ $1,000 □ $ _______

Enclosed is a check made out to “HAP”

Please charge this contribution from my credit card: □ VISA □ MasterCard □ American Express

Card Number: ___________________________ Expiration Date: ____________ (MM/YY) ____________

Name and address as they appear on credit card: _________________________________

I would like to make monthly donations of $ ______________ every: □ month □ months □ months

I would like to make this donation in the memory of: ____________________________