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Summer 2011 Newsletter



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Pathways Summer 2011 Newsletter



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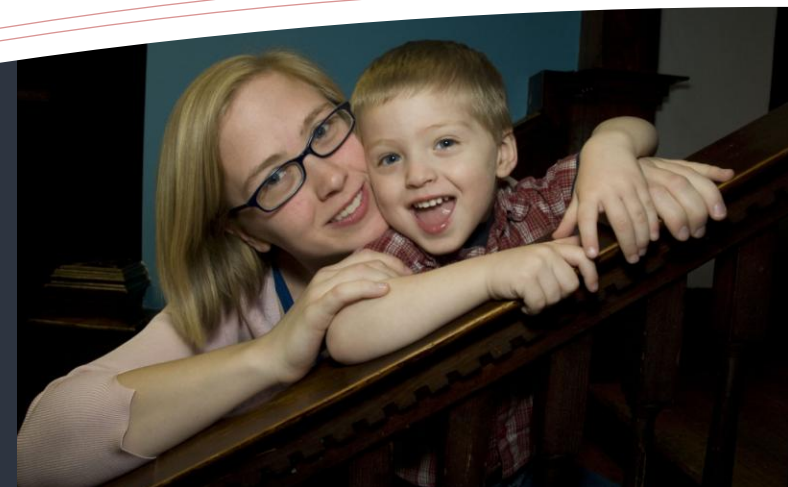
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Robin's Story of Survival

By Heather N. Caygle

Robin ended up at Pathways in 2010 by sheer luck. After serving 13 months in a Florida prison for check forgery, she was offered the opportunity to be sent anywhere.

Before going to prison, Robin had been a heavy user of drugs and alcohol, so she knew she didn't want to stay in Florida and fall back into that habit.

"They asked me where I wanted to go, so I looked on the map, put my finger on it, and when I moved my finger aside it said 'Birmingham, Alabama,'" she said.

"If it wasn't for Pathways sticking by me, I would be on the streets. They didn't give up on me."

Robin ended up at Pathways, where she was given structure and support by a dedicated staff.

"At Pathways, everything started getting better and better for me," Robin said. "I got involved in my treatment, I went to my meetings every day, I stayed clean and they put me in a job-training program."

Robin had been in and out of prison three times before, but with the help of Pathways, she was determined to stay clean.

"I didn't go back to Florida because I didn't want to go back to the same thing. This time it was different. I wanted to have my own apartment, I wanted to have a job, I wanted to have a car," she said.

According to Robin, the support of the Pathways staff was invaluable to her recovery.



Robin in the living room of her new apartment.

"If it wasn't for Pathways sticking by me, I would be on the streets probably smoking crack again," she said. "They didn't give up on me."

Now Robin has a job, her own apartment and will be celebrating three years sober on July 29.

"I threw away that old behavior and that old life," she said. "I survived, and I'm not going back."

To read more about Robin and her journey through Pathways, visit Pathways' blog at pathwayshome.blogspot.com

Please consider donations of: Goods * Services * Time * Money

Help Pathways provide hospitality, housing, and hope to more than 1,000 homeless women and children each year.

To learn more on giving visit our website at www.pathwayshome.org.



Maria's Corner

"Path": a track that has been worn by the continual passage of feet.

"Way": a door or opening leading or providing access to or from somewhere.

Two words that fit so well together, giving a very vivid description of our mission. We combat homelessness by helping women and children who have lost their home to regain a sure track toward a place of security through consistent provision of necessary resources. Whether it's a hot meal, a bed, laundry detergent, personal hygiene items, or a class for employment readiness or health and wellness, the basic needs of every woman and child who comes through our doors are our main priorities. We desire to see families restored to a sense of normalcy, and we believe that our efforts make way for one more step, one more accomplishment, one more opportunity. No one gets into dire straits overnight, so we commit to walking that path with our "guests". It's our desire to foster an environment of caring, patience and stability for every woman and child we serve. And we can continue to do this with support from those who share the same burden of love for those needing to find their pathway home.

Maria Dickens, Executive Director

Pathways' Mudbowl Frisbee Tournament Turns 30

Ultimate Frisbee event raises \$10,000 for homeless women and children

The women and children served by Pathways benefitted greatly from the \$10,000 raised by the 2011 Mudbowl ultimate Frisbee tournament, which celebrated its 30th anniversary this year.

The event, which is organized by the Birmingham Ultimate Disc Association (BUDA) in conjunction with Pathways, took place May 21 at The Gardendale Soccer Complex at Kenneth A. Clemons Recreational Complex.

Corporate and community-sponsored teams donned cleats and jerseys representing these sponsors: KBR (Title Sponsor), Alabama Power, Church of the Highlands, Redeemer Community

Church, Regions, Merrill Lynch, Mountain Brook Community Church, Southern Progress, and Wingate by Wyndham – Tuscaloosa.

"I felt the level of competition was as high as it has ever been this year, and there was a lot of parity in between the teams," said Mike Murphy, 2011 Mudbowl chair. "Everybody lost a game, which I don't think has ever happened."

Jim 'N Nick's Bar-B-Q generously donated lunch, and Pucker Powder provided delicious treats for all participants. William Anderson designed the Mudbowl 30th anniversary logo pro bono.

Mountain Brook Community Church took the championship, defeating Redeemer Community Church 9 to 5 in the final game. Congrats to them, and many thanks to all the participants for their support!

Mark Your Calendar...

2011 Sporting Clays August 26 at Selwood Farms
For more information, visit at www.pathwayshome.org



A young Mudbowl fan shows off the 30th anniversary commemorative disc.



By Heather N. Caygle

Preacher Jeff Young and his wife Melanie have been actively volunteering with Pathways since the spring.

When they first arrived in Birmingham about two years ago, they were volunteering at another shelter. Last year, one of the members of their congregation wanted to volunteer with homeless children, and so the group reached out to Lane Turbeville, volunteer coordinator at Pathways.

"Lane was so open and helpful in giving us information," said Jeff.

Now Jeff and Melanie volunteer at Pathways in a variety of ways. Jeff teaches a bi-weekly Bible class for women, Melanie leads a weekly class for children, they serve lunch at Pathways' Day Center and are about to start tutoring.

Volunteer Spotlight: Jeff and Melanie Young

Preacher and wife find volunteering at Pathways to be deeply rewarding

Melanie and Jeff are excited to help in any way they can.

"It's just really about compassion and finding any way we can be able to help people," said Jeff.

"It's a blessing to us just to be able to serve and show compassion," added Melanie. "It helps them but it probably helps us more."

Both Melanie and Jeff believe volunteering at Pathways has made them better people.

"You change when you start volunteering. It really changes who you are as a person and you develop a different frame of mind about your life," said Jeff. "You actually get more out of volunteering than always doing things for yourself."

What makes the volunteer experience even more rewarding is the appreciation shown by the women and children at Pathways.

"The women and the children that we've been involved with are very

appreciative, and it seems to mean a lot to them," said Melanie. "It's rewarding because you don't feel like you're wasting your time."

"Last time we were there a little boy named Scotty came up and he was so excited to see us. That felt great," Jeff added.

Even in the short time they have been volunteering at the shelter, Melanie and Jeff have already seen some women succeed with the help of Pathways.

"It's nice to see the women progress in life," said Jeff. "We've known a few who have been able to leave Pathways and get a place of their own. It's very rewarding to see that."

Both Jeff and Melanie encourage anyone interested in volunteering their time to get involved with Pathways.

"We love it. It is the best thing that I do through the week," Jeff said. "There is nothing that I do during the week that I find more rewarding."

Get Involved! Volunteer Opportunities

At Pathways there are many ways to volunteer, and volunteers are always needed throughout the day. Find a way to get involved!

Prepare Lunch

Volunteers are needed daily to prepare and/or serve lunch at our Day Center, which serves over 40 women per day. Volunteers can bring a cooked meal or serve something already prepared.

Dental Services

The homeless women at Pathways are in need of dental services. We are currently seeking dentists to provide pro bono dental services for our guests.

Call Pathways at 205.322.6854 if you are interested in volunteering.

Sponsor a Newsletter!

Pathways is looking for sponsors to underwrite the cost of publishing our quarterly newsletter. By becoming a sponsor, you would allow us to use the money we would spend on printing costs to feed hungry children, provide job training for unemployed mothers, or provide basic services to women living on the streets. Your business would be recognized in the newsletter as well as on Pathways' website. For more information, contact Development Director Karen Griner at 205.322.6854 or karen.griner@pathwayshome.org.

You Can Support Pathways by Donating Needed Items

Pathways is currently in need of the following items. Donations are accepted 8:30 am to 5 pm Monday through Friday at Pathways' downtown office, 409 Richard Arrington, Jr. Blvd N.

Day Center

- Deodorant
- Lotion
- Mouthwash
- Toothpaste/toothbrushes
- Combs/hair brushes
- Pens/paper
- Activity books (word find, Sudoku, fill-in)
- Towels and wash cloths
- Diapers/wipes



Clothes Closet

- Plus size clothing
- Plastic bags (all sizes) to put clothes in
- Shoes sizes 10 and up
- Professional dress wear
- Winter Items (hats, gloves, scarves)
- Socks and hosiery
- Plus size undergarments

Transitional Housing and Shelter Programs

- Double and twin bed sheet sets
- Diapers and wipes
- Cleaning Supplies
- Back packs

To inquire about making donations contact Karen Griner, Development Director, at 205.322.6854 or karen.griner@pathwayshome.org.

