

The Freeman Flash

SPRING 2017

ELIZABETH FREEMAN CENTER'S OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

ISSUE XLVIII

EFC's new Disability Justice Program



EFC is launching a new Disability Justice Program this fall to expand services and outreach by, for, and with survivors living with disabilities in Berkshire County.

Spread the Word – WE ARE HIRING!

Passionate about disability justice? Apply to be our new Disability Justice Counselor/Advocate! People living with disabilities strongly encouraged to apply. Visit elizabethfreemancenter.org/jobs to learn more.

LGBTQ Support Group begins

EFC is launching an LGBTQ support group! For lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, and gender non-conforming folks (age 18+). Come talk about LGBTQ issues and build community. Started May 30th, still open to newcomers. Tuesdays 6:30-7:30pm, location TBA.



To join, please contact Jenn or Jesi: JenniferW@elizabethfreemancenter.org and (413) 499-2425, or JessicaS@elizabethfreemancenter.org and (413) 429-8190.

Our Great Barrington office has moved!

Our South County office is in a new location! Come visit us in our new space:

168 Main Street, Suite 4
(back of the H&R Block building)
Great Barrington, MA 01230

We're moooving!



Money School wins 2017 Innovation Award

In April, EFC was awarded the 2017 Innovation Award from the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance (MOVA) for Money School, our financial independence initiative for survivors of domestic and sexual violence. We are thrilled!

We're currently offering our first Spanish-speaking Money School series (Escuela de Finanzas), with the next series (English and Spanish) starting in the fall.

(continued on next page)



New address!



24 hour hotline 1-866-401-2425

Pittsfield
43 Francis Ave.
(413) 499-2425

Gt. Barrington
168 Main St., Ste. 4
(413) 429-8190

North Adams
61 Main St., Ste. 202
(413) 663-7459

www.elizabethfreemancenter.org



Shelter News

by Carla D, Shelter Director

What a busy time here at shelter!! Four guests recently moved out of shelter into their own apartments, and everyone is excited for them as they move forward in safety and independence with their children.



New plants for the children's butterfly garden

We have added Al-Anon meetings each week to complement our AA group that meets weekly. We had a garden day in April, with help from the Junior League of the Berkshires (see picture). We received Mother's Day gift bags from Mary Kay for all of the women in shelter. Our guests and staff enjoyed a Memorial Day Barbeque complete with fun lawn and water games! And we are looking forward to the summer, with tickets to Tanglewood, Berkshire Museum and Wahconah Park with our own Pittsfield Suns for our guests to enjoy.

Welcome, Julian

We are excited to introduce Julian, our new bilingual Family Counselor/Advocate in the North Adams office!

Julian comes to us with a wealth of experience working with children and young adults, and his friendly and caring demeanor has already been putting people at ease. El habla español.



2017 Innovation Award cont.

Thank you to all of the survivors, advisors, financial coaches, presenters, and supporters that make Money School great. As Janis, our Executive Director says, "This program is a community effort – everyone has come together to create a program that is making a real difference in survivors' lives."

Money School was developed in a partnership between Elizabeth Freeman Center and the American Institute for Economic Research.

To learn more, contact our Money School Coordinator, Donna at (413) 499-2425 or DonnaL@elizabethfreemancenter.org.



Reflections

Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month may be over, but the work of supporting survivors never stops.

Thank you to everyone who rallied, spoke out, organized fundraisers (Otto's Deli and Berkshire Salsa!), offered self-defense classes (Kim Rivers!), celebrated their own surviving and thriving, or reached out

to a survivor last month. We are proud to be in community with you all, as we work to build a world where everyone can live in safety, with dignity and justice.

Overflowing with gratitude

We would like to say a giant thank-you to the incredible Cindy S. and her friends and community, who for a fifth spring in a row created beautiful care packages of hope and love for all of the guests in our shelter. These gifts are a welcome reminder to shelter guests that they are not alone, that they matter, and that they have community support.



And a huge thank-you to the National Association of Letter Carriers! EFC's shelter received boxes and boxes of donated non-perishable food from their annual Stamp Out Hunger food drive. Shelter guests often arrive at shelter with nothing but what they are wearing - to have healthy food waiting for them means a lot, to them and to us.



Cindy's care packages