



Christ
House

HEALING AND HOPE FOR HOMELESS PERSONS

VOLUME XXXIV, NO. 3 | SUMMER 2019

Day by Day

Edwin D'Souza, who has worked as a Christ House night nurse since 1999, administers medication to a patient during a night shift.

Late Night Christ House: Operating a 24-Hour Facility

Our compassionate staff meets our patients' needs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

When many employees begin the rush hour trek home at 5:00, our clinical staff is just beginning to gear up for the long night ahead. As a 24-hour facility, Christ House has never closed its doors since opening on Christmas Eve 1985 thanks to our incredible staff members who keep the medical floor staffed every single

hour of the year.

Christ House Off-Hours

Working an off-hour shift is challenging for many reasons. As our patients are medically complex, many suffer from multiple chronic health conditions and are recovering from addictions. Our staff working off-hours must be

able to attend to seriously ill patients with significantly fewer colleagues around. And for those working the night shift, staying alert during late hours is critical as well as an additional challenge. This requires our nursing team to have sound clinical assessment skills, a strong work ethic, and both mental and physical stamina.



The mission of Christ House is to provide comprehensive and compassionate health care to sick and homeless men from the District of Columbia, and to assist them in addressing the critical issues to help them break the cycle of homelessness.

Continued

Edwin D'Souza, who has been a Christ House night nurse since 1999, actually prefers the night shift. D'Souza thrives in the off-hour environment where he can fully exercise his strong work ethic and utilize the clinical skills he has cultivated over years of nursing experience.

"You have to be prepared for anything at any time," says D'Souza.

A Mission-Driven Staff

According to Clinical Director, Mary Jordan, the 24/7 operations of Christ House can only be sustained by the right people. Our clinical staff must be composed of individuals who are team-oriented, flexible, and most essentially, dedicated to the Christ House mission. Ensuring that our patients have access to nursing care at all times requires everyone to pitch in. "A generous spirit," as Jordan puts it, is an essential trait for Christ House clinical staff members, who take turns working nights, weekends, and holidays.

The Live-In Community

Nine clinical staff members live onsite on the third and fourth floors at Christ House, forming the live-in community that offers back-up support in case an emergency arises during off-hours. Nurse practitioners Mary Jordan and Mari Lowe are two of our clinical staff members who live above the medical floor at Christ House. Jordan and Lowe coordinate to ensure that at least one of them is present at Christ House during all nights, weekends, and holidays.



A homeless respite care assistant starts a load of laundry during a weekend shift.

Did you know?

We run an average of **30 loads of laundry in a 24-hour period** to keep up with the influx of patient clothing, bedding, and towels that need to be washed. That's **10,080 loads per year!**

Want to help us continue to provide clean and dignifying clothing and supplies for our patients? Consider making a donation of the following:

- **Wind Fresh Laundry Detergent: 215 loads, powder, "fresh scent"**
- **Tide Laundry Detergent: 180 loads, powder, "original" scent**

***Due to allergy concerns, any donated detergent must be this specific brand and type.** Thank you for supporting our 24-hour operations!

"There's not a weekend that goes by that I'm not checking in with the second floor in person, or through text or phone call," says Jordan.

Years of experience have proven the importance of the live-in community to Jordan. She recalls a time when a patient had back-to-back seizures during early hours one Sunday morning. Thanks to the live-in community, the nurse on the night shift was able to quickly summon a staff member who lived on the floor above. The extra support

allowed one nurse to stabilize the patient while the other staff members maintained the rest of the floor and called 9-1-1.

The 24/7 operations of Christ House are a significant undertaking that require twice the resources and compassion from both our staff and supporters to sustain. We thank you for making it possible for us to continue to offer a place of recovery for sick and homeless individuals 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.



Patient Spotlight: Joseph



Joseph was a patient for two months this year. Read his interview below to see how your support makes a difference!

How did you arrive at Christ House? I've had 4 strokes since 2010. Two of them were back-to-back. I had one in October of 2018 and another one in November of 2018. After that last stroke, I lost my apartment, my cars, and so much more. At that point, I was referred to Christ House by a counselor at Washington Hospital Center.

What is it like to be a patient at Christ House? The first day I walked in, I was a little apprehensive about what I was getting myself into. I thought that Christ House was only for addictions recovery, but I soon came to understand that Christ House is actually about healing. That's what Christ House does—it heals you, mentally, physically, and sometimes psychologically too. When I first came, I had a tremendous limp since one side of my body was weak from my strokes. The staff at Christ House made sure that I went to physical therapy two to three times a week, and helped me do my at-home exercises. Now, I'm much stronger. I've learned a lot about myself, my medication, and how to take care of my health. Christ House has been a blessing for me.

What are your hopes for the future? I have four great-grandkids. I want to get a place where they can come over and just rip the place apart!

New Friends Join the Christ House Family

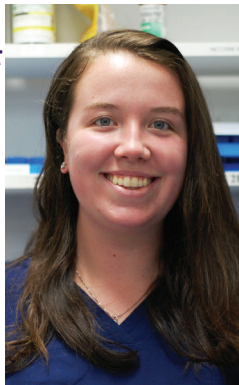
We welcomed six new Year Long Volunteers in June. These individuals have committed to serving our patients 40 hours a week for a full year. We're so grateful for the new gifts they bring to our community!



Andrei
Case Management Assistant

Helps our patients with insurance, benefits, and various social services

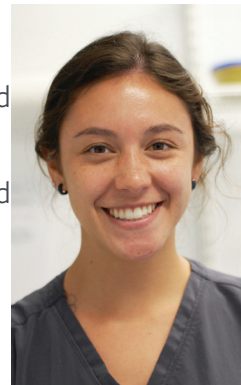
Fun Fact: Loves to go hiking



Cassie
Nurse

Plans, evaluates, and provides hands-on care and education for our patients, and supervises respite care assistants

Fun Fact: Favorite animal is a pug



Hayley
Respite Care Assistant

Assists patients with activities of daily living and attends to various other clinical needs

Fun Fact: Enjoys R&B and reggae



Makayla
Clinical Unit Assistant

Coordinates patient logistics and serves as the first point of contact for all Christ House medical inquiries

Fun Fact: Likes to bake



Jamie
Activities Coordinator

Organizes patient activities and trips to enrich and give structure to patients' days

Fun Fact: Speaks 5 languages



Olivia
Respite Care Assistant

Assists patients with activities of daily living and attends to various other clinical needs

Fun Fact: Originally hails from New York

Want to volunteer alongside these talented individuals?

Go to <https://christhouse.org/volunteer/> to see how you can get involved at Christ House.

Labor Day BBQ

**Monday,
September 2nd
12PM**

All are welcome! Please RSVP to Jamie.Liu@christhouse.org with the number of people in your party before August 26th.

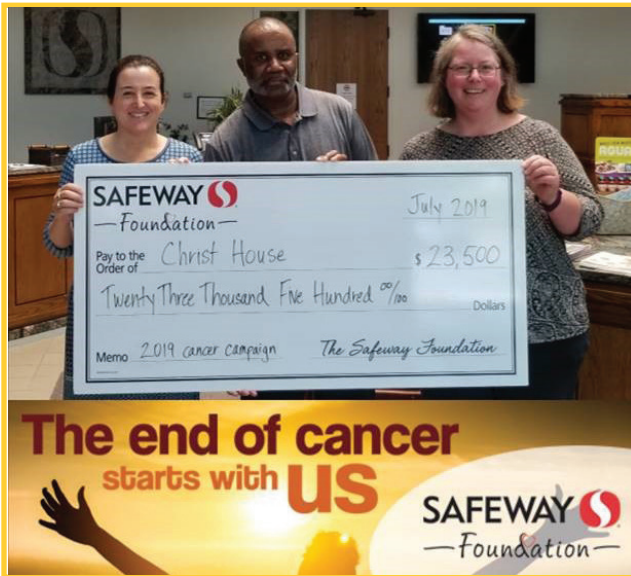


In-Kind Needs

Help our patients protect their eyes and stay hydrated during these hot summer months with an in-kind donation!

- **Sunglasses** - men's sunglasses with 100% UV protection
- **Water bottles** - new only

We recommend calling ahead before dropping off donations as our needs change over time. Thank you!



Thank you, SAFEWAY

We're thrilled to announce that the Safeway Foundation has awarded Christ House a **\$23,500 grant** to support cancer screenings for our patients! Safeway is committed to improving the lives of its neighbors, especially those who have limited access to health care. We have partnered with Safeway to provide care to vulnerable populations since 2017, and are deeply grateful to continue this partnership.

The Advance Advancing hope in Christ's name
#381215

CFC #34256 | UW #8385

www.christhouse.org
Return Service Requested



1717 Columbia Road, NW
Washington, DC 20009

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