



It's All About SELF

FEBRUARY - MARCH 2024

Summertime approaches quickly as spring fades beneath the sun. While many plan for their vacations, the unhoused have a deeper quandary as our winter initiative comes to an end. How does this program impact the unhoused in our community?

December 1st through April 30th brings additional night by night emergency housing beds. With this placement comes a warm place to rest one's head, a hot meal to eat, and a secure place for one's belongings. Once this program ends, some may return to the street for they have no long-term place to go.

Affordable housing continues to be a challenge that our society continues to grapple over. While housing opportunities are scarce, the barriers continue to grow. The correlation between mental health diagnosis and the unhoused is significant. Limited treatment opportunities coupled with scarce employment options significantly increase one's probability of being unhoused.

Can housing insecurity be diminished without collaboration between mental health providers, substance use disorder treatment, workforce development, and DEI solutions? Service delivery continues to create a pathway for resources that diminish housing insecurity. Our team at SELF Inc. remains committed to partnering with other organizations as we develop housing opportunities for the unhoused.

Please join us in this fight! Together we can make a difference. Reach out to your elected officials and challenge them to support affordable housing bills on a local, state, and federal level.

In Service,

Dr. Dash

FROM THE
DESK OF
THE CEO

HIGHLIGHTING IFE WELLNES CENTER

Ife Wellness Center is perhaps the most unique shelter in Philadelphia as this shelter is a direct referral emergency housing program for participants who are willing to be enrolled in a recovery treatment program, agree to stay in treatment for substance use disorders and or other mental health issues and acknowledge to themselves and our team a desire to stop using, maintain their physician proscribed treatments while remaining open minded, learning to live their best lives.

Mayor Jim Kenney issued Opioid Emergency Response Executive Order 3-18 establishing an emergency response to help combat Philadelphia's opioid epidemic and in November of 2018 the Office of Homeless Services under Mission Area 3 engaged SELF Incorporated to establish a comprehensive navigation center for individuals displaced by the clearing of the encampments. On January 31st, 2019, Ife Wellness was opened at 801 West Girard Avenue on the 2nd floor of the Hawthorn Building.



Ife welcome desk – Supervisor Lawrence Hite

Today this program has evolved serving 80 participants of which 24 are reserved for female identified participants. While Ife still provides a navigation center capability for participants who are engaged by OHS and the Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disability Services Outreach teams, Ife also accepts direct referrals from substance use disorder treatment centers and other related service agencies who need emergency housing support for their exiting participants who qualify for the Ife program. Ife also holds twenty additional beds for the OHS Winter Initiative, beds used to house encampment participants asked to relocate or because of a City CODE weather event. These special beds remain available for the duration of that event or action.

IFE TRANSLATED IN ENGLISH IS DEFINED AS THE NOUN LOVE IN THE YORUBA LANGUAGE AND LOVE IS A CORE VALUE OF IFE WELLNESS.

TUESDAY AFTERNOONS AT 1PM

Ife has its weekly community meeting where we all gather to discuss important community issues and announce and enroll participants in new and upcoming workshop courses and activities. We also have our various program partners present to our participants from time to time. Pictured below are Ife participants from a recent community meeting.



Ife Wellness Participants during our March 12 Community meeting.



Our team comprises of four case managers, Cory Edwards-Fuller, Lead Case Manager Sunday Alugbhe, Rhonda Stratton and Brian Ducksworth

The shelters Participant Advocate's and leadership team of seventeen, all who work with IFE participants, and our dedicated case management team to boost growth and progress towards IFE program participants achieve their recovery and housing goals.

HIGHLIGHTING IFE

"Dealing with vulnerable homeless populations is a work in progress and can be challenging especially when they are still addicted and not ready to address their immediate needs whether substance abuse or mental health. At the end of the day case management takes gradual steps and a nonjudgmental approach when addressing client's needs and connecting them with resources and can be so rewarding when a client's needs are met."

**Sunday Alugbhe,
Lead Case Manager**

Ife Wellness has developed relationships with our region's 12-step fellowships, coordinated by Program Director Peter Lien with Narcotics Anonymous Hospital & Institutions (H&I) Area and Alcoholics Anonymous Home Group outreach committees which provides IFE with three weekly meetings. The fellowships provide materials and information on their respective programs and inform participants where external meetings are located. These outreach teams provide qualified, diverse, experienced speakers who engage with our participants while sharing their experience in recovery.

MINDS OF MEN

Minds of Men is a Spiritual grassroots organization that ministers to the homeless, the formerly incarcerated and children suffering from the effects addiction/alcoholism has had on their families by parental drug/alcohol abuse.



Minds of Men, Derrick McKnight (shown on the left in the photo) and his team of Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) facilitators provide a Friday afternoon workshop at 4PM.



Ife also partners with the Lehigh Valley Barber School that provides a barber shop experience twice a month here at Ife on Thursday afternoons creating a fun barbershop community experience for our participants.

Our partners at Philadelphia Health Management Corporation HCH Specialized Health Service supports Iife Wellness participants with weekly nurse visits from 8am to 2pm every Tuesday and Thursday. We thank PHMC for working with Iife to help fulfill its core and vital navigation mission by engaging with incoming



participants who may have arrived at Iife via a street outreach team and who have limited contact with healthcare. The PHMC nursing team helps participants navigate needed services with referrals from our case management team and provides weekly health and wellness checks for any participant in our program.



Additionally on Monday and Wednesday afternoons we are working with Core Services Coordinator Mark Hackney, Office of The SCA, DBHIDS who has provided excellent programming coordination for our participants to include the currently running 9-week workshops:

Housing, Credit Repair and Financial Services Workshop, Core Services

Instructor:
Denise Collier

Attitude Management for Conflict Resolution workshop

Instructor:
Judith M. Lewis,
MS, JCDC, JCTC

Yesterday, Today & Forever: The Process of Grief & Loss; Core Services

Instructor:
Dr. Tashina Reeder



Supervisor Hite conducting his weekly men's meeting on Friday afternoons.

Supervisor Lawrence Hite and staff conduct weekly both a men's and women's focused meeting discussing their unique issues, discuss life skills, how to live together and other related topics designed to keep participants engaged in their housing and recovery programs.

Assistant Program Director Kristopher Pittman takes the lead along with our program partner, Philadelphia Department of Public Health in coordinating the COVID Ambassador Program which trains Iife Participants to go into the community to conduct community outreach meetups and presentations on COVID and COVID prevention. Over an eight-month period the Ambassadors visited over 153 sites and made outreach contacts with over 2,400 people in the community.

Our talented team members, Participant Advocates coordinate and encourage our participants in "team and confidence" building groups like Movie night, Game and Puzzle Day and Karaoke singing showdowns. All promoting group activities that engage expressive qualities and build confidence and increased critical thinking – but really, we are all having lots of fun as a community.



HOOPS 4 HOPE

Learning to build new relationships and work in fellowship with others is key to recovery. Hoops 4 Hope basketball league host the inter-shelter Philadelphia wide basketball league which Ife is apart and has a six-participant squad.

Check them out on Tuesday nights at:
The Church of the Advocate gym
1801 West Diamond Street
7-9pm.



RING THE BELL



Most rewarding of all is watching Ife program participants successfully complete this program by moving into their new home and to mark this occasion we ask them to "Ring the Bell".

Here are just a few successful Ring the Bell celebrants in the past month



IFE WELLNESS CENTER

TEAM MEMBERS

Peter Lien	Program Director
Kristopher Pittman	Assistant Program Director
Lawrence Hite	Participant Advocate Supervisor (1st Shift)
Anika Cooper	Participant Advocate Supervisor (2nd Shift)
Donna Frazier	Participant Advocate (1st Shift)
Gandia Reynolds	Participant Advocate (1st Shift)
Michelle Bush	Participant Advocate (2nd Shift)
Tashanda Watkins	Participant Advocate (2nd Shift)
Jihan Harvey	Participant Advocate (3rd Shift)
Donte Haslam	Participant Advocate (3rd Shift)
Caszir Gary	Participant Advocate (3rd Shift)

SHELTER – PART TIME

Gregory White	Participant Advocate
James Carter	Participant Advocate
Mikell Jones	Participant Advocate
Latoya Baldwin	Participant Advocate



SELF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



"I'm excited to announce that I recently earned a Master Degree in Public Health, (MPH) from West Chester University with a concentration in Community Health. I have always been passionate about positively impacting communities, and this degree has equipped me with the knowledge and skills to do just that. I look forward to applying my expertise to create healthier, thriving environments and contribute to the well-being of those around me. Thank you for your continued support on this journey!"

Chandler

Davida Ramirez

Davida Ramirez has been employed with SELF Inc. Susquehanna House since 10-11-21. With her hard work and absorbing any information through trainings that has been provided, she was promoted to Participant Advocate Supervisor on 1-9-23. She has assisted Program Director and absorbed the information needed to further her skills.

Unfortunately, Program Director; Joanne Wodarski went out on medical leave for 3 months. Davida stepped in with her leadership skills and made it work. With being a team player, she done a fantastic job to hold everything and everybody together.

Again, thank you Davida for the loyalty and dedication to Susquehanna House team.



CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION

"Being a Team Player in a Program Director Position for 3 months"

The certificate is from all Susquehanna House team.



"The Greek poet Ovid wrote, 'Fertilior seges est alienis semper in agris', which translates to "the harvest is always fruitful in another man's fields". Instead of admiring and desiring someone else's fields, I decided to toil my own, produce a good harvest, distribute with equity, and repeat. Being in, and of service is not for the faint of heart, and requires preparation, and that was/is the endeavor; to always be preparing (knowledge seeking) to meet the challenge. Knowledge is not power; it is the Application of Knowledge that is the Power".

Troy Mouzon

birthdays

FEBRUARY

KIANTE MCKOY 02/10

GANDIA REYNOLDS 02/13

ESSENCE OWENS 02/14

TRESSA THOMPSON 02/16

MARCH

JEROME ANDERSON 03/01

SHERRY BROWN 03/06

TROY MOUZON 03/08

KRISTOPHER PITTMAN 03/08

CARMEN MARIA BROWN 03/08

SHARISSE JOHNSON 03/10

PETER LIEN 03/10

MARGARET HOWE 03/10

DONTE HASLAMM 03/15

ROBIN JOHNSON 03/18

DENISE MCKOY 03/24

STEVEN FRAZIER 03/25

GREGORY WHITE 03/26

MARVIN VEREEN 03/27

THOMAS FELDER 03/28

KEVIN MARTIN 03/28

ROBERT PARKS 03/29

DONATE TODAY

Mail a check to:

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VOLUNTEER

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