

# HOPE'S DOOR

*Embracing Life Free From Domestic Abuse*



**SPRING HAS FINALLY SPRUNG!**

## THE 2014 ANNUAL SPRING GALA EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS



Nicole Taylor Photography

Gala Co-Chairs Debra Kousouros and Nancy K. Simpkins

We want to thank our 34th Annual Gala Co-Chairs Nancy K. Simpkins and Debra Kousouros and the Friends Committee for an amazing job, as well as all of those that came and supported this important event. The gala, which was at Abigail Kirsch Tappan Hill Mansion, was our most successful fundraising effort to date raising a net income of over \$105,000. The focus was on H.O.P.E. — “Hope Offers Possibilities Everyday”—highlighting our work to help victims of domestic violence achieve safety, independence and healing from the trauma of abuse. We celebrated the possibilities each day brings for victims and their families to live a more peaceful and happy life.

Three Westchester teachers were honored this year for their commitment to Hope’s Door’s Love Shouldn’t Hurt program. The honorees were Paul LaVallee, Special Education Teacher and STAR (Students Terminating Abusive Relationships) Chapter Liaison at Hendrick Hudson High School; Kim Lundy, Health Teacher at Pelham Memorial High School; and Marisa Marks, Health Teacher and STAR Chapter Liaison at Alexander Hamilton Jr./Sr. High School. Although the organization is fortunate to have many supporters of the Love Shouldn’t Hurt Program, the three teachers who were honored demonstrate outstanding dedication to helping spread the mis-

sion of promoting healthy relationships that are based on equality, respect, and trust. In addition, Westchester Deputy County Executive Kevin Plunkett presented each honoree with a proclamation for their outstanding effort on teen dating abuse prevention. To see a short film on their contributions to the teen program, log onto [www.hopesdoorny.org/teen-prevention-program/](http://www.hopesdoorny.org/teen-prevention-program/)

Scott McGee, News 12 Westchester Anchor and the evening’s emcee said, “Unfortunately, in my job I see the end result of domestic abuse far too often. Yet it’s only because of organizations like Hope’s Door that we don’t see more tragedies. It’s an honor for me to be a part of helping Hope’s Door to continue their important work.” Guests had a good time dancing to RSVP Band and bidding on a number of exciting live and silent auction items.



Peter Grobe Photography

Left to Right: Hope’s Door Executive Director CarlLa Horton, Westchester Deputy County Executive Kevin Plunkett, News 12 Westchester Anchor/Gala Emcee Scott McGee, Hope’s Door Board of Directors President Eric Wrubel

### *Save the Date*

2014 Annual Fall Luncheon on Friday October 17, 2014

16<sup>th</sup> Annual Teen Symposium on Friday, October 24, 2014

35<sup>th</sup> Annual Spring Gala on Friday, April 24, 2015

To join the Friends Committee or to sponsor one of these important events, contact Jennifer Ryan Safsel, Director of Development & Community Relations at 914.747.0828 x1005.



# HOPE'S DOOR

[www.HopesDoorNY.org](http://www.HopesDoorNY.org)

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Eric I. Wrubel, Esq., President  
Debra Kousouros, Vice President  
Carey Vames, Secretary  
Wendy M. Gardner, Treasurer  
Emily Bond  
Jean Marie Connolly  
Ken Marsolais  
Caroline Murphy  
Dan Schorr  
Ira Schulman

## ADVISORY BOARD

Sheryl Dale, Chair  
Asst. Director, Mohawk Day Camp  
Renée Brown, CEO, C.W. Brown  
Alyssa Dweck, MD, MK Medical Group  
Nick Gregory, Meteorologist, FOX5  
Rick Krim, EVP, VHI  
Joel Seligman, President & CEO,  
Northern Westchester Hospital  
Irina Zhabinskaya, MD, Med. Dir., Ped.,  
Northern Westchester Hospital

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Carlla Horton, MPA

## NEWSLETTER STAFF

Jennifer Ryan Safsel, Director of Development  
& Community Relations  
Lindsay Amoroso, Development Associate  
Gay French-Ottaviani, LCSW-R  
Senior Counselor for Community Services  
Margo Goody, Designer



CARLLA HORTON

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It takes tremendous courage for a battered person to walk away from their home and into our shelter. Often they leave behind not only the abuser but also family, friends, neighbors, a job, and other sources of love and support. Imagine, just for a moment, your life without these or similar comforts. It's almost unimaginable—perhaps equally as painful as the abuse and violence left behind.

I recall what a former resident said after coming to our shelter with her three boys: "When we first arrived at the shelter, I looked around and was stunned. I don't know what I was expecting—maybe a gymnasium with cots all around and me staying awake all night to protect the kids. What I found was a home where everybody did everything they could to make us feel safe and comfortable."

Our home is even more comforting thanks to many of you who supported our Fund-A-Need campaign at our gala on April 25th. We asked for support to complete the refurnishing of the house begun last year with support from the Sexauer Foundation. Many of you jumped at the chance to support this project and, with the matching funds provided by Nancy K. Simpkins, the project is on track for completion this summer. Needless to say, our clients and staff are looking forward to all new living room sofas, kitchen chairs, bedroom sets, mattresses – even cheery bedding and lamps to brighten up the rooms.

Please know that we could not be more grateful for all you do to share in our mission. There is still time to donate to the residence improvement fund. If you would like to add your support, go to [www.HopesDoorNY.org/donate](http://www.HopesDoorNY.org/donate).

## SURVIVOR'S STORY

There I was—scared to death—not knowing what's next. I went to the safe house with no visible scars; no black and blue marks, no bruises, no scratches. After two years of mental and financial abuse and threats to kick me out of the house, deport me and take my child away from me, I had enough. All I needed was just somebody who would listen. Somebody to verify that I am doing the right thing, that I am not crazy, that I deserve better, and my child does, too. I received so much HOPE, LOVE, SUPPORT and FAITH at Hope's Door that I never would have dreamed about receiving. I spent five months in the safe house. On one hand, I was eager to get out of there—get a job, my own place and live happily ever after forever. On the other hand, I wanted to stay there—I had people who worked hard so that I was comfortable. It took me three

months to find a job—countless interviews and applications, lots of traveling, talking, childcare arrangements—something I was not able to accomplish in twenty months while living with my husband. All because of the support and help I got from Hope's Door staff through their "self sufficiency" program. I still sometimes feel guilty trying to justify myself for standing up for myself and my child, my beautiful little girl. Only when I moved out to be on my own did I fully realize how blessed I had been to have been able to spend time at the safe house. I just wish they had more legal power or resources of attorneys that are experienced in DV cases. I am still in the middle of litigation fighting for custody and praying to God that my little girl stays with me. I am on my own now, but Hope's Door is still there for me. I put our lives in their hands, and it was the best choice I could have made.



Nicole Taylor Photography



Left to Right: Eric Wright, Patricia Klingenstein, Nancy K. Simpkins, Karen Wright, John Klingenstein



Ingrid and Dr. John Connolly

Nicole Taylor Photography

Peter Grobe Photography



Jeff and Martha Kohn



Silent Auction Co-Chairs Heather Bell-Pellegrino and Abby Woodworth

Nicole Taylor Photography

Peter Grobe Photography



Survivor Speaker Stephanie

*Hope's Door*  
*34th Annual*  
*Gala*

To view more gala photos, go to our website gallery at <http://hopesdoorny.org/news/>

Peter Grobe Photography



Hope's Door Board of Directors Member Ira Schulman, diamond and amethyst earrings raffle winner Raysa Toribio



Debbie Lionetti, Laurie Sturz, Caroline Shepherd

Nicole Taylor Photography

## THANKS TO OUR GENEROUS GALA SPONSORS

### GOLD

Thomas Klingenstein & Nancy Perlman  
Beth & Ira Leventhal  
Nancy K. Simpkins

### SILVER

BNY Mellon Wealth Management  
Heckler & O'Keefe CPAs P.C.  
Martha & Jeff Kohn  
Laurie & Paul Sturz  
Warshaw Burstein, LLP

### FRIENDS

Lee Manning-Vogelstein  
Dr. Terrence and Caroline Murphy  
The Oren and Mary Jo Bramson Charitable Fund  
Patricia & Gib Smith  
Carey Vames & Richard Klein  
Abby & Eric Woodworth

### BENEFACTOR

Obie & Mary Clifford  
Ambassador April H. Foley  
Jonathan Jankus  
Klingman & Associates, LLC  
Michelle & Simon Orange

### PATRON

Susan & Lawrence Bauman  
The Carroll and Percy Klingenstein Foundation Inc.  
Ingrid & Dr. John Connolly  
Wendy & Tom Gardner  
Jennie & Larry Grob  
Debra & Jim Kousouros  
Stephan Month  
Carol & Daniel Strickberger

## SPOTLIGHT ON THE HOPE'S DOOR RESIDENTIAL STAFF

"Hope's Door hotline, how can we help you today?" These are the very first words victims hear on the other end of the phone when they decide enough is enough. Those precious moments that follow involve collaboration between the victim and the counselor on how to leave the home and get to the shelter as quickly and as safely as possible; sometimes under the cover of darkness.

### First Step

Making the brave decision to pack up just a few of your belongings and leave a dangerous, life threatening situation is not an easy one. In fact, it's probably the toughest decision a victim of domestic violence will ever make in their life. The residential staff at Hope's Door understands this, and that is why, from the moment the hotline call comes in to the moment a resident moves out of the shelter, staff is there to guide and support the family during this difficult journey.

The work of the Hope's Door staff begins the moment the family arrives at the shelter. They are greeted by counselors and by the assistant to the residential director. The family is introduced to their housemates and then shown to their room so that they may get settled in. Staff will check in with the family to assess for any immediate needs such as medical care, hunger, or thirst. This may seem elementary, but quite often, an abuser will not only control the victims travel, finances, and outside relationships, but will also control when or if the victim will eat, sleep, or receive medical care.

### The Journey

The first night is all about making the family feel safe and at home; as at home as one can feel when they are in a place that is not their own with people they just met. The following days and months are a journey for the family as they navigate the various legal and social service systems. The counselor works closely with the family to advocate for public assistance, legal representation, housing needs, and other services that the family may need. This can be a long, frustrating, and humbling process. This is where the residential staff steps in to listen, empower, and lend a voice to those whose voices have been silenced for so long.



Left to Right: Monique, Brittany, Crystal, Lupe, Brittany and Jenn

### New Beginning

The day comes when the family has found a new home. It is a time of both regret and celebration. The family is excited to start anew in their very own home, but sad to leave those they have grown to know behind. For the staff at Hope's Door, the feelings are the same. There is great happiness to see a family happy and moving on, but, a sadness to say goodbye.

When moving day arrives, the counselor reminds the family to call if they need help. We will be there to support them on their new journey towards a life free of violence. As the staff waves goodbye, thoughts come to mind of that fateful day when the call came to the hotline and a family walked through our door. As these thoughts bring forth smiles for the staff who worked tirelessly to make a dream a reality, suddenly the phone rings....."Hope's Door hotline, how can we help you?"

### Thank you

The residential staff at Hope's Door would like to thank those who support us in our mission. It is only with your unwavering support that we are able to continue to answer the many hotline calls we receive. If you or someone you know is experiencing violence in their relationship, call our hotline at 888-438-8700. One call can change a life forever.



## HOPE'S DOOR ATTENDS LEGISLATIVE DAY



NY State Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson (center) with Hope's Door staff



NY State Assemblywoman Sandy Galef and Hope's Door Director of Development Jennifer Ryan Safsel



Hope's Door staff Brittany and Crystal in the Assembly Chamber





## A PROFILE ON COUNSELING: PUTTING A FACE ON HOPE'S DOOR

**BRITTANY** decided to become a counselor because as a teen dating abuse survivor herself, she wanted to prevent other young people from experiencing what she did. She began her career as an intern in 2011. Subsequently she was hired as the Assistant Children's Counselor and was recently promoted to Residential Children's Counselor. Brittany's work begins the moment a victim makes the decision that they have no choice but to flee their home and come to our shelter. On arrival, each child receives a welcome bag containing comforting items such as a blanket, a stuffed toy and a book. Brittany introduces herself and welcomes the family to their new home. "Brittany's warm and friendly personality makes the children arriving at the shelter feel less afraid," states Crystal, the Shelter Director.

Crystal points out, "You can see Brittany immediately forging a relationship with the parent. She quickly learns about the dynamic that existed in the home; gains insight into what the child has endured; and plans her counseling approach." Brittany ensures that each child is placed in school, taking into account any special needs. "She provides an atmosphere where the child receives the necessary one-on-one counseling while having fun," says Carlla Horton, Executive Director of Hope's Door. "It's a unique talent and she does it well."

Brittany explains, "In college I volunteered in a program called "Lead" where we went to schools and used acting to bring important issues like dating violence and drug and alcohol abuse, among others, to light in a creative and approachable way. What I do at Hope's Door is an extension of that. I enjoy making children laugh while helping them heal." Brittany's work ranges from counseling, to advocating for special services, to organizing recreational activities for the family, or just helping a child get ready for a test at school. Brittany smiled, "It is rewarding to see kids progress so much in about a six month time-frame. I get to see some first steps, passing a hard test or even just laughing again."

HOPE'S DOOR SEEKS TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND TO EMPOWER VICTIMS TO ACHIEVE SAFETY, INDEPENDENCE, AND HEALING FROM THE TRAUMA OF ABUSE.

*Dear Hope,*

I was in an unhealthy, abusive marriage for 18 years before I realized something was wrong. We have 2 daughters, and when the abuse hit the fan they were 10 and 14 years old. The abuse was verbal, not physical. At the time I didn't understand what was happening. How would my children understand if I, a 46 year old woman, couldn't? His constant yelling at me, to me, at them, and his ordering of us around seemed normal to us. I went along with all of his yelling thinking "well, that's just him" and ignored it. I worry that my behavior was a model to my daughters—reflecting that his behavior was acceptable. How do I explain to them that his behavior was and is NOT acceptable so that they do not fall into an abusive relationship like I did?

Thank you,  
Concerned Mom



*Dear Concerned Mom*

Your question is so important. Thank you for asking.

Since you ended the abusive relationship with their father, they have already learned they can do that too. You have been demonstrating the courage to live your convictions. And you are a true example of what it takes to end abuse with your partner. Modeling how to have healthy relationships is your best bet. This includes not only with your intimate partner and with your children, but with yourself. Be true to yourself, treat your body, mind and spirit with respect and your children will see how a woman can do that. Your desire to teach your teen daughters about healthy and unhealthy relationships is an admirable one, but they may think they are too old to learn this from you and would rather listen to a friend at school. Intimate Partner Abuse is intergenerational and you are right to worry it will effect your children in many ways. If you want to say something to them, do it while having a quiet talk...while making dinner together for example. You can encourage your school to invite the Hope's Door Love Shouldn't Hurt Teen Program into your children's classrooms. You could talk about how important mutuality of respect is. If they want to ask you questions about relationships, you should become available for consultation, keeping communication open and non-judgmental. But remember, like you, the most important relationship will be the one they have with themselves. Remind them of their strengths when you witness them. People forget.

Warmly,  
Hope



E-MAIL DEAR HOPE AT: [DEARHOPE@HOPESDOORNY.ORG](mailto:DEARHOPE@HOPESDOORNY.ORG)



# HOPE'S DOOR

*Embracing Life Free From Domestic Abuse*

Non-Profit Org.  
**U.S. POSTAGE PAID**  
White Plains, NY  
Permit No. 560

PO Box 203  
39 Washington Avenue  
Pleasantville, NY 10570

Call our free and confidential 24/7 bilingual hotline 888.438.8700 – hablamos español.  
[www.HopesDoorNY.org](http://www.HopesDoorNY.org) Hope's Door Offices: 914.747.0828

Home. It's where you should feel safe and protected. Hope's Door. It's who you call if you're not.  
El Hogar. Es donde debes sentirse seguro y protegido. Hope's Door. Somos a quien llamar si no lo estas.

## CHILDREN'S COUNSELOR AMANDA READY HONORED WITH TWO AWARDS



**AMANDA  
READY**

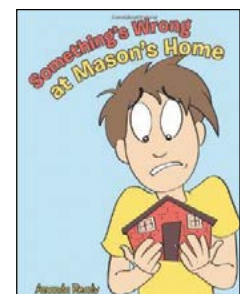
Children's Counselor Amanda Ready was recently selected for two awards. The Westchester Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect presented Amanda with their Community Based Service Award at a ceremony held on April 17, 2014. The Business Council of Westchester selected Amanda as one of their 40 Under 40 Rising Stars to be recognized this June.

Ready is a distinguished counselor in her field. She serves as a counselor in our "Safe Moms Make Safe Kids" program where she helps children break the silence about abuse and provides uniquely designed interventions to help them heal from the trauma. Among other achievements, services to children increased by 40% in her first year at Hope's Door.

Ready authored and published the book "Something's Wrong at Mason's Home" to help parents and educators speak with children about family violence. The interactive learning tool teaches children about healthy and unhealthy relationships and provides strategies to encourage them to break the silence. The goals are to protect children, prevent future abuse, and break the inter-generational cycle of violence.

Ready also volunteered in a three-month program in Costa Rica teaching classes in English to adolescents and leading a women's group at a local community center. This led her to found and fund the start-up costs for "Ready to Empower," which provides support services for women and their children living in poverty in Costa Rica.

"Something's Wrong at Mason's Home" is available through [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) or [BarnesandNoble.com](http://BarnesandNoble.com).



VISIT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE, [WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/HOPESDOORNYINC](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/HOPESDOORNYINC)

