Thanks to Your Support, Alice Feel’s at Home at EGH

Alice [pseudonym] met an American man online in early 2007. They corresponded through email every week and video-chatted occasionally; he visited her in China twice, where they traveled to several tourist locations. He was very romantic, told her that he loved her and asked her to marry him. She gave up her job managing over 4000 laboratory technicians in a large laboratory in Nanning, China, moved to Seattle, and married him later that year.

After a short time, Alice realized the marriage was not what she expected. Her new husband was very controlling. He would not let her leave the house without him and even withheld food from her as punishment for talking to her friends in Nanning. She pushed back, as she wanted to take an English as a Second Language (ESL) class. The arguments escalated and he became violent. The first night he beat her, she called the police and moved out of their home.

Not understanding the local resources available for survivors of domestic violence, Alice stayed in a motel until her money ran out, and then began to navigate the emergency shelter system in Seattle. That’s where she learned about Elizabeth Gregory Home (EGH). “I don’t have any family here. I don’t have close friends. That’s why I came to EGH,” said Alice.

While staying in overnight shelters, Alice visited EGH’s Day Center during weekdays to get vital resources like food, hygiene supplies, and laundry. In 2011, she learned that a room was available through EGH’s transitional housing program. She applied, was accepted, and lived in the transitional house for nearly two years.

During those two years, Alice depended on Michele Martin, EGH’s Operations Manager, for help with everything from scheduling doctor’s appointments to filling out application forms for benefits and housing. “Many people cannot understand my accent, but Michele is so patient, she always helped me,” Alice said. Furthermore, when Alice moved into permanent low-income housing in 2013, she counted on Michele’s help to get resources to furnish her new apartment.

Even now, Alice stops by the EGH Day Center for support, whether for clothing, household items or just to let Michele know how she’s doing. “Michele is so close to me, she’s like my family,” said Alice.

In addition to taking ESL classes, Alice recently completed a Quality Assurance program at Shoreline Community College. She hopes to take the online Quality Assurance Exam and find a job in the quality control field. “In the future, I hope I can get a good job and live more confidently,” Alice said. “I appreciate my new life that’s free from fear.”
On October 1st, EGH will launch our winter coat drive. We will be accepting donations of coats throughout the month of October. Gently used or new coats in all sizes are needed, but especially large or extra-large hooded coats. Raincoats and rain ponchos are also welcome.

When EGH distributes your donated coats, women enjoy “shopping” from the vast array of sizes and choices. In fact, part of the experience is helping each other select styles and colors. Staff and volunteers often hear words of gratitude, particularly how touched women feel that someone they’ve never met cares enough about their wellbeing to donate.

We invite you to bring your donations directly to our Day Center, Monday through Friday, between 10:00AM – 4:00PM. If you have questions, don’t hesitate to reach out to Elizabeth Stevenson for more information at (206) 729-0262, ext. 1006, or via email estevenson@eghseattle.org.

Your generosity is deeply appreciated. Thank you!

Ruth Herold
Executive Director

Thanks to this team from Microsoft, the ladies at EGH enjoyed a special pizza party last week on the United Way’s Day of Caring, with trivia games and bingo. Thank you!
Mary’s Second Retirement

When a woman comes down the steps of our Day Center and into the welcoming arms of Elizabeth Gregory Home (EGH), the first person she meets is the receptionist at the front desk. Clients who are greeted with the friendly face of a person who listens and patiently answers questions is the best possible introduction to EGH and the services available. Being that welcoming first person is an important role that sets the tone for further interactions.

Mary Gillmore decided to take on that role because a friend who volunteered at EGH told her about the work we do and the satisfaction of being part of the volunteer team. Mary’s professional background in social work and social psychology gave her a clear understanding of many of the issues confronting women that can lead to homelessness.

Having served as Associate Dean at the University of Washington and as Director of the School of Social Work at Arizona State University, Mary also knew the importance of providing a safety net and services for people in immediate need of support. Her earlier career as a nurse made her acutely aware of the impact of being homeless on an individual’s physical and emotional health.

As that welcoming person at the front desk, Mary assisted clients in many important ways – by securing bus tickets that enable them to get to EGH, an overnight shelter, or a job interview; by scheduling appointments with staff or external resources; by scheduling access to in-house washers and dryers that are in high demand; and by listening with empathy. Staying busy was never a problem, since the receptionist also handles the periodic arrival of donations of clothing and other essential items such as laundry pods, feminine hygiene items, or hair care products.

Why give up free time, why not enjoy filling a well-earned retirement with other activities? Mary’s response to this question was what so many of our volunteers say: “I wanted to give back to my community. I always felt I should be giving back, something that perhaps grew out of my early education where there was a strong emphasis on helping others.” Not volunteering was not an option for Mary who had worked previously with a literacy program.

With a recent relocation to a new home that is somewhat distant from EGH, Mary will once again retire, this time with the satisfaction of having given what she could, when she could, to a cause she knew was worth her time and energy – helping vulnerable women. We are grateful for the many hours she contributed to make EGH a place we are proud to have in our community, a place dedicated to meeting the needs of women who are homeless.
**Most Needed Items**

Thanks to you, we are able to provide hygiene and other essential items for women who rely on EGH’s Day Center. Our top needs this quarter are:

- Warm Winter Coats
- Blankets
- Body Wash
- Raincoats and Umbrellas
- Sweat pants and T-Shirts (up to XXXL)

**Thank You!**

**GO PAPERLESS**

Email us at info@eghseattle.org and type “Go Paperless” in the subject line.

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