



# Newsletter



UPDATE FROM  
THE PHOENIX RESIDENCE, INC.



SUMMER 2020

We are blessed! Anyone who knows me, knows that I talk about how “blessed” Phoenix is to have such amazing people work here! Nothing like a Pandemic to bring out the best and worst in people. We’ve certainly had people draw a line in the sand and not return to work in a group setting, but others have jumped in and picked up extra hours or indicated their desire to volunteer if we were to have positive COVID cases.

We have been COVID-free for the past 8 weeks! The staff have worked hard to follow all of the changing rules to keep people safe. We are not perfect, but we are striving to do the best that we can and to be better! Many staff have hung in there with us and they deserve all the praise!

We launched Close the Gap about a year ago to bring awareness to the workforce shortage and wage disparity of our Direct Support Professional workforce. Many families have increased their support. We are grateful to everyone who has contributed to the campaign and for those who are planning to jump on the wagon.

As we celebrate this important milestone of one year of launching our Close the Gap campaign, please join me in saluting our amazing staff! Eternally grateful and blessed!

Darlene Scott, President/CEO

## Close the Gap Update

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Thanks to your support,  
we have raised:

**\$256,113 Total**

**\$30,776 Year-to-Date**  
(January – June 2020)

## Phoenix Staff Continue Remarkable Care During COVID-19



*Andy Fariss from Newport House was one of our bingo winners.*

These last three months have been challenging to say the least as the coronavirus swept through the country. All the preparation to keep our homes, staff, and the individuals we support safe and healthy has paid off as we are happy to report that we continue to have no COVID cases.

We have to thank our dedicated staff here at Phoenix for this wonderful news. They show up to work every day with a smile, trying to make social distancing and staying at home fun. We’ve truly been amazed at all the creative activities and projects they have come up with to keep everyone busy, including karaoke nights, new arts and crafts projects, and trying out new recipes. Several of our staff members also made face masks during the onset of COVID-19.

None of this would be possible without you – so thank you for taking care of the individuals we support like family. We know these last few months have been tough, but we genuinely appreciate all you do for Phoenix, so thank you! To show our appreciation, we’ve celebrated our staff with thank you cards, bingo games, and Heroes Work Here signs at all our homes. **Thank you all for everything you do!**

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# Close the Gap Spotlight: Shirlena Wilson

This month we are highlighting a staff member who is going above and beyond here at Phoenix, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Shirlena Wilson of Furness House has worked at Phoenix for nearly two years. She comes to work every day with a smile, working well over 80 hours a pay period and volunteering to stay late when she is needed.

Not only does she keep the house organized, but she also makes it feel homey and uplifting. During the pandemic, she has volunteered to quarantine with an individual we support should we get a case of the coronavirus. Additionally, she offered to sew up comforters for the individuals we support.

"Shirlena has built really good relationships with the individuals and their families," said Program Manager Tashianna Henry. "She always sets up Facetime or coordinates communication with the family members. The individuals here are happy when she is around."



*DSP Shirlena Wilson with Betty Magnuson at Furness House.*

## **Q&A with Shirlena Wilson:**

- 1.) What is the best part about being a direct support professional? Why did you want to become a DSP?

*The best part of being a DSP is helping others when they can't help themselves. I enjoy working with people and making them happy, and putting others' needs before myself.*

- 2.) What kind of relationship do you have with the individuals we support?

*Each of my ladies has their own way of letting me know what they want or need ... I enjoy each and every one of them. I think of this job as I'm going to need someone to help me some day, why not help others. I love these ladies whole-heartedly. When I do stuff for them, that makes me feel good knowing they are happy and safe.*

# Supporters Continue Giving Tradition

Phoenix is so grateful for all the support we've received this quarter. Despite having to cancel our fundraising events this year, so many of you continued giving your time, sponsorships, or in-kind donations to Phoenix. Thank you for your continued support!

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Wheel of Fortune  
Wild Mountain & Taylors Falls Recreation

## **COVID-19 In-Kind Donations:**

Cindy Newman  
Creative Memories



*Recently, brothers Daniel and Kennedy Gee moved into Janet Court and celebrated their birthday.*

To learn more about our campaign or make a donation, please visit [www.phoenixresidence.org/give.html](http://www.phoenixresidence.org/give.html).