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Shiloh House Reopened: Women overcoming addiction have somewhere safe to restart their lives

On Monday, December 14th, Volunteers of America Massachusetts (VOAMASS) will hold a community open house to celebrate the reopening of the Shiloh House, a residential recovery program for women. While VOAMASS has been a trusted provider of alcohol and drug addiction treatment since the 1960’s, the organization was forced to temporarily shut down its women’s recovery programs due to the Long Island bridge closure last year. But, with support from the Bureau of Substance Abuse, the City of Boston, and individual community members, VOAMASS was finally able to open its doors once again to women struggling with addiction.

“Women from all over the state have been waiting for this moment,” says Annette Geldzahler, Program Director of the Women’s Recovery Services at Volunteers of America Massachusetts. “Because of the lack of available treatment beds, referrals are pouring in. These are the ones we’ve gotten in the last week alone,” she says, pointing to a stack of 100 applications on her desk.

Annette is hopeful for those who will be accepted for the program. “There are very few places giving women skills to live sober, healthy lives,” she says. “But once they’re here, we work on long-term, life-long plans, and empower them with the therapy, tools, connections and supports they need to reenter the community. They’re receiving services here that will help them transform their lives.”

The scarcity of long-term substance abuse treatment beds throughout the commonwealth has been a major issue for community leaders, nonprofit providers and politicians alike. Not to mention that in the meantime, individuals and families are bearing the burdens of addiction alone, often facing risks of relapse, overdose, and criminal behavior.

The Shiloh House has 14 beds available, and it is one of two properties where Volunteers of America Massachusetts will support women in recovery. The second property, the Hello House in Dorchester, is slated to open in the next few months and will provide an additional 26 women with a safe place to learn how to live a sober life.

About Volunteers of America Massachusetts:

Volunteers of America Massachusetts is a trusted community provider, a passionate advocate for individuals struggling to get back on their feet, and a partner helping other community based organizations throughout Massachusetts. Volunteers of America Massachusetts provides vital social services to thousands of women, men, and young people each year. To learn more, visit us online at www.voamass.org.

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