2014 ANNUAL REPORT

THE FIRST 40 YEARS
1974-2014
“All of us need a Rosie in our lives. She is the hope we all have, that lets us know that everything is going to be all right, in our darkest hour. Rosie’s Place has provided the base from which many women can again build shattered lives. It is the place we can dream our dreams and know somehow that everything is going to turn around now that a friend has stepped into the void and found us.”

KIP TIERMAN
Rosie’s Place Founder
On Easter Sunday, 1974, Kip Tiernan and a small group of friends opened the doors of Rosie’s Place not knowing quite what to expect. They planned to offer coffee, clothes, a place to hang out, and some compassionate listening. Forty years later, Rosie’s Place still provides all of that – and much more.

Today, our guests visit Rosie’s Place for needs small and large, simple and complex. For one guest, a meal or a bus token is all she needs. For another guest, her daily visit to Rosie’s Place includes not only a meal and a visit with an Advocate, but taking part in an art activity and an English class. Truly a community center for poor and homeless women, Rosie’s Place offers so much to the thousands of women who have no place else to turn.

Looking forward, we will expand our reach to underserved women in Boston’s public housing developments; create a community health program to reach women at home with serious, chronic medical conditions; and ensure that we have the space and resources to continue to serve our guests with dignity, respect and love.

Because of your generosity and unwavering support, we embrace our duty to serve every woman who comes to us. From 1974 to the present day, you’ve made it possible for us to keep the doors open and the lights shining. You’ve provided a sanctuary for women alone, scared and sad. Thank you so much for caring.
We are not sure exactly when, but many years ago our founder Kip Tiernan wrote: 
“All of us need a Rosie in our lives. She is the hope that we all have, that lets us know that everything is going to be all right…” Although there was never an actual “Rosie,” the idea of her has come to represent, for our guests, the unconditional support, understanding and—above all—love they find when they come to Rosie’s Place.

Over the past 40 years, the spirit of “Rosie” has been present not so much in big events but in countless, small moments of grace, acts of generosity, stories to be told—and retold with new endings.

- A guest arrives with some pieces of her life missing or damaged and is welcomed in with open arms.
- A mother is reunited with her children after working with an Advocate for months to make it possible.
- A student in an ESOL class learns English and graduates from a Certified Nursing Assistant program.
- A woman who stayed in our shelter a year ago returns with the keys to her very own apartment.

These are just a few images in the collective memory of Rosie’s Place.

As we turn 40, we reflect on our beginnings, assess where we are now and look forward with purpose and optimism. In this Annual Report you will see snapshots of the programs and hear the voices of the supporters, volunteers and guests who have brought us here, from the early days up to the present. All of these, together with our philosophy of unconditional love, have created a rich community that, every day, carries on the true essence of “Rosie.”

The next 40 years will certainly see as much change and growth as the last 40 have. We hope with all our hearts that some of the services we must provide because of terrible failures in our world will disappear because they are no longer needed. Perhaps if we dream it, we can make it true.

As we strive for a better tomorrow, we remain grateful that you’re at our side today. Thank you for being part of the most amazing community we could imagine.

WITH FAITH,

Sue Marsh
Executive Director

Isabelle Stillger
Board Chair
“I came to Rosie’s Place to volunteer in 2002 because I wanted to learn more about homelessness—what drives women to the streets and what can be done to help them. From my first day, I saw a welcoming and safe place where staff was positive and guests were respected. Wonderful experiences in the Dining Room and with tutoring women in our Women’s Education Center led me to the Board of Directors. I have learned so much about the ‘perfect storm’ of factors that can lead to homelessness and poverty and I am pleased to be part of an amazing team at Rosie’s Place striving to meet the needs of our women in the future.”

ISABELLE STILLGER
Rosie’s Place Board Chair
Many of our guests come directly from sleeping on the streets and suffer from a chronic disability, such as mental illness or substance addiction. Others are escaping an abusive relationship or are newly evicted. And today, in Massachusetts’s scarce and overpriced housing market, we are finding that even women who have a steady job or income find it difficult to remain housed.

During their stay, Valeria and other guests find in longtime manager Debbie Conway and her round-the-clock staff, a support system, knowledgeable resource, fair mediator and, most important, someone who cares.

**OVERNIGHT SHELTER**

From the start, Rosie’s Place would do things differently—better than the status quo. Our shelter would not require a guest to leave each morning; she could stay for days or weeks, allowing her enough time to make a plan for what comes next.

Rosie’s Place’s Overnight Program is still open 365 days a year to provide emergency shelter to 20 women for up to three weeks each. If she wishes, a guest can access a range of services right here that can help her focus on long-term solutions, rather than stop-gap measures.

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During their stay, Valeria and other guests find in longtime manager Debbie Conway and her round-the-clock staff, a support system, knowledgeable resource, fair mediator and, most important, someone who cares.
“We treat everyone here with respect. I try to create a homelike environment—it means a lot to women who come to us alone and are weighed down with troubles. I have gotten to know many women really well and do feel as close to them as family.”

DEBORAH CONWAY
Overnight Manager since 1999 (on left)

“When I came up to Boston from Georgia last year, I never thought my housing would fall through. I had to send my son to a relative’s house while I wait, and that is so hard. Staying at Rosie’s Place has helped me to be strong. It’s such a positive place—when I’m here, I’m busy and I don’t think of negative things so much.”

VALERIA A.
Rosie’s Place guest since 2013 (on right)
A hot meal among friends was the first promise of Rosie’s Place when we opened our doors on Easter Sunday, 1974. From the start, food was the draw; small, pink notices that read, “If you need a meal, come here and we’ll help you,” were distributed, and the word spread.

Over the years we’ve created a network of thousands of Dining Room volunteers who make it possible to feed every woman and child who comes to us for a meal. One such committed friend is Tom, a financial advisor who has helped serve and clean up lunch just about every Wednesday since 1983.

Today, while the scope of our work continues to expand, the Dining Room remains the heart of Rosie’s Place. To our guests, it is not just somewhere to enjoy a nutritious lunch, dinner or, more recently, breakfast, too, but a special place to rest, seek respite from the streets and make and visit friends.

“When I first came here, we served about 15 to 20 women at noontime. Now we can feed 150 women or more. Volunteering here gives me perspective. Serving lunch to guests is what’s real, not $100,000 trades at my firm.”

TOM TATE
Volunteer since 1983
Gradually, we changed our service model from strictly sheltering to empowerment-based services, in which we work with guests to help them find more permanent solutions to pressing problems. Advocates were hired to assist guests with a wide range of challenging issues, from finding housing and a job, to addressing addiction and mental health struggles, to managing family matters. For many guests, it was the warmth and empathy of these staff members that encouraged them to take a first step forward.

Advocacy at Rosie’s Place today comprises ten Advocates, five of whom are fluent in Spanish, Haitian-Creole, Cape Verdean-Creole, Portuguese, Mandarin or French. In addition to helping guests feel safe as they confront some of their most daunting issues, they also help connect guests with health and wellness care, clothing, legal advice, transportation and emergency funds for eviction prevention and prescriptions.

And because we do not accept government funding, our Advocates are free to meet our guests’ varied and often complex needs without constraint on our services.

“When I tell people that I work as an Advocate with poor and homeless women, they will often say ‘Isn’t that so depressing?’ I’m always surprised by that response, because it is such a privilege to be surrounded by strong, resilient women every single day. I work with women who are doing incredible things to keep moving forward in their lives. I am in constant awe of their strength and honored to be a part of their lives.”

ERIN MILLER
Advocacy Manager since 2011
(bottom row, far left)
I signed on after I retired, thinking I might pursue a second career in ESOL. I hadn’t been in a classroom for 25 years but I’ve found that I absolutely love teaching here! The women work hard and have very complex lives, yet they are tenacious and have such energy. I have learned so much from them."

SANDY GOLDSTEIN
Volunteer teacher since 2013 (on left)

“In El Salvador, my family was too afraid for me to go to school because of the danger of gangs in my village. My father taught me and I also educated myself. I like to learn and I am working to write and read much better in English. It is wonderful that I can be in a school where I feel safe.”

LEONOR M.
Rosie’s Place guest since 2013 (on right)
Once our guests were able to gain some stability in their lives, they often sought the tools that would lead to a job and greater opportunity. So, Rosie’s Place began offering its first adult education classes in literacy skills and GED preparation. We recruited volunteer teachers and offered small group instruction and one-on-one tutoring, all at no cost.

As we began to serve a rapidly expanding number of immigrant women who spoke little or no English, we added ESOL classes to our offerings. These classes were customized to focus on guests’ practical needs, such as the ability to speak with a doctor, navigate a grocery store or fill out a job application. We even helped underwrite GED test fees, certificate programs and outside courses that provided career advancement.

In 2010, we opened the Women’s Education Center, a new wing of Rosie’s Place that houses classrooms on four floors, enough to offer morning, afternoon and evening classes for hundreds of women each semester.

With technology instruction now available and a formalized curriculum and evaluation process, we expect the number of enrolled students to continue to grow.
At Rosie’s Place, far more women we serve are poor than are homeless. They come for meals, often with their children, to stretch modest monthly food budgets. Our first food pantry, organized in the Dining Room, sought to meet this need by handing out non-perishables twice a week to further supplement guests’ grocery purchases.

A short time later, Rosie’s Place Groceries moved into dedicated spaces in our newly renovated building. Rather than giving guests pre-bagged groceries, assuming that we know what food they might prefer, we welcomed them to select what they like and “shop” among our shelves. And thanks to relationships with local farms, we now offer fresh produce—a luxury for so many guests—along with meat, dairy products and dry goods.

An uncertain economy has brought greater numbers of women and, accordingly, we extended our hours into the evening. With this change, we have been able to accommodate even more women, especially those who may be at work, at school or caring for children during our morning and afternoon hours.

“My neighbor told me about Rosie’s Place and we come together to the pantry and then class. Rosie’s Place Groceries has good food to eat and sometimes I need food. My favorites are the vegetables—carrots, tomatoes and potatoes. There is good support here; I want to learn English and the teacher here is very good, and if I’m hungry, I can eat food in the Dining Room too.”

FENG MING D.
Rosie’s Place guest since 2012
Rosie’s Place has long recognized the importance of treating poor and homeless women as whole people, that the challenges which bring them to our doors do not define them. This approach informed the creation of the Arts Initiative in 2006, which offers guests a full slate of arts and crafts workshops, field trips and performances—activities not traditionally provided at a direct service agency.

A cross-section of a month of programming includes volunteer-led workshops in creative writing, jewelry-making, crocheting, painting flowers in the style of Georgia O’Keefe and photography; art trips to the DeCordova Museum and Harriet Tubman Park; and performances by a poet and a pianist/singer. These arts activities create an atmosphere of care and calm, and a means for our guests to connect with their talents and build upon their strengths.

“The ‘What Rosie’s Place Means to Me’ anniversary quilt project provided me with the opportunity to showcase my creativity in designing multi-media squares. Other art projects are displayed inside Rosie’s Place in such a way that it elicits pride and accomplishment to those guests who participated. I highly suggest a visit to the art room to see projects in a variety of media…it is awe-inspiring.”

LADY
Rosie’s Place guest
At Rosie’s Place, we truly see all poor and homeless women as part of our community, whether they visit us regularly or rarely set foot in our building.

This philosophy led us a decade ago to find a way to not only support women in finding housing but to help them keep it, too. This homelessness prevention work has grown as our housing stabilization workers offer even more newly-housed guests long-term support and services through monthly home visits. With our involvement, guests like Angela have become more independent with each passing year.

More recently, we launched our Outreach Van, which five days a week provides information, food, blankets and other necessary items to hundreds of women on the streets of Dorchester and Roxbury. And with the Friendly Visitor program, we connect volunteers with poor and isolated women at home or in long-term care facilities; friendships form, bringing a measure of comfort and enjoyment to both our guests and our volunteers.
“Rosie’s Place has been there for me through my ups and downs. I’ve got lots of friends here and I come in for meals and to go to the Wellness Center. I also love going on the field trips to museums. Evelyn makes sure everything is in order with my rent and bills. It is a great feeling to know that she cares.”

**ANGELA C.**  
Rosie’s Place guest since 1994 (on left)

“Meeting guests in their homes creates an ongoing connection that carries through every day. I hear from and see many of these same guests at Rosie’s Place because they know they can trust me and that we are here for them, no matter what.”

**EVELYN GONZALEZ**  
Outreach Manager since 2005 (on right)
SELF-ADVOCACY

Self-advocacy work builds upon Rosie’s Place’s existing efforts to equip women with the information, skills and encouragement they need to make informed decisions and advocate for themselves in all areas of their lives.

We help our guests develop problem-solving skills and confidence through diverse activities such as multi-session training series, anti-bullying workshops and IMPACT, a self-defense and de-escalation course.

The self-advocacy approach always seeks to ensure that guests’ voices drive programming and activities. This has resulted in the creation of a community garden at Rosie’s Place, with guests taking on the planning, tending and harvesting responsibilities. Our guests also lead a weekly mindful walking group, a monthly raffle of guest-made crafts and other items and a healthy cooking class. Putting the reins in guests’ hands fosters growth and leadership development.

“As an IMPACT instructor, it’s been powerful to witness the high level of growth and change in the guests—it’s not something you always see. After only 12 hours of classes, women who have a lot of fight in them learn how to manage their adrenaline and the quietest women just seem to ‘take up more space’ and stand up for themselves.”

ROBIN SAEZ
IMPACT Program Coordinator
In FY2014, Rosie’s Place and our generous friends, made an impact in the lives of more than **12,000 women** in the following ways:

We served **92,000 nutritionally balanced breakfasts, lunches and dinners** to guests and their children, an increase of 15% over FY2013.

Women shopping at Rosie’s Place Groceries made more than **22,000 visits**, taking home about **569,000 pounds of food**.

Rosie’s Place’s Advocacy staff accommodated **1,000 appointments** with guests each month.

We provided **515 individual stays** for guests in our overnight shelter.

Through our Outreach activities, **96% of guests** receiving monthly in-home supports were able to stay housed and break the cycle of homelessness.

Our Outreach Van provided services and support to as many as **500 women per month** on the streets of Boston.

The Women’s Education Center provided **316 women each semester** with free classes and tutoring.

**2,100 women** participated in **268 on- and off-site arts workshops**, 343 of whom were new to our offerings.

**2,500 volunteers** provided nearly **61,000 hours** of service, the equivalent of 30 full-time employees.

Rosie’s Place relies solely on the generous support of individuals, foundations and corporations and does not accept any city, state or federal funding. We are proud that **86 cents of every dollar** raised went directly to essential services for poor and homeless women.
Advocacy:
$3,617,203 (38%)
One-on-one support, assistance and referrals. Self-Advocacy empowers guests to advocate for themselves.

Finance/Administration:
$313,710 (3%)

Public Policy:
$189,586 (2%)
Education and training to involve our guests in the legislative process

Development:
$990,199 (10%)

Women’s Craft Cooperative:
$366,920 (4%)
Social enterprise providing guests with income, work skills and self-confidence

Emergency Shelter:
$524,610 (6%)
Twenty-bed shelter where women find respite from the streets while they work with Advocates to identify more permanent solutions

Permanent Housing:
$96,326 (3%)
Permanent, supportive housing for formerly homeless women, including those who are medically frail

Women’s Education:
$945,009 (10%)
Free ESOL and Literacy courses taught by volunteer instructors and tutors within a familiar and supportive environment

Food Programs:
$2,589,090 (27%)
Dining Room serves breakfast, lunch and dinner and the Groceries program allows guests to “shop” for their fresh and non-perishable items themselves

Women’s Education:
$945,009 (10%)

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$945,009 (10%)
Rosie’s Place relies solely on private support and does not accept any city, state or federal government funding. In fiscal year 2014, **$7,542,193 in operating support** was raised. In addition, **$2,257,193 was received through in-kind contributions** of clothing, food, toiletries and volunteer hours.

Net assets of property, equipment and cash were equal to **$18,628,930** at fiscal year end.

Please call the Development Office at 617.442.9322 to request our complete audited financial statement.
Named in honor of Rosie’s Place founder Kip Tiernan, members of the Founder’s Circle contributed $1,000 or more during the fiscal year. Just as Kip depended on a small group of volunteers and their $250 contribution to open Rosie’s Place in 1974, so do we depend on the consistent generosity and involvement of these individuals to provide help and hope to thousands of women each year. We are very grateful for their support and dedication to our mission.

Anonymous (145)  
Jan Adams  
Ruth and Ernest Adler  
Kamesh and Geeta Aiyer  
Janet and David Aldrich  
Susan Alexander and James Gammill  
The Alizadeh Family  
Ann and Jack Allegrini  
Susan Alvey  
Gaille Anderson  
Amy Anthony  
Dennis Arinella  
Robert Armacost  
Elizabeth and William Armstrong  
Elizabeth Armstrong and James Iglehart  
Judith Arnold  
Judith Aronstein and Joseph Rice  
Diane and Lois Ashcroft  
Dorothy H. Baldini  
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Christy and Jay Cashman  
Kimberly Castelda and Mark Kelleher  
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Ralph Catalano and Jane Stabile  
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Pamela Dippel Choney  
Jin Chung  
Grace and Raymond Ciccolo  
Jessica Cirone  
Holly Clark  
Elizabeth and Stephen Clarke  
Judith Engle Clifford  
Linda and Barry Coffman  
Christina and Tim Cohen  
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Jack and Judy Connor  
John and Eileen Connors  
Patricia and George Conrad  
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Carolyn Crowley  
Mary Danberg  
Bruce Daniel and Susan Dacy  
Robert Davids and Jennifer Jackson  
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In Memory of Phyllis Davis  
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Ana Mari De Garavilla and Paul Hoffman  
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Susan Dodd  
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Kathleen Donohue and Mark Sanders  
Robert Doran  
R. Michael Dorsch  
Jamie Dostou  
Deborah and David Douglas
A number of Rosie's Place guests meet members from the Boston chapter of the nonprofit Back on My Feet at 6 am three mornings a week to either walk or run, which helps them both feel good, and feel good about themselves.
Tania Phillips and Jeffrey Dover
Kasper Pilibosian
Jean and Scott Pilla-Pierce
James Pinney
Diana Pisciotta
Mary Powers
Kelly and Stephen Pratt
Adelita Press
Cynthia and John Quealy
Elaine Quinn
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Lydia Vaught
Penny and Richard Valentine
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Designates donors whose support has spanned 10 consecutive fiscal or
calendar years
Rosie’s Place accepts no funding from the city, state, or federal government, therefore we depend on the support of our many generous corporations, foundations, and civic groups. Our organizational supporters range from religious organizations to corporate employee giving programs to foundation grants. All are vital to our ability to provide a comprehensive range of services to poor and homeless women. The following list represents those who contributed more than $1,000 this past fiscal year. We appreciate their continued generosity and support.

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The Edmund & Betsy Cabot Charitable Foundation
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Robert M. Childs Charitable Foundation
Citizens Bank Foundation
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City of Boston’s Lucy Bullman Fund
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Colcwell Banker Residential Brokerage Cares, Inc.
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Concert Pharmaceuticals
Conn Kavanaugh Rosenthal Peisch & Ford, LLP
ConocoPhillips
The John and Mary Corcoran Family Foundation
Covidien
Covidien Employee Matching Gift Program
Mary A. Crabtree Fund

CARE PACKAGES TO FAMILIES IN EMERGENCY SHELTER - JUNE 2014
Rosie’s Place helps our guests and other sheltered women by providing special care packages (818 at last count) so that families with little or no comforts from home are equipped with essentials such as toiletries, non-perishable food and school items.
As it has for many years, Rosie’s Place, with the donated services of beauty and health practitioners, invited guests to enjoy activities designed to pamper the mind, body and spirit.
40th Anniversary Party - April 2014

This festive annual party for Rosie’s Place guests, always held on Easter Sunday (the day of our founding), included three special meals, a reading of Rosie’s Place’s history, and dancing to music from the last four decades.
Funny Women...Serious Business - October 2013

A sold-out crowd of 1,500 friends of Rosie’s Place—along with headliner Joy Behar—came together at our annual luncheon to help raise a record $475,000 for our vital programs.

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