



St. John's Shelter Program
FOR WOMEN & CHILDREN

**Transforming lives.
Transforming the community.
One woman, one child
at a time.**

A Look Back at 2007 as We Charge Full-Steem Ahead

• A Note from Michele Steeb, Executive Director

With your support in 2007, St. John's was able to greatly augment its service to homeless women with children in Sacramento County. Together, we achieved much:

- We expanded from a 60-day to a 90-day Program! This change helps us better ensure the success of our clients re-integrating into the community as productive and empowered contributors.
- We launched an After-Care Program! This program is designed to support and monitor the progress of our graduates for up to three years—we are currently serving more than 200 women and children in After Care.
- We provided Thanksgiving AND Christmas to not only the 116 women and children living in our Shelter, we were also able to provide Thanksgiving and Christmas to more than 60 graduate families!
- We served more than 1,300 women and children in advancing from a point of crisis to a position of self-sufficiency—an almost 20% increase over the number of women and children we served in 2006!

While we made monumental strides in 2007, only some of which are detailed above, we have seen a staggering increase in the numbers of homeless women with children in need of St. John's services. Despite our 100-bed capacity, our average daily capacity in 2007 was 105 women and children. Our average capacity so far in

2008 is 115 women and children. But what troubles us most is that as of December, **we are now turning away more than 100 women and children each day.** This is up from 25 women and children per day during the first half of 2007.

I am also troubled to report that while we have made much progress in finding housing for our successful graduates (see chart to the right), almost half of our successful graduates get fed back into the system because there is simply not enough affordable housing for these families.

I can think of no other word to use but "crisis." The good news is that we have a plan to address this crisis issue. The Board of Directors of St. John's has committed to launching our own affordable housing program. This will allow us to better ensure that our successful graduates secure housing. It will also help us to address our capacity issues as we'll be able to move families out of St. John's earlier, allowing more families to be served. We have begun discussions with various city and county officials as well as local developers to put together the pieces necessary to execute this plan.

Please note that your donations to St. John's, received between March 1 and April 30, up to \$50,000, will be matched by Alan Shawn Feinstein, as part of the Foundation's 2008 Challenge to End Hunger!



2007

Women and children served	1300
Average capacity	105
Average # of women and children now being turned away daily	100
Successful graduates housed	53%

How can you help?

We cannot take this important step without your support. We ask you to tap into your network of friends and family who might be able to lend their talents to help us. Do you know any landowners, architects, developers and financiers who might like to work with us? Please let me know at 453-1482 or at msteeb@stjohns-shelter.org.

In the meantime, please continue to support us as both as volunteers and donors. I can say in all sincerity that the work we do with these families is nothing short of miraculous, and we need your support to continue it!

Finally, you can help us by spreading the St. John's story ... we need the support of all members of this community to get these families on the path to self-sufficiency.

Our Mission: Support homeless women and children to advance from a point of crisis to a position of self-sufficiency.



Thank You For Making Our Christmas So Special, So Abundant

It might seem like a long time ago, but we just had to share with you what a special Christmas we enjoyed at St. John's! On December 22, **we welcomed more than 250 current and graduate clients** to the Shelter for a Christmas celebration. Celebrations Party Rentals donated a 40'x 80' tent to host our gathering. Napoli Culinary Academy and Café provided a hearty and fabulous lunch for all. Bayside Church provided more than 50 volunteers to conduct Christmas crafts with the children. And most exciting, Santa and Mrs. Claus visited and were able to spend time with all of our children! It was such a special day, so wonderful to see our graduates happy, healthy and self-sufficient. We are extreme-

ly grateful to all who helped make this day possible!

But the 22nd wasn't the end of our celebration ... Through your donations, we were able to provide an abundant Christmas to the 116 women and children living in the Shelter, as well as to more than 60 graduate families! On behalf of the staff and the Board of St. John's, thank you for making our Christmas so, so special! It simply would not have happened without your support!

P.S. Special thanks to those who adopted our families for Christmas. We look forward to working with you again this next Christmas!

Our Christmas celebration was greatly enjoyed by more than 250 current and graduate clients



Volunteers Needed!

- Two people and a truck to pick up and deliver furniture to our shelter graduates—hours are flexible.
- After school volunteers to provide 1:1 tutoring and homework help—hours are 3:30 pm-5:00 pm.
- Groups to cook and serve dinner for our clients—hours are 4:30-6:00 pm.
- Are there other projects you'd like to take on? If so, please consider attending Volunteer Orientation which takes place every Tuesday at 6:00 pm. Or, you can contact Twyla, our Volunteer Services Coordinator, for more information at 916-453-1482 or tteitzel@stjohnsshelter.org.



With the help of STC actors, some of our children practice being the next American Idols

AT&T/STC: Thank you for a Cinderella evening!

At intermission of the Sacramento Theater Company's production of Suzan Lori Parks' "Topdog/Underdog," a St. John's Shelter Program client said, "Thank you to St. John's for making me feel like Cinderella for a night!"

Through the generous benefaction of AT&T, 39 clients traveled in a bus to attend this production of a play—its author was the first African American woman to receive the Pulitzer Prize in Drama.

The play tells the story of two nearly homeless brothers who struggle to move forward with their lives in the face of prejudice, lack of social supports, and personal challenges with addiction.

The director, Benny Sato Ambush, wrote: "We all can relate to the hue and cry of wanting but not getting, can we not? From whatever hand life has dealt us, do not we all hunger for something else, work to move beyond, seek to overcome some skeletal regret poking around in the dark corners of our lives? Do not we all reach—for acceptance? For love? For a sense of adequacy? Do not we all desire to matter in the world? To be acknowledged, witnessed and counted? To know where home is?"

While the adults were enjoying the production, STC sent several actors to perform for the 43 children at the Shelter. Our children were serenaded, and they were entertained. And then, they were encouraged to share their talents. While we don't have any Idol-ready contestants just yet, we've certainly got some up and comers!

Thank you AT&T and STC for "acknowledging, witnessing, and counting" our clients and for providing them with an evening at the theater—

one that articulately spoke of the universality of acceptance, love, and, most importantly, home!

The Road to Recovery

● My story by Tracy Fox

Hi, my name is Tracy, and I am a mom of two children. I've been using drugs and alcohol for more than 24 years. Since I can remember, I suffered low self esteem and desperately wanted to be loved by everyone. I wanted acceptance... to fit in... to belong. I first began smoking weed because of peer pressure in high school. I went along with the crowd. This carried on into adulthood and lead to me making a lot of bad choices, especially in relationships. They were very, very abusive. Drugs and alcohol were used to kill the pain. But the pain was still there after I came down... every time.

Eventually, I lost my apartment because I didn't pay my rent—at that time, I preferred to do crack and drink alcohol to escape my misery. Tragedy followed when my son drowned the day before his 16th birthday. I tried to find answers in the bottom of a can of "2-11", along with a freebase bowl, but still no answers came.

I went through a lot of homelessness... living with different family members and people I thought were my friends. I was mad at the world because of my loss and I just didn't want to live any longer. I caused my family a lot of grief and pain.

I thought God was playing a cruel joke on me when I had my daughter Ashley. I asked God many times, "When are you going to end my misery? I'm so tired of doing this to myself and going through this heartache." I continued to drink and use even more. I kept surviving each drug or alcohol binge. But I figured God had a plan for me because I was still alive.

One day when I was taking my daughter Ashley to Mustard Seed to sign-up for summer school, I saw Wanda, St. John's Case Manager. I knew Wanda because I had been in and out of St. John's several times, but I failed each time because I couldn't commit to being clean and sober for longer than a couple of weeks. Wanda asked how we were doing. She looked at me, only the way Wanda can look at you, and told me to call St. John's. That afternoon, at my daughter's urging, I did call, and they accepted me back... with the condition that I follow the Program to a tee. I resisted a little in the beginning by not doing all the groups I was



Tracy with her daughter Ashley

required to do, and I was quickly reminded that I would be asked to leave if I did not comply. Ashley, who was beginning to thrive, desperately wanted to stay, and I decided I did, too.

When I began complying with the Program and doing the required work, doors started opening for me. St. John's was able to refer me to Turning Point, a new housing Program. Though it took some time, Turning Point accepted us. Ashley and I recently moved into a very nice, two-bedroom duplex. Best of all, it's in a location that allows Ashley to continue attending Joseph Bonnheim Elementary—the school she attended while at St. John's. I get her on the school bus every morning. She is finally doing great in her studies. And, she was recently elected President of the Student Council. I am very proud of her.

Since leaving St. John's last fall, we have been in St. John's After Care Program. I return to St. John's almost every day for classes, and Ashley continues to participate in St. John's after-school program. I love being around clean and sober people, not only because of what they offer me, but because I am now in a place to help them.

I've come to the conclusion that staying clean and sober is just like a job; it is a job because you have to work at it, not sometimes but all of the time. If you don't work hard at it, and you give up, then you're not living... you're just existing. Thanks, St. John's, for giving me my life back.

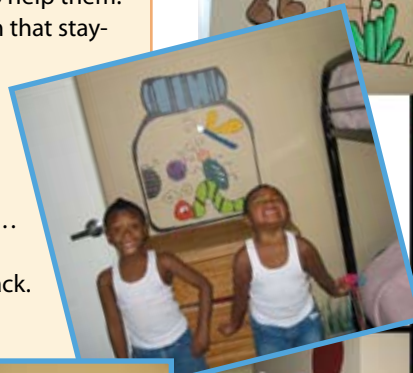
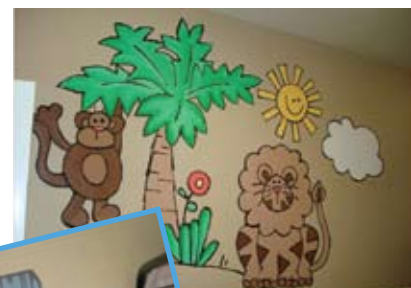
First Covenant Church Performs an Extreme Makeover on Our 14 Bedrooms

Imagine the joy and excitement that our children experienced upon seeing their newly decorated rooms. It was a scene right from Trading Spaces and Extreme Makeovers!

The wonderfully talented and creative efforts of members of the First Covenant Church transformed our rather institutional bedrooms into theme rooms. Now our women and children are enjoying sleeping in rooms inspired by Dr. Seuss, the sea, the forest, puppies, and polka dots! All rooms were freshly painted and adorned with robe hooks, rugs, comforters and pillows to match each theme.

As if the room makeover were not enough, First Covenant sent a huge team of volunteers to perform makeovers on our women while their rooms were being redesigned. Salon services included hair, make-up and nails! They also sent volunteers to entertain the children for the afternoon.

We are so grateful to everyone at First Covenant Church for their enthusiasm, dedication, hard work, and generosity! You have made a huge difference at St. John's, and we thank you!



New murals brighten our rooms!

Greg Miller Says Good-Bye After Three Years of Service to St. John's

Someone recently wrote: "Trusting God has transformed my life. I used to think that God's will was about which shoelace to tie first, or what job to apply for..."

A large outdoor tent filled with 80 alumnae from St. John's Shelter Program lifting their voices in affirmation, dignity, and hope.

St. John's staff inside the cold Warehouse on December 24th at 2 am, working diligently to help Santa deliver an abundance of gifts to children in the Shelter Program.

Clients bravely telling their stories to Shelter visitors in the hope of making a connection with them, to achieve their affirmation and support.

These are just a few of many strong memories from my three years at St. John's Shelter Program. These years were marked by an increase in women arriving at the Shelter Program with significant mental health diagnoses, of children with fierce interior wounds from silently coping with street life, and of not enough affordable housing for families to call "home."

I have been awed by the strength and nobility of homeless women, from their first phone call to be placed on our "Seeking Shelter List." I've been touched by their sensitivity to one another in the Shelter Program as they struggle daily to live to-



Line dancing and saying goodbye at Greg's farewell party

gether in a community of 100+ people. I've been inspired by their wisdom, perseverance, and humor.

I am leaving Sacramento to help care for my parents in Washington State, and I depart St. John's with deep gratitude and affection for its mission and for its staff, who labor tirelessly 24/7 in order for each woman and child to secure a future marked by safety, civility, and compassion.

A heartfelt thank you to the staff, the Board of Directors, volunteers, and benefactors. The writer above concludes: "... Today, I think God's will, simply put, is to love God and all of his creation to the best of my ability. To the extent that I honestly do this, I discover that I am useful, happy, joyous, and free—and the jobs and the shoelaces work themselves out."

- Greg Miller

Twyla Teitzel Joins St. John's as Our New Volunteer Services Coordinator



Twyla has an extensive background in the areas of public relations and small business development. For over twenty years, she has managed the office and seminars for Dr. Dan Murphy. She also brings extensive experience in education and community outreach.

Twyla has served on the Board of California's Homeschooling Organizations for several years. She is the former President of Soroptimist International of Pleasanton.

Also a yoga teacher, a children's advocate, a connoisseur of healthy living, and a tremendous people-person, Twyla brings a great deal to our organization, and we feel very fortunate to have her.



Delia at a competition. Photo credit: Gail Field

Help Us Save Money!

We hope you enjoy receiving updates from us as much as we enjoy keeping you posted on all that is happening at St. John's! The production of our newsletter is generously donated by Kim Marquardt, but the printing and mailing of our newsletter can be quite expensive. Please help us save money by providing us with your email address so we can send you, at no cost to us, the email version of our newsletter. And by the way, we **promise** to keep your email address to ourselves!

Email addresses can be emailed to accounting@stjohnsshelter.org.

The Strongest Woman in the World Inspires Our Clients

Delia Chilgren, the strongest woman in the world in the 54-59 age category, shared her amazing story with our clients in January. Delia, up until she was 51, called herself "a life-long couch potato." It was after a car accident that Delia finally took her doctor's advice and began lifting weights. In less than seven years, on 11/19/07, Delia was crowned the strongest woman in the world in the 54-59 age category! She imparted the seven lessons she learned through this inspirational process:

- 1 Physical exercise makes you feel better—even if it's just a few minutes a day, do something physical.
- 2 Break big goals into bite-size pieces—don't try and do it all at once.
- 3 Discipline and focus are very important, but self-forgiveness is most important.
- 4 Understand that once you embark upon changing life-long habits, there will be challenges.
- 5 At the same time, expect that other positive changes will occur.
- 6 Support is crucial—don't try to do it alone.
- 7 Start with a goal, and work towards it every day—most importantly, BEGIN TODAY!

Thank you, Delia, for sharing your time and your encouragement with our clients!

Career Planning and Placement Program Begins at St. John's

• **By Maureen Gagliardi**

In keeping with St. John's mission of supporting homeless women with children to advance from a point of crisis to a position of self-sufficiency, it became clear that St. John's needed to dramatically enhance its career planning and placement efforts to further assist its clients in maintaining their self-sufficiency.

I am so proud to have the opportunity to work with these women and am constantly amazed by their qualifications and determination to get out into the workforce to make a better life for themselves and their children.



Most recently, we have partnered with the CSUS, Career Counseling Graduate Program. This program provides our clients the opportunity to meet regularly with a career counselor in training. Not only does this provide our clients with instruction and guidance, it allows them to be on a College Campus, giving them an added boost in advancing themselves both professionally and academically.

Our initial step is to determine which of our clients are ready for a career. Those clients who are ready then undergo an assessment to determine their capabilities and interests. Once we have that guidance, we reach out to our partners within the local business community to help these clients realize their career dreams.

I welcome the opportunity to meet with your organization to discuss a potential partnership in further detail. I think you will find both the courage and the determination of our clients to be valuable assets to your organization. Please call me at 453-1482, or you can email me at mgagliardi@stjohnsshelter.org.

Donate Through Giveline

"In Our Words"

• **A Column Written by the Youth Residing in our Shelter**

In light of this year's Presidential election, we asked the following question of our children: "Who is your greatest role model?"



Ghani, age 13 - "I am my own role model because I'm pretty smart, and when I grow up, I will find a cure for cancer."

Charles, age 11 - "God because he never breaks promises, and He makes everyone unique."

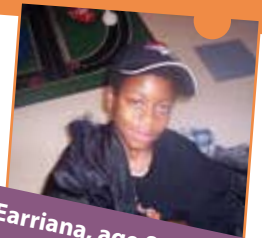
Glen, age 9 - "My mom because she took care of me when I was a baby and couldn't feed myself."



Ayesha, age 9 - "I look up to doctors because they save lives, and they cure people."



Earriana, age 8 - "I look up to Ravin Simmons because she designs clothes and is a very nice person."



LaQuisha, age 11 - "My sister because she teaches me to be nice and considerate."



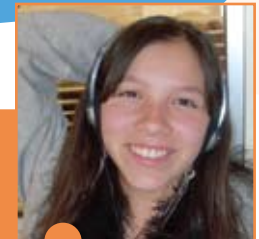
Yuritzza, age 5 - "My grandma because one time when I was little she bought me a pacifier, and she gives me lots of kisses."



Deneitriah, age 12 - "My mom because she handles difficult situations very calmly. When we go through hard times, she always makes sure we know that she loves us."



Destiny, age 13 - "My Mom is my hero because she has gone through some very hard times and she has taken very good care of me and brothers and sisters. My Mom teaches us to make good choices and teaches us to be understanding people."



Giveline.com is an online store created for the community-minded shopper, offering more than a million bestselling products including books, movies, music, electronics, housewares, gifts and more. Every purchase generates a substantial donation to St. John's - an amazing average of 16% of store sales, sometimes as high as 33%. Giveline has great products, great service, and great prices - the only difference between Giveline and other major online retailers is that every purchase earns money for our organization.

Please visit our Web site and click on the Giveline link. Alternatively, you can visit them directly at <http://www.giveline.com>, then select St. John's as your preferred charity in the upper right hand corner of the Web site.

Livin' Free!

For as long as she can remember, Sharon Fredrickson wanted to pursue her passion for helping people live free and give back to those in need. She and her partner founded Livin' Free™ in order to motivate people to live a balanced, truly free life. Now, more than just a job, Sharon presents seminars for the personal satisfaction of helping people change their lives and take their first steps down the path towards success.

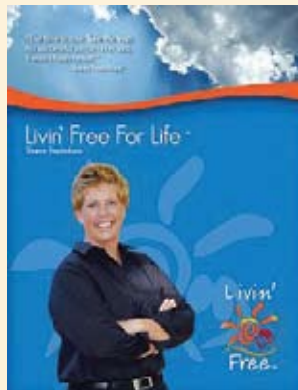
At one point, Sharon's personal life began to spiral out-of-control. Her life was in shambles, and her relationships were in ruins. She knew she couldn't keep living the way she was and decided to make a change. Today, she lives a healthy, balanced life. And, based on her experiences, Sharon now jumps at any chance to help others and show them how to live free.

After hearing about St. John's Shelter Program for Women and Children, Sharon

volunteered to talk to our clients about setting and achieving goals and reaching for their dreams. She understands many of the struggles these clients face on a daily basis and saw this as a perfect opportunity to help them take the first steps towards a balanced, productive life.

After her first session in January, Sharon came away excited and inspired by the 65 women in attendance. It was made even better when, after asking the women if they wanted her to come back for another session, they all raised their hands without hesitation.

"Although it was difficult to watch these women come to terms with what their lives



will look like in one year, three years and then five years if they don't make any changes, it was exciting to watch them realize they can make positive changes," Sharon says. "To see the expressions on their faces when they took the first step towards reaching for their dreams and living free, it was one of the most fulfilling moments in my professional life."

After the success of the Livin' Free™ seminar, Sharon plans to present to the women at St. John's on a monthly basis.

If you are interested in learning more about Sharon and her seminars, please visit www.livinfree.com. We also encourage you to visit this web site to read more about how Livin' Free™ can help you achieve a balanced and fulfilling life. In the meantime, thank you for sharing your talents and insights with our women, Sharon!

Important Changes to Our Donation Policies and Hours

We are so grateful for your help in clothing and housing more than 1300 women and children in 2007! Please note that due to limited staffing, **we will no longer be able to accept donations outside of the following hours:**

- Tuesday: 1-6 pm
- Wednesday: 1-6 pm
- Thursday: 1-6 pm
- Saturday: 10-4 pm

Lastly, please note that due to a combination of factors ranging from state regulation to need, we can no longer accept the following donations:

- Used Toys
- Happy Meal Toys
- Office Equipment
- Used Baby Equipment
- Soiled/Heavily Worn Clothing
- Non-Essential Household Items

Meet Our Newest Board Member, Debbie Aspling

Debbie Aspling is currently the Sr. Vice President/Area Manager for the Kaiser Sacramento and Roseville Medical Centers.

Debbie joined Kaiser in 2005 as the Chief Operating Officer for the Roseville Medical Center. Kaiser Permanente has grown into the area's largest health maintenance organization, with more than 655,862 members. It is the area's largest private-sector employer, with more than 8,300 full-time employees and 1,200 physicians.

Prior to joining Kaiser Permanente, Debbie was Vice President and Chief Operating Officer at Lodi Memorial Hospital as well as Assistant Administrator for Patient Services at Sutter General Hospital in Sacramento. Debbie also currently serves as Commander in the Air Force Reserves at Travis Air Force Base.

Debbie received her Bachelors of Science in Nursing, graduating Cum Laude from San Francisco State University, her Post Graduate Studies in Nursing Management from the University of California, Davis, and her M.B.A. from the California State University, Sac-

ramento. She completed her Fellowship Grant in Nursing Administration from Wharton School of Business, University of Pennsylvania.

Debbie serves as a Fellow for the American College of Healthcare Executives and is on the Trauma Task Force for CAHHS. Debbie has authored numerous articles on Clinical Pathways and Practice Guidelines.

We welcome you to our team, Debbie!



Your donations help bring smiles like these on the faces of some of our children who were able to attend an ERI Girls Convention

Donations are gratefully accepted Tuesdays from 1 to 6 pm, Wednesdays from 1 to 6 pm, Thursdays from 1 to 6 pm, and Saturdays from 10 am to 4 pm.

Due to your overwhelming generosity with donations, and with the limited space we have available to store donated items, we are no longer able to accept donations outside of these hours.

Bold items are in high demand!

Children's Program:

(Due to State regulations, all of the donations to the children's room must be new. Thank you!)

Playroom furniture
2 rocking chairs
Walker

Baby swings

Bouncers

Bottles

Sippy cups

Toddler outdoor play structure

Kitchen Needs:

18x24 inch white cutting boards

14 inch chef knives

10 inch chef knives

Wooden spoons

30-cup rice cooker

8 oz. ladles

2 oz. ladles

24"x 48" stainless steel table

12 oz. plastic scoops

6 oz. rice/ice cream scoopers
Industrial slicer

On-going Needs:

Powder bleach

Dish soap

Paper towels

Foil wrap

Plastic wrap

Powder free gloves

Antibacterial and baby wipes

Twin-sized pillows

Twin- and full-sized sheets

Blankets: twin and full

Women's undergarments, pajamas, and sweats (especially sizes 1X-4X)

Career/interview clothes

Travel size tubes of toothpaste

Women's deodorant

Hair grease

Batteries (AA/AAA/D)

Silverware

Laundry detergent

Heavy duty garbage bags

Napkins

Toilet paper

ZipLoc bags:

sandwich and gallon

Pull-up diapers

Regular disposable diapers

Depends

Sanitary napkins and tampons

Dish soap

Kleenex

Paper towels

Baby wipes

General Needs:

Three commercial washing machines

Three commercial dryers

Yarn

Crochet hooks

Field Trips:

Our women and children could really use some outings ... otherwise known as field trips! If you are able to donate any of the following, please let us know:

- Skating rink excursions
- Outings to the Roseville water slides
- Race car driving excursions on Bradshaw
- Kayaking excursions
- Paint ball events
- Movie theater excursions

St. John's also needs your financial assistance to make ends meet. By making a \$1400 commitment to us this year, you will underwrite the transformation of a life.

Name _____ Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email Address _____

Please return with your check or money order to:

St. John's Shelter Program for Women and Children, 4410 Power Inn Road, Sacramento, CA 95826

Donations may also be made with a credit card online at www.stjohnsshelter.org

St. John's Shelter Program for Women and Children is a nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization. We rely on donations from the community, local business and civic groups to continue to provide assistance and hope to homeless women and children. We do not loan or sell your information. Tax ID#: 68-0132934

Our 2007 Donors

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St. John's Shelter Program

FOR WOMEN & CHILDREN

4410 Power Inn Road
Sacramento, CA 95826

Ph. 916-453-1482
Fax 916-453-1425

www.stjohnsshelter.org

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Would You Like To Do Something To Help St. John's and Feel Treasured and Inspired at the Same Time?

Please join us for our 2nd annual St. John's Celebrating Mothers Tea Party. The event will take place on Wednesday, May 7th 2008 from 3:30-5:30 pm at the Sheraton Grand Hotel! Our invitation to you is enclosed in this newsletter.

You can be a part of the Tea Party by serving as a sponsor. Sponsorships, ranging from \$1000 to \$5000, include benefits such as tables, program ads, signage, media recognition and the presence of a shelter alumna at your table. If a sponsorship is of interest to you or your organization, please contact Sharon Gerber, our event coordinator, at sharongerber@sixdegreez.net and/or at 448-2881

You can also be a part of our Tea Party by attending the event. Last year, we sold out at 450 tickets, and though we have expanded the room to be able to accom-

modate 600 guests, please make sure you purchase your tickets today by visiting www.stjohnsshelter.org. Or again, you may contact Sharon Gerber, our event coordinator, at sharongerber@sixdegreez.net and/or at 448-2881.

We hope to see you there!

Please note that your donations to St. John's, received between March 1 and April 30, up to \$50,000, will be matched by Alan Shawn Feinstein, as part of the Foundation's 2008 Challenge to End Hunger!

See page 8 for a full listing of 2007 donors

A Huge Thank You to Our 2007 Donors!

Because of your support in 2007, St. John's was able to assist more than 1,300 women and children in advancing from a point of crisis to a position of self-sufficiency. We were able to expand from a 60-day to a 90-day Program to further ensure the success of our clients in re-integrating into the community as productive and empowered contributors. We were able to launch an After-Care Program to support and monitor the progress of our graduates for three years. And, we were able to provide Thanksgiving and Christmas to the 116 women and children living in our Shelter at the time, and to more than 60 graduate families.

On behalf of the women and children we serve, the staff and Board of Directors of St. John's Shelter Program for Women and Children, we are SOOOO grateful for your support! St. John's wouldn't exist without you!