

Sober Times

"There is no greater joy than seeing recovering women reunited with their families."

A Publication of Mrs. Wilson's/ALFRE, Inc.

Fall 2011

FOCUS ON RECOVERY

Sophia (not her real name) is a twenty-six-year-old mother to a darling four-year-old girl. She takes care of her daughter and her home and works full-time. She is also a recent alumna of Mrs. Wilson's Halfway House.

A few years back, Sophia was in a car accident and began taking prescribed pain killers. She soon became addicted to not only the prescription drugs but also to alcohol, and her life spiraled out of control. Before long, she had nowhere to live, faced jail time, had legal issues and lost custody of her daughter. She knew she didn't want to get high anymore, but she didn't know how to stop.

Sophia entered a rehabilitation facility and was on the verge of regaining custody of her daughter when it was revealed she was still using. It had been a year since custody was removed, and the state was getting ready to put Sophia's little girl up for adoption. Terrified, Sophia knew she had to overcome her addiction if she wanted her daughter back.

Because of the circumstances, Sophia says she was "lucky and unlucky to get into Mrs. Wilson's." It was within this home she had her "saddest and most memorable and most fun times. The first time I really laughed again was at Mrs. Wilson's." She also "came to a point where I realized things may not go the way I planned, but I am not going to stop fighting."

While at Mrs. Wilson's, Sophia learned people skills and had a support network that she never experienced before. She also came to understand her own self-esteem issues and strengths. Upon reflection about Mrs. Wilson's, she says "it was my lifeline. This is my family now."

Sophia completed Mrs. Wilson's program and moved to the Tomlinson House, the three-quarter house for residents of Mrs. Wilson's who have completed our program but need a little extra support. During her time in the program, she never gave up fighting for her daughter.

On July 15, 2011, Sophia regained custody. Even the judge who awarded her custody said this was a rare case. Very few women in Sophia's place ever regain custody. While at Mrs. Wilson's, Sophia met her best friend, who is also a successful alumna. She too has a young daughter. The two young women and their daughters often have sleepovers. They recently took their girls to a Selena Gomez concert.

Before, Sophia says, she "never took advice until I wanted to use it." Now she "turns to women I see that I admire. I follow them. I don't know anything." Sophia is an inspiration, and her daughter has a mother she can greatly admire.

BRICK CAMPAIGN

Help us pave the way to recovery. Mrs. Wilson's Halfway House is excited to offer you the opportunity to purchase a personalized engraved brick to be set in our garden for the residents, used for meditation and reflection.

Bricks are a great opportunity to congratulate alumnae, celebrate milestones or honor your loved ones.

Bricks must be ordered by December 1, 2011. Bricks are available in two sizes small (\$100.00) and large (\$200.00).



To order your brick today, please call us at: 973.540.0116 x16.

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Greetings From Mrs. Wilson's



Nine months ago I asked my friend Chad Peters to recommend a local charity I could get involved with. I explained that I didn't want the "flashy" charity of the month or the "mega" charity. I simply said, "Help me find an organization that is doing good things and needs help." In less than a week he came back to me and announced that he had found "it". So, for the next 30 minutes I listened as he described Mrs. Wilson's House and all the services they provide to help women in recovery. (Chad is a board member, so he has a thorough understanding of what happens at Mrs. Wilson's.)

As he finished, I said, "I'm in. Tell me what they need."

My first assignment was to chair Papillon, which is our spring fundraiser. After a successful event, I accepted an invitation to join the board and just as I was phasing into my new role as a Board Member, news came of Pat's retirement. One month later, our Board chair Rosemary McGee, approached me regarding filling in as interim director during the search for a permanent director. So, I resigned from the board and as I write this I am in Mrs. Wilson's House, serving as Interim Executive Director, helping to manage our operations and develop our strategic plan.

During the past six weeks I have gained powerful insight into the important work we do at the House. In fact, I never realized the impact of the services we provide here at Mrs. Wilson's House to help the women in our care. As I reflect on them, two things consistently stand out—Reuniting mothers with their children and witnessing the dramatic transformation of the women who successfully complete our program.

Several times over the past few weeks, I've had the opportunity to watch mothers reconnect with their children during family visits. I can honestly say that witnessing the love shared between mother and child is one of the greatest joys I have experienced here. If ever we needed a reminder as to how important our work is, we simply need to reflect upon what we see during these visits...Both mother and child beaming with excitement and love.

In addition, I've had the opportunity to see the wide-eyed expressions of uncertainty and apprehension on the faces of women as they first join the house. This stands in direct contrast to the confident and assured smiles of the women I see at our graduation ceremonies. This transformation from uncertainty to confidence is another clear sign that the work we do here at Mrs. Wilson's is impacting women's lives in a positive way.

So, as we prepare for the challenges of the coming year, I do so with renewed strength of commitment, grounded in the spirit of love and transformation. It is in this spirit that I invite you to join in support of Mrs. Wilson's House. Please feel free to contact me at my direct line 201 978 7340 or CJMeenan@MrsWilsons.org. I'm not sure what your calling at Mrs. Wilson's will be since there are so many ways to help. However, I do know it will be meaningful and rewarding. I look forward to sharing it with you.

Peace, CJ

Thank You!

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Sober Times

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ALFRE, Inc., dba Mrs. Wilson's is a non-profit corporation, tax-exempt 501(c)(3).

TIPS ON STAYING SOBER DURING THE HOLIDAYS

Staying sober during the holidays may not be easy, but it can be done. Below find some tips:

- *Keep in close contact with your sponsor*
- *Celebrate the holidays for their true meaning*
- *If going to a party, arrive late and leave early*
- *Remember how "it" was*
- *Thank your Higher Power for your sobriety*
- *Celebrate with other recovering alcoholics*
- *Bring your own beverages, if you are unsure of what will be served*
- *Steer clear of the bar area*
- *Keep busy by talking, dancing or helping out with children*
- *Always keep a non-alcoholic drink in your hand*
- *Avoid parties you know will be focused around alcohol*
- *Volunteer at a local soup kitchen and remember how lucky you are*
- *Make sure you have your own transportation home*
- *When experiencing a craving, eat something sweet*
- *Go to more support group meetings*
- *Focus on the things you like most about yourself*
- *Take extra care of yourself; remember to slow down and experience some quiet time during this busy season*
- *Celebrate staying sober*

GoodSearch/GoodShop

We want to let you know we are looking for creative ways to raise funds for the house and treatments we provide to our residents. What if Mrs. Wilson's earned a donation every time you searched the Internet? Or how about if a percentage of every purchase you made online went to support our cause? Well, now it can!

GoodSearch.com is a Yahoo-powered search engine that donates half its advertising revenue, about a penny per search, to the charities its users designate. Use it just as you would any search engine, get quality search results from Yahoo, and watch the donations add up! And GoodShop.com is a new online shopping mall that donates up to 30 percent of each purchase to your favorite cause. Hundreds of stores like Target, Gap, Best Buy, Macy's

and Barnes & Noble have teamed up with GoodShop, and every time you place an order you'll be supporting your favorite cause.

And if you download the GoodSearch – Alfre – Mrs. Wilson's Halfway House toolbar, our cause will earn money every time you shop and search online – even if you forget to go to GoodShop or GoodSearch first! Add the Alfre – Mrs. Wilson's Halfway House toolbar at goodsearch.com/toolbar/alfre-mrs-wilsons-halfway-house.

We hope you will support us in this novel fundraising effort. You can even click on the "amount raised" button on the page to see how we as the Mrs. Wilson's support community are doing.

SAVE
THE DATE

PAPILLON

Thursday, April 19, 2012 at 6pm,
Park Avenue Club
Florham Park, NJ



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Mrs. Wilson's
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MRS. WILSON'S WISH LIST

Alarm Clocks

Towels*

Crock Pots

New Bedding (twin size)*

Vacuums



HOLIDAY GIFT WISH LIST

Our Holiday Gift Wish List is below.

Umbrellas*

Sweat Shirts*

Pens

Socks*

Journals

Lotions

Pajamas*

Disposal Cameras

*At this time we can only accept new items (no used). Thank you for your understanding.