



# Safe Inc. OF SCHENECTADY

*"WHERE HOPE SHAPES THE FUTURE"*

A newsletter for staff, friends and supporters of Safe Inc. Spring 2021

## ....From the desk of the Executive Director



*Pictured: Scott Brady, Executive Director*

After a long snowy winter, and seemingly long year, we embrace spring as a reminder that renewal and positive change is possible and underway. It has been a little over one year since Coronavirus altered all our lives. Looking back, it is amazing how we adjusted to a "new normal". We immediately had to deal with toilet paper shortages, personal protective equipment shortages, shortages in cleaning supplies while needing to increase the cleaning and sanitization of the facility. We adjusted to interacting with other professionals virtually, which was a difficult transition for a human service provider as we value human/personal interaction. Throughout the pandemic we were grateful for the tremendous support received through donations of clothing, food, monetary contributions, and generous offers of other types of assistance. In addition, our federal, state, and local government partners ensured we remained operational by understanding our challenges and coming through with support throughout the pandemic. Like all shelters, our service is essential. During the pandemic we never

stopped serving homeless youth however we know there are many more young people needing shelter and support. As we begin to open schools, community centers, and local businesses, Safe Inc. will be focusing on increasing awareness of youth homelessness and sexual exploitation. Safe Inc. wants to ensure all homeless youth understand there is hope, there is a safe place for them to stay and that everyone has an opportunity for a new beginning.



### About our programs: Project Safe and Safe House

**Project Safe** is an outpatient treatment and referral program designed to serve individuals between the ages of 18 and 35 who have been sexually exploited or at risk of sexual exploitation. The program is tailored to meet ALL the needs of each individual through a network of services and referrals.

**Safe House** is a temporary 30-day emergency shelter that serves homeless and runaway youth ages 16 to 20 in a home like environment. A youth may come to Safe House through self-referral or through referral sources. Admission to Safe House is solely voluntary. Limited space is available for youth 14 and 15 for respite. The program is tailored to meet ALL the needs of each youth through a network of services and referrals.

### Fun Facts:

April  
Diversity Month



May  
National Mental Health  
Awareness



June  
National Pride



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Schenectady  
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  - Charlene Stratford ▪ Tanasia Young
- Residential Specialists**

## Spring into 2021 - Big plans ahead

### Capital Roots- The Root of Inspiration For Spring

Capital Roots has been providing fresh fruit and vegetables to community organization in Troy, Schenectady, Albany and all the way up to Saratoga Springs with their Squash Hunger Program since 2004. Volunteers drop off fresh produce to about 40 different organizations a week and Safe House is one of them. We would like to extend our gratitude to Capital Roots Squash Hunger Program and our friends over at Schenectady ARC for bringing us fresh fruits and veggies every week!

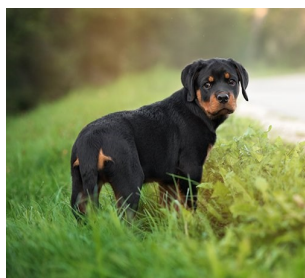
Capital Roots has inspired us with their Green Thumb to work on our own garden this spring and summer so our clients who come through can have a fun activity to work on while also learning a valuable skill.



*Pictured: Leah Johnson, Residential Specialist and volunteers from Capital Roots who stopped by Safe Inc. to drop off fresh veggies.*

## Meet Athena DeCarmine, Shelter Manager

Athena started at Safe Inc. of Schenectady in June 2020 as the Aftercare Case Manager and then transitioned into the Street Outreach/Activities Specialist in December 2020 and then made one more move in March 2021 to become the Shelter Manager (which was the original position she interviewed for back in May of 2020). She looks forward to her new role and working with the staff to make Safe House the best that it can be. During her time here at Safe she has taken on extra tasks such as posting on Safe's social media (Facebook and Instagram), creating and managing Safe's website along with producing the agency quarterly Newsletter. When not at Safe she loves to play with her best bud Bubba, her three (3) year old Rottweiler, snowboarding, roller skating, vacationing and spending time with her boyfriend.



## Creating Success at Safe Inc.

**CLIENT STORY** (Editor's Note: This is the story of a young man who used the services of Project Safe and Safe House. He has agreed to share his story with you.)



Many of Safe's clients are born into situations where the family system is already dysfunctional. This client is one of thousands.

I was born to parents who suffered from severe mental health conditions. At the age of 3, both of my parents were hospitalized and I began the long cycle of foster care and group homes. Numerous providers tried to seek-out good foster homes for me but unfortunately I suffered both emotional and physical abuse at the hands of my foster parents. I internalized most of what was happening to me and became very defiant and rebellious in my behavior. Therefore, I was removed from several placements before the age of 8. During my years of group home living, I was diagnosed with bipolar disorder, which led me to believe that I would suffer from mental health issues like my parents.

At the age of 17, I voluntarily left the foster home I was living in and was referred to Safe House by two Street Outreach Workers that I met on the street.

Safe House was the beginning of a long journey to independence. My goals were to obtain housing, education, and employment. Safe House staff worked diligently with me to complete my goals. Their confidence in me helped me to believe in myself. The counselors at Safe always greeted me with a smile and a positive attitude and because of their support and guidance, I am now living in my own apartment, I attended college, and now working full-time. My life is good due to the staff at Safe and their belief that I could be a productive individual.

## Did you know.....

... that every night thousands of young people experience homelessness without a parent or guardian and go to sleep without the safety, stability and support of a family or home?

... that youth homelessness is often rooted in family conflict? Did you know that there are other contributing factors that can cause youth homelessness such as economic circumstances like poverty and housing insecurity, racial disparities, involvement with child welfare, involvement with the juvenile justice system, and mental health and substance use disorders?

...that many homeless youth and young adults have experienced significant trauma before and after becoming homeless and are particularly vulnerable, including victims of human trafficking?

This is how **YOU** can help one of the many youth and young adults who come to Safe House who need a safe place to stay for a night. By making a donation of \$70 for one night you have given a homeless youth a safe, family like environment for one night where they don't have to worry about the weather or where they are going to get their next meal or if they will be able to shower and change their clothes. Safe House does all of that and more for each youth and young adult that comes to our door.

Next time when you don't know what you want to do for your birthday, in lieu of gifts, ask that friends and family donate a bed night for a homeless youth. You can visit our web site at [www.safeincfoschenectady.org](http://www.safeincfoschenectady.org) to donate through PayPal or you can mail a check to:

Safe Inc. of Schenectady  
Attention: Bed Night(s)  
1344 Albany Street  
Schenectady, NY 12304

**Thank you!**



## Community Support

Safe Inc. would like to extend a big **THANK YOU** to our community members, local businesses, foundations, and grants funders who continue to support Safe's Mission and allow our staff to continue to help those in need.

The Women's Fund of the Capital Region—Fresh Start Collection

Nonprofit Training and Advancement Fund of The Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region

CDPHP for their commitment to Safe's Mission and keeping the community safe during the pandemic

Stewart's Holiday Match

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority

Price Chopper's Golub Foundation

Tom Anadio of Anadio's Home Improvement

Brian Merriam—The Merriam Agency

Bagel and Bakes

Julie Rouse, Safety Course Instructor—American Red Cross



# How can YOU help?

## Donations

Since the very beginning our organization has been blessed with so many donations from our community supporters. The list of donations is endless and for that, we are truly grateful.

Currently Safe Inc. is in need of intake clothing for our emergency youth shelter, Safe House. When a youth comes to Safe House, everything that they come to shelter with must be washed, dried and counted on an inventory sheet. During the intake process staff will give a youth a new, clean outfit for the client to put on after a shower while their clothing is still being washed and dried. The youth is more than welcome to keep the new outfit that they are given.

Here is are some of the specific items that Safe House is in need of for its youth:

**Women**—Sweatpants/yoga pants/leggings, sizes small, large, extra large; T-shirts, size small, large and extra large; Underwear, size six (6) and nine (9). Sports bras, all sizes.

**Men**—Sweatpants/Joggers, size small, medium, extra large and extra extra large; T-shirts, size small, medium, extra large, extra extra large; Cotton boxers, all sizes.

You can also find a full wish list at Amazon Wish List on our Facebook page or website [www.safeincfschenectady.org](http://www.safeincfschenectady.org).

