



# IMPACT! newsletter



## May is Mental Health Awareness Month

How your investment is changing the future for individuals ... leading the way to life in recovery!

May  
2019

### STEP UP HONORS MARLEEN & BRUCE ROGNLIEN



Marleen and Bruce Rognlien

Step Up is pleased to honor Marleen and Bruce Rognlien at the Donor Appreciation Soiree on May 5, 2019 at the Craig Krull Gallery. The Rognliens have been involved with Step Up for more than 20 years when they met founder Susan Dempsay. Their son Andy had bipolar disorder and a drinking problem. "Susan literally saved our lives by explaining the connection between mental illness and self-medication via alcohol and drugs. At that time no one had heard of dual diagnosis," said Bruce. Bruce and Marleen now understood the complexities of their son's illness.

Susan asked Bruce to serve on the Step Up Board, and ultimately he became Board Chair. He was instrumental in hiring CEO Tod Lipka. Under Tod's leadership, the Rognliens have watched Step Up grow and expand nationally.

Their personal dream is to see the development of early childhood identification and treatment of mental illness. "It would have made a difference in Andy's life and every young person that shows early signs of possible symptoms of having a mental illness."

To RSVP for the Donor Soiree, email [events@stepuponsecond.org](mailto:events@stepuponsecond.org).

### PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

*The #1 requested supportive service...*



Raneika M. (left) and Reginald M. (right) holding their lease.

Step Up has expanded services to Atlanta, Georgia. Along with Pathways to Housing founder Sam Tsemberis, Step Up has partnered with Atlanta Housing and Partners for Home on their Mainstream Voucher project. The new initiative will assist individuals experiencing homelessness and mental health conditions as they move through the voucher process. The new program, Step Up/Pathways to Housing, provides ongoing case management and skill building services to insure the person remains in housing and continues to improve their self-sufficiency.

Since March, Step Up/Pathways has helped Raneika M. and Reginald M. move into their apartments. Both signed leases on April 4 and moved into their apartments April 11 and 12. Congratulations, Atlanta Team!

### A SENSE OF BELONGING

*Mutuality, safety, and respect...*



Tod Lipka, Step Up President & CEO and Michelle P., Step Up member, meet with Gov. Gavin Newsom in San Bernardino as the Governor is briefed on the county's housing initiatives.

Step Up member Michelle P. is turning her life around. A few short years ago, she was living unsheltered in a Victorville park and using drugs. Michelle attempted suicide. She was hospitalized and ordered to rehab. Michelle was then referred to Step Up. Her service coordinator helped her find a home of her own. With support, she was able to create structure and self-motivation. Michelle found a job at Stater Brothers and is now a manager supervising the cashiers during her shift. She maintains her sobriety by attending NA and goes to the gym. Michelle says, "I'm greatly appreciative and happy to be employed and living on my own." Because her journey is so compelling, Michelle was invited by Step Up's Inland Empire Team to participate in a roundtable conversation and share her story with Governor Gavin Newsom. Congratulations on all you have accomplished, Michelle!

### VOCATIONAL TRAINING & PLACEMENT

*Productivity and social connectedness...*



Donovan (left) with Step Up member Erica and her daughter.

Wildwood School 8th grade student Donovan Robertson was tasked with learning something new and putting it towards a good cause. He wanted to learn how to build a computer. Donovan raised \$1,000 on GoFundMe to build two computers. He offered the first computer to Erica, a Step Up member.

It was a great match. Erica, desperately in need of a computer, told her education specialist how much she wanted to re-enroll at LA Trade Tech. She failed her last online class because she only had her phone to use for homework. Donovan and his parents delivered the PC computer to Erica. Donovan said he "felt really good about it." He hopes to build the second computer soon and donate it to another Step Up member.

In Honor of



and

Mother's Day



To make a gift in honor/memory of a loved one please visit [www.stepuponsecond.org](http://www.stepuponsecond.org)