

SAVE THE DATE 30TH ANNIVERSARY GALA

Honoring ROBERT J. HUGIN
October 19, 2018, 7:00 – 10:00 p.m., Baltusrol Golf Club, Springfield, NJ
For information, contact Corina Borg, Manager of Special Events,
at cborg@familypromise.org.



Charity Navigator Awards Family Promise Top Rating...Again!



For the fifth consecutive year, Family Promise has been awarded Charity Navigator's coveted four-star rating, signifying strong financial health and commitment to accountability and transparency. Only nine percent of charities rated have earned this top distinction for at least five consecutive years from America's largest independent charity evaluator.

FAMILY PROMISE®

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Family Promise® is a national nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization addressing the crisis of family homelessness in the U.S. Through a comprehensive set of solutions involving prevention, shelter, and stabilization, Family Promise empowers families experiencing or at risk of homelessness to reclaim and maintain their independence.

...a publication highlighting our work to help low-income families achieve independence.



A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Dear Friends,

I participated in two important gatherings last month that addressed the challenges for low-income Americans. One was a conference on the future of micro-enterprise with the Association of Enterprise Opportunity (AEO). The other was the quarterly meeting of the New York Fed's Community Advisory Group (CAG).

Both centered on a critical question: *What is the future for the American worker?* Our job market will change more rapidly in the next ten years than it has in the past 30.

For the New York Fed, I presented about the challenges of affordable housing and how that intersects with poverty and employment. After all, homes are where jobs go at night. With AEO, we discussed best practices in enterprise development. Recognizing that entrepreneurship is a means for income and employment, Family Promise will soon be launching a new micro-entrepreneurship program with our partners at Woodforest National Bank that will empower families to optimize business opportunities, whether advancing a side business or creating a new startup.

The question of the future of the workforce has direct impact as we plan our next 30 years. We are not just about shelter, not just about housing. We are about empowerment, and how people will earn a living is central to that.

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Spreading Seeds of Hope



April showers might bring flowers in May, but Family Promise gives families in need the seeds to grow and bloom all year long. On May 10th, Family Promise hosted its first Garden of Hope Party at Summit's Reeves-Reed Arboretum where, surrounded by lush flowering spring gardens, friends and supporters met to hear firsthand how Family Promise helped one young family blossom.

Family Promise founder Karen Olson and a graduate of the Union County shelter program, Nichole, shared their personal stories with the more than 100 guests who attended the event, many of whom were being introduced to Family Promise for the first time.

Olson said she's still amazed that what began 30 years ago as a personal mission to assist a few local homeless individuals turned into a nationwide movement that has served nearly one million people to date.

"I never imagined I'd be here today talking about a national organization with 200,000 volunteers," she remarked.

Olson stressed how important it is for struggling families to have support within the community,

noting that the lack of a support system is often what brings families to Family Promise.

"The name Family Promise describes us perfectly. We're a second family for the people we serve, and we give our families a promise: the promise of a brighter future," she said.

Single mom Nichole was six credits away from earning her bachelor's degree while working

"The things I gained from Family Promise far outweigh the things I lost when we became homeless."

full-time to support her son, Zion, when she was laid off, forced to leave school, and subsequently lost her home. She described how Family Promise empowered her to regain her independence.

"Most social service agencies look for ways to say no: 'No, you don't qualify. No, you can't do this. No, you can't have that.' Family Promise looks for ways to say yes," explained Nichole.

She and Zion participated in the emergency shelter program, during which time Family

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A MESSAGE
FROM THE CEO

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To accomplish this goal, we must expand our programs and ensure families can be sustainable long-term. We also need to continue to inform policy, as we do with the CAG and our Government Relations Committee.

We want to work toward a future where family homelessness and housing instability are a rarity, not an endemic problem. To do so, we are building the infrastructure now to ensure a better tomorrow.

Sincerely,



Claas Ehlers

WELCOME TO OUR
NEWEST AFFILIATES

Beaverton, OR
Hudson County, NJ
Whatcom County, WA

SPREADING SEEDS OF HOPE

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Promise provided her with counseling and case management and helped her complete her degree, maintain her transportation, get Zion the educational support he needed at school, and steer the family back to independence, ultimately finding them a new home.

“Family Promise isn’t just a shelter, it’s a whole system of support. You come away a better person with higher self-esteem. You come away understanding there are people who care,” explained Nichole.

Why I Give
VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



“Family Promise makes a real difference in people’s lives, including ours.”

“Family Promise has changed the way we look at homelessness,” say Nancy and Kevin Mahoney, who volunteer with Family Promise-Union County (FP-UC) through their church, Saint Michael’s, in Cranford, New Jersey.

The couple learned about Family Promise five years ago at an introductory presentation about the organization. Nancy convinced her church to become a host site and helped develop the program there, recruiting Kevin and many other volunteers. Four months later they welcomed their first families.

The mothers in the temporary shelter program especially impress the Mahoneys. “I see moms making so many sacrifices for their children. They work hard to get their families in a safe place,” Nancy says.

But it’s not just the families who touch Nancy and Kevin’s life. They’re grateful to work with so many dedicated volunteers.

“There are over one hundred of us at Saint Michael’s alone,” says Kevin, noting that in addition to hands-on volunteers there are many others “always working behind the scenes.” Even the parish school has raised money for Family Promise.

The Mahoneys maintain contact with several families who have graduated from the program.

“We enjoy reconnecting with former guests and seeing the progress they’ve made because of their experience with Family Promise,” Nancy says.

FP-UC Executive Director Geleen Donovan considers the Mahoneys invaluable to the program. “Their compassion and concern for others is reflected in the relationships they form with our families and volunteers,” she says.

The Mahoneys cherish their work with Family Promise. “Family Promise is special. It makes a real difference in people’s lives,” says Nancy, “including ours.”

To learn how you can make a difference in the lives of children and families in need, visit: <https://familypromise.org/get-involved>

Fighting Family Homelessness:
Sometimes It IS Just Child’s Play

There’s a familiar saying that “play is the work of children,” and studies show play is essential to a child’s cognitive, physical, emotional, creative, and social development. But children in families battling poverty and homelessness often lack not only essentials like food, shelter, and proper medical care, but the ability and opportunity to play. They have limited outlets to learn, explore, grow, and simply be kids.

Children are at the heart of Family Promise’s work, which is why Family Promise has partnered with other likeminded nonprofits to ensure the impact of homelessness on them is not overlooked.

Sesame Street in Communities, a philanthropic initiative of Sesame Workshop, the nonprofit organization behind the popular children’s television show, has enlisted Family Promise and other national leaders to join their conversation on family homelessness as they explore ways to address this crisis, engage with families at risk, and raise awareness of the issue. The panel’s goal is to create broader awareness of family

homelessness and its impact, as well as inform those who interact with young children who lack stable housing.

Jeanette Betancourt, Senior Vice President of Community and Family Engagement for Sesame Workshop, noted the “incredible discussion” had left Sesame Workshop “with deep considerations on the need and, more importantly, what is possible.”

Family Promise CEO Claas Ehlers echoes this sentiment: “Putting the resources of the leader in children’s education into family homelessness is an important step to raising awareness and engaging communities. We’re thrilled to be part of this effort.”

Recognizing the importance of creative play for children, Family Promise has also forged an innovative partnership with KaBOOM!, a national nonprofit dedicated to giving kids a childhood filled with the balanced and active play necessary to thrive, that will bring play

products to Family Promise Affiliates across the country, increasing access to engaging, safe play spaces.

“We’ve always made sure that children can play,” explains Ehlers, adding, “It’s part of the



normative environment Family Promise strives for. Working with KaBOOM! allows us to provide a consistent option to impact children’s lives during their stay with us.”

Ehlers sums up the significance of these partnerships: “Our organizations share a critical mission to improve the lives of children. Partnering brings us together in that cause and also provides our Affiliates with a valuable way to engage additional volunteers.”



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MAXIMIZE THE IMPACT OF A GIFT TO
FAMILY PROMISE?

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