



Founded on Agape

Thea's Notes

A Newsletter of Thea Bowman House

Winter 2020

Thea Bowman House St. Patrick's Day Parade Party

Saturday, March 14, 2020
8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
DeSales Center Auditorium

Food and Drinks, Karen Food, Souvenirs, Homemade Baked Goods & Irish Soda Bread
Face and Nail Painting, Photo Booth, Free Arts and Crafts
Indoor Viewing of Parade, Warming Station

Entertainment After the Parade:
Butler-Sheehan Academy of Irish Dance & Johnston School of Irish Dance



☐ I would like to add my business/organization as an event sponsor.

Enclosed is our contribution of \$ _____

☐ I cannot attend and enclose my donation of \$ _____

☐ I would like to make a donation of \$ _____

in memory/honor of _____



Find us on the web: www.theabowmanhouse.org or facebook.com/theabowmanhouse

Outfitted for Success

We missed our fall newsletter this year. Our big move, even though it was only two floors up, seemed to take precedence over our usual activities. There are now 350 children in Thea Bowman House programs. Our commitment to helping them to succeed through education is a goal shared with local community partners.

Our friends at Bank of America arrive each September with book bags stocked with school supplies. They even research school supply lists to make sure each child starts their first day with everything that they need.

Another community partner, the Hartford Insurance, adds to the availability of back-to-school supplies. Their generosity is so great that we can stock supplies for mid-school-year replenishment.

Every day there is someone there to help with homework in the classrooms thanks to our volunteer tutors. **NO EXCUSES FOR BAD GRADES!!!**



Bank of America's Book Bag Drive



Good Friends in All Seasons

We were thrilled with the visit of one of our greatest advocates this Christmas seasons. Roann Destito and her staff arrived with many gifts and two of the biggest teddy bears that any of us have ever seen. Roann continues to work diligently on behalf of so many programs in our community to improve the quality of care for our children.

During each holiday season, we continue to be amazed by so many generous benefactors. Some adopt a family, others adopt a classroom, still others purchase turkeys and hams so that everyone can enjoy a holiday meal. Cornell Cooperative Extension arrives with Santa and his therapy dogs to thrill the entire pre-k program. The DeSales auditorium turns into Santa's workshop where gift packages are received and distributed to Thea Bowman House families. This year we even had a boutique so that last minute needs could be met. The Elves-in-Charge, while anonymous, really embody the spirit of this very special season. We thank each one of you for helping Thea Bowman House continue to be a place of unconditional love.



Roann Destito's Christmas Visit



Sister Thea Bowman Day in Utica

Mayor Robert Palmieri joined our children and families on February 12, 2020, as he issued a proclamation announcing Sister Thea Bowman Day in Utica, NY. The celebration included the children's choir as they performed "This Little Light of Mine" gospel style. The teens joined the kindergarten and first graders as they presented the life of Sister Thea through a child's eyes. We took the name of this great woman for our center because she was the embodiment of the kind of unconditional love or *agape*, that we hoped to embrace in our mission statement.

Sister Thea promoted multi-cultural education as a teacher, and she used her gifts of music, song and poetry to encourage her own African American people to celebrate their heritage and to be proud of being their true selves. Her 52 years on earth were spent well as she taught us to live every day to the fullest.

The event ended with the unveiling of our new logo, which makes a simple yet profound image of children of all races, religions, and cultures in a circle with a heart full of love at the center.

New Life at the DeSales Center

You may have heard about the Academics First Child Care Center that hopes to open its doors on the ground floor of the four story DeSales Center. The goal is to provide 24/7 child care to help those parents who work nights and weekends.

The former St. Francis deSales School is reliving its original mission of education and care of children. Thea Bowman House now occupies the first and second floors of the building with 160 pre-kindergarten and over 100 school aged children.

Handicap accessibility has been a growing need. Currently programs are limited in their ability to serve children and adults with disabilities. It also keeps us from using the top floor. We will soon be announcing a campaign to install an elevator and some desperately needed replacement windows.

There will be a kick-off event in the spring. Please help us spread the word.



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Mission Statement

The mission of Thea Bowman House, Inc. is to provide a safe, nurturing environment.

To enable culturally diverse children and families achieve their full potential.

The foundation on which Thea Bowman House is built is agape, "unconditional love."

Jane Domingue
Executive Director

Sandy Wright
School-age Program Director

Board of Directors

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Darby O'Brien, President
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Emily Arthur, Secretary
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Katherine Poupart
Sharon Zohne
Kathryn Barefoot
Heather Beebe
William Ryan
F. Christopher Giruzzi, Esq.

The Big Move

Thanks to the helping hands of some wonderful people in our community, Thea Bowman House was able to move to the first and second floor of the DeSales Center in October of 2019. Painters and movers hailed from Utica National Insurance, the Hartford, Mohawk Valley Community College, the United Way and the ThinKubator. Still other angels from Oneida County BOCES and Youth Build fashioned needed radiator covers. Donor advised grants from the Community Foundation of Herkimer and Oneida Counties supplied some needed furnishings for the much larger space.

Our new home is now a licensed child care center for children ages 3 to 12. The space is so great for the children. **YES, WE ARE STILL AT LAFAYETTE STREET AS WELL.** As the center has grown, so has the generosity of our community.

If you visit us, be sure to enter on the Park Avenue side of the building.



United Way of
the Valley and
Greater Utica Area

PLEASE SUPPORT THE UNITED WAY

United Way of the Valley and Greater Utica helps to support four Thea Bowman House programs. These are Child Care for low income families, the DOVE program (Domestic Violence Ended), the Kids with Promise Teen Program, and our food pantry called St. Clare's Cupboard. They also fund many of our collaborating partners. Our local United Way works tirelessly on behalf of our community through advocacy and volunteerism.