Dear Friend,

The needs of our community are growing. So is Volunteers of America Mid-States.

This year, we doubled our capacity to serve pregnant and parenting women struggling with addiction by opening VOA Recovery at 2nd Street in Louisville, which expands our Freedom House residential program for moms and babies. It also adds additional outpatient services for any individual or family who needs our help. In a few months, we will open another Freedom House in Southeastern Kentucky – going directly to a beautiful part of our state that unfortunately has some of the highest addiction rates in the nation.

Why do we do it? Because Volunteers of America is not intimidated by the size of the challenge. We are motivated by the size of the need.

How do we do it? With cutting edge programs that get results and engage the whole community. In this issue, you will see how we help kids facing homelessness get ready for a great school year.

We are able to do this work because of your support. We provide services to more than 22,000 individuals across 41 programs because compassionate, generous individuals just like you share your time, your resources and your expertise.

St. Francis of Assisi said, “It is in the giving, that we receive.”

Volunteers of America gives every day. From low-income seniors who need housing to adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities who need care and comfort, we are there. But with your help, I promise you we all receive so much more. Thank you for allowing us to give — and receive.

Jennifer Hancock
President and CEO

A LETTER FROM JENNIFER
KIDS CAN’T LEARN WHEN THEY DON’T HAVE THE SUPPLIES AND SUPPORT THEY NEED. EVERY YEAR, VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA’S BACK TO SCHOOL CAMPAIGN MAKES SURE CHILDREN IN NEED HAVE CLOTHES, UNIFORMS, BACKPACKS AND SUPPLIES.

GIFT CARDS ARE TERRIFIC FOR OUR KIDS. WE USE THEM TO BUY THE SUPPLIES THAT ARE SPECIFIC TO EVERY CHILD’S NEEDS AND CLASSES.

EMPOWER OUR KIDS. JOIN OUR BACK TO SCHOOL CAMPAIGN.

MAKE THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL A GREAT DAY OF SCHOOL

Volunteers of America’s Back to School campaign gives kids the resources they need to learn and thrive.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Give a gift card that will be used to purchase exactly the supplies kids need for school.

Volunteer to tutor children.

Donate at voamid.org/bts or crowdrise.com/voamid

Contact Gema Moreno at GemaM@voamid.org or (502) 636-4664 to learn more.

NO FAMILY SHOULD FACE HOMELESSNESS ALONE

Volunteers of America’s Louisville Family Housing Services is one of the very few places in our community where families facing homelessness can stay together. Louisville Family Housing Services is a place of hope during tough times. We keep families united in one location while we work to provide permanent housing. Last year, we provided shelter and housing stabilization services to nearly 1,000 individuals - including more than 300 children.
MEETING THE CHALLENGE
NEW VOA RECOVERY IN LOUISVILLE DOUBLES VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA’S CAPACITY TO SERVE PREGNANT AND PARENTING WOMEN STRUGGLING WITH ADDICTION

STATE-OF-THE-ART FACILITY ALSO PROVIDES OUTPATIENT CARE FOR INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES

Our nation’s enormous opioid and addiction challenge can be daunting. The New York Times called it “America’s 50-state epidemic.”

But at Volunteers of America, we’re not backing down -- we are fighting back and making progress.

In May, we doubled the capacity of our Freedom House program for pregnant and parenting women by opening VOA Recovery at 2nd Street in Louisville, our newest state-of-the-art addiction recovery facility. Our new location is a three-million dollar investment in healthy moms and babies. It represents our commitment to standing with families and beating addiction. It also represents the generosity of more than 100 unique donors and founders.

If you or a loved one is struggling with addiction, VOA Recovery will help. Call (502) 635-4530 or go to voamid.org/addiction.

To support our work, go to crowdise.com/voamid or text VOAMID to 41411 to donate.
VoA Services
• Assessment
• Transitional housing
• Residential support and treatment
• Intensive outpatient services
• Medication-assisted therapy
• Comprehensive case management
• Freedom House serving pregnant and parenting women with their children

“I’M AN OPPORTUNITY”

Megan Coldiron speaks at the grand opening of VOA Recovery at 2nd Street. Volunteers of America’s newest addiction recovery facility. Megan is a graduate of Volunteers of America’s Freedom House. She overcame addiction and now is working as an addiction recovery professional in Eastern Kentucky, where she grew up and is raising her family.

Watch Megan’s story of recovery and how Volunteers of America helped her take back her life. voamid.org/voices

Volunteers of America never
saw me as a liability - they
saw me as an opportunity.
And they gave me the most
comprehensive care that I ever received.
– Megan Coldiron

“This kind of investment and expansion is fundamental to our mission. We believe in meeting challenges and changing lives. We’re ready to serve the people of Southeastern Kentucky and help them take back their communities from addiction.”
– Jennifer Hancock

Need help? Contact us.
Call an addiction recovery specialist at
(502) 635-4530
or visit voamid.org/addiction

VOA Services

Volunteers of America never
saw me as a liability - they
saw me as an opportunity.
And they gave me the most
comprehensive care that I ever received.
– Megan Coldiron

Volunteers of America follows the need

Our friends and neighbors in Southeastern Kentucky have almost four times more opioids prescribed to them than the U.S. average. A list of the top ten counties in America for opioid prescriptions includes six in this part of our state. No county in America has more opioid prescriptions than Owsley County. Clay and Bell Counties are right behind. At Volunteers of America, we believe in meeting needs no matter how complex.

The families of Southeastern Kentucky have been targets for opioid abuse. We are determined to help. Thanks to a generous grant from the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the partnership of key leaders like Senate President Robert Stivers, the office of the Governor and community groups like Operation UNITE, we will open a new Freedom House for pregnant and parenting mothers later this year.

Senate President Robert Stivers speaks at VOA Recovery’s 2nd Street grand opening about the need for more programs like Freedom House throughout the state of Kentucky.
NEW MOMS, NEW LIVES.

Our new VOA Recovery facility in West Louisville is home to moms and children starting fresh after overcoming addiction.

Getting help, helping others

Brian Reidinger beat his addiction and found stable housing. Now he tells his story so Volunteers of America can serve more veterans and families.

For far too many veterans, Brian Reidinger’s story is familiar. When Brian returned home to Indiana after combat duty in Iraq as a U.S. Marine, he struggled. He battled alcoholism and had trouble holding a job. Then Brian found what he thought was a “magic pill” — opioids. But it wasn’t magic. Soon, a few pills was not enough. And it didn’t take long before Brian was facing addiction to opioids and heroin.

“I knew what I was doing was wrong — but I couldn’t stop. I tried so many times on my own,” Brian said.

Soon, Brian was in and out of jail. He missed the birth of his son to get high. He decided the only thing valuable he had left was his military life insurance policy. He attempted suicide.

But Brian survived, and eventually received the help he needed to beat his addiction. But Brian still desperately needed housing for his family. That’s when he met Volunteers of America.

“I’ve heard a lot of broken promises, but before I knew it, Volunteers of America found me a two-bathroom, three-bedroom house in Sellersburg,” Brian said. “I don’t like handouts. But Volunteers of America made it feel like my military service was enough. That I had earned help.”

I want everyone to understand this: I’d be homeless if it weren’t for Volunteers of America. They put me, and my family, on a brand new path.

Brian was courageous enough to beat addiction and seek housing assistance. But his bravery didn’t stop there. Brian also told his story to more than 300 guests at Volunteers of America’s Building Better Communities Luncheon in New Albany.

To make sure Volunteers of America can help more veterans beat addiction, locate stable housing and find good jobs, go to voamid.org/veterans, or crowdrise.com/voamid.

To learn more about our services in Clark and Floyd Counties, go to voamid.org/southernindiana or contact Jamie Ogles at (502) 650-4221.
When you visit the Louisville Slugger Museum and Factory, you’ll notice that the world-famous factory in action. Allen Walts might be waiting to make sure you are on time for your tour. Allen stands at the entrance, between exhibits that show how Louisville Slugger turns ash and maple trees into legendary baseball bats used by everyone from Babe Ruth to Derek Jeter to Joey Votto. His colleagues agree. Just ask John Williams. “That’s a gesture of respect. He’s always quick to help our guests and you can’t find a better person,” John said.

Allen is 65 years old and like many adults with disabilities, has had limited employment opportunities. Allen, who lives in New Albany, Indiana, had worked for a time in a sheltered workshop, doing repetitive tasks that didn’t allow him to interact with others or build new skills. Volunteers of America is working to change that, and is investing in finding fulfilling employment for the people we serve throughout the region. We provide comfortable, welcoming homes and around-the-clock support to adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Tennessee, northern Kentucky as well as Clark and Floyd Counties in Indiana.

Kim Caballeros manages Volunteers of America’s Supported Employment program and thought Allen would be an excellent candidate for more challenging work. “Ideally, we want to get as many people as possible into meaningful employment. As Volunteers of America, we’re very passionate about finding more opportunities for the people we serve,” Kim said.

Kim works with area employers to find good fits for our clients, giving them chances to learn job skills and gain confidence. Allen also enjoys earning more money. He earns more in one three-hour shift at Louisville Slugger than he did in a month in the sheltered workshop. But of far greater value is that Allen knows how to make sure everyone has their ticket and is on the right tour.

“Having Allen here is a win-win for everyone. Allen is a great fit for us because he’s a huge baseball fan and his enthusiasm really shines through,” said P.J. Shelley, Tour and Programming Director for Louisville Slugger.

Allen’s team is the Cincinnati Reds, and he makes clear to his coworkers that baseball is his sport — not football. He likes to joke with his colleagues, sometimes taking off his Louisville Slugger cap to show that he doesn’t have much hair. Then he’ll suggest that his friends get a similar haircut.

“I look forward to the days Allen is working,” said P.J. Shelley. “Allen’s friendly and funny, but he’s serious about making sure everyone has their ticket and is on the right tour. He really helps our tour guides,” said Alex Sherrard, Allen’s Guest Services Lead. For Allen Walts, the job is more than a paycheck. It’s an opportunity and a challenge.

Allen is an enthusiastic tour guide who works with Allen regularly. Tour and Programming Director for Louisville Slugger, Olivia Scarbrough share a laugh, chatting visitors the allure of their four-hour, joke-filled guided tours. Allen Walts steps up to the plate for job at the Louisville Slugger Museum and Factory.
THE LONG RIDE TO FREEDOM

MICHAEL PAGLIARO WANTED TO START THE CONVERSATION WITH OTHER VETERANS ABOUT SOMETHING THEY DON’T DISCUSS - PTSD

Michael Pagliaro stood over his oven pouring blueberries into a pan. “I get up every morning and tell myself I have to do something,” Michael said. The kitchen’s screen door was open and an American flag was flapping just outside. The U.S. army veteran turned amateur chef was baking a cobbler for a neighbor. Michael has lived a lifetime of helping others. In 1983, Michael enlisted in the Army. A product of generations of service members, the 17-year-old followed in his father’s footsteps and became a military police officer. He was stationed at West Point Military Academy when he received orders to go to Saudi Arabia as part of Operation Desert Storm. When he returned, his story became similar to that of so many other soldiers. He felt out of place in the civilian world and missed the family he had made in the Middle East. After months of sleepless nights, Michael became restless and needed a way out. “Some of the healing process with PTSD and traumatic experiences is talking about it. You have to talk with your army buddies and socialize.”

Jason McVey, a case manager at Volunteers of America Mid-States, connected with Michael. “They are my therapy. It gives me something to do and I can share the fruits of my labor with people who stop by.”

Michael possessed extensive culinary skills. He enjoys cooking for those he is close to and always sends me home with a piece of pie or jar of pickles when I’m done with a visit.”

With the stability of the apartment came something just as important: the opportunity to combat post-traumatic stress by gardening and cooking. “They are my therapy. It gives me something to do and I can share the fruits of my labor with people who stop by.”

Michael regularly feeds friends with the produce from his garden. One of those friends is a neighboring veteran who was behind on his rent when Michael met him. He put the neighbor in touch with Volunteers of America, who helped the veteran keep his home. He and Michael still communicate. Sometimes non-verbally.

“They use small American flags outside their doors to indicate to the other they are awake and, if the screen doors are open, available for a visit,” Jason explained. “This took the guess work out of popping in for a visit or wasting valuable cell phone minutes for a phone call. It is an ingenious idea.”

Michael is also thinking about one more form of therapy. As he watched a honey bee fly through his open screen door, Michael said, “I want to get into beekeeping.”

To see behind-the-scenes footage of Michael’s interview – including a teary story of reunions, go to voamid.org/voices
Niall McCabe is more than a leader and star midfielder for Louisville City, Louisville’s very own United Soccer League defending champion. Niall also is committed to taking care of his health. He had a convenient and confidential HIV test through Volunteers of America’s VOA FIT program.

Volunteers of America not only cares about your physical health – VOA FIT helps your financial health. Go to voamid.org/voafit to learn how you can make fifteen dollars for being tested – and an additional ten dollars for every friend you encourage to take a test.

You might not end up as a soccer star, but you’ll be taking a great step toward a healthy future.

“I can’t believe that, especially in this day and age, more people don’t want to know their HIV status. I know mine; you should know yours, too.”

Rita Finnie is Volunteers of America’s Associate Vice-President for Program Services. Rita started with Volunteers of America as a Direct Service Professional – an entry-level position – and now oversees our Developmental Disabilities services in West Tennessee, where we provide homes and care for some of the states’ most vulnerable.

“I found a purpose with Volunteers of America. We take our message of love to those who need it most.”

Working in Memphis, Rita Finnie is Volunteers of America’s Associate Vice-President for Program Services. Rita started with Volunteers of America as a Direct Service Professional – an entry-level position – and now oversees our Developmental Disabilities services in West Tennessee, where we provide homes and care for some of the states’ most vulnerable.

“Working with the developmentally disabled, you have some amazing moments.

Moments when you laugh, moments when you cry. But we make sure that people know they are loved.”

Who are the voices of VOA? They are veterans and adults with developmental disabilities. They are families facing homelessness, moms and dads struggling with addiction, friends who need answers about HIV. They are donors and volunteers who lend a helping hand. They are the voices of our community, coming together.
Volunteers of America receives amazing leadership and guidance from our generous and dedicated Board of Directors. This year, as we completed our renovation and expansion of our newest VOA Recovery location, George McMinn provided invaluable service. George is a Senior Project Executive at Messer Construction and in his 9th year as a board member. From supporting programs at Louisville Family Housing Services to helping us complete our expansion on time and on budget, George’s expertise helps Volunteers of America change lives.

Voices

Irene Whitt

“Irene Whitt has lived at Maud Booth Gardens in Knoxville, Tennessee for six years. An Eastern Kentucky native, Irene wanted to be close to her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She finds herself fortunate to live in a community like Maud Booth Gardens where she can take advantage of the partnership Maud Booth has with Second Harvest, a food bank that works with fixed-income communities to provide fresh vegetables to residents. Maud Booth recently won the Small Property of the Year award at Volunteers of America’s national conference in New Orleans.

Maud Booth is really quiet and peaceful. I have a garden with flowers and herbs. I can tend to my plants and it keeps me feeling good.”
10th annual Power of 1 Breakfast
October 16, 2018
Networking | 7:30 a.m.
Breakfast & Program | 8 a.m.
The Omni Hotel
400 South 2nd Street
Louisville, KY 40202
RSVP:
Callie Elliott
CallieE@voamid.org
(502) 636-4660
please join us at this free fundraising event and learn how you can make a difference for people who need us most in our community.
please visit voamid.org/powerof1breakfast for details.

AN OLD VEHICLE CAN OPEN UP A WHOLE NEW WORLD FOR SOMEONE IN NEED.
DONATING WITH VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA IS:
• Tax-deductible
• Fast, easy and convenient
• Free – we’ll tow the vehicle at no charge
Donate your vehicle now: 1-800-407-2600 or visit voamid.org to start the process.

for 10 years, we’ve been sharing life-changing stories. this year, be part of our celebration.