

## If These Walls Could Talk

### Building plays vital role in supporting survivors

From the outside, the house at 1649 Downing Street may not look very different from others in the neighborhood. The distinctive architecture is a hallmark of Denver's historic Capitol Hill neighborhood. Once you step inside, though, it becomes obvious that this building has a purpose: to serve survivors of domestic violence and support the operations of SafeHouse Denver. Welcome to the CAC, our Counseling and Advocacy Center.

#### The welcoming first floor

Survivors who arrive for their counseling appointments are greeted with a welcoming smile from their Advocates and comfortable seating to fill out any necessary paperwork. Helpful flyers and forms are readily available to connect survivors with community resources. The lobby décor and seating were intentionally selected to offer a sense of warmth and a feeling of home.

#### The second floor: heart of the CAC

The majority of CAC operations take place on the second floor. At one end sits the hub for our 24-Hour Crisis and Information Line. Before the pandemic, Advocates, interns and trained volunteers would take calls in this space, providing support and resources. For now, calls are answered at the Emergency Shelter or from socially-distanced CAC offices, ensuring that we can connect with survivors at all times.

At the other end is a private conference room that has previously hosted support groups, volunteer groups and team meetings.

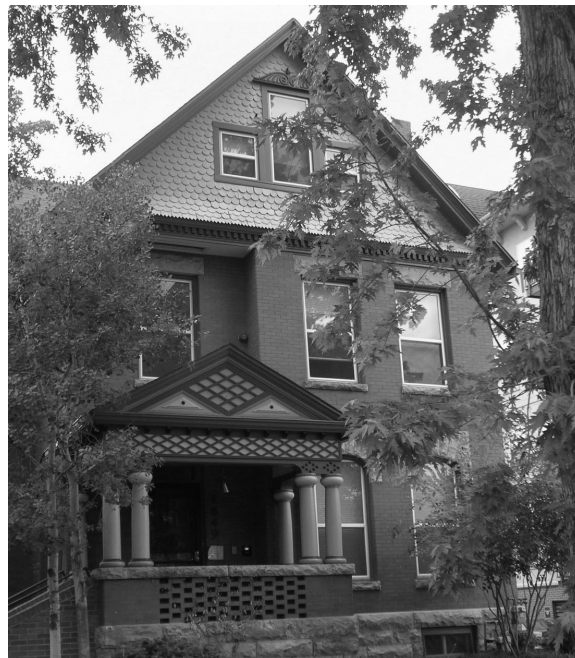
Private offices line the hall between these two areas, providing safe, quiet spaces for survivors to meet with their Advocates. As a key component in our full continuum of

care, the CAC directly supports survivors who are not in need of emergency housing by...

- Helping survivors form safety plans to navigate daily routines
- Expanding survivors' knowledge of, and access to, community resources
- Connecting survivors with support networks that empower them to make changes in their lives
- Providing survivors with information about their legal rights and options

At the CAC, survivors

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## Music Makes A Difference

### Benefit concert returns as virtual event

2020 was a year of adjustment for people and organizations around the world. Community events that support SafeHouse Denver were no exception, as the third installment of the Sing Out For SafeHouse (SOFS) benefit concert in March of last year was postponed mere days before its performance due to the pandemic. With its dedicated participants and a willingness to adapt, the event will return as a virtual livestream on Sunday, March 14.

"Domestic violence is the dirty little secret that no one wants to talk about," Leah Peer, co-founder of SOFS, said. "Engaging musically through meaningful texts makes it easier to shine a light on this blight on our society that affects folks at

every socioeconomic level." Peer is also the founder and music director of Kol Nashim, the women's choir of the Colorado Hebrew Chorale – both of which are among the five choirs participating in the newly virtual event. They will be joined by members of the Denver Children's Choir, the Denver Chorale and the Denver Women's Chorus.

As an abuse survivor herself, Peer emphasized the need for programs that address the subject. Kol Nashim's early annual concerts supported a shelter in Jerusalem, but audiences wanted to see more local support as well, forming the basis for the choir's relationship with SafeHouse Denver in 2017.

"We try to focus on pieces that

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## A Letter From Our CEO



**Dear Friends,**

I sincerely hope that this edition of the *SafeHouse Journal* finds you and your family staying well and healthy. What a strange and challenging time we find ourselves in. Although the Pandemic has brought so much heartache and fear, it has shined a light on what our community has known for a very long time – that not everyone is safe at home. The increased visibility of domestic violence in the news and media continues, and I am hopeful that these conversations will lead to a deeper understanding of this complex issue.

Like the rest of the world, 2020 was a year of change at SafeHouse Denver. Most significantly, we unexpectedly purchased the building at 1649 Downing Street that houses our Counseling and Advocacy Center (CAC) program. As you just read in our cover story, the CAC Program – and this building – are an essential part of the full continuum of care that SafeHouse Denver provides survivors of domestic violence. Although we hadn't planned to make a purchase of this magnitude during a pandemic, the opportunity to control our own destiny was too great to pass up. Our strong financial reputation allowed us to secure a very competitive mortgage for just over \$1 million and keep our yearly expenses flat. With no pre-payment penalties, we will be actively working to further safeguard our longevity by fundraising to fully retire the CAC mortgage as quickly as possible. I hope you join me in celebrating this unanticipated, but exciting, step into SafeHouse Denver's future!

Another significant change over the last year was how we deliver the services that make up our full continuum of care. Our Emergency Shelter is operating at limited capacity to ensure socially-distant living for residents; the CAC is utilizing virtual counseling options that more closely mimic in-person services; and the Extended Stay Program remains a springboard for survivors to move into self-sufficiency. Throughout the many challenges and constantly shifting regulations, I am so proud of the way our Staff rallied to ensure that survivors continue to be supported in a trauma-informed and compassionate way.

In each of my 13 years with SafeHouse Denver, I find myself grateful to do this work. But this past year, I am especially thankful to work with a dedicated Board of Directors and a committed and talented Staff. I am honored to walk alongside survivors who take the first brave step in their journey. And I am deeply appreciative of you – our strong community of donors, funders, partner agencies, volunteers and supporters. Together, we will continue to work toward our mission of *helping adults, children and youth reclaim their right to a life free from domestic violence*. Thank you for all you do to make a difference for survivors!

With warm gratitude and best wishes in 2021,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Victoria McVicker'.

Victoria McVicker, CEO

P.S. I hope you'll continue to join me in supporting survivors by participating in one of the many initiatives listed in this newsletter!

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### **If These Walls Could Talk**

are provided with an environment where they can set self-identified goals and guide the trauma-informed services they receive – all of which re-establishes their independence and bolsters self-confidence.

### **The third floor: a place to gather**

At the top of the stairs, there is a large conference table in an open, inviting room. In pre-pandemic times, group counseling sessions, as well as teen groups, volunteer groups and other advocacy events, have met here.

### **Securing our home and our future**

Every part of the CAC is designed to help survivors feel supported and empowered. In August 2020, when the landlord opted to sell the building for \$1.3 million, SafeHouse Denver's CEO Victoria McVicker and the Board of Directors made plans to secure our future at this beautiful property.

As a focal point for survivors since 1998, losing this building would be a detriment to our mission. After inspections and other due diligence, **SafeHouse Denver officially purchased the CAC in November 2020** with a competitive mortgage.

Details about fundraising to retire the mortgage are forthcoming, but these walls breathed a sigh of relief, knowing they will continue to serve their purpose for years to come. 🏠

### **Music Makes A Difference**

empower and reach out," Peer said. Among its other musical selections, the concert will feature the world premiere of "Baruch She'asani Isha (Blessed Who Made Me A Woman)," composed by Kol Nashim pianist Nili Abrahamsson using text by renowned Israeli poet Esther Raab.

**With 100 percent of the donations being matched by an anonymous donor**, the success of SOFS is reliant on community participation. "The challenge of the virtual event is that we cannot see our audience, but I hope that our attendees will be numerous, and that they will open their hearts and pocketbooks," Peer said.

For more details or to donate, visit [www.coloradogives.org/singout2021](http://www.coloradogives.org/singout2021) 🏠

# News & Notes

## Ahoy! New Partner On The Horizon



We are honored to announce that **Dry Dock Brewing Company** has selected SafeHouse Denver as their annual charitable partner for 2021!

For every Booty Box (a 12-pack featuring four signature flavors) sold in Colorado this year, Dry Dock will donate 25 cents. Over the course of the year, those quarters will really add up!

This new opportunity will reach even more people with our mission and continue to raise funds and awareness for survivors. Please join us in welcoming Dry Dock as our latest community partner by following them on social media!

### 2021 Board of Directors

**Roger Sherman**, *CRL Associates, Inc.*,  
Chair

**Geralyn Gorshing**, *CPS HR Consulting*,  
Chair-Elect

**Jamie Slavin**, *Guardian Mortgage*,  
*Sunflower Bank*, Treasurer

**Nate Barker**, *Messner Reeves LLP*,  
Secretary

**Alexis Anderson**, *Havas Formula*

**Trevor Bartel**, *Lewis Roca Rothgerber*  
*Christie*

**Dylan Metzner**, *Jones & Keller*

**Barry Overton**, *Overton Enterprises*

**J.J. Simon**, *US Bank*

**Danielle Vaughan**, *FirstBank*

**Victoria McVicker**, *CEO*

### Honorary Board

**Cassidy Bednark**, *a.k.a. DJ Bedz*

**Dayle Cedars**, *Community Volunteer*

**Susan Noble**, *Community Volunteer*

**Carol & Paul Rose**, *Community*  
*Volunteers*

**Karen Wolfe**, *Community Volunteer*

## Vehicle Donations

Spring Cleaning season is almost here. Do you have an old, unused vehicle that's taking up space? Consider donating it!

We partner with organizations like **Cars Helping Charities** and **Donate For Charity**, who auction the vehicle or its parts and donate the proceeds to support survivors. They accept any vehicle - cars, trucks, vans, motorcycles, snowmobiles, RVs and boats - in any condition.

Your donation is tax-deductible, and free towing is provided! Visit our website for more information.

## Hope Gala Sponsorships Available



It's not too soon to get involved with our signature annual event! Held every October for Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the **Hope Gala** is a cornerstone of our efforts to support survivors. Last year's virtual format was an incredible success -- help us make this year one for the books too!

Interested in sponsoring this event? Contact Shannon Boltz by calling 303-302-6116 or emailing [sboltz@safefhouse-denver.org](mailto:sboltz@safefhouse-denver.org).

## Giving Back Group

Even during a pandemic, the Denver real estate market has been active! If you're planning to buy or sell a home, consider partnering with the **Giving Back Group**.

Their agents donate 20% of their commission to the nonprofit of each client's choice, including SafeHouse Denver. Rick and Victor are ready to help you and help others!

## Save the Date



Start building up your appetite! Sampling For Hope will return on **Thursday, June 10** as a virtual event. How does a food tasting event go digital? Stay tuned to find out!

Support local restaurants as well as our work with survivors by making your plans now to participate. More details about the program and other fun surprises will be announced later this spring. Proceeds will directly benefit our Extended Stay Program.

Interested in sponsoring this event? Contact Heather Schreck, Annual Giving & Events Manager, by calling 303-302-6126 or emailing [hschreck@safefhouse-denver.org](mailto:hschreck@safefhouse-denver.org).

## New Website Enhances Safety

Visit us at [safefhouse-denver.org](http://safefhouse-denver.org) to check out our redesigned website! This update provides a fresh look, a streamlined donation process and enhanced online safety for survivors.

Not only does the Escape Site button take users to a new page, it also opens a new tab and clears the back button history, so no one can see the last page. This feature makes browsing our site even safer for survivors.

*Read our blog or follow us on social media for all the latest news!*



# SafeHouse Denver

1649 Downing Street  
Denver, CO 80218

Admin: 303-318-9959  
Crisis Line: 303-318-9989  
www.safehouse-denver.org

Let us know if you receive duplicates of this mailing.

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## SingOut for SafeHouse: A Free Virtual Event Sunday, March 14, 2021, 4PM MDT



Donations welcomed and matched by an anonymous donor. All proceeds benefit SafeHouse.

Donations: [www.coloradogives.org/singout2021](http://www.coloradogives.org/singout2021)

Livestream accessed through [www.coloradohebrewchorale.org](http://www.coloradohebrewchorale.org)



## SafeHouse Denver Programs & Services

We offer comprehensive services in English and Spanish at our Emergency Shelter, non-residential Counseling & Advocacy Center and Extended Stay Program.

### SERVICES INCLUDE:

- 24-Hour Crisis & Information Line
- Secure Emergency Housing
- Extended Stay Housing
- Counseling and Advocacy Services
- Support Groups
- Referrals to Community Resources
- Teen Dating Violence Intervention & Prevention
- Family and Children's Services
- Community Education and Outreach

Crisis & Information Line ..... 303-318-9989  
 Administration..... 303-318-9959  
 Community Education ..... 303-302-6125  
 Development Department ..... 303-302-6126

## Ways to Support SafeHouse Denver

The generosity of our donors, sponsors, funders and friends is essential to our work. Every gift is important, so please consider making a donation in one of these ways.

- **Make** a financial contribution by mailing a check using the enclosed giving envelope; calling 303-302-6126; or donating online at [safehouse-denver.org](http://safehouse-denver.org).
- **Become** a Sustainer of Hope by committing to a monthly gift. Select the option on the enclosed giving envelope or use the online form at [safehouse-denver.org](http://safehouse-denver.org).
- **Plan** alternate methods of giving through stocks, IRA disbursements, charitable trusts, wills or estate plans. For more information, please contact Shannon Boltz at 303-302-6116 or [sboltz@safehouse-denver.org](mailto:sboltz@safehouse-denver.org).
- **Designate** SafeHouse Denver as your charity of choice during your employer's workplace giving campaign. Simply note SafeHouse Denver on the pledge form, or ask your employer to match your contribution.
- **Donate** in-kind goods. Visit our website and click on 'Get Involved' to view our current Wish List.
- **Earn** even greater tax relief on a donation of \$100 or more. Write 'Enterprise Zone' on your check or make a note in the comments field of your online donation.