

# WARM HEARTH

## In the Small Corners

### Celebrating Ten Years

It is hard to believe that ten years ago in January, Warm Hearth opened its doors. The beginning was full of hope and harrowing risk. But we walked upon sacred ground.

It blesses us beyond measure to continue this journey with those of you who were there when we began—through the disorganization, the struggles, and the remarkable successes and healing of our residents.

It blesses us equally to welcome those of you who are newer—to invite you into a steadfast circle of supporters and volunteers and to have the confidence that when you give of yourself, you give to something lasting and less tenuous than it has been in the past.

When I consider the last ten years, I feel deep gratitude for each of you and for the staff in Armenia. When we opened our home, many of our staff had never interacted with a person with a disability. Today they are our residents' greatest advocates and friends. Through their work, witness and loyal presence, the staff is changing Armenia by bringing dignity to people with disabilities.

When we opened our home, our residents were battered and worn down by rejection, instability and abuse. While the effects of these sufferings are still apparent, today our residents reflect the knowledge that they are accepted and loved. They exhibit a joy that many of you have beheld with your own eyes. They are leaning into the stability of our home and experiencing some healing from the abuses of their pasts. What more could we ask for than to see those we love and serve heal in such a slow, deep, honest way?

Sincerely Yours,

*Natalie Bryant-Rizzieri*

Founder & Executive Director





## Agappy

Agappy has enjoyed the recent efforts to reach out to our neighbors and loves to help the neighbors in their gardens. Her bright smile is a gift to the neighbors and to those in our home. She enjoys helping with meals, her carpet-weaving and designing, "all flowers", all children, the restaurant called "Hot Doggy" and her "pleasant" life at Warm Hearth. We are blessed to call her one of our own.

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**Our 2016 Goals:** sustainable and loving care for our residents and a home that is increasingly independent.

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**TO VIEW A COPY OF OUR ANNUAL REPORT, GO TO:**  
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## Your kindness sustains our residents, our hearts and our home.

Our hope is that as you reflect on the work accomplished in the last decade that you will know, deep in your bones, that change is possible. The world this last year has been full of rage and suffering and the news each night is bleak. But there is still light. There are still beautiful things happening, even if they are small and slow. And you are an integral part of that.

At Warm Hearth's opening, our founder said, "Let us remember that this is about the residents. This is not about us." While there is profound truth to that, it is, after all, *also* about us. It is about learning to give with our whole hearts. It is about learning to see all people—ourselves included—as vulnerable and limited in some way. In this way, it is about our own healing as well, for failure to acknowledge and attend to our own and others' limits without disparaging is a disease that must be healed in the world. We *need* the residents of Warm Hearth to help us integrate this truth. How beautiful that something so small could reach and change so many hearts.

