

WARM HEARTH

In the Small Corners

Revolution

Dear friends,

When we opened Warm Hearth in 2006, there was little to no protection for adult orphans with special needs. No one kept track of where they lived or who cared for them. If they were lucky, they got to stay in the orphanages, though the orphanages were offered no funds for their care after they reached 18 years of age so their meager care left a lot to be desired. The other option



was for them to live in the large psychiatric institutions for the rest of their lives. When I lived in Armenia, these institutions were not only called “graveyards,” they were graveyards. Last year they received such a negative Human Rights Watch report that many of them have to close now.

This is the reason Warm Hearth began — to answer this need for forever homes and for a loving option for orphans with special needs. Only a precious few individuals in Armenia understood what we were doing and why we were doing it. We had to come up with a word in Armenian for something akin to “group home” to try to explain what we were doing. We were met with tremendous resistance and doubt.

Now fourteen years later, we were approached by the Armenian government and asked to open a third group home. That word is no longer in quotes. They know what it means. They have seen that it works. And not only that, they offered to fund nearly half of the home’s expenses — nearly half of all three of our home’s expenses. Change and revolution happen—miraculous, heart-stopping change. It sometimes takes fourteen years, but it can happen. And this change means so many things. It means Armenia valuing their own. It means a safe and loving and forever home for eight more people.

Sincerely Yours,

Natalie Bryant-Rizzieri

Founder & Executive Director





Hrach

Hrach is one of the residents at our second home in Arinj. He is joyful and positive and already dearly loved by all of the staff. He is eager to help and gets joy from taking part in the family life at Warm Hearth. He loves the other residents very much and considers them dear friends. Sadly, we have no information about his parents or where he came from as he was abandoned as a babe. He lived in both Nubarashen and Kapan orphanages before coming home in 2018. How blessed we are that we get to love him.

Our 2019 Goals: sustainable and loving care for our residents and two forever homes that are increasingly independent.

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Your kindness sustains our residents, our hearts and our home.

- We are in the process of raising \$150,000 to open and support our third home in 2020. Thanks to Emill and Nare Mehrabian for your incredible efforts to help us raise funds and for your deep commitment to our future residents.
- Special thanks to SOAR Colorado for raising \$1200 at their annual event for our homes.
- Thanks to Enterprise Christian Church for hosting Natalie and for being fierce advocates for this work. It was such a pleasure to spend the day with ECC and to meet those who have long loved and supported Warm Hearth in so many creative ways. Special thanks to Melody for another hand-made quilt for our residents.
- We are excited to announce that after hosting the first EMDR training in Armenia earlier this year, they have formed their own association and have two trainings planned for 2020. EMDR (Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing) is a form of psychotherapy developed by Francine Shapiro to address trauma.

