

WARM HEARTH

In the Small Corners

Ingenuity in Struggle

Dear friends,

2020 has been a bear so far. There's no way around it. Covid-19 has turned many everyday rituals inside out. The loss associated with that is no small thing. In the midst of so much change, it has been our desire to maintain a sense of joyous shelter and safety for our residents.

Living in a group home is inherently more risky than living in a single family home. Some of our residents

have the additional vulnerability of a complicated health history. We have taken their risks to heart and implemented a strict shelter-in-place since mid-March. In order to cut down on exposure, staff members work longer hours and we provide their transportation to and from the homes. No visitors have been allowed to come to the homes. These safety measures have kept all of our residents well, for the time being. But we do have plans in place for how we will proceed when someone becomes ill. At this point, we assume that it is not if, but when.

In the meantime, our staff have gone the extra kilometer to make sure that our residents' days are full, structured, interesting and engaging. I am so grateful that they are afforded that luxury. There is a lot of cooking, chopping, exercising, planting, blowing up balloons and creating. The residents are crafting brilliant paper suns and pineapples, clay cherries and peaches. They are marking birthdays with ingenuity. Our staff members have been incredible friends and partners in this time, as have each of you. And as always, I am amazed by our residents' resiliency — their willingness and ability to not just make the most of what they have been given but to make something more, to make something beautiful. Thank you for all you do to make something beautiful on their behalf as well. Our homes are a testament to your love.

Sincerely Yours,

Natalie Bryant-Rizzieri

Founder & Executive Director





Artur (Arame)

While we know nothing about Artur’s family and background, we do know that he belongs at our Arinj home. One thing we love about him is that when he sings and performs, he does so with unrivaled passion. He likes to go by the name of Arame, his favorite singer. He is a conscientious and responsible member of our community. He knows the basics of shoe-making and carpet-weaving. We hope to help him develop these skills further. More so, we hope that the sense of belonging touches him deep in his heart.

Our 2020 Goals: sustainable and loving care for our residents and three forever homes that are increasingly independent.

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

- Thanks to Ani Marganian (CA) and Dr. Avagyan (Armenia) for collaborating to develop the first ever high-tech program in the Armenian language which will allow one of our residents and many others to communicate at their skill level. We are in awe of your passion, kindness, and expertise.
- Thanks to Dr. Joshua Boverman (OR) for giving so generously of your heart and time to meet with Dr. Adelaida (our residents’ psychiatrist in Armenia) to discuss psychiatric best practices in group home settings. Dr. Boverman’s insights, experience and huge heart are a tremendous gift and support to this work.
- Congratulations to Alya Kirakosyan (our Executive Director in Armenia) for winning the Zartir/Impact Hub Yerevan Fellowship program, which will provide mentorship and net-working opportunities to push this work forward. We are so proud of you and look forward to seeing what you learn in this one-year fellowship program.

