



**Unity House of Troy**  
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www.unityhousesny.org



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# unity house

Making Life Better

## CONNECTIONS

*At the heart of all we do is the belief that everyone is deserving of respect and compassion, so they have dignity and hope for changed lives. Our work is possible because of the resilience of those we serve, the dedication and expertise of our teams, and the generosity of people like you, who help support this valuable work. **On behalf of the people we serve, thank you.***

With gratitude,

David L. Bach  
Chief Executive Officer

## The Many Faces of Success



**Everyone has setbacks. Success is doing what it takes to keep moving forward after a setback.**

This is illustrated in the case of “Jane” who came to Unity House for help in finding a job. Jane had a narrow skill set and limitations due to being on the autism spectrum that made it hard for her to secure and maintain a job. The staff at Northeast Career Planning at Unity House were not deterred by the realization that placing Jane in her first choice of a job would be a challenge, even with their professional help. They saw Jane’s potential.

With patient help from the team, Jane was able to open up and consider ways she could transfer her skills to other jobs. Success! Today, Jane is employed at a grocery store bakery. She started out slowly, but has grown in her position, having proven herself as an asset to her department. Jane helps prepare and decorate baked goods, arranges them in cases, and enters data to properly label each item. Her supervisors give her glowing reports, and her co-workers say she is a joy to be around. Most important, they accept Jane for who she is and have given her room to grow at her own pace. Jane has the dignity of work and takes pride in her achievements, which have not come easy, even with help. For now, Jane is happy in her current job, but she is considering how she might be able to do other jobs. For Jane, part of her success is making her own choices.

For others, success might look different: an infant receiving therapy at A Child’s Place at Unity House might finally roll over on their own; a family might not surrender their pet because they were able to feed the pet and themselves with groceries they chose from the Unity House food pantry; a young person might find lifesaving refuge from abuse at Unity House’s shelter for victims of domestic violence; a once homeless individual might find stable housing under a Unity House roof.

Some people utilize Unity House services once, or intermittently. Others are likely to need help more often, or for a longer duration. No matter where a person is at, we strive to meet them with kindness and respect, honoring their inherent dignity. For Unity House, success is meeting people where they are to make life better one person at a time.

### You can help!

There are many ways to participate:

- Adopt a child’s Wish List
- Donate Gift Cards
- Give new toys
- Write a check to the Children’s Holiday Program at Unity House

Thank you to the many individuals, businesses, and faith communities who are supporters of our Children’s Holiday Program.

### CORE VALUES

With passion and integrity, Unity House embraces the view that everyone deserves equal economic, political, and social rights. We work together to open doors of access and opportunity for everyone, particularly those in greatest need.

## Check out Unity on the Move!

Unity on the Move is the Unity House van that is outfitted with pantry goods and other life essentials. It’s also a connection to the broad array of Unity House services and programs. The van fills a vital purpose in that it removes geographic barriers: it is mobile, hosted at different sites on a regular schedule. Flexible mobility like that of Unity on the Move means bringing responsive services to where they are needed, to often underserved areas.



**A Care-A-Van that meets people where they are, in Troy and Rensselaer County.**

### Making Connections

Staff are trained and equipped to assess needs and make connections to local services, including help at Unity House in applying for SNAP benefits, homelessness prevention assistance, and connection to domestic violence services or employment supports. A public health nurse is available to do basic physical and mental health screenings and to connect guests to telehealth and other services when indicated.

Unity on the Move offers a mobile food pantry, intake and case management, a public health nurse, support staff and guest services. Providing a healthy food pantry and medically tailored food pantry options in rural communities is more critical than ever due to the impacts of COVID. There are currently five small pantries outside of Troy and the city of Rensselaer serving all of rural Rensselaer County. Many are staffed by volunteers and may not open every weekday. Historically, food insecurity affects over 10,000 people in Rensselaer County.

We are grateful to generous partners, such as CDPHP, KeyBank, and Broadview FCU.

Rewarded.  
Fulfilled. Making  
a difference.

Learn about careers  
at Unity House.

Rachel, Speech Therapist  
A Child’s Place at Unity House  
(1 yr)



You can be a part of  
making life better.



SCAN ME

or visit

www.unityhousesny.org



## Domestic Violence Awareness & Prevention Month

A collaborative community response is how best to meet the needs of victims of domestic violence. The signature color purple dominated outreach efforts around October's Domestic Violence Awareness & Prevention events. Many thanks to our community partners who are key to this work. If you would like a speaker on the topic of domestic violence, including Teen Dating Abuse Awareness & Prevention, please reach out to Sarah at (518) 272-5917.

**Domestic Violence TEXT HOTLINE**  
*We are here for you 24 hours a day 7 days a week!*  
 Text us or visit us on the web:  
**TEXT 518-720-6161**  
**CALL 518-272-2370**  
 or  
**rc.chat/uhdvs**

## Special thanks to The Robison Family Foundation

for their generous support of our Traveling Summer Camp. Hundreds of children enjoyed fun day trips throughout the Capital Region over 6 weeks of summer. The children had a blast!



Fun moments like this one at Albany's Empire State Plaza.



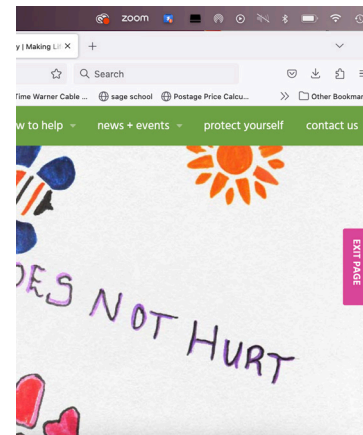
## Rising Food Insecurity makes Thanksgiving Food Baskets essential

**Thanksgiving Food Packages will help hundreds of families in need.** By working together with neighboring non-profits, we reduce duplication of effort and streamline enrollment and distribution. Each package has all the fixings for a Thanksgiving feast and a gift card for a turkey or other main entree. If you would like to support this work, you could host a food drive for non-perishable pantry staples or donate to our food programs.

## EXIT? Why do we have an exit on our website?

Enabling a hasty retreat from our website helps ensure the safety of victims of abuse who are seeking help. If an abusive partner enters the room, a person can safely exit out of a page, to view an unrelated website.

**Help is always available:** Call/Text or visit our website to web chat with an advocate: 24 Hour Hotline: (518) 272-2370 Text: (518) 272-6161



## An Evening of Unity: A Cocktail Party with Purpose

It was an inspirational evening to honor the Leadership Institute of the Rensselaer County Regional Chamber of Commerce with the Community Hero Award and to bestow our inaugural Founders Award on Regis Obijiski, a founder of Unity House in 1971. Special thanks to those who shared their stories, of Unity House of the past and in the present. Your contributions to our mission mean more than you know!



John Baackes, left, presents the Founders Award to Regis Obijiski

## Meet Stefanie Bastien, Director of Development & Communications



While she does not provide direct support to consumers of Unity House services, work in Development is very much a public facing role.

The word development can mean many things. At Unity House, development means promoting the good work of Unity House as well as raising awareness of the people we serve and the issues they face. It's about building relationships that lead to change.

Stefanie oversees a team that helps secure needed funds for Unity House services and programs. She also manages the Unity House brand and advocacy efforts. In these roles, Stefanie works with many stakeholders, both internal and external.

Stefanie started working at Unity House in 2023, coming from the Alzheimer's Association. Prior, Stefanie worked at the Muscular

Dystrophy Association and in the private sector. She lives in Halfmoon with her husband Chris and their two children.

For Stefanie, it all comes back to the Unity House mission of making life better. Her commitment to being a part of change for good is evident in all she does, whether volunteering at her children's school or taking on initiatives at work, Stefanie steps up to make a difference.

**Reach out:** Want to learn more about ways to support Unity House? Contact Stefanie at (518) 274-2607 x4133 or [Sbastien@UnityHouseNY.org](mailto:Sbastien@UnityHouseNY.org)

## Collect, Buy, Donate

Unity House has an ongoing need for:

- **Diapers:** needed for food pantry, daycare, shelter, and more. Any size except newborn.
- **Personal Care items:** needed for our shelter including shampoo/conditioner, soap, laundry detergent, toilet paper, and feminine hygiene products. A variety of toiletries is helpful because there are many skin and hair types.
- **Non-perishables for pantry shelves.**
- **Winter wear:** new or gently used boots and warm coats in all sizes and styles.
- **Underwear:** new bras and underwear in a variety of sizes and styles.

**Donations can be brought to our community resource center at 2431 Sixth Avenue in Troy, weekdays, 8:30 am - 4:00 pm. Thank you for thinking of the people we serve!**

## With appreciation for great volunteer board members!

Coming from business, creative, and legal fields, Unity House board members bring years of experience and leadership to help address the needs of people served by Unity House services and philosophy.

- Alexander Courtney, Jr.
- Michael DiAcetis
- David Ellis
- Carlo Fusco
- Kathleen (Kate) Koval
- Paul Levine
- Erika Martin, PhD
- Beth Mothersbaugh
- Drue Sanders\*
- Frank Sarratori\*
- Susan V. Shipherd
- Karen B. Simons
- James A. Slavin, M.D.
- Tara Toomajian
- Rev. Cynthia Van Alstyne
- Erin Vickers\*
- Jean Watts
- Jill Winters\*
- Gwen Wright

\*elected to the board of directors in August 2023



## Fall Festival Fun

**In October A Child's Place hosted their annual Fall Festival.** Children, families and staff enjoyed a great day outdoors. Thank you to volunteers from Broadview FCU who helped set up loads of fun for families.

## Make Life Better

**Set up a recurring donation:**

You can specify the program that means the most to you, and you can designate your gift in honor of someone special.

**Look for an Employer Match:**

Does your workplace match charitable donations or hours volunteered?

**Qualified Charitable Distributions:**

If your IRA requires a RMD, consider a QCD to Unity House, direct from your plan administrator.