

PLEASE USE THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE TO MAKE A DONATION TO NEXT STEP CENTER.

### OUR MISSION:

To provide a temporary home for Somerset County families and individuals, enabling them to work toward a resolution of issues that might have led to homelessness. We do this by referrals to other county agencies for potential assistance and in-house counseling. Our policy is to offer a helping hand, not a handout.

Next Step Center, Inc.  
P.O. Box 850  
406 Stoystown Rd.  
Somerset, PA 15501  
(814) 444- 8588  
www.nextstepcenter.org

### Subaru Loves to Help

THE GREAT PEOPLE OF SPANGLER SUBARU AND SUBARU AMBASSADORS OF AMERICA GIVE BACK TO THE COMMUNITY WITH DONATIONS TO HELP SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY THROUGH THE LOVE PROMISES (SUBARU LOVES TO HELP, LOVES TO CARE, LOVES PETS, LOVES THE EARTH, ETC.)



Donations from Spangler Subaru and Subaru Ambassadors of America!

# NEXT STEP CENTER, INC. Newsletter

## Board Members

Chair: *Karen Ferry*  
Vice-chair: *Marlene Gotjen*  
Treasurer: *Art Gotjen*  
Secretary: *Paul Bomboy*  
*Cory Merrbach*  
*Rev. Brenda Shaffer*  
*Andrea Palguta, LSW*  
*Lisa Phillips*  
*M. Renee Gindlesperger*  
*Nancy Webb*  
*Pastor Arnie McFarland*

## Employees

Executive Director:  
Lisa Wengerd  
Transitions Coordinator/ Security:  
Justin Kerrigan  
Transitions Program /Office Assistant:  
Becky Kozuch  
Community Housing & Advocacy  
Director:  
Amanda Webreck  
Community Housing & Advocacy Case  
Manager:  
Chrystal Shaulis  
Community Housing Program Assistant  
Tammy Purbaugh  
Christopher Beggs  
Maintenance & Security Technician

*Directors Note: How did the Shelter Begin?  
By Ernest D. Withrow*

I recall awakening early one winter morning and driving to the office seeing icicles glistening in faint sunlight as they hung from trees and porches. The sunlight reflected off the snow-covered ground lending character to a beautiful winter landscape. The scene looked as if it had been taken from a picture in a winter wonderland. The moment was quickly interrupted as I turned my car radio on. The news broadcaster had just announced the death of an elderly woman who had frozen to death during the night. A grim reality reduced the snowy fairy tale to the cold temperature it represented.

Born on that cold morning, the Next Step Center took its first breath. It was the vision of two people, both in awe over the senseless death of a human being who had lost her life due to a lack of heat or a place to escape from the bitter cold.

I remember attending the first board meeting April 27, 1995. We gathered in the dining room at Kings Restaurant. All the participants were eager to see results. Our task was to show evidence that Somerset County needed a shelter for those who found themselves homeless. This committee compiled statistical data from local agencies and some as far away as Harrisburg. The planning stages of a shelter quickly proved to be a monumental undertaking and we often found ourselves multitasking.

As part of the advisory board, I met with many people from several committees throughout Somerset. Some were more willing to welcome a shelter than others. It was the responsibility of the advisory board to analyze the concerns of the community at large. Many people felt that a shelter would bring un-wanted residents to the neighborhood. Thus, the committee vowed that the shelter would only provide housing for Somerset County residents. This single fact seemed to ease the conscience and concerns of all. That was just the beginning.

Lisa Wengerd

Executive Director



*“Christmas at the Next Step Center!”*



*“Success is not failure; failure is not fatal: It is the courage to continue that counts.” - Winston S. Churchill*

*Success Means Something More for Our Homeless Youth.*

*By Justin Kerrigan*

What does success look like for our homeless youth? Well, a youthful client at the Next Step Center showed me that success can be housing stability and financial independence, but for him it means a lot more. Without a supportive family he was forced to find a support system, which he found at the Next Step Center in the other guests and staff. He also was able to get the guidance he needed to succeed in programs offered at the Next Step Center. The transitions program showed him new life skills necessary to live independently. Case management guided him through job searches to find employment, and housing searches to locate affordable housing. Soon after entering the Next Step Center, he was able to get full-time employment at a local restaurant. He received financial assistance through the Community Housing Assistance Program (CHAP) to help pay the costs of moving into his own apartment. The support and guidance he found with the Next Step Center through Transitions life skills, Case management, and CHAP provided everything he needed to succeed. The Next Step Center is currently working with him individually, and has offered him an opportunity to move into one of the first renovated apartments at the Glades Centre. He has agreed to take the offer starting in December, and we plan to see even more success from this young man in the future.

Justin Kerrigan

Transitions Program Coordinator



*Our Community Partnerships*



LEE INITIATIVES  
**Health & Wellness**  
ENDOWMENT



**COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**  
FOR THE ALLEGHENIES

SERVING BEDFORD, CAMBRIA, SOMERSET, AND INDIANA COUNTIES



**LIVE UNITED**

## Welcome: Chris Beggs Success Story

By Amanda Webreck

The Next Step Center welcomes one of our newest team members, Christopher Beggs. Mr. Beggs came to the Next Step Center in May of 2021 and was struggling to find his pathway home. He struggled with drug addiction for over 25 years and was finding difficulty in his recovery process. Through the help of the Next Step Centers Community Housing Assistance Program (CHAP) and the Recovery to Work Program, Chris was able to find his footing. Chris spent 30 days at the Next Step Center, where he built his confidence through the Transitions life skills curriculum and was able to hone resources such as energy efficiency, budgeting, and employment techniques. He was then placed in safe housing close to the Day Reporting Center (DRC), where he was able to walk back and forth daily to comply with probation requirements. Chris continued to prioritize his recovery through the use of the Certified Recovery Specialist (CRS) offered through Beal Counseling and maintaining his ongoing treatment. The Next Step Center saw Chris's energy and motivation to succeed and offered him a probationary period as the Glade Centre Maintenance & Security Technician through the PA CareerLink's WIA program. Chris has since graduated from the Day Reporting Center, is nearing his year sobriety date and has been offered a permanent position with the Next Step Center family.

Amanda Webreck

Community Housing & Advocacy Director

*Congratulations Chris!!*



## Glades Centre Renovation Project

By Christopher Beggs

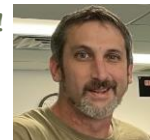
It's a large task at hand but progress is being made. It's the projects objective to renovate a historical building in up town Somerset while helping those who are less fortunate in the community to get a fresh start with housing to help them get things together in a safe environment. The progress that has been made up here

has been large in part for volunteers from the community. We are very grateful for everyone that contributed to this massive ongoing renovation. We would like to thank the following contributors: the 16 people for 4 hours from the Wheeler Brothers volunteer committee, the 3 people for 6 hours from the Somerset County probation department, the 3 people for 38 hours from the Somerset County MRT program, the 5 people for 75 hours from the Somerset County Jail work release program, and the extra hours by all Next Step Center employees and board members. We are always looking for volunteers. It is greatly appreciated.

If you or anyone you know that is interested, please let us know at the Next Step Center. Our contact number is (814) 444-8588 and use extension 11 for Lisa Wengerd, extension 12 for Amanda Webreck. We will be happy to help you. Also a quick shout out to all the donations that we have received. Thanks again everyone!

Christopher Beggs

Maintenance & Security Technician



Left to right: Chris Beggs & Tim Sprowls,  
Day Reporting Center Manager

## Community Housing Program Assistant

By Tammy Purbaugh

My newly created position at the Next Step Center is to help our homeless and rental clients find the service needed to secure housing in the short term and long term. Helping the Community Housing Director and the Executive Director using our programs and resources to assure our clients get the absolute best outcomes. I also collect and enter data into our statewide and Next Step Center programs and help with volunteer coordination. I am extremely excited to be part of this knowledgeable and dedicated team.

### SUGAR COOKIE DOUGH RECIPE

½ cup of margarine or butter

½ cup shortening

2 cups flour

1 egg

¾ cup sugar

1 tablespoon of milk

1 teaspoon baking powder

1 teaspoon vanilla

Dash of salt

Beat margarine and shortening with electric mixer on medium.

Add 1 cup of flour, egg, sugar, milk, baking powder, vanilla, and salt

Combine then Beat in remaining flour

Divide in half Cover and chill for 3 hours.

½ teaspoon mint extract

Few drops of green food coloring

4 milk chocolate bars

Mix cookie dough and mint extract and food coloring until combine and light green

On floured surface roll out and cut into rectangular pieces

Place a chocolate square of candy bar saving a ½ of candy bar for later and fold over

Place 1 inch apart of lightly greased cookie sheet

Using fork to press edges together to form cookies

Bake at 375 for 8 to 10 minutes

Put on wire rack to cool

Melt remaining chocolate in saucepan stirring constantly drizzle over cookies

Place in Refrigerator for a few minutes to set chocolate

Makes 24 cookies

These were my Dads favorite holiday cookies. He loved everything mint. My sister cheats by using frozen cookie dough.

Tammy Jo Purbaugh

Community Housing Program Assistant



## Transitions/Office Assistant

By Rebecca Kozuch

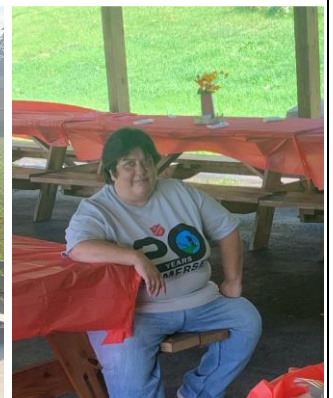
Hi, my name is Becky. My job title here at the Next Step Center is the Transitions Program/Office Assistant. My job includes helping the Executive Director with doing referrals, faxing, filing, doing reports receiving and making phone calls and intake with clients as they come into the shelter. My job as a Transition Assistant includes helping with the classes as needed, doing case management with clients, and helping with donations as we get them.

I had recently been working with a 57 year old male who came to the shelter but as it turned out he could not do stairs, so we ended up putting him in one of our other programs that we use here at the shelter, and he spent 9 days in a hotel due to not having anywhere to go. I did case management with him thru the week, and I checked on him once going to the hotel to make sure he was doing okay and to make sure he had food. He is now in his own apartment here in Somerset County and doing well.

Rebecca Kozuch

Transitions/Office Assistant

**BECKY LIKES TO VOLUNTEER AND  
HELP OUT WHENEVER SHE CAN!**



## Overcoming the Odds

By Chrystal Shaulis

Jessica Ryniak was a participant in the NSC Community Housing Assistance Program. Jessica had many barriers when she entered the program, including being homeless, unemployed, trying to maintain sobriety, and CYS involvement are just a few of the barriers Jessica dealt with daily. Jessica entered the NSC back in April 2021, Jessica lost her job due to COVID, which left her with no income. Jessica lost custody of her son and was working with CYS to get him back. She currently had supervised visits twice a week. Jessica knew she wanted to do better for and her son. Jessica was able to get a full-time job at a local Family Dollar, where she is still employed. Jessica rented an apartment in July with the help of the CHAP program. Today, Jessica still maintains employment, sobriety, and went from supervised visits with her son to having him overnights, working towards full-time custody in the near future.



Chrystal Shaulis

Community Housing & Advocacy Case Manager

### “Glades Centre”



## Volunteer Spotlight!

*Wheeler Brothers Volunteer Committee*



*Somerset County Jail Work Release*



NONPROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE PAID  
SOMERSET, PA  
PERMIT NO. 40

P.O. Box 850  
406 Stoystown Rd  
Somerset, PA 15501  
Tel: 814-444-8588  
Fax: 814-444-1022  
E-mail: [nsc@nextstepcenter.org](mailto:nsc@nextstepcenter.org)



#### *WISH LIST OF ITEMS NEEDED:*

- Laundry Soap (liquid HE)
- Fabric Softener
- Dishwasher Detergent
- Bleach
- Floor Cleaner
- Pillows
- Towels
- Hand Towels
- Wash Cloths
- Zip Lock Bags
- Light Bulbs

## Our Impact on 2021

- 54 individuals sheltered
- Includes 10 children, 1 veteran
- For a total of 825 people days
- Average stay 20 days
- 32 obtained safe affordable housing
- Remaining 22 exited to other housing options (friends or family)
- 40 obtained or maintained income