



Boots For Good

A young man stopped by recently to inquire about getting a pair of size 12 work boots for a new job.

We found a pair of boots in his size but without laces. Luckily, staff were able to pull laces from a smaller pair of shoes. The man was so relieved that he would be able to show up to his first day of work in proper shoes!

We strive to offer our guests clothing that they feel proud to wear because our mission is to restore dignity.

Our guests need new or gently used adult-size items suitable for outdoor wear. If you can, donate items Mon-Sat, 8-10:30 a.m. or 1:30-4 p.m. at 310 NW Glisan.



A thank you note from a guest reads, "Thank you for never looking down on us. I mean, I know you're short but your LOVE is Gigantic!"

Jenn, a Friend to Many

During Blanchet House's lunch and dinner hours, you'll find Jennifer "Jenn" Coon talking with and helping people on the sidewalk.

A petite woman in a yellow safety vest, Jenn offers assistance to people struggling to survive in downtown Portland – most unhoused. And she is busy. She finds clothes for the naked, bandages for wounds, directs people to shelters, calls ambulances for the unconscious, and lends a listening ear to the lonely.

THANK YOU

"We sometimes forget that there's a mother, daughter, son, or friend under there," says Jenn of people experiencing homelessness. "Sometimes people just want to be heard and I'm a good listener. I often remind myself that I used to be there."

She has a rare combination of lived and learned experience. Once homeless herself due to drug addiction, she's uniquely qualified.

"It's not something I'm proud of but it speaks to how powerful drugs are. I thank God every day that I have my kids back in my life," she says.

Jenn eventually found her way out of the fog of addiction and received training to become a peer support specialist. She is contracted to work at Blanchet through the Mental Health & Addiction Association of Oregon. She teaches and leads by showing how to help in the most compassionate and dignified way possible.

Between meal services, Jenn supports Blanchet's transitional housing residents. She accompanies them to medical appointments, proofreads resumes and job applications, navigates housing paperwork, and has signed up dozens of people to receive COVID-19 vaccinations.

"Getting to Blanchet is a big accomplishment for people," she says. "These are the people who are sleeping in doorways. People with the bare minimum. This is their lifeline."



ILLUSTRATION BY JENNIFER TAFT



A nurse dries the foot of a woman who's been sleeping outdoors and eating at Blanchet House.

Nurses Host Foot Care Clinic

On Oct. 5, nurses with the Harrington Health Clinic (HHC) and University of Portland hosted a foot care clinic at Blanchet House. They turned the garage into a cozy spa with live music played by harpist and fellow nurse Maureen "Mo" Briare.

NEW SERVICE

The feet of people living outdoors or in shelters are so neglected and can cause much pain and misery.

"Walk and walk and walk," says Jennifer Coon. "People sometimes won't take their shoes off for weeks at a time for fear of them being stolen."

12 guests had their feet soaked, treated, and massaged.

"Foot injuries are common due to accidents, assault, and neglect," says Emily Harrington, NP. "Good hygiene can be difficult to access and when available, it's in the form of shared showers which can invite foot ailments."

Every guest was offered new socks, shoes, and a pair of odor-repelling insoles to take with them.

"It was so beautiful to welcome our guests inside," says Coon. "They could sit down for 45 minutes and just be loved on."

HHC plans to hold foot care clinics monthly. If you'd like to help, they need **new** adult-sized cotton or wool socks, athletic shoes and practical boots in women's sizes 7-11 and men's 10-13. You can mail or drop off at Blanchet House, 310 NW Glisan, Portland, OR, 97209, ATTN: Harrington Health Clinic.



From left to right, Dominique Forrest, Jonathan Gonzales, and Mary Ann Walker.

Welcome New Board Members

We're honored to welcome three talented and compassionate individuals to our volunteer board of directors.

Dominique Forrest an educator at St. Andrew Nativity School, Jonathan Gonzales a partner at Gonzales, Gonzales & Gonzales Immigration Law Offices, and Mary Ann Walker Operations Director at Vivacare bring tremendous leadership, insight, and value to Blanchet House.

"Blanchet spoke to me loud and clear with it's no barrier to care mission," says Walker. "I see every person as a human, a child of God, equal, and deserving."

Learn more about all of Blanchet's board members on our website at BlanchetHouse.org/Our-Team.

UPCOMING EVENTS

WILLAMETTE WEEK'S GIVE GUIDE

Nov 1 - Dec 31

We're honored to tell you that Blanchet House is selected to participate in Willamette Week's Give Guide fundraising campaign.

A donation to Blanchet via the Give Guide website will go directly to support our programs.

PLUS! Every \$10 donation is entered to win special gifts on certain days of the campaign.

Visit GiveGuide.org to donate and see the list of great gifts.

LEND A HELPING HAND BRUNCH 2022

March 6, 2022

Save the date to join hosts Rich Ulring and Misty Marquam at the virtual brunch. This fundraising celebration will be broadcast LIVE from a studio to your computer or phone.

Join us as a treasured sponsor to receive great benefits and support a mission that is on the front lines working to end homelessness.

Call Sasha at 503-241-4340 or BlanchetHouse.org/Brunch2022.

Canning at Blanchet Farm

Kelley learned jarring and canning as a child, standing next to his mother in the kitchen.

FARM NEWS

“I was a weak kid so I had to stay inside. I wore support braces from my feet to under my arms because I was a super preemie. I remember how bad they hurt,” Kelley recalls.

At Blanchet Farm, Kelley is teaching some of the other guys how to preserve the fruit and vegetables grown there.

“When I’m canning I’m not thinking about anything. It’s kind of zenful. It’s a good escape,” he says. “Maybe someone down the road will enjoy what I made. I’m thankful for this place.”

Farm Case Manager Debra Fresh was able to secure a housing voucher for Kelley and he will soon be moving into his own place in Yamhill County.

We wish him well and will think of him every time we open one of his jars.



Kelley in the Blanchet Farm kitchen with some of his jarred veggies.



A volunteer serves lunch to guests at Blanchet House.

We're Home to Our Guests in Need

By Scott Kerman, Blanchet House Executive Director

It's hard to believe that we're approaching the end of 2021, and we are still serving out our doors because of the pandemic.

As I watched volunteers hand out coffee this morning to guests shivering and soaked from sleeping in the rain, carrying all of their belongings, I thought about the history of this great mission and its future.

MESSAGE FROM SCOTT

For nearly 70 years, Blanchet House of Hospitality has offered aid, nourishment, and hope to the Portland community. Rain or shine, we offer three meals a day, six days a week. But in reality, we do far more. We provide comfort, care, and support to anyone seeking our help. People come to our doors because they trust us. We're listeners, healers, and friends.

As the pandemic unfolded last year, we watched a precarious social safety net tear. The homelessness crisis dramatically worsened along with addiction and mental health issues. People once able to get by on their own found themselves in need of help for the first time in their life.

Blanchet House sprang into action. Overnight, we designed a new "to go" meal service, expanded our capacity to serve, and respond to needs as they surfaced in our community by staying flexible and innovative.

Despite the uncertainty of the world around us, Blanchet House has remained a beacon of help and hope, providing food, shelter, and aid to those who arrive at our door. Thanks to the tireless efforts of our staff, volunteers, residents, and generous supporters like you, we've been able to meet the escalating demands put upon us.

And yet, the lasting effects of this crisis linger. Many of our guests continue to endure extreme trauma, grief, and instability.

As we approach our 70th year, now is the time to recommit to our mission, establish our plans for growth, and strengthen our relationship with our donors, volunteers, and the greater Portland community.

Our future is bright, and our vision is clear. We are committed as ever to seeing the human being in front of us rather than the problem. We pray for our community and for the resiliency of our supporters.

We're forging ahead in 2022, evolving and growing in our services and community while making sure Blanchet House still feels like home.



310 NW Glisan Street
 Portland, OR 97209
 (503) 241-4340

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 coffee, and hope.

We're able to offer aid daily because of your generosity.

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A Place to Be Seen

"I walked by a guy the other day with a sign that said 'Feeling invisible.' And it made me think because that was me years ago," says Jeffrey McDaniel, Blanchet House's Residential Program Manager. "I was destitute. I was dragging my suitcase behind me. I didn't want to look people in the eye. There was fear. There was shame and guilt. All those things are tied up in a person's mind when they don't have a place to go."



**Jeffrey McDaniel,
 Resident Manager.**

We're grateful to have Jeffrey on staff to offer wisdom and support to others in the predicament he once was in. He reminded us of the successes happening at Blanchet House.

"In the past month several men completed the initial phase of our program and are moving in a new, healthy direction," he says. "They are getting jobs, attending meetings, addressing health and financial issues. They are using the resources Blanchet offers to eventually live a prosperous life."