

OUR RESPONSE to COVID-19

A Message from the Mission of Deeds Staff

It's fair to say that the history of Mission of Deeds has been one where we have "learned by doing." The need to learn was never greater than when COVID-19 arrived in full force.

Our first decision was to close in the middle of March to do our part to slow the spread of the disease. What we thought would be a brief shutdown kept extending and we did not have staff return to our facility until the last week in May.

Meanwhile, there was a beehive of activity behind the scenes. At first it seemed overwhelming. How could we ever do our work but not take risks with anyone's health? After numerous meetings on Zoom, we started slowly to gain clarity.

From the start of our reopening, the purpose of all decisions has been to preserve everyone's health.

The first step was to start serving clients whose appointments we were forced to postpone in March, followed by newly referred clients. We serve everyone under a completely new model. Furniture is staged near a large loading door so clients can choose from a range of inventory without coming inside the building. We are heartened that clients realize these changes are necessary to comply with public health guidelines and keep everyone safe.



Mission of Deeds Warehouse crew, Dave, Larry and Andres, take every precaution during these unprecedented times



Photo taken pre-pandemic!

The next step was to put our truck back on the road, with the requirement that donors have the furniture outside for pick-up. After that, we resumed allowing drop-offs at our facility, but only by appointment.

No matter how donations reach us, we perform extra advance screening to prioritize key items that are in low supply, then we quarantine everything before making the furniture available to the people we help. We are grateful for our donors' understanding.

We also reached out via email to about 800 caseworkers who refer clients to us, easing our referral procedures in various ways to help them navigate the severe restrictions under which they and their organizations are often working.

There is one crucial aspect that has not resumed: volunteer service. This saddens us more than anything and it causes our facility to lack the vitality that our awesome volunteers bring. To all of you, someday this will change! We miss you all so very much!

From the start of our reopening, the purpose of all decisions has been to preserve everyone's health. A key part of this is limiting the number of people in the building. When we feel we can do otherwise, we will have the biggest celebration of your return that we can imagine. Meanwhile, we are so moved by the love and support that you continue to show in so many ways, even from afar. You inspire us every day and always will.

So, that's a quick summary of the new, definitely not improved, but still necessary, mode of operation at Mission of Deeds.

We review all aspects constantly. Next up is how to modify our procedures for winter weather.



Mission of Deeds COVID Showroom

We can't wait to return to our "old normal." Meanwhile, whatever the world throws at us, Mission of Deeds will find a way to carry on. We appreciate your support—which you amazingly continue through thick and thin—more than words can say.

We appreciate your support... more than words can say.

HOW WE PUT YOUR MONETARY DONATIONS TO GOOD USE

- \$25** Set of Kitchenware for a Family
- \$50** Linen Set
- \$100** 8 Sheet Sets
- \$150** 63 Pillows
- \$250** Pots and Pans for 24 Families
- \$500** 25 Toasters and 25 Coffee Makers
- \$1000** 5 Sets of Bunk Beds with Mattresses
- \$1500** 167 Blankets
- \$2000** 16 Bed Sets (Mattress, Box Spring, Bedframe, Pillow, Sheet Set, and Blanket)
- \$5000** 30 Cribs with Mattresses

WHY WE GIVE TO MISSION OF DEEDS

by John and Heidi O'Connor, Reading, MA

Our parents and our Catholic faith always taught us to help those in need, whether through service or financial donation. We try our best to live this tradition and believe we receive more in return than we've ever given.

When we consider specific charities, there are three things that are most important: the overall purpose, the quality of operations, and how and where money is spent. We've found that many charities have great objectives but struggle in operations or spending patterns. However, Mission of Deeds gets A+ in each of

these categories and we take great pride in our involvement.

Mission of Deeds tackles the unfortunate reality of those living without beds or basic furniture. This is hard to imagine given the wealth in the Boston area, but it's a sad truth. Providing beds and furniture provides physical comfort, but also has an immeasurable benefit to the client's self-esteem—a gift that lives beyond the delivery of furniture.

As for operations and spending patterns, we've found the charity to be extremely careful and hyper-focused on those in need,

giving us comfort that our donations are handled wisely. It only takes seeing how the clients are treated to know this is a charity that cares. The volunteers and staff are amazing people and remind us there is love in this world, despite the craziness we see every day. Twenty years ago we started with simple furniture donations, then became volunteers, and then added financial support. It has been a wonderful experience for our children and for us. While there is always more to do, we are thrilled to be a small part of Mission of Deeds.



At Mission of Deeds we strive to always put our clients first. We are proud that 85% of our budget goes directly to client care. In pairing with GuideStar, we are giving our donors a look at where their donation goes and how they have a direct effect on our clients' lives. We hope this information helps you feel great about your decision to donate to Mission of Deeds. GuideStar is the world's largest

source of information on nonprofit organizations. GuideStar's Nonprofit Profiles provide donors with the information they need to make smart decisions, build connections, and learn from each other to achieve their missions. We are proud to have received GuideStar's Platinum Seal of Transparency—their newest and highest level of recognition.

2019 EXPENSE BREAKDOWN

- Programs — 85%
- Administration — 8%
- Fundraising — 7%



MISSION OF DEEDS
Furnishing Homes. Changing Lives.

WINTER 2020

A MESSAGE from our PRESIDENT



When Tony Triglione started Mission of Deeds in 1993, most of our clients did not have beds until we provided them. That is still true today and we continue to give huge numbers of beds to people in need, always without charge.

However, the pandemic has brought an additional need to the fore—student desks. Remote learning has changed so much for so many families, but our clients are affected in especially extreme ways. They are balancing work, parenting, paying rent, buying food, and trying to provide an appropriate setting for their children's education. Living on the margins to begin with, the challenges can be overwhelming.

To address this need, Mission of Deeds began a drive for small student desks. We are especially heartened to provide these, since it is a special way to fill the needs of parents and children at a stressful time and because a good education can do so much to break the cycle of poverty.

Desks, and education, go hand in hand with a long-standing MOD program—giving children's books to each client family. Starting with a few old bookshelves years ago, the children's book area expanded into its own bright and colorful room in our larger and revitalized facility in 2011.

The pandemic also highlighted the issue of food insecurity. To help our clients in this regard, Mission

of Deeds now provides a supermarket gift card to each family or individual to whom we give furniture. This could become a permanent part of the service we offer.

Continuing is the winter coats program—with a twist: due to COVID, we are accepting only brand new, warm, machine-washable jackets for adults and children.

Desks, children's books, food gift cards, coats—these things were not on our horizon when the charity started. Yet Tony began Mission of Deeds simply to help people and we are always open to new programs consistent with his vision. Our main focus was, is and ever shall be, giving beds, furniture and household goods, without charge, to individuals and families in need. Everything else is in addition to this unchanging purpose.

Also unchanging is our gratitude for the incredible support that each of you provide. In this very difficult time, the continued enthusiasm and generosity to our cause that you show every day inspires and drives everything Mission of Deeds does. Your support is humbling and our appreciation is never ending.

As difficult as it sometimes is to imagine, we *will* get through this. Thanks to you, so will our clients.

Christopher J. Barrett

REMEMBERING TINA TRIGLIONE

Ever since Tony Triglione founded Mission of Deeds, he always had the support of his whole family including, of course, his wife, Tina. Sadly, Tina passed away on October 21 at the age of 95.

Tina had many interests. She was a talented artist in oil and pastel, sang in the church choir and loved to cook. She was also a devoted sports fan, especially of the Red Sox, never missing a game. When she and her sister, Mal, were teenagers, they actually stood in front of Ted Williams' car after a game until he gave them an autograph!

Tina was an avid golfer and played in most of the Mission of Deeds Golf Tournaments. She also attended MODFEST and our Galas for many years and was a constant supporter of our work.



We will always remember Tina for her kind and thoughtful ways, for her generous spirit and for her great love for her family, which includes four children, ten grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Even though Tina has passed, she will always be the First Lady of Mission of Deeds.

A MESSAGE *from our* EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



In 1993, Tony Triglione had the vision to start a charity to give beds, furniture and household essentials, free of charge, to people in need.

He and his office staff came up with the name Mission of Deeds. Two years later, Tony asked his friend Al Longo to help us develop a logo. The result of that process, our helping hands, was the symbol of our work for all that time.

The new logo came about because of the creativity, collaboration and perseverance of the team that made it happen. This included Jody Collins Skinner who led the effort in every way, Donna Snow, Paula Goss, Sharon Petersen and Jan Triglione, with important input from Art Triglione and the entire Board of Directors, as well as the superb talent and patience of our graphic designer, Karen Lynch.

but simply because you want to. Mission of Deeds happens because of each of you. One man's vision launched an organization whose work and values spread further and further, every day, as you furnish more homes and change more lives.

Being age 27 makes our charity a millennial, but we look to the future with the enthusiasm of a child, and, like the child, with the feeling that, for Mission of Deeds, the best is yet to come.

For making that future possible, and for all you do, you have our thanks.

Bruce C. Murison

Bruce C. Murison



During those 27 years, the hard-working hands of our volunteers, and the wonderful support of our donors, have furnished about 15,000 households in need. Let me repeat that ...15,000 households or about 40,000 adults and children who had been homeless or in other difficult situations.

Yet, as successful as we are, we continually think about how to renew and refresh the organization to prepare for the future. A couple of years ago we decided it was time for a new look.

The first things we considered were our logo, our colors and our tag line. We wanted to modernize our look but also pay homage to Tony and our past. I wish I could say it was a quick and easy process. It was not, but earlier this year we crossed the finish line.

The same team worked with the awesome, creative and energetic Judie Hart and Tim McCall to launch our new website that also debuted this year. Please check it out at www.missionofdeeds.org where you will see the new logo and much, much more.

Yet no matter who made it happen, the logo belongs to, and personifies, each and every one of you, our donors and volunteers. Your loving hearts and hard working hands infuse and inspire every single thing that Mission of Deeds has ever done and will ever do.

Let's appreciate and celebrate who we are—a community of people joined together for the timeless purpose of neighbors helping neighbors, not because some bureaucracy tells you to, or because some rule or regulation says you have to,

A DIFFERENT WAY: AN ANNEX STORY

by Donna Snow, Director of Volunteers and Household Items



Donna Snow's Reading garage, aka: The Annex. Here, boxes of kitchen essentials are tailored to the size and needs of each client's family.

During this pandemic, the staff at Mission of Deeds has been continuously servicing clients since the beginning of June. Safety for everyone has been our priority. Consistent with that, we have created an "Annex" in Reading (my garage!) to collect and prepare essential kitchen items.

A Kitchen Essentials box is made and tailored to the size of each client's family. Every box typically contains dishes, glassware, mugs, flatware, pots and pans, cooking utensils, mixing bowls, food

storage containers, and either a toaster or coffee maker.

Generous supporters have been sending useful kitchen items to the "Annex" or to our main facility. Some of our incredible volunteers have collected and cleaned kitchen items at home that had been given to them by family members or neighbors. We are extremely grateful to everyone who has supported our efforts. Our "Annex" is another example of Mission of Deeds making a difference in a different way.

VIRTUAL MODFEST 2020

by Paula Goss, Office Manager

Mission of Deeds' annual fall fundraising event, MODFEST, had a different look this September. What started as a simple walk in 2008, evolved over the years into a full-fledged family fun day with food vendors, face painting, cornhole and so much more. But that was not the case this year as most outdoor events were cancelled due to the safety concerns of large crowd gatherings. Instead, we asked all of our wonderful supporters to celebrate a "Virtual MODFEST" by walking at their own pace in their own space!

The response was overwhelming, and our supporters made this year's MODFEST the most successful yet! We cannot thank you enough for your support and generosity in providing Mission of Deeds with the means to help more and more individuals and families in need that live in our local communities.

Socially distanced, but still together transforming generosity into hope...this is Mission of Deeds!

WAYS TO GIVE TO MISSION OF DEEDS

We are amazed by the many ways you support us. You donate financially, either by check or credit card; you sponsor and attend events; you donate goods; you give generously of your time. Mission of Deeds is grateful for all the ways you help.

From a financial viewpoint, our monthly giving program is the easiest way to provide steady support for the ongoing work of Mission of Deeds. By giving monthly, you can spread your gift out throughout the year, and make an even bigger impact in helping our clients. With just \$10 a month, over the course of a year you are giving a complete bed set to a child in need.

There are other ways our donors support our work that you may not have realized. Mission of Deeds gratefully accepts gifts in these forms:

- IRA distributions
- Appreciated stock and other securities
- Donor advised fund grants
- Private foundation grants
- Charitable gift of a life insurance policy

Please consult with your financial planner to determine the best option. For more information you can contact Bruce at bruce.murison@missionofdeeds.org or Jody at jody.collinsskinner@missionofdeeds.org

Whatever way you support us, please know that you make a huge difference in the lives of those in need.

A Special Note about Tax Deductibility

for cash contributions made to public charities. ■ This "\$300 Universal Deduction" allows the taxpayer to deduct up to that amount of charitable cash donations as an adjustment to income on the regular Form 1040 without itemizing. ■ We pass this information along as something you may want to discuss with your tax professional.

Mission of Deeds is not in a position to give tax advice, but we learned about a new provision that helps taxpayers who do not ordinarily benefit from charitable deductions. ■ In response to the pandemic, Congress passed the CARES Act that includes a provision allowing taxpayers who do not itemize to take up to a \$300 deduction



Clockwise from top: One family's new children's bedroom, Magician Joe Cole entertained at the Mission of Deeds March Gala, Paula Goss and family pulled the winning raffles for the Virtual MODFEST.

MOD'S GRATITUDE

We want to thank the many businesses that support Mission of Deeds in so many ways. They do things like hold fundraisers, sponsor events, champion Buy-a-Bed and make more affordable (or even donate) needed services. Here are a few members of our Business Hall of Fame. We plan to highlight more of you each newsletter.



ONE CLIENT'S GRATITUDE



On a beautiful August day, our client Gladys was giddy about all the items she received from Mission of Deeds. Gladys had been living in a single room in a rooming house where the rent took most of her income. She was in need of new affordable housing since her medical issues made the rooming house unsafe for her. She was finally awarded elderly subsidized housing, and Greater Lynn Senior Services supplied the truck and movers to load and move her into her new home.

Gladys was thrilled as our MOD warehouse crew brought out items to choose. Since we were operating under our new COVID-19 procedures, Gladys could not go into our warehouse showroom, so we brought the showroom to Gladys. She was so excited she exclaimed, "I'm 60 years old and I have never had my own couch before." She clapped her hands with joy as she picked out a dresser and a nightstand to go along with her new bed. She had a huge smile when she picked out a bedside lamp with a flower on it. Now with her home almost furnished, she picked out her kitchen table and three chairs. Sitting down in a chair she became overwhelmed with all she was receiving from Mission of Deeds.

At the end of her appointment, she wanted us to tell our donors how excited she was to make her new apartment into her first real home with all the beautiful items she received. She felt truly blessed to be part of the Mission of Deeds family.



WHO is MISSION OF DEEDS?

Tony Triglione founded Mission of Deeds in 1993 to provide beds, furniture and household goods, without charge, to people in need. Tony had grown up very poor, then became highly successful in business, but never forgot what it had been like to be poor. His vision was that Mission of Deeds be a place where people would receive needed items while being treated with kindness and respect.

People like you donate furniture and housewares to us, and we buy mattresses, box springs, pillows and linens from your financial donations. We receive no government grants or United Way funding—it's all neighbors helping neighbors. Thanks to your generosity and the hard work of our volunteers, Mission of Deeds has furnished the apartments of many thousands of the previously homeless, survivors of domestic abuse, displaced veterans, the abandoned elderly, and others in great need—like those who have fallen on hard times due to the pandemic. With Tony's vision as our guide, we look forward to serving the community for years to come.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS



A refugee single mother began to cry when we gave her son a bed. She told her case worker: "My 11-year-old boy never had a bed of his own."

A grandmother helping to raise her two small grandchildren wrote:

"I truly would like to let you know how much I appreciate all the wonderful furniture...I have had nothing to sleep or sit on for over a year."

A caseworker wrote to us, about a family coming out of homelessness:

"As with most of our homeless families, they lost everything." After receiving our help, the mother sent a thank you note to Mission of Deeds, writing, "I just wanted to let you know that the furniture and other items you have given to our family has made our house into a home. Before having the items you have given, I worried about not having furniture for my children. Now I walk around with a smile. Programs like yours change people's lives. Thank you."

A former client reached out on Facebook:

"Your organization is the most worthy of praise. You really do help the needy when they need it the most. I was a recipient of you once. I'll never forget how happy you made me, and I've donated since, when I got back on my feet. God bless you all for your hard work."

From an Executive Director of a Social Service Agency:

"On behalf of our agency and the clients we serve, thank you for your willingness to provide older adults and adults living with disabilities in our region with beds and bed frames. Your support makes all the difference in our ability to help them continue living independently and comfortably in their own homes."

A client who lost her job and needed to move:

"What a terrific bed! Sincere and hearty thank you for your generous gifts! It is such a comfort to have my own bed, sheets, and necessities thanks to your thoughtful organization."