Arlington Thrive Launched!

The AMEN staff and Board of Directors announced on April 29 that after 38 years, the organization had re-branded. The new name and tagline — Arlington Thrive: Emergency Funds for Neighbors in Need — debuted at an event at the Twisted Vines Bottle Shop and Bistro which drew a large crowd of supporters, including members of the Arlington County Board, Arlington County staff, donors and volunteers.

“Since 1975, this organization has been the only one in Arlington to provide same-day emergency financial assistance to residents who are in crisis and cannot pay their bills,” said Executive Director Geraldine Shannon. “What we do has not changed, but we feel that our new name better reflects the organization’s mission and vision. If all of its residents thrive, Arlington thrives. Arlington County Board Chairman Walter J. Tejada, who spoke at the event, focused on Arlington Thrive’s important work in the community, saying “Arlington Thrive’s assistance can help an individual or an entire family from becoming homeless. Preventing homelessness before it happens is the best way to help those who are vulnerable.”

As part of its re-branding, Arlington Thrive introduced a new logo, which you can see above, and a redesigned website: www.arlingtonthrive.org. We hope you will check it out.

Arlington Energy Masters Recognized with “Green Giant” Award

Arlington Thrive partners with Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment (ACE) and the Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) on a program called Arlington Energy Masters, which helps low-income apartment dwellers reduce their energy use. The program, conserves resources, lowers utility bills, making it a “win-win” for the environment and Arlington residents. Arlington Energy Masters was named a “Green Giant” by Washingtonian Magazine which annually recognizes organizations and individuals who are working to save our natural resources.

Arlington Energy Masters volunteers receive 16 hours of training from ACE and a VCE certification in exchange for 60 hours of volunteer work in the community, such as replacing light bulbs, installing low-flow showerheads and repairing insulation leaks. Energy attorney Jill Barker, an Arlington Thrive Board Member, was instrumental in launching this program with the ACE and the VCE.

If all of its residents thrive, Arlington thrives.
From the Executive Director

By the time you read this newsletter, it will no longer be Spring. We have had a busy and eventful year. AMEN became Arlington Thrive! The Board of Directors and I feel that the new name better reflects the organization’s mission and vision in Arlington. Arlington thrives when all its residents can meet their basic needs. We must have a more visible brand in the community to attract the support needed to fulfill the mission of providing emergency financial assistance. We believe that the new name and tagline with its bright attractive logo will help accomplish that.

During this year, we were able to provide close to $820,000 in direct emergency financial assistance to help residents pay bills for rent, utilities, medical and dental care, prescriptions, etc. With the County’s additional $50,000 and the generous support from donors, foundations, churches and civic organizations, Thrive provided financial assistance to more than 2800 cases helping more than 5400 residents with their emergency needs. Of these, Thrive prevented the eviction of more than 600 households and most were families with children. With your support, Arlington Thrive prevents homelessness in our community.

Please help Arlington residents continue to thrive and give generously.

Gerry Shannon

Board Transitions

Diane Weisz Young resigned from the Board as she and her family prepare to leave on a State Dept. overseas assignment. She served on the Board since 2008 and most recently was Vice-President. Charlie Klein ended his service as a Board member after more than 20 years. He has served on several committees and will continue to volunteer as a Daily Fund volunteer

Allen O’Neil joined the Thrive Board in October 2012. Mr. O’Neil is an attorney at Brickfield, Burchette, Ritts, & Stone, PC. He learned about Arlington Thrive when he participated in the Train for 10 program several years ago and was impressed with the charity’s mission and work. By serving on the Board, he hopes he can contribute to the organization’s continued success in assisting Arlington residents in need.

Thrive Recognizes Volunteers

Arlington Thrive volunteers were honored by Thrive Board members, staff and County social workers at a May 8 brunch. Every day, Thrive volunteers are on the frontline taking emergency financial assistance requests from County and private agency social workers. Since volunteers work by telephone or email, it was the first time for many social workers and volunteers to meet in person. Jeanne Booth, Chief of the County DHS Community Assistance Bureau and Arlington Board President Bob Zawacki thanked the group for their dedication and work that provided important safety net services to Arlington residents.
We ❤️ Our Volunteers!

New record for Train for Ten

On a very cold Saturday morning in February, 35 shivering runners and those who aspired to be runners gathered at the five mile marker of the W&OD trail to begin the three-month Train for Ten program. It was the third year of the program, which prepares runners to compete in the GW Parkway Classic race while also benefiting Arlington Thrive. This year saw the largest turnout ever for the program. Of the 35 who trained, 23 ran the 10 mile race or the 5K on Sunday, April 21. In addition to running, this group’s individual fundraising efforts netted almost $10,000 for Arlington Thrive.

Arlington resident and first-time Train for Ten runner Dave Nelson said, “I hadn’t run in a long time, and I wasn’t sure I could even do 10 miles. Thanks to the training program, I was able to do it and was pleased with my time,” said Dave Nelson. “It was a good way to get back in shape and to support the work that Arlington Thrive is doing in our community. Plus, I had a lot of fun and met some new friends.”

Denny Pinch, a certified trainer and long-distance runner, once again coached the team. Team members included running novices, as well as experienced runners who joined the team to increase their speed and endurance. This year, three members of the First Presbyterian Church youth group participated in the program and the race, with the never-flagging support of Arlington Thrive Board member Hanna Eun. One of them, Tajin, age 14, came in second in his age group with a time of 1:27:38.

If 10 miles seems daunting, we are exploring the possibility of sponsoring an Arlington Thrive “Train for Five (K)” this fall! Check the website and Facebook page for updates.

Your Donation Helped this Mother and her Newborn

This past winter, a young woman sought rental assistance at the County Community Assistance Bureau (CAB). She was on maternity leave from her job and had a newborn infant. Her financial emergency resulted when her husband left her before the baby was born, and she now did not have enough to pay the rent. Complications from childbirth required her to recuperate for six more weeks before she could go back to work. A CAB social worker asked Arlington Thrive to provide two partial months’ rent so that she could stay in her Arlington apartment and recuperate until she returned to work. Without that emergency financial assistance, she and the baby could have been evicted. She was very thankful for the help.

Arlington Thrive’s financial support serves as a safety net for Arlington families like this one who experience financial crises. Thank you for helping keep this young mother and her baby in their home. Your ongoing support will help many others like them and ensure that everyone who lives in Arlington may thrive.
We have a new name, but our mission remains the same.

AMEN had served the Arlington community for 38 years providing emergency financial assistance and Arlington Thrive will continue to do so. The new name better reflects the mission and vision of the organization. Arlington Thrive is our mission in just two words. When all of its residents thrive, Arlington thrives.

Arlington thrives:

• when its residents can meet their basic needs;
• when neighbors help neighbors in need;
• when we stop homelessness before it begins;
• when children sleep in their own beds in their own homes.

Many of us are fortunate to have more than enough to meet our needs. Please remember our neighbors who need assistance. With your generous support, together we will ensure that all of Arlington’s residents may thrive in this community. Please make a donation!