2015 Resolve to Run Program Breaks Records

Despite the cold and snowy winter weather, Arlington Thrive runners trained faithfully for almost three months to run in the April 26 GW Parkway Classic 10 mile and 5K Races. Their persistence paid off, as both personal and fundraising records were broken. Our runners raised more than $14,500 for Arlington Thrive – 20% over the goal! Kudos to the top three racer/fundraisers this year—Jill Barker, Toby Haggerty and John Underwood.

Long-time Coach Denny Pinch directed the 10 mile group again this year, while newcomer Jeffery Myers worked with the 5K runners. Forty two runners signed up for the training program, and a total of 31 ran either the 10 mile or 5K race—an increase over last year’s Resolve to Run participants.

Arlington Thrive’s 10 mile team finished 15th out of 38 teams. John Pulley was the first Thrive team member to cross the finish line, and John Underwood placed an impressive third in his age group. To raise awareness of Arlington Thrive’s mission, team members sported bibs with Thrive’s logo and the message: “I am running for my Arlington neighbors in need.”

John Underwood, Jill Barker and Toby Haggerty (not pictured here) were the leading fundraisers on the Resolve to Run Team this year.

Katharine Carney and Karla Rios Paniagua celebrate the end of a successful race.

Read how Thrive helped Doug with overdue utility bill, page 3
From the Executive Director

2015 marks the 40th anniversary of Arlington Thrive and its mission to provide emergency financial assistance to our Arlington neighbors. A charity that started in 1975 as AMEN (Arlingtonians Ministering to Emergency Needs), Arlington Thrive has grown and changed significantly in budget, numbers of residents assisted, and sophistication as a sustainable nonprofit charity. However, Thrive relies on its volunteers to fulfill its mission as much it did in 1975, and has every year since then. Every weekday, volunteers staff the Daily Emergency Financial Assistance program and the EnergyShare program to review and respond to social workers’ requests for financial assistance. Another important group of volunteers are the members of the Board of Directors, who provide governance, oversight, and policy guidance for the organization.

I want to acknowledge, thank and honor all of the volunteers who have worked to fulfill the mission of Arlington Thrive (and AMEN) during those 40 years. I celebrate you and all you have done to help our neighbors in need.

Thank you,
Gerry Shannon

Nicole LaFragola Joins Thrive Staff

Nicole became Thrive’s Administration Manager in February. A Florida native, she attended Daytona State College for Accounting and Finance. She spent more than five years in administrative positions including the Ruesch Center for the Cure of GI Cancers. After a year traveling, she returned to Arlington to attend George Mason U and to work at Thrive. During her free time, she enjoys hiking, photography and is involved with local cycling organizations.

Board Transitions

This spring, Arlington Thrive welcomed four new members to the Board of Directors.

Toby Haggerty, a Vice President of Commercial Lending at EagleBank, has assisted nonprofit and for profit organizations in assessing financial options, managing risk, and long term financial planning. Toby recently earned his MBA from George Mason University. He has served on the Thrive Finance Committee since late 2013 and participated in this year’s “Resolve to Run” program. Toby was also elected as Board Treasurer.
Rebecca Ely, holds an MBA in Human Services from Brandeis’ Heller School for Social Policy and Management. She is a former Arlington Thrive Development Manager and is now Inova Health’s Program Manager of Employee Wellness Programs. She has extensive experience in fundraising, grant writing and nonprofit management.

Sheena McConnell is an economist and vice president at Mathematica Policy Research where she evaluates programs and policies for vulnerable populations. She has studied programs that provide financial assistance to low-income families and is a regular volunteer at Miriam’s Kitchen. She is originally from Liverpool, England and grew up shopping in Penny Lane.

Jane Northern, now retired, spent her career as a nonprofit fundraiser. She is the volunteer coordinator of Foundry United Methodist Church’s ID Ministry, assisting low income and homeless individuals to obtain ID paperwork. She has ushered at the Kennedy Center for 20 years and enjoys reading and travel.

In March, we said goodbye to the following Board members: Jill Barker, Vicki Shteir-Dunn and Bob Zawacki. We thank them for their leadership and contributions during their service.

Utility Bill Beyond Resident’s Budget

Arlington resident, Doug,* has a cognitive impairment, but it didn’t stop him from getting a job with a small landscaping business. However, even with full-time employment, his income didn’t stretch far enough to pay his Washington Gas bill in full. When he could, he would send $25 toward his bill, but his partial payments were not enough to pay all, so his service was cut off. He went to the County DHS for help, and his social worker turned to Arlington Thrive. We were able to help Doug by paying $595.61 toward his past bill so he could have his gas service reinstated. Along with the needed financial assistance, Doug was counseled on how to budget his income and expenses to ensure this won’t happen again. Doug was truly grateful for both the short-term funding and the counseling that will help him in the long-term.

*name changed to protect privacy

Summer Wine-tasting in Shirlington at ShirLaLa

In June, Arlington Thrive will partner with Federal Realty Investment Trust at the ShirLaLa Festival, a music and wine-tasting festival at the Village at Shirlington. On June 4, 11, 18 and 25, from 6:30-8:30 p.m., Arlington Thrive staff and volunteers will be on hand to manage the wine tent. This is a great opportunity for Arlington Thrive to share information about our organization with the community. Please come out and enjoy music and wine with us in June. We’re also looking for volunteers to participate. If you’re interested, contact us at info@arlingtonthrive.org or call the office at 703-558-0035.

Young Professional Steering Committee Forming

Board member Kellen MacBeth is organizing a Young Professional Steering Committee. This committee will help to plan the upcoming young professionals’ event and provide advice and feedback on other ways to better engage the young professional community in Arlington Thrive’s mission. The Young Professional Steering Committee kick-off meeting took place on May 21. For more information, e-mail info@arlingtonthrive.org

The Aurora Hills Women’s Club dedicated their 2014-15 fundraising to support Arlington Thrive. We appreciate the Club’s generous support. Pictured are Thrive Staff members Shandra Niswander and Gerry Shannon with Aurora Hills Women’s Club President Mary Downey.
Please save the date!
Wednesday, November 18, 2015
Arlington Thrive 40th Anniversary Celebration & Fundraiser to Benefit Arlington Thrive at Army Navy Country Club

WE ARE CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF PROVIDING EMERGENCY FUNDS FOR OUR NEIGHBORS IN NEED

Hands-on Volunteer Opportunity to Help Arlington Thrive

Arlington Thrive is seeking volunteers who will take calls from social workers requesting emergency financial assistance for their clients. The commitment is one or two weekday afternoons (1:00-5:00 p.m.) per month. You must have some computer skills to record the requests in laptop computer database and be able to transport the computer to the next day volunteer’s home. Training and ongoing consultation are provided.

To volunteer and to learn more about this rewarding opportunity to help others, email info@arlingtonthrive.org. To learn more about Arlington Thrive and its programs, see www.arlingtonthrive.org