



AveNEWS October 2016

Avenues supports more than 300 youth a year - we can't do it without your help. If you would like to make a direct impact on homeless youth, please click to donate.

[▶ DONATE NOW](#)

In This Issue

[Health and Wellness at Avenues](#)
[Voices for Dreams](#)
[Volunteer Spotlight](#)
[National Youth Homelessness Awareness Month](#)

Appreciation This Month



Avenues thanks the [Otto Bremer Trust](#) for their continued support. In its most recent grantmaking cycle, Otto Bremer awarded 144 grants, totaling

Dear Friends,

Avenues for Homeless Youth adheres to the "9 Evidence-Based, Guiding Principles to Help Youth Overcome Homelessness" in everything we do. We strive to provide holistic services that are trauma-informed, non-judgmental, relationship-based and journey-oriented. We recognize that we have an opportunity to intersect with youth for a brief, but very critical time in their life journey. We have discussed some of these principles in past issues and invite you to read about them [here](#).

As we have adapted Avenues' programming and services to embrace the 9 principles over recent years, we recognized that the health and wellness of our youth -- especially their mental health wellness -- needed to be at the very center of our work. We discuss this in the lead article of this newsletter.

As always, we are grateful for your confidence in our work and support of homeless youth. I welcome your comments and questions.

Deb

Deborah Loon
Executive Director

\$9.9 million.



Avenues' yard and parking lot are looking great after a [Wells Fargo](#) volunteer group visited last month! Volunteers cleaned the house, mulched the yard and even repainted the lines of the parking lot. Thank you for your support!



[Best Buy](#) provided Avenues with 800 hygiene packages, including toothbrushes, shampoo, soap and socks. Thank you for your donation!



Thank you to all the artists who participated in [Art for Avenues](#)! Community members gathered to listen to local musicians and spoken word artists - all in support of Avenues!

Thank you to the organizers of the [Gotta Drink Em All Pub Crawl](#) who generously donated part of their proceeds to Avenues!

**Kick Ball
Champions**



Health and Wellness at Avenues

Most of the young people Avenues supports face mental health issues. They have experienced significant traumas throughout their young lives, which have affected their health and wellness.

"In many communities, mental wellness still isn't talked about, but it needs to be addressed. The mind is no different than physical health; it is at the basis of everything we do," explained Zayed Ahmed, Avenues' Program Director. "We know that young people who have experienced homelessness and other traumas can move forward to long-term stability and a thriving young adulthood when their overall wellness improves."

Part of Avenues' holistic and principles-based services is a deepened health and wellness programming emphasis. In fact, we have intentionally selected a program director with advanced training and licensure in the mental health field. Zayed Ahmed has a PhD in Psychology and is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor.

Avenues has a part-time mental health therapist on staff (Steven Cambrice, LICSW) who provides individual therapy for youth, family therapy for youth and their families (as appropriate), clinical case consultation for our direct service team and supervision of our expanding mental health therapy internship program. He also trains staff to normalize mental health discussions with youth, promotes trauma-informed practices and helps us center wellness in all of our interactions and services. We are working to expand the mental health therapist position to full-time.

Avenues also has a contract with the Annex Teen Clinic for nursing consultation and health education at both Brooklyn Avenues and Minneapolis Avenues. Rachel Chalmers, Avenues' Youth Nurse, meets with youth to do health assessments, help youth learn to make their physical health a priority, address issues, make referrals and manage medications.

"Mental health issues often begin to show as youth transition into stability while living with us, as they are no longer in survival mode," Zayed said. "Our goal is to be ready to recognize and address their needs. In addition, we aim to address the stigma of mental



Avenues and fellow [Youth Service Network](#) (YSN) collaborators enjoyed an afternoon of kickball, BBQ and fun! Avenues' kickball team took first place for the second year in row!

Mark Your Calendars

Voices for Dreams

Join Avenues and the Brooklyn Park faith community for a night of song in support of Brooklyn Avenues! Voices for Dreams is on Oct. 22 at Brooklyn United Methodist Church. [Click here](#) for more information. Want to join in the fun? We are looking for [concert sponsors](#) for the event.

Queers on Wheels

Back by popular demand, [Queers on Wheels](#) Halloween Edition is on Oct. 27! All LGBTQ identified youth and friends are invited to the Roller Garden for a night of fabulous costumes and fun. Join Avenues' GLBT Host Home staff on Oct. 27 from 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm!

Give to the Max Day

In honor of National Youth Homelessness Awareness Month (Nov.), pledge to give to your max for Avenues on Nov. 17. Your support is critical for making our youths' dreams possible.

Avenues Wish List

It's about to get cold outside - we've updated our wish lists on [Amazon](#), [Target](#) and [Walmart](#)

health diagnosis and to promote mental wellness as a life long goal through centering it as a organizational value."



Voices for Dreams

Presented by the Victor Donato Memorial Foundation

Join the Brooklyn Park faith community in raising funds and awareness for Brooklyn Avenues!

Acclaimed gospel singer Robert Robinson, who has performed at the Brooklyn Avenues benefit concert for the past two years, will join The Cassidy Brothers, Brooklyn United Methodist Church Dance Ministry, and community choir in a night of song, faith and fun in support of Brooklyn Avenues.

The event will be held at Brooklyn United Methodist Church in its sanctuary, on Oct. 22nd at 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm. The concert is free, but a free-will offering will be asked during the program. [Click here](#) for more details.

A special thank you to our sponsors who have generously supported Brooklyn Avenues for Homeless Youth: Victor Donato Memorial Foundation, Diversified Plastics, Hoffman and Swintek, and Thrivent Financial.

Don't have a singing voice? We are also looking for event sponsors. Learn more by [clicking here](#) or contact [Craig Freeman](#), Avenues' Community Engagement Manager.

Volunteer Spotlight: Jim Suddendorf

websites with our winter clothing needs. For a printable PDF of our wish list, [click here](#).



Did you know that Avenues makes donation drives easy? We now supply businesses, churches and organizations with donation bins and marketing support. Our staff will even pick up and drop off everything you need.

During September and October, [Alerus](#) is hosting a donation drive for Avenues. They're collecting pajamas, robes, pillows and blankets - a pajama party in support of Avenues!

So far they've already collected more than 40 sets of pajamas!

We're Hiring

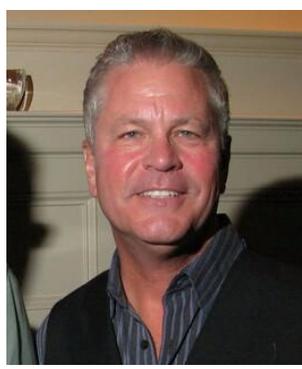
[On Call Youth Support Specialist](#)

 [Send to a Colleague](#)



Avenues for Homeless Youth Administration Offices:

1708 Oak Park Ave. N
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55411
rblair@avenuesforyouth.org
612-844-2001



Jim Suddendorf first learned about Avenues through a friend who participated in an Avenues' host home program. Knowing that being a host home wasn't for him, Jim took his friend's advice in volunteering. He's now been volunteering twice a week at Minneapolis

Avenues for five months.

"It's something that makes me feel good," Jim explained, "Avenues is a cause I believe in."

Every Tuesday Jim makes a home-cooked meal for the youth. Jim, a passionate cook, always brings his cookbook with him so that he can utilize whatever's in the kitchen. Sometimes he even brings in his own ingredients to add extra flavor.

"The youth like to come in and ask what I'm cooking," Jim said about the nights he cooks.

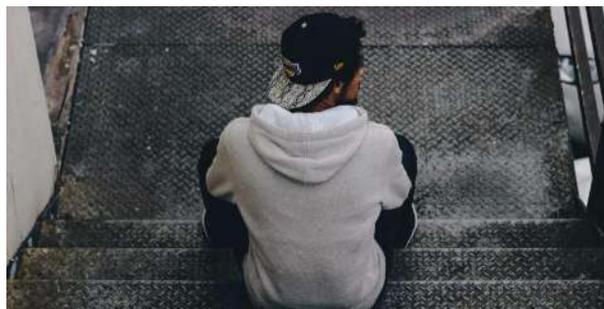
Jim's prepared ribs, roast beef, and even a turkey (with complete fixings) meal - all of which he says are prepared like his mother would do it. He believes the youths' favorite dish is his creamy two-cheese mac' and cheese, which has cheddar, Asiago and cottage cheese.

Jim also volunteers on Thursdays, helping staff put away and organize food deliveries. He feels his time volunteering relieves staff so that they can focus on the youth.

"While I'm cooking, the youth counselors can now do other things that they have to do. If you're in a position where you can give back, you should," Jim said.

Want to try out Jim's creamy two-cheese mac' and cheese? [Click here](#) for his recipe.

To learn about volunteering opportunities at Avenues, contact Craig Freeman, Avenues' Community Engagement Manager, at CFreeman@avenuesforyouth.org or 612.844.2005



National Youth Homelessness

Awareness Month

In recognition of National Youth Homelessness Awareness Month this November, Avenues is providing unique opportunities for our supporters to raise awareness and funds for youth homelessness.

Nourishing Dreams, a month long campaign with local restaurants, will take place throughout November. Participating restaurants are donating 10% (or more) of their proceeds to Avenues from one shift during one day of November! A complete list of restaurants will be sent to our supporters the week before November. Want to make the most of Nourishing Dreams? Consider planning a family or work dinner event at one of the Nourishing Dreams restaurants.



In addition to Nourishing Dreams, Avenues is encouraging supporters to spread awareness of youth homelessness by having an Avenues staff member speak at your workplace, committee, faith place, or other gathering. We want to inform our communities about the root causes of youth homelessness, the challenges youth face, and the dreams they can achieve. In early October, a past Avenues' youth spoke at [KPMG](#) to help kick-off their giving campaign.

Want to learn more or participate in Nourishing Dreams? Contact [Rachel Blair](#), Avenues' Marketing and Communications Specialist.

To learn more about an Avenues' representative speaking at your next gathering, contact [Craig Freeman](#), Avenues' Community Engagement Manager.