



AveNEWS November 2016

Avenues supports more than 300 youth a year - and we can't do it without you! To help homeless youth move from surviving to thriving, please click to donate.

[▶ DONATE NOW](#)

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**Mark Your
Calendars**

give
TO THE
MAX
NOV. 17, 2016

You can pre-schedule your donation for Give to the Max Day

Dear Friends,

Overheard from a youth recently about living at Minneapolis Avenues -- "This is the most stable I've ever been."

Stability is the first thing Avenues provides the hundreds of youth we support every year. A stable place to live, food and basic needs, support of caring adults, both staff and volunteers.

That stability provides the foundation on which our young people can move from surviving to thriving young adults. Stability makes it possible for them to DREAM about a different future for themselves, then to pursue their dreams.

Your support provides stability to Avenues! You make it possible for Avenues to support those hundreds of youth every year. Your support enables Avenues to DREAM about how to continue growing so we can support more.

Thank you for that stability through your support.
Thank you for dreaming with us.

Deb

Deborah Loon
Executive Director

by visiting our [GiveMN page!](#) Our goal is to make \$25,000 during Give to the Max, the cost of feeding all 33 youth at Brooklyn and Minneapolis Avenues for three months. Our Board of Directors has pledged to match \$15,000 - [schedule your donation now!](#)



Holiday Volunteering

The holidays are right around the corner and we're looking for volunteers to help us receive and wrap gifts for the youth. Brookdale Covenant Church has graciously allotted Avenues space in the church to receive, store, and wrap gifts donated to our youth.

We welcome all ages of volunteers to help us this holiday season. We are looking for volunteers to receive and store donations at Brookdale Covenant, as well as wrap presents on Dec. 17.

If you would like to contribute gifts and supplies for our youth this holiday season, our youths' wish lists will soon be available for our supporters!

Contact [Hailey Alexander](#) for more details about holiday volunteering and donations.

Voices for Dreams



Voices for Dreams, Brooklyn Avenues third annual benefit concert, was a success! Acclaimed gospel singer Robert Robinson was joined by the Cassidy Brothers, Brooklyn United Methodist Church



Nourishing Dreams

Twelve restaurants throughout the Twin Cities are NOURISHING DREAMS of homeless youth by donating part of their profits to Avenues during November!

Avenues' youth are provided three nutritious meals a day, plus snacks. Feeding our youth is our second largest expense behind staff wages. Local restaurants are giving back to make sure homeless youth reach their potential. After all, it's impossible to dream when in crisis.

[Check out this flyer](#) for the full list of participating restaurants and dates. Please join Avenues at one or more of the participating restaurants. Dine alone or bring a group. Help promote Nourishing Dreams by sharing the flyer at work and through your social media.

Can't make any of the dates? [Schedule a donation now for Give to the Max Day.](#)

Thanks for helping Avenues and these twelve restaurants Nourish Dreams!

For more information on Nourishing Dreams, contact [Rachel Blair](#), Avenues' Marketing and Communications Specialist



A True Community

Last month, Minneapolis homeless youth service

Dance Ministry, and our own community choir.



A special thank you to Dave Kiser, Brooklyn United Methodist Church, and the concert's sponsors - The Victor Donato Memorial Foundation, Hoffman & Swintek, Thrivent Financial, Diversified Plastics, and Channel 12.



Finally, the concert would not have been possible without our awesome planning committee - Brenda Reeves, Lynn Bohm, Thea Bruley, Gail Stone and Anna Donato.

Appreciation This Month

ROBINS / KAPLAN LLP

On Oct. 27, LGBTQ identified youth, Avenues staff, friends and allies gathered at the Roller Garden for "Queers on Wheels." Thank you [Robins Kaplan](#) for sponsoring this community building event - it's a community favorite!



Thank you to [Target](#) for believing in the impact of Avenues on the community and its youth. We are grateful for your strong financial support!

providers, including Avenues and the ConneQT Collaborative, won the True Community Award for our work on ending LGBTQ youth homelessness.

Avenues and our ConneQT partners (RECLAIM and The Link) accepted the award after speaking at the [True Colors 40 to None Summit](#) in Los Angeles, California. JP Arcani, Ryan Berg, Kelly Brazil (Avenues' staff) and ConneQT program participants attended the summit.

"Forty to none is the goal of the summit because 40% of homeless youth identify as LGBTQ," explained Ryan Berg, Avenues' ConneQT Host Home Program Manager.

ConneQT partners spoke at the summit about centering their work around mental health with a racial justice and gender justice lens. Attending youth also talked about their experiences in the ConneQT program, including a youth who received support from all three partners.

"Historically, programs and policies are designed by service providers who have never experienced homelessness," Ryan explained on why youth attended the conference. "Youth provide invaluable insight in designing and implementing programs."

To learn more about Avenues' efforts to end LGBTQ youth homelessness through our Host Home Programs, watch our NEW video.



Avenues Host Home Programs



Outside at Avenues

Thanks to Gray Plant Mooty, Wells Fargo and Rebuilding Together Twin Cities, both Brooklyn Avenues

and Minneapolis Avenues now have basketball courts!



Alerus Mortgage employees gathered over 40 pajama sets, as well as pillows, soaps and bath robes during its donation drive for Avenues youth. Thank you!



During the Twin Cities Book Festival, author Heidi Cullinan collected donations in honor of Avenues. Thank you for your support!

Avenues Wish List

It's about to get cold outside -we've updated our wish lists with our winter clothing needs. [Click here for a printable list.](#) Shop locally and deliver yourself to Avenues (email ahead halexander@avenuesforyouth.org). Or shop online at [Amazon](#), [Target](#) and [Walmart](#).

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.

We're Hiring

[On Call Youth Support Specialist](#)

[Youth Counselor Team Lead](#)

[Maintenance Technician](#)



In honor of the firm's 150th anniversary, Gray Plant Mooty made a special donation for a sport court at Minneapolis Avenues and sturdy basketball hoops at both sites. Then the firm sent 24 volunteers out for a half day to install the sport court and hoop.



Wells Fargo raised funds from its employees to complete the project when we learned we needed to import and compact a lot of gravel for the court base. They also supplied us with basketballs and nets. Rebuilding Together Twin Cities provided overall project coordination and supervision.



The snow may be flying soon, but youth and staff at Avenues will enjoy basketball for many years to come!



 Send to a Colleague



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Volunteer Spotlight:

Nan Brown and Crosby

Crosby and Gracie, certified therapy dogs, have been volunteering with Avenues for years. Gracie has been visiting Minneapolis Avenues with her owner, Cory Houseman, twice a month for more years than we can recall. Nan Brown and Crosby, her Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier, began volunteering for Brooklyn Avenues as soon as it was built. Crosby has volunteered his whole life, including weekly hours at the University of Minnesota Pet Away Worry and Stress (PAWS) program.

Crosby's training began as a puppy. He completed all four levels of Canine Good Citizen testing and took additional therapy classes at the humane society. His training included role playing around medical equipment and stressful situations. He's trained not to bark or startle easily in loud situations.

"I never previously thought that I would enjoy this age of kids," Nan said about volunteering with youth. "But now the youth and I talk about school, or even play video games."

Depending on their experiences with dogs, the youth come out to talk to and pet Crosby. Others just smile when they see him. Either way, once he's met a youth once or twice, Crosby is a friend for life.

"Dogs give unconditional friendship," Nan explained. "Crosby enjoys you, you enjoy Crosby, and Crosby doesn't need to know anything else."

Nan considers Crosby to be therapeutic not only for youth but for staff, who often stop what they're doing just to say hello. Nan says Crosby is always happy to lean on people, or give dog hugs.

"Life is merrier with a terrier," Nan said.

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