

## December 2023

I know I have shared in previous newsletters that the holidays can be a challenging time for folks we serve. In spite of all the decorations and cheer, the holidays can be difficult for anyone. Darla Marlow is a staff member that has been working the front desk as HOC for the past two years. Many patrons will tell you that Darla is a tough cookie—she tells it like it is and runs a tight ship. Patrons will also tell you that she is first in line to offer a smile and a helping hand. I will share that Darla is whip-smart and is always working to find ways to serve people better—she truly brightens people's days. Recognizing that folks were struggling as the holiday season was approaching, Darla posted an "I'm Thankful For..." list, inviting people to consider and share what they were thankful for this year. Here are some of the things our patrons shared:

- My children
- All the services HOC provides
- My health
- Staying out of prison
- Keeping a job
- Staying clean
- Having a bed
- My family
- Being clean from meth since November 2nd
- My hair
- Eternal life through Jesus
- Housing team speedy process of me getting housing

I am reminded constantly that in serving others, we are also blessed. I am so grateful to the staff at House of Charity and the many ways they show up to serve; from our kitchen staff to Operations Assistants such as Darla--all look for ways to uphold the dignity of each person that walks through our door. They serve with kindness and compassion, respect and hope. This is so needed this time of year, when it might be harder to remember all that good that surrounds us.

As we enter this Christmas season, what is on your "I'm Thankful For..." list? I hope your list is plentiful and that your season is filled with peace.

May your days be merry and bright!

Dena



*Darla Marlow, House of Charity Staff Member*