



The Magnifier

...news from Magnificat Houses

Magnificat Houses, Inc. (MHI)

Spring 2022

MHI Board Names Rafael Garcia to Take MHI's Helm on June 3

Magnificat Houses announces an upcoming change in leadership as seasoned business executive and former Board Chairman **Rafael Garcia** becomes interim executive director. **John Boyles**, executive director since 2017, will continue serving through June 3 to complete a major growth initiative to be announced in coming weeks.

A veteran of international mission works, Boyles was sought out by a Catholic religious order for a new leadership position supporting ongoing global mission projects and relief services for refugees and impoverished communities in underserved countries, details to be announced.

"John took months with his decision, first making sure he could leave MHI's mission on target," said current Board Chairman Suzanne Young. "In only five years, John has shepherded this organization from a private nonprofit to one integrated with the various City and County systems for helping the homeless get a solid

foothold in society. At this moment, we are on-point to double our services to the homeless, and Rafael Garcia has been one of the architects of that plan. We are up to the task," Young said.



IN THE SHADOW OF OUR FOUNDER...for five years, John Boyles and Rafael Garcia have been working together to lay the foundation for MHI's next 50 years.

Leading healthcare expert Dr. David Buck, founder of Healthcare for the Homeless and longtime supporter and guide to MHI writes, "John led Magnificat through a very tough time, and set it on a very successful trajectory. MHI is one of Houston's gems, and I look forward to continue working with you all."

MHI was founded in 1968 by social worker Rose Mary Badami, who envisioned a faith-based organization dedicated to creating compassionate communities where all, regardless of their backgrounds or misdeeds, are respect-

ed and invited to become the best version of themselves. MHI has been in continuous service to Houston's poor and displaced for 54 years through four areas of outreach: housing, meals, mental wellness, and skills training. Tens of thousands have passed through Magnificat's many doors.

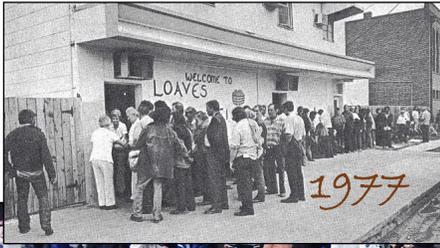
On a personal note...

As many of you know, I have been sought out by an international Catholic religious order to support programs easing the global poor, displaced and those seeking refuge. I have prayed over my decision and, with Magnificat's mission on track and future growth inevitable, I find myself called to accept this new challenge. I am deeply grateful for all Magnificat has taught me over these five years as executive director. My time here has been the privilege of a lifetime. Thank you for all your love and support.

In Our Ministries...

Feed the Hungry

In the First Quarter of 2022, Magnificat has served **38,504** free meals to guests in our neighborhood homes and at our downtown soup kitchen **Loaves & Fishes**. Soup kitchen meals continue to average **380.2** meals per day, a clear rise since pre-pandemic times. More Houston families, reacting to hard times and high prices, are coming to us. Our arms are always open to the hungry, no questions asked.



Clothe the Naked

These Lenten volunteers came all the way from **Pittsburgh's Duquesne University Campus Ministry** to spiff up our huge and versatile **Anawim Thrift Store**, which serves numerous functions in its under-

served northside neighborhood. **1st**, Anawim provides dignified clothing for those just coming into MHI housing from displacement or hard times. **2nd**, it serves as a retail training center for guests and members of our *St. Joseph Clubhouse*.

3rd, it offers very low cost provisions to the neighborhood's needy—and a great shopping experience for anyone seeking the eclectic and vintage finds. **4th**, Anawim

is the best place in town to pass yourself off as an angel—a photo op kids will love. Come try on our wings at 2102 Common Street. Hours: Monday through Saturday, 10 am to 4 pm, 832-831-4196



At St. Joseph Clubhouse



In our first Spring fully open since the Pandemic, we find ourselves grieving two community deaths.

Longtime member **Joan Broderick** passed away on April 1st. "**Miss Joanie**" is our longest tenured member, having joined The Clubhouse near its opening in the early 1990s. She loved working in the office where she could welcome visitors and spread her special brand of optimism to fellow members. She enthusiastically advocated for public health agendas benefitting those who struggle with depression or cringe from stigma.



"**Sue**" Mann generously shared her many talents and skills with the Clubhouse community. As she edited our newsletter, she empowered members by teaching writing, editing, layout and publishing skills, encouraging all to speak openly about their journey toward improved mental health. Sue herself struggled following a long battle with cancer. She passed away on April 5. We honor all she gave us, and know she loved us dearly.

Let us best remember these valued women by the joy and hope they gave us all!

Easter Dressed as the 12 Apostles, residents, staff and clergy reenact the ritual washing of the feet, reminding all that service to others is golden.



In Community, we celebrate everything...

Beanbag tossing probably isn't a game the mythical St. Patrick played—but our community has a big imagination and the skills to build our own games.

St. Patrick's Day



...and everyone

Back atcha, Erik!

Former Houston Oiler ADGER ARMSTRONG, a resident who met and married his late wife MARCI here, often comes home to Magnificat to offer support and courage to current guests and Club-house members, today for his friend Tobin.



The idea was to toss that big ole bag into that little old hole—and some did, by golly!



Saying Goodbye to Old Friends...

Two who shaped Magnificat's story with founder Rose Mary Badami have died in recent months. We honor them and their contribution to our legacy.



Theresa Plunkett (1927-2022)

Young Theresa stood with Rose Mary when Magnificat was just an idea. When our first house was struggling financially, Theresa gave up her own first apartment to devote her rent money to MHI, and moved in with four women needing mental health support. She kept

her day job working for a judge to help our founder's pilot house survive. Theresa died only a few rooms away from Rose Mary in St. Dominic. Thank you, Theresa.



Vincent Portillo (d. 2021)

The iconic **Loaves & Fishes** mural by fine artist Vincent Portillo stands as a testament to his artistry and his generosity. After a brief MHI residency in the late 1980's, Vincent remained devoted to Rose Mary, offering his talents to inspire and heal others as he had been healed.

When later he returned to his native Mexico he founded and directed his own Loaves & Fishes (**Panes y Peces**) in Nueva Laredo, dedicated to Rose Mary Badami.



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Confessions from the Back Office

With all the hassles staff must deal with in this business of a ministry, how do we know if it's worth it at all? It's not like being in the business of making a widget, where you put the parts together and see a finished product. In most cases we don't, or even know if any progress is being made toward one. The finished product for MHI is just knowing we have helped people who are lost or in need of a helping hand.



In yesterday's PayPal account I found a \$25 donation from a former resident. He wrote this in the notes column:

"I was a short-term guest (3 days), twice in the fall of 2019, at the Montrose house. Thank you for welcoming me."

I remember the name but not the face. I assume MHI gave him the helping hand to get him on his way, and he is now doing fine. It was all I needed to remind myself: we just need to just keep working on these broken widgets knowing we might never see the finished product. That's the job.

Evans Nucere, CFO

MHI GOLD TURNS PLATINUM!

GUIDESTAR has consistently cited MHI for our transparency, and now adds the Platinum Seal of Transparency 2022 designation from CANDID.

(We appreciate the citation, no matter what it's called.)



BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU

recognizes MHI's consistently low overhead—under 10%— which means more donor dollars go to our services to the hungry, homeless and mentally ill.



DONATE ANYTIME: www.mhihouston.org/donate

Thank you for your loving support of our mission!



Easter's ritual washing of the feet honors our tradition of mutual support in healing.