



**Magnificat  
Houses  
Inc.**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**ROSE MARY BADAMI, FOUNDER OF MAGNIFICAT HOUSES, INC. DIES AT 100,  
PIONEERING SOCIAL WORKER LEAVES A LEGACY OF ONGOING SERVICES**

HOUSTON, TX (June 3, 2024) - Rose Mary Badami, MSW, died quietly in her sleep on Saturday, June 1, 2024, 55 years after founding Magnificat Houses, Inc. (Magnificat or MHI), an enduring Houston non-profit addressing hunger, homelessness and mental illness.

In 1968, Rose Mary purchased a single house through private donations in a then-undesirable area now known as the Second Ward. Over time, Magnificat grew to encompass 15 residential properties, mostly neighborhood homes where the homeless and ex-offenders could re-enter society through a supportive, family-style environment. In 1972, Rose Mary began her iconic downtown Houston soup kitchen, Loaves & Fishes, which has operated continuously since 1976 at 2009 Congress serving a daily average of 340 meals to Houston's hungry residents.

By 1991, confident that mental illness underlies most social problems, Rose Mary founded St. Joseph House to offer free healing programs for Magnificat residents. With its 1995 accreditation by Clubhouse International, St. Joseph Clubhouse programs became free and open to anyone over 18 with a mental health diagnosis. Its adjacent two-acre park accommodates community-building activities, such as organic gardening, cookouts and holiday celebrations. The first graduate of the University of St. Thomas's new school of social work in 1954, Rose Mary logged in years of social work for Houston and Harris County agencies and for the Good Shepherd Home for Delinquent and Pre-Delinquent Girls. She also helped launch a home for displaced mothers and their children.

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By midlife, she was ready to launch her privately run non-profit, Magnificat House. Rose Mary speculated that given a dignified home and peer training, a group of displaced strangers could come to love and accept each other, share home tasks and responsibilities, and gain self-worth and confidence while they strived for an independent life.

Rose Mary developed a personal goal of “getting all the people off the streets that I can in my lifetime.” She sometimes drove the streets looking for downtrodden women, telling them to “Get in the car—I am taking you home.” There was no stopping Rose Mary if she saw someone she thought she could help.

Thousands of displaced persons have come through Magnificat’s doors over the past 55 years, and many have gained what they needed to become productive members of society. MHI Executive Director, Meredith Vaughan affirms, “Rose Mary created a ministry to serve the most vulnerable in our community, Magnificat Houses, Inc. It is our duty and privilege to continue her legacy indefinitely, and all of us at MHI will strive to do so.”

Born in 1923, Rose Mary was deeply affected by the Great Depression and the countless homeless men who came, hat in hand, to her grandmother’s back door. Instead of handing them a sack lunch, her grandmother invited the strangers into the dining room to eat on her best china. Rose Mary never forgot the dignity her grandmother bestowed on the helpless. It shaped her life and her career. Rose Mary never married and had no surviving siblings. Her family was the Magnificat community.

Service details are being arranged and memorial donations may be made online through [www.mhihouston.org/donate](http://www.mhihouston.org/donate) or by check to Magnificat Houses, Inc., P.O. Box 8486, Houston, TX, 77288. Please designate Badami Memorial. For more information, or to join Rose Mary’s tribute page in the MHI quarterly newsletter, *The Magnifier*, please contact the editor at [gmonti@mhihouston.org](mailto:gmonti@mhihouston.org).

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**About Magnificat Houses, Inc. (MHI)**

Magnificat Houses, Inc. is a welcoming community where those needing housing, food and mental health programs can stabilize and grow in productivity and independence. MHI offers refuge and hope by creating homes where displaced persons of differing mental abilities, social backgrounds, religions, and cultures can live together in a healing community. Now in its sixth decade, MHI has been in continuous service to Houston's poor and displaced through four areas of outreach: housing, meals, mental wellness, and skills training. MHI operates 15 housing structures in rotation in Houston neighborhoods, Loaves & Fishes Soup Kitchen serving 300-350 fresh meals six days per week, St. Joseph Clubhouse, free and open weekdays to those with mental health diagnoses, and also provides skills training through partnerships and in-house programs to empower those reentering society. 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 respected and invited to become the best version of themselves. Tens of thousands have passed through Magnificat's many doors and programs over the last 55 years.