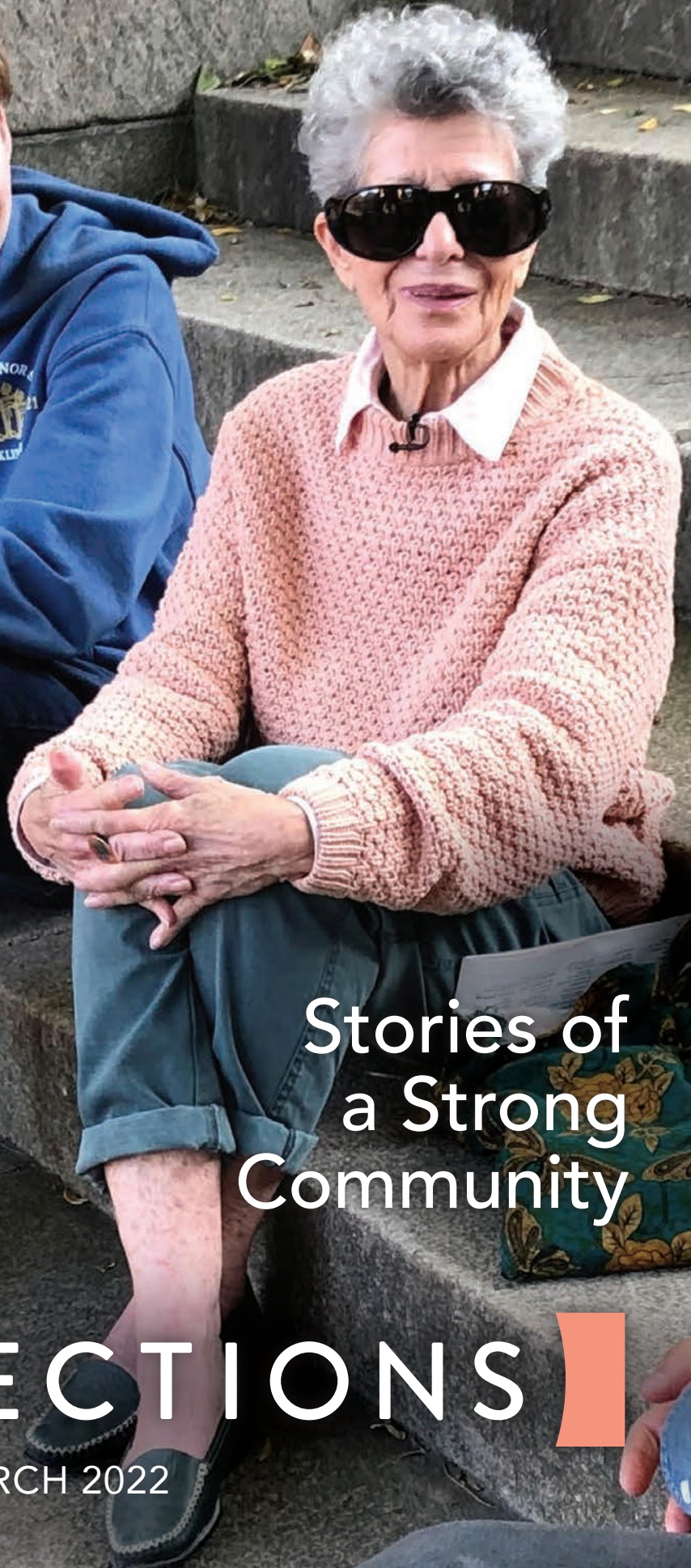


GENERATIONS HELPING

DOROT

GENERATIONS HELPING



Stories of
a Strong
Community

CONNECTIONS

MARCH 2022

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Dear Friends,

One of the most important things I've learned from my years of work with older adults is how to take the long view. By that I mean that when I'm able to put things in perspective, I can see unique growth opportunities, even in challenging times, like these past two pandemic years.



In the first quarter of 2022, DOROT is preparing to relaunch our in-person programs when it is safe to do so, and to grow our programs to serve older adults. With your continued support we will grow strategically and smartly.

I would like to personally thank DOROT staffers Gretchen Quinn, Elazar Stepansky, Rochelle Banks and Amelia Kramer for their many years of service to DOROT and the residents of the Homelessness Prevention Program. See page 5 for a photo tribute to four of the most compassionate and committed people I've ever known.

Thank you for staying connected with DOROT.

Sincerely,

Mark L. Meridy
Executive Director



When Nathaniel Met Marilyn

To understand the magic of Generations Helping Generations, look no further than Marilyn Warner and Nathaniel Tanenbaum.

Marilyn and Nathaniel met this summer in DOROT's Summer Teen Internship Program (STIP). A young-at-heart 70+ Upper West Sider, Marilyn came to DOROT looking for connection during the pandemic. Nathaniel, an 18-year-old high school senior from Brooklyn, joined the program for community service credit and to meet new people. Two people from two different generations coming together over Zoom to listen, talk, share and connect in a meaningful way.

"I think we need programs like this to get our social engines working again,"

said Nathaniel. "Talking to strangers takes certain skills that are intimidating to develop."

"I truly look forward to our conversations," said Marilyn. "Nathaniel is a fascinating young man with a wide range of interests – we can and do talk about most everything – our age difference only makes the conversations more fun."

From Nathaniel's college applications and Marilyn's grandchild to their shared interest in travel, theater, film and history, the conversations and emails flow easily. In a recent email exchange the two compared the original *West Side Story* to the new version of the movie, and discussed how the Broadway show *Hamilton* is as educational as it is entertaining.

In late fall last year, they had the opportunity to meet in person. "That hug. I'm glad we got it on film," said Marilyn. A new friendship, literally spanning the ages.

Adult 65+ Volunteer Opportunities

Calling all young-at-heart 65+ volunteers to engage with teens during DOROT's STIP program this summer.

LEARN MORE AT
WWW.DOROTUSA.ORG/65



A Toolbox of New Skills

Did you know that March is National Social Work Month? At DOROT, social work is at the heart of every program and service we offer to keep older adults socially connected and bring the generations together.

As we move into a third year of pandemic life, we reached out to a few dedicated DOROT social workers to learn what they're hearing from older adults they connect with every day. In short, while there is a very real sense of weariness, it's balanced by resilience, strength and a toolbox of new skills to help cope and thrive during this new normal. Here are some of the common trends they shared:

Zoom Boom: It's no surprise that Zoom continues to play an outsized role in

the lives of older adults. While "Zoom fatigue" is hitting some, virtual programs continue to be a bright spot. Whether it's a virtual visit to a museum, a concert, a class on the legacy of civil rights icons or mindfulness meditation, older adults are exploring new worlds on a daily basis. And for those seniors who had difficulty attending in-person events, Zoom events have been nothing less than transformative.

Sign up for the Onsite@Home weekly newsletter by emailing DOROTPrograms@dorotusa.org

A Virtual Hug: For some DOROT seniors, the pandemic has provided a new opportunity to find and give support. Intimate, online support

groups, convened by social workers, are helping to foster a comforting routine in these troubled times. In fact, seniors who may have never considered participating in an in-person group are finding a new level of social connection from their own homes.

Learn more about support groups by calling **212-769-2850**

Helping Others: Volunteering is one of the best ways to find purpose in life. This is certainly true for many DOROT seniors who have found meaning through volunteering from home. From joining an intergenerational workshop, playing online chess with teens or forming new friendships over the telephone, volunteers aged 65+ are discovering that the benefits of volunteering are truly mutual.

Learn more about volunteering, email **sharemywisdom@dorotusa.org**

Trying Something New: Social workers also shared that older adults are taking this time to discover, or rediscover, new creative pursuits. Cooking, painting, diving into the world of podcasts, writing memoirs and creating photo albums and family trees are just some of the ways DOROT seniors are crafting their own silver linings during this time.

A few tips from DOROT social workers that benefit everyone:

- Honor your own feelings! Remember to take it slow.
- Reach out to someone you haven't spoken to in a while. They might be thinking about you, too!
- Step out of your comfort zone and try a new creative hobby.
- Not confident on Zoom? Contact a DOROT Tech Coach for 1:1 help at **917-441-3706**.
- Put your mental and physical health first. Don't skip your regular doctor's check-ups and reach out to DOROT for mental health resources at **212-769-2850**.
- Remember to get your COVID-19 booster and flu shot.
- Be kind to yourself. We're all doing the best we can!

Learn more about creative workshops, email **lastingimpressions@dorotusa.org**

Thank you to Jane Blumenstein, Daniel Jackson and Jackie Pykon.



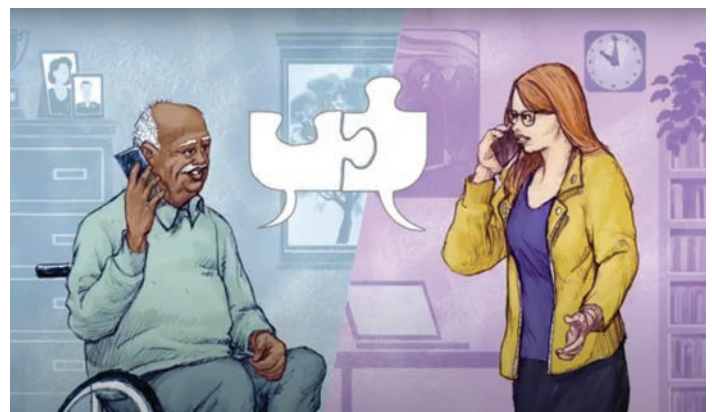
Caring Calls and the Joy of Connection

“It’s a wonderful concept to bring different generations together – something in this culture we don’t do enough of,” notes Kamal, a 78-year-old retiree in Manhattan, sparked by his new friendship with Abigail, a 21-year-old UPenn undergraduate.

Abigail and Kamal are among more than 1,400 Caring Calls matches made by DOROT during the past two years, forming meaningful friendships over the phone and across 42 different states across the country! Its popularity has led to the creation of new iterations of the program, including one for older adults and volunteers who identify as LGBTQ+.

As a testament to the success of the program, in late 2021, the NYS Department of Aging sought DOROT’s assistance to develop tools for a statewide rollout of a program modeled on Caring Calls. The “Friendly Calls”

program will match volunteers across New York with older adults, individuals with disabilities or caregivers for weekly calls and connection. DOROT produced a package of four animated microlearning videos and training manuals to support “Friendly Calls” volunteers throughout their journey. You can see an image from one of the videos below.



To learn more about participating and volunteering in Caring Calls, email volunteers@dorotusa.org



**Gretchen Quinn
Elazar Stepansky
Rochelle Banks
Amelia Kramer**

For more than 35 years, their everyday acts of kindness and compassion, with their ability to navigate the world of transitional housing in New York City, gave home and hope to older adults in need at DOROT's Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP).

While the doors at the HPP closed in February due to the changing landscape of funding for homelessness housing programs, its long-term success was no doubt a product of the work of this core team. We thank them for helping New York's most vulnerable older adults find stability, a caring community and permanent homes.





171 West 85th Street
New York, NY 10024
212.769.2850



CONNECTIONS

MARCH 2022



MAILING AREA

SAVE THE DATE

Annual Benefit

Wednesday, June 15, 2022

6:30pm EDT

Harvard Club | 35 W 44th St. | New York City

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