“First of all, thank you. You may not see the progress, but by helping one of us you are helping all of us. Everyone is looking for a miracle; you helped me get mine.”

- Brad, Thrive DC Client

2017 Year-end Impact Report
A Conversation with Executive Director Alicia Horton

What was 2017 like for Thrive DC?
2017 was an extremely difficult year for many reasons. A changing political environment, changing city priorities and the loss of funding, and an extremely challenging grant year (some of our grants had very stringent standards) all combined to weigh heavily on our staff.

Because of all these things and more, there was a general feeling of uncertainty among staff and clients that made things particularly challenging.

What was the low point in 2017?
Staff reductions. When the city cut our funding it had harsh repercussions, and we had to let go of staff that were very near and dear to our heart. We also had to cut our hot meal program down to three days a week, which was disappointing on a number of levels.

What was the high point?
Seeing how people rallied in our hour of need was both heartening and reassuring. We had some incredible fundraising events that gave me hope. It was a time when we had to take a page from our clients’ book and just keep going on despite the obstacles.

They do this every day, and it’s inspiring to me how they don’t just persevere, but stay resilient while maintaining their positivity and gratitude. If I could have a dollar for every time a client told me “When I hit the lottery I’m going to take care of Thrive...”

Knowing how much people appreciate and treasure our services was and is incredibly uplifting.

What are you most proud of from 2017?
While it was sad and frustrating to see our meal programs suffer, Thrive DC is also much more than just emergency services.

Last year we secured grant funding that let us expand our Workforce Development, Re-Entry, and Substance Abuse programs and have seen some amazing progress from the clients using those services.

For example, 90% of the clients who regularly participate in our Substance Abuse program have stopped using drugs or alcohol. That’s an incredible testament to the need our clients have for these programs and the life-changing work that’s happening here.

Thrive has undergone a lot of changes over its 39 years. This isn’t the first time we’ve lost or added programs. What, to you, is the essence of Thrive DC?

The essence of Thrive DC is our family. Staff, clients, volunteers, and donors all make up a family that supports each other through the tough times and celebrates hard-won triumphs.

Other organizations may provide similar services. What makes us unique is that even though we do big numbers (see pages 3 & 9) we still act like a small family: personal, friendly, and open-armed.

People just like being here in a way that some bigger organizations lose as they grow.
I started volunteering with Thrive almost four years ago when my neighbor told me about Thrive DC. For a long time I had wanted to work with an organization that supported people in homelessness. When I found out I could bring my kids as well I thought “Bingo!”

I wanted to make sure my daughters experienced life outside our bubble. I felt that Thrive DC could be transformative if my girls learned the stories of our homeless clients and understood that people are so much more than their circumstances.

Four years later, this has been an amazing experience. I have volunteered with similar organizations in the past and couldn’t leave quickly enough. But at Thrive DC I leave better than when I enter.

I might come to Thrive in a bad mood, worried about the world’s problems or frustrated with my family, but I leave encouraged and emboldened by the hugs I receive and the conversations I have.

Want to see the rest of Denise’s article? Read about her most powerful moments volunteering on our website! www.thrivedc.org
No matter what obstacles we faced in 2017, you made your impact felt.

This chart represents some of the core services and resources that you made possible last year.

And it doesn’t cover nearly half of it! What isn’t pictured are other services like the $5,000 in prescription medicine you helped our clients secure, or the 900+ doctor’s visits you made possible with our transportation program.

On behalf of all the clients that these services impacted, thank you.
Thank You For Your Support

Thrive DC is very thankful to the following businesses, organizations, and foundations that believed in our clients and supported their journeys out of homelessness so generously last year.

These organizations helped thousands of clients avoid hunger, stay clean, get back to work, get sober, re-enter the community after incarceration, and stay warm during the winter.

**$100,000+**
United Planning Organization

**$50,000—$99,999**
DC Department of Employment Services
DC Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants

**$25,000—$49,999**
William S. Abell Foundation
DC Department of Behavioral Health
The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation
Greater Washington Community Foundation – City Fund
J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation
Share Fund

**$10,000—$24,999**
Agua Fund, Inc.
Naomi and Nehemiah Cohen Foundation
Harman Family Foundation
Helping Children Grow
Jovid Foundation
MAC AIDS Fund
Wayne and JoAnn Moore Charitable Foundation
Shrine of the Blessed Sacrament
Sylarn Foundation
VIDA Fitness/Urban Adventures Companies

**$5,000—$9,999**
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees
DC Mayor’s Office on Latino Affairs
Embassy of the United Arab Emirates
Emergency Food and Shelter Program
Green Charitable Foundation Inc.
Corina Higginson Trust
Lainoff Family Foundation
Little River United Church of Christ
Richard E. and Nancy P. Marriott Foundation
Martone Construction
Westmoreland Congregational United Church of Christ
Workers of St. Albans

**$1,000—$4,999**
Ben’s Chili Bowl Foundation
Carita Foundation
Caucus Salvadoreño Empresarial Inc.
Chaedrol Inc.
Charities Aid Foundation
Commercial Real Estate Women (CREW) DC
Crestwood Citizens Association
Eisenhower School
ExxonMobil
Gives Inc.
Government Affairs Industry Network (GAIN)
Ivy and Coney LLC
John Snow, Inc.
Kangaroo Boxing LLC
Magruder’s of DC
Maximus Foundation
Metropolitan A.M.E. Church
Miller and Chevalier Charitable Foundation
Prime Settlement
Rock Spring United Church of Christ
Sterne, Kessler, Goldstein & Fox
TCG Inc.
The United Church
United Jewish Endowment Fund – Clement C. and Sandra K. Alpert Philanthropic Fund
UPS Foundation
Urban Brokers, LLC
Washington Chapter of Jack & Jill
World Bank
World Services, LLC

Special recognition to the following businesses and organizations that provided significant in-kind support:

Capital Area Food Bank  Support the Girls
Food Authority  VIDA Fitness
FRESHFARM Markets  Janney Elementary School
Pret A Manger
That Sandwich Meant Everything To Me

Angel had second thoughts the first time he walked into Thrive DC.

“Initially, I thought this place was too rough for me. I didn’t feel like someone who belonged here. But then a staff member came over to welcome me and give me a sandwich.

“That sandwich meant everything to me; I had no money and no place to go. That sandwich said ‘don’t give up, stay strong.’”

Angel needed help finding a job. He was living in a closet paying $200/month just to sleep at night. Thankfully, Thrive DC was able help him out with a job immediately. Less than a week after Angel came for help he was set up with a job at a local grocery store.

“At first it was very good, easy work with a lot of hours. Then they started giving me less, first 30, then 20 hours. And you can’t live on that.”

Angel respectfully let Thrive DC know that he was going to quit his job, and went to a friend who had his own painting company. When there was a job it was a good arrangement; but every day there was the risk that they might not get a call, or the job wouldn’t pay enough to cover his bills.

Eventually he ran out of options and came back to Thrive.

This time things were different. Angel came looking for help right when a position was opening up at the International Monetary Fund. The Thrive DC staff was impressed with Angel’s drive, determination, and demeanor, and immediately recommended him for the position. After a short interview and background check Angel was hired!

Angel’s been at his new job for several months now and is making $15/hr with benefits. He plans to stay in the small one-bedroom apartment he’s been renting and save up money. Angel has a plan, and never wants to worry about becoming homeless ever again.

“I made so many mistakes, so many. But now I have this chance and am going to do the right thing.”

Angel with Job Developer Kiyara Zerbager
Where Does Thrive DC Get It’s Funding...

This is one of the most common questions we get asked.

The chart below shows the (unaudited) breakdown of our funding for 2017. One of the biggest changes next year will be a shrinking of the Government slice. With the reduced city support for our Emergency Services, we’re focusing on raising more from the community to help meet our client’s most basic needs.

...And Where Does It Go?

The chart below shows the breakdown in how we spent what we received in 2017. As you can see, **84% of what we receive goes directly to programs**, and most of that is for Emergency Services: meals, showers, laundry and other day-to-day supports.

Join The Next Step Team

Meeting our clients’ day-to-day needs without the city’s help is going to be tough in 2018. But one of the easiest and most impactful ways you can help is with an automatic monthly donation.

To join our Next Step Team as a monthly donor, visit our website at [www.thrivedc.org/nextstepteam](http://www.thrivedc.org/nextstepteam) or contact our Community Relations Manager at 202-503-1528 or greg@thrivedc.org.

Without the city’s support, our clients need help they can count on. **You can be that help.**
The **2017 CasA Crestwood Tour of Homes** attracted hundreds of people to six beautiful homes and one jaw-dropping church.

The annual event, presented by the Crestwood Citizens Association, raised more than $7,000 for our client services. Special thanks go to event sponsors Urban Brokers, LLC and TTR Sotheby’s-Mahshie Fazio Partnership.

With over 600 registrants (and more than a dozen dogs) the **third annual VIDA Thrive 5k** continued as Thrive DC’s largest event. Since its inception the 5k run/walk has raised over $41,000 for our programs.

Thank you to VIDA Fitness and event sponsors Territory Foods and Woodway.

Stay tuned for information on these and other events in 2018!

### New Start Society

Without the support of hundreds in our Thrive DC family, our mission to end and prevent homelessness in Washington, DC would be impossible. We especially thank the following members of the **New Start Society**, Thrive DC’s major donors, for their generous help this year.

Members of the New Start Society commit to donating $1,000 or more annually to help our homeless clients. If you would like more information on how you can be a member, please contact Development Director Daniel Meloy at 202-503-1523 or [daniel@thrivedc.org](mailto:daniel@thrivedc.org).

**$5,000+**
- Anonymous
- Jennie Bonney and Isaac Shapiro
- Matt and Cindy Cutts
- Camille and Larry Martone

**$2,500—$4,999**
- Michelle and David Baldacci
- Patrick Buehler
- Chava Brandriss
- Alex Dewar
- Maura Dollymore
- Steven Groening and Stephen Strasser
- April Irwin and Kevin Kuhar
- Gracy Obuchowicz
- James Norton
- Patrick Pearsall & Mitchell Reich
- Suzanne Richeson

**$1,000—$2,499**
- Anonymous (3)
- Luca Bertazzo
- Joanna Cohen
- Caitlin Cummings
- Jill DePort
- Amy Freekman
- Jeff and Leslie Furst
- Brenda and Tom Hammond, Jr
- Masha and Eric Hansford
- The Johnson Family
- Michael and Nancy Kator
- Samuel Kupfer
- Margaret Lawless
- Jenna Mack
- Lucy Mack
- Annie and Paul Mahon
- David Merrell
- Nicholas Michael
- Stephen Miller
- Patrick O’Brien
- Barbara Paulsen and Teo Furtado

**$1,000—$2,499**
- Synina Pugh-Jackson
- Kate and Aaron Rabinowitz
- Ankita Ritwik and Sachin Desai
- Michael Robbins
- Sam Rudy
- Julie Silvers
- Sharmila and Theo Sitther
- Kathleen Smith
- Lon Smith
- Sally and Francis Smith
- Caryn Sweeney
- Jean Trompeter
- Carrie and Jack Wood
- Paul Varnado and Lauren Wrosek
- Patricia Weaver and John Buckley
- Andrea and Ken Weckstein
- Betsy Whalen
- Sarah Williams
Our Re-Entry program teaches clients the life skills they need to be a part of the community again.

It teaches them how to keep a job, how to pay their bills, how to rebuild relationships with their family, that every criticism is not a personal attack, and how to handle their new responsibilities and freedom.

*Most importantly, it show our clients that their life isn’t over yet.*

*It’s OK for them to dream big plans again.*

I have a client who recently achieved 30 days of sobriety.

*He used to use drugs every single day.*

His birthday was over the winter holidays. On New Year’s Eve his “friends” came by to visit. When he opened the door they offered him his drug of choice.

“Let us in,” they said, “and this will be your birthday present.”

*He told them no!*
One client came to the Employment Program while he was still sleeping rough on the street.
He had a lifetime of experience, but didn’t know how to write a good resume or apply for jobs online. He was embarrassed about his situation and not knowing the “obvious” skills that younger workers did.

**With our support and connections, we were able to get him his first supervisor’s job!**
Six months later he is thriving and looks like a completely different person.

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**I had one client stop using drugs because of music therapy.**

One afternoon she heard me singing “Rise Up” by Audra Day. She became overwhelmed by her emotions and the message of the song.

She told me that she hears me singing that song in her head every time she wants to get high.

The memory and her desire to get sober help her stay strong.

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**I will always remember this conversation with a first time client:**

"What? I can get a bag of groceries and a meal?"

“Absolutely! We also have showers if you need it.”

“I would love to shower. But I don’t have clean underwear or any sanitary supplies.”

“Not a problem. I can help you with new undergarments and we have plenty of hygiene supplies for you.”

“But if I shower now I won’t get to eat!”

“Don’t worry. We’ll keep your plate warm until you are done.”

With eyes full of tears, she told me:

**“What don’t you do here? I’m not used to being treated like this. This is a wonderful place!”**
**2018 — Our Priority for the New Year**

2017 was a hard year. But even so, we’re excited about the new possibilities of 2018.

Because the city has cut its funding we are no longer obligated to follow all of their requirements. This year we have the opportunity and freedom to serve our clients in new ways and to try new things to improve their chances of success.

And with that freedom we’re focused on making improvements generally and focusing on:

**Increasing resources and support for**

**single homeless women in Washington, DC**

As of December 2017, our Executive Director Alicia Horton has been nominated to be a member of the city’s Interagency Council on Homelessness. For the past year she has served on a Women’s Task Force for the ICH, documenting the unique needs of homeless women (for the results of their study, visit our website!).

Now she will have the chance to put their recommendations into practice.

At Thrive DC too we are making changes. As we head into the new year we will be hiring a new Women’s Program Coordinator. This new hire will work with Alicia to change our programming and address the needs uncovered by the Women’s Task Force.

39 years ago we started as the Dinner Program for Homeless Women, and their well-being continues to be a special concern for us today.

It could have been easy for us last year in our budget cuts to eliminate the women’s program. And in the city that is generally what’s been done for homeless women in the face of financial crisis.

But at Thrive DC, we don’t stop helping our family because it gets hard, and we won’t let the city do that either. As we rededicate ourselves to this especially vulnerable population, look for more updates in our next Impact Report.
She told me:

"I will sit at Virginia Williams every day, all day, until somebody helps me and my kids.

But when I am done sitting there, I am so glad I can come here with my kid for some good food and kind smiles."

- Alicia, Staff