“Recovery does work. It works.” says Paterra Warren, a Peer Recovery Coach on staff at Santa Maria. “Everything that I have done is because of my drug addiction, but also my big accomplishments are because of my drug addiction. If all of those things had never happened to me, I wouldn’t be where I am today. I wouldn’t have this purpose, this job. It made me into what I am today.”

Paterra has learned that addiction does not discriminate. Different from many, Paterra’s childhood was wonderful. She was raised in a loving home, full of family fun, vacations, and school life. However, she was drawn into the wrong crowd and found that she liked to drink alcohol. Alcohol made her bolder, more “wild.” Early on, however, she found she drank to become drunk.

>more inside
FROM DARK TO LIGHT

CONTINUED FROM COVER STORY

At college, she quickly fell into her old habit of drinking which soon led to abusing drugs. To maintain her drug habit and lifestyle, she needed money, so she turned to prostitution. After years of a dangerous life, she was finally introduced to Santa Maria through STAR Drug Court, a diversion court that supports opportunities for treatment and change rather than punishment.

She participated in treatment at Santa Maria’s Jacquelyn House for 90 days. She then moved into transitional housing at Well Springs. She got a job, and she continued outpatient treatment at Career in Recovery. “Recovery has to do with being connected. Staying connected.” Into her fifth year of sobriety, she is a successful graduate of STAR Drug Court, a certified community health care worker, a Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor Intern, and is currently working towards a degree in social work.

Recently hired as the Peer Recovery Support Specialist for the Women with Children program, she says “I love what I do. And that’s why I wouldn’t change what happened back then because of all of that I am here today.” Her growth radiates through her story. “I’m willing, I’m open-minded, I’m teachable and each day brings something new and something different. Every day I just ask God to work through me, because at the end of the day it is not about me, my story is not for me. It is for others.”

She is the face of RecovHERy.
A NON-_TRANSACTIONAL STORE OPENS AT SANTA MARIA

On Thursday June 28, Santa Maria, in partnership with Palais Royal, hosted the Grand Opening of a brand new, on-site, non-transactional store that is accessible to all women receiving services at Santa Maria. This store is stocked with donations from Palais Royal, so the women of Santa Maria can come "shop" to fulfill their basic needs and the needs of their children.

Before the ribbon cutting, Nadine Scamp, CEO of Santa Maria stated, “Santa Maria is about restoring lives and restoring hope. So, this store really represents the first opportunity for them (our clients) and allows them to see that they are in a safe place where people are going to love them no matter where they've been because we know their past does not determine their future.”

In his remarks, Bill Gentner, EVP and CMO of Stage Stores said, “We know that it is so important to not just be in our communities but to be a part of them and give back. So for that reason, we have our Community Counts program. For that it is such an important deal for us to make people lives better, and I can't imagine doing it at a better place than here, with you.”

If you'd like to help us keep this store fulled stocked, we welcome new or gently used women and children clothing. Please contact Cynthia Turner at cturner@santamariahostel.org to coordinate donations.
NURSE LIS
BRINGS CALM TO THE STORM OF NEW MOTHERHOOD

Nurse Lis Holland has one goal: to do whatever she can to strengthen women for their release from a life of incarceration, marginalization and stigma. For 30 years, she has been working with pregnant women and new mothers to give birth to healthy and happy babies. Here at Santa Maria, she enjoys her time counseling women one-on-one to navigate the medical system and learn what they need to be safe and secure.

This work began in the Dallas area where as a nurse she worked with babies born to women struggling with drug dependence. She realized that in order to help the babies she needed to teach the moms. On her own she began comprehensive prenatal education and care in the Dallas County Jail. She formed a non-profit, recruiting women interested in helping moms and kids have a fighting chance. They formed a curriculum that stressed resiliency and empowerment. They made a difference.

Not long after relocating to Houston, she was employed by Santa Maria Hostel (SMH) to coordinate medical services for the Mommies program, a community based intervention program which works with pregnant women dependent on opioids. Since 2016, this team has been leading the charge to improve birth outcomes for both moms and babies. As a Certified Addiction Registered Nurse, a rare certification, Nurse Lis is compassionate, empathetic and understanding of the rejection these women feel. If the women are rejected, their children are also. She works to make the joy of motherhood and healthy births, the norm.

Lis is a lifelong learner, always expanding her reach when possible. She has become involved in the maternal mortality crisis in Texas and works with Nadine Scamp, CEO to help bring awareness and best practices to this statewide focus. She believes that a “little tincture of kindness” goes a long way to reaching those marginalized and forgotten. SMH is fortunate to have her on the team.

MILA SCULPTURE AND PERFORMANCE

We were honored to partner once again with artist Branislav Jankic for MILA—a sculpture and performance created as a continuation of his 2013 project at Santa Maria Letter To My Mother. The performance was held at Bonita House on June 20th, 2018.

In this participatory performance, one hundred and seventy six clients and alumni were invited into a quiet room in small groups of four and five. With a cast bronze nail, each woman worked to carve her name, or the name of a loved one, into a diamond shaped table designed by the artist for this purpose. In this way, each client assisted in bringing this sculpture into life. The sculpture is made of salvaged wood shaped as a European symbol of motherhood and fertility.

Powerful moments were experienced trough the three-hour performance. The large room was a quiet place for reflection where the striking sounds of the woman carving their names and the movements of their hands were the highlight. A camera placed in the ceiling of the room recorded the performance. The artist moved around the room witnessing the work and capturing these moments with his camera. This project is one of many on going efforts by the artist toward lifting the stigma facing women in recovery.

THANK YOU TO THE LEVENSON FOUNDATION FOR FINANCIALLY SUPPORTING THIS PROJECT AND FOR THE ONGOING SUPPORT THEY HAVE GIVEN TO THE ARTIST AND THE RECOVERY COMMUNITY.
SANTA MARIA LUNCHEON

A New Start Luncheon, benefiting Santa Maria Hostel, was held on Tuesday, May 22 at the River Oaks Country Club, to honor and recognize the many women and families whose lives have been transformed as a result of their recovery.

Deborah Duncan, host of Great Day Houston with KHOU-TV, was awarded the “Visionary Award”. Branislav Jankic was honored with the “Rise Award.” Jankic is a Serbian-American artist, director and photographer based in New York and Chicago. His wife Monika Jagaciak accepted the award on his behalf.

Two of Santa Maria former clients, Lisa Carpenter and Michelle Hansford, were the guest speakers and shared their inspiring stories with all our guests.

We’d like to thank our Board members, our sponsors, staff, community partners, volunteers, and guests who made our 3rd Annual Luncheon a great success!

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO SUPPORTED OUR MISSION BY ATTENDING THE RISE 2018 LUNCHEON
TEXANS DAY OF CARING

On Saturday, April 28, dozens of volunteers from the Houston Texans Organization, Palais Royal, and United Way of Greater Houston visited the Jacquelyn House and experienced first-hand how their support makes a difference as they helped to take care of our campus. This amazing group of volunteers put their time and effort to work by cleaning bed plants and adding mulch, re-staining benches, painting offices, painting the outside fence, and power washing the outdoor furniture and basketball court. They contributed a total of 222 volunteer hours and approximately $1,000 in supplies donated. So much was accomplished in one day and our facility was definitely looking prettier. Thank you to the many volunteers who helped!

We were honored to host two Houston Texans players—Bryce Jones, corner back, and Andre Hal, safety.