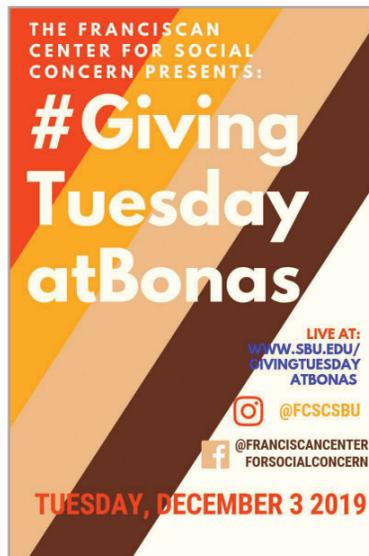




Franciscan Center for Social Concern
P.O. Box AR
St. Bonaventure, NY 14778



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the Warming HOUSE

COMMUNITY • DIGNITY • NOURISHMENT

Fall 2019



By Alice Miller Nation

MISSION INTO PASSION

Each time I park my car at the entrance of the Warming House I try to remember to take a deep breath. It's my way of reflecting and remembering my small place in the lineage of those who have mentored students and cared for 40 years' worth of Warming House guests who long for community, nutrition and dignity.

The Warming House student leadership team meets every three weeks. During these meetings, we try to thoughtfully plan for what lies ahead, share our stories of

recent experiences with our guests and offer support to one another as these students undertake quite possibly one of the most unique and challenging jobs they will ever have during their college career. At our most recent meeting, one of the things I emphasized was this: The difference between a GOOD organization and a GREAT organization is attention to detail.

When we pay attention to taking care of the smallest of everyday tasks, things get easier and the mission suddenly transforms into a passion. I encouraged the student leadership team to give attention to the details that come with running the Warming House. When these details are cared for, the Warming House not only looks neater and cleaner, it looks like a home – a place where guests and volunteers alike are happy to gather. Together.

Unfortunately, many of the individuals and families that come to the Warming House are invisible to much of society. Either people don't notice them or ignore them in many day-to-day encounters.

But, they're not "invisible" to us.

The Warming House provides a place where all are welcome and we try to learn the names and stories of our guests. It's a safe place, where all are valued and

treated respectfully. It is my hope that the student leadership team at the Warming House practice and embody these skills while serving our guests so that they can not only better serve them, but better serve our world upon receiving their diplomas.

As you can imagine, the Warming House runs on a shoestring budget. The Franciscan Center for Social Concern is responsible for raising the funds needed to provide this service to our brothers and sisters in the Greater Olean community.

From the bottom of my heart, I thank you for your generosity and prayers for the Warming House. Whether you might have worked at the Warming House many years ago as a student or simply want to support the good works of St. Bonaventure students today, please know how grateful we are for your continued support. Thanks to your kind generosity, we are able to continue serving those in need while teaching and practicing Franciscan values with our current students.

Blessings! If you find yourself in Olean, please stop by the Warming House. One of our student coordinators would love to give you a tour and share a cup of coffee with you.

Peace and all good,
Alice Miller Nation



Chance Relationship Fosters New Partnership

By Cameron Hurst, '19



Serendipity. It's defined as "the occurrence and development of events by chance in a happy or beneficial way."

It's also the perfect word to describe a new partnership between the Warming House and Chosen Grove Farm, a pastured, antibiotic-free, non-GMO organic farm located in Canandaigua, New York.

Talks between Franciscan Center for Social Concern Director Alice Miller Nation and farm co-owner Cory Westbrook, a close family friend, began over the summer.

"Alice was up to my folks' house and we were all sitting around and talking about her job with the Warming House and how it relates to St. Bonaventure University," said Cory. "We didn't say much at that point in time, but when we got home, my wife, Amanda, brought up maybe doing something in regard to providing food so as to help the Warming House."

As fate would have it, not only is Amanda a double-graduate of

St. Bonaventure, but also a former student of lecturer of business John Stevens. She experienced the Warming House as part of Stevens' Management 301 course.

"She really enjoyed her experience and she was excited about this connection to the Warming House through my family through Alice Miller Nation," said Cory, who talked about how fondly Amanda had remembered her time at the Warming House.

The Westbrooks felt the time had come to give back to the community, and approached Miller Nation with the idea of allocating 70 chickens for the Warming House.

"I called Alice and told her about the idea and told her what we wanted to do, and she thought it was a great idea and was happy to be on the receiving end of some of these pastured, non-GMO birds," said Cory, referring to the group of chickens as the "Bona Batch."

The Westbrooks began the farm in 2016 with just laying hens.

"Amanda wanted just a small batch of laying hens so that we could have eggs for breakfast," Cory said, laughing. "Honest to God, that was the goal there."

But, then we had enough chickens and they laid enough eggs that we started giving them out to family and friends. We started getting heavy into egg production and started doing pretty decent numbers of eggs."

They started to expand, and admit they are still learning every day. They use a unique mobile-coup method so that the chickens can be moved from grassy area to grassy area. "We are really committed to this, for all our animals," Cory said. "No animals have a barn. A lot of animals, if raised on hard-packed ground, start to have illnesses. We avoid that with this method."



▲ Cory and Amanda Westbrook, co-owners of Chosen Grove Farm

Moving forward, Amanda and Cory have said that Chosen Grove Farm will continue to work with the Warming House to supply food based on the need at the time.

"We're committed to working with Alice based on whatever the Warming House needs," Cory said.

And, at the end of the day, both Cory and Amanda feel blessed for the opportunity to give back more directly to the Greater Olean region rather than through a financial donation.

"It was just a different process, being able to grow something," Cory said. "I



▲ The 'Bona Batch' at Chosen Grove Farm

want a donation to be more thoughtful than just giving money. So, when this opportunity presented itself, especially for Amanda, it was kind of a no-brainer that allows us to do what we are good at, which is farming these animals locally, here, and also allowed us to give back a little bit, which is also cool. It's all worked out perfectly."

He added, "It shouldn't just be the folks who can afford it getting this really good quality food. It should be everybody."

Warming House Introduces New Nutrition Program

The Warming House is starting a nutrition program focused on teaching its guests how to cook nutritious meals at home. The class will be conducted once a month and will feature a new dish each month in order to teach guests how to include a variety of foods in their diets. Not only will they learn how to cook, but leaders Haley Sousa and Jairo Del Cid Godoy will be discussing the nutritious benefits of each of the meals they are making and why it is important to fill diets with different vitamins and minerals. There will be discussions about the food pyramid and, at the end of each meal, the guest

will get to take home a recipe for the meal and all the ingredients used to cook it. This program is made possible by a

grant through the Cattaraugus Regional Community Foundation.

"I hope this nutrition program helps those in the Olean community recognize that healthy eating is attainable and that including a variety of food and nutrients in their diets can help them feel better in their day-to-day lives," said Sousa, class of '21. "The Warming House aims to provide a nourishing meal six days a week and our goal with this nutrition program is to help them do the same in their own kitchens."



▲ Haley Sousa prepares fresh produce to be used in a nutritious recipe at the Warming House.

Farm To Table Students Reflect On Their Summer

Four St. Bonaventure University students – Jayda Muniz, Katie Heitzman, Devin Natera and Jairo Del Cid Godoy – spent their summer months working and growing – literally and spiritually.

As employees of the Farm-to-Table program, the four students spent mornings working at Cantic Farm in Allegany and evenings at the Warming House.

By Cameron Hurst, '19 After noticing the listing on the university notice board, Muniz, a sophomore sociology major from Hornell, New York, was invited to meet with Franciscan Center for Social Concern Director Alice Miller Nation

who, unbeknownst to her, was actually conducting her interview.

"I went in to get more information and I didn't realize Alice was even interviewing me while we were talking about what it was about," she said. "It was very casual and I appreciated that."

Heitzman, a sophomore biochemistry major from Centerville, New York, had never worked at the Warming House before and explained how eye-opening the experience was.

"I got to learn more about people's stories," she said. "I also got to see firsthand how people don't always want to help others when they need it, and it was a really good feeling to be able to do that."

"I had gone to the Warming House to volunteer for HEOP a few times in order to complete my required volunteer hours," added Del Cid Godoy, a senior finance major from Brooklyn. "A friend walked me through a day at the Warming House and told me that working there is fun because you grow a real relationship with the guests."

Natera, like Del Cid Godoy, had also volunteered at the Warming House through HEOP, but had an additional experience through lecturer John Stevens' Management 301 class.

"Even then, my experience at the Warming House was magical in the sense of being able to provide for those who needed help and needed a friend," she said.

The students also enjoyed having the opportunity to work at Cantic Farm, a longtime partner of the Warming House.

"They were really nice," Natera noted of those she worked with at the farm. "They

treated me like an adult. This was my first job ever and I wasn't sure what to expect.

"Eventually, we progressed, and as I went on, I got more jobs with more responsibility."



▲ Pictured from left are Katie Heitzman, Jadya Muniz, Devin Natera, and Jairo Del Cid Godoy

"The farm was great, the people were really nice and they always recognized when you were doing good work," Heitzman said.

Natera, a native of New York City, said working at the farm was hard at first, but he ended up learning a lot.

"It was something that I wasn't used to," he said. "But with perseverance and determination and willingness to improve I was able to have a great experience working there."

"It taught me a lot about how plants grow and the importance of each plant we were planting and harvesting," Del Cid Godoy added. "It really took me out of the lifestyle of a city kid and taught me the lifestyle of farmers."

But, the most memorable aspect for all four students was the interaction with Warming House guests.

"They were all really nice," Muniz said. "As it went on, the guests started to warm

up to me. One lady, Miss Lisa, near the end of the program actually brought me a piece of cake that she received for her birthday."

"The guests were nice and made me realize that I should be helping them because my worst day could probably be their best day," Del Cid Godoy said.

And all said they learned a lot about themselves over the course of the summer.

"I learned a lot about myself and personal growth," Heitzman said. "Growing through challenges can be difficult, but when you do, you walk away having learned so much more about yourself than you thought you would coming in."

"The biggest lesson that I learned was that no matter if you've never done something before, give it a try because you never know what it will teach you," said Natera.