

STORIES FOR PEOPLE  
WHO SUPPORT SURVIVORS

# Bloom

SPRING 2026





**I lived in the transitional housing program after shelter.** Having a place of my own that I could afford kept me from going back. Today, I work at two elementary schools, volunteer at church, co-lead a Latino Literacy program, and am working to become a Spanish Interpreter for Fayette County Schools. I'm planning to get my master's degree and will be getting married this year. We've been together for five years. He's very compassionate, peaceful and calm.

## Paula's story



**"I had my own place, and a new job, and that's where I met him."**

There was a lot of gaslighting. He would call me names and belittle me. He always made me feel like I was dumb, and I knew I wasn't.

It was a lot of getting back together, trying to make things work. I knew I had to get out of the relationship but found out I was pregnant.

One night I came home after working one of my two jobs and he was drunk. We started fighting. He was really angry. He grabbed my arms and tackled me to the ground and left a bruise.

That was the first and only physical abuse. I left and filed for a protective order. He avoided being served for months. I had to quit my jobs and move to a shelter in Frankfort.

I wasn't required to attend the court hearing in Lexington but was so desperate. I told the judge I had to revoke my emergency protective order because I didn't have anywhere to go. I had to go back to my abuser.

The judge said no—and asked if there was a representative from GreenHouse17 in the court.

Living at GreenHouse17 was the best of times and the worst of times. I treated it like a sociological project and tried to intellectualize my trauma. The things that were most helpful were the support groups. I went to every group that I could attend.

Coming here gave me resources to deal with what happened during my childhood. I grew up in a very chaotic situation and GreenHouse17 gave me tools to deal with this trauma.

*"when you're a survivor you're surviving"*

You're going to make compromises with yourself and your pride to deal with abusers. You will have to make sacrifices.

People think you're going to be this exemplary human, the heroine of your story, but you're a flawed person like anybody else.

Everything that happens in our lives feeds into our journey. The most important thing is getting back on your feet. Go to therapy, talk with a therapist, and find healthy coping strategies.

*This is only part of Paula's story, in her own words, shared with permission.*

# empowered expression

## ARTIST ENRICHMENT GRANT



Through the Artist Enrichment Grant at the Kentucky Foundation for Women, photographer Katie Romano will support survivors this year through her digital and analog art.

Katie says, "I am so excited to be working with GreenHouse17 and creating artwork which uplifts and advocates for women. Sharing the voices of survivors is a critical step to raise awareness."

This is Katie's second Bloom cover collaboration. We were excited to welcome her back to help share Paula's story and look forward to sharing more survivor stories with the community this year.

"When survivors choose to share their stories, the experience affirms their strength and makes their healing visible," says Corissa Phillips, our external relations director. "Photography can tell these stories in ways that words alone cannot."

Photo by Photographer Bill Cole

The **Artist Enrichment grant** provides opportunities for artists to develop new skills and art that advances social justice in Kentucky. This year's recipients include artists across literary, performing, visual, and media art. Visit the Kentucky Foundation for Women website at [kfw.org](http://kfw.org) to learn more.



# altruism matters

## INSPIRED GIVING

The Economics of Altruism class at the University of Kentucky's Gatton College of Business and Economics recently selected our organization as a partner agency.

As part of the course, a team of five students completed an in-depth economic analysis and recommendations for our nonprofit. "The survey results from the students were especially helpful in planning our

social media strategies," shares Chelsey Keesy, our content specialist. "Their feedback gave us insight into how younger audiences want to engage with their communities."

At the end of the semester, we attended a Grant Award Ceremony and were honored with a \$7,500 award, recognizing the students' work and the impact of this partnership.



Photo courtesy of the University of Kentucky

**Thank you** to team members Riley Garrett, Grace Stanley, Ana McClellan, Ashtyn Williams, and Layla Angeles Plakosh, guided by Dr. Gail Hoyt, professor of economics. The project was generously supported by Charles and Valerie Sonstebly and the Davisson/Sonstebly Family Charitable Trust.

# COMMUNITY CONNECTORS

Informing the community about intimate partner abuse and sharing resources is a vital part of ending harm and helping survivors find safety and support.

We receive more than a hundred invitations to participate in resource fairs and community events across our service area every year. While not able to attend them all, the recently launched Community Connectors program helps extend that reach.

The effort trains volunteers to attend events, share information, and engage in meaningful conversations. Since its launch, five dedicated volunteers have represented the mission at several events.

Katherine Lewellen says, "It's an honor to represent GreenHouse17

as a community connector. It has been a wonderful experience and the friendships and connections I have made are invaluable to me. I am grateful for the opportunity to support survivors in this way."

Their dedication means greater access to resources for survivors, stronger relationships with local partners, and more pathways to safety.

"I enjoy engaging with community members at events like U-Pick Days and Rock Relief," shares community connector Sharon Leong. "I love being able to provide information about services and the ways individuals and organizations can help."



**We're seeking community connectors** in Anderson, Bourbon, Boyle, Clark, Estill, Franklin, Garrard, Harrison, Jessamine, Lincoln, Madison, Mercer, Nicholas, Powell, Scott, and Woodford counties. If you'd like to learn more, please send Hallie an email at [hlintner@greenhouse17.org](mailto:hlintner@greenhouse17.org).





## harvest happiness

### U-PICK DAYS ON THE FARM

Summer is on the way, and we're already looking forward to U-Pick Days on the farm.

Survivors living at the shelter find healing and a sense of purpose in the flower fields. U-Pick Days help sustain the farm while inviting the community to share that energy.

"I loved being around all the flowers," shares a survivor who helped the farm. "It really made me see how full of life the world is."

Survivors earn an hourly stipend for their time and care on the farm, helping meet basic needs while finding healing in nature.

For many survivors, time on the farm becomes something they carry with them.

"When I'm working on the farm, I feel at peace," shares another survivor. "Not only did I learn about flowers, I learned more about myself."



**Make plans for some flower picking fun this summer!** Our U-Pick Season Pass includes four picks on Saturdays in August and September. Bring family and friends to introduce them to our mission. Follow the QR code to sign up today at [GreenHouse17.org](https://GreenHouse17.org).



## transformative ink

### A NEW STEP FORWARD

For the past year and a half, Tenebrous Tattoo has offered something deeply significant for survivors—tattoo cover-ups as a tool for healing.

"It's very healing," says Lynnae, a survivor who recently had a scar covered. "It's like putting your past behind you. It's a new step forward."

When Tenebrous opened, owners Joshua and Angela wanted a way to give back to the community. Joshua was covering up work put on a friend by an abuser, and the

idea for this partnership began to take shape.

"Throughout the totality of my time tattooing, I have seen the value of cover-ups for people who were covering up a negative part of their life," he shares.

Angela adds, "A cover-up is transformative. It's a rare opportunity to see it actively transform someone as they watch that old work disappear."



**We love to partner with local businesses.**

Whether providing a helpful service or hanging a flyer for awareness, every partnership reminds survivors that our community cares.

# COMMUNITY CARE

## nurturing lives



Although the work to end intimate partner abuse always will be difficult, safer tomorrows are possible in a community that cares about survivors.

(top left to right) Associate director Diane Fleet joined Live From Chevy Chase to discuss National Stalking Awareness Month in January.

In celebration of their 5-year anniversary, Senora May and Tyler Childer's Hickman Holler Appalachian Relief Fund surprised nonprofits with \$500,000 in grant funding. We were grateful to be awarded an \$8,000 donation to support survivors.

Staff honored the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at the Freedom March, walking in solidarity with our community to honor Dr. King's message of equality.

Donations to reduce parking fines through LEXPARK's Connect

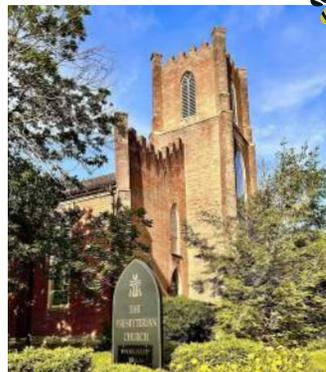
for Community raised more than \$1,000 to support the mission.

Thank you to Heart of Kentucky United Way for their longtime partnership and support in Boyle, Garrard, Mercer, and Lincoln counties.

Another wonderful year of Shop & Share! Many thanks to First Lady Britanny Beshear, ZeroV, Kroger, and other partners for coordinating this statewide event. Thank you to everyone who volunteered and donated. Our pantry at the emergency shelter will be stocked for almost a year.

Celebrating the support of the Local Mission Committee of The Presbyterian Church of Danville for their longtime Deacon's Aid support.

Valentine's Day marked our 21st anniversary as a nonprofit organization. Past and current staff honored the milestone with photos on social media.



Do you have a great idea to support survivors? Let's chat! Reach out to Hallie at [hlintner@greenhouse17.org](mailto:hlintner@greenhouse17.org) or 859-519-1911.



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Make plans for some flower picking fun this summer! Follow the QR code to sign up for our U-Pick Season Pass at [GreenHouse17.org](http://GreenHouse17.org)

# Green House17

Nurturing lives

harmed by intimate partner abuse.



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For questions about this publication or making a charitable gift, contact Corissa Phillips, CFRE, by call to 859.519.1904 or email to [cphillips@greenhouse17.org](mailto:cphillips@greenhouse17.org).

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