

# A Note From Kris Jaeger Director, Development & Community Relations



Looking out my kitchen window, into my small and humble backyard garden, all I see is work—hours of cleaning and pruning and sweeping that will need to be done to begin planting for spring. The soil in the garden beds need replenishing and the Rose of Sharon tree, Hydrangea bush and Lilacs all need care to have a successful summer of blooming. Just as plants need proper care to thrive, people also require nurturing environments to grow and develop. Both demand a deep understanding of patience and timing.

**Nurturing Growth:** In gardening, you must wait for seeds to sprout and plants to flourish, knowing that growth takes time. Similarly, when working with people, especially those who have experienced extreme trauma, we must allow them to progress at their own pace and be patient as they work towards finding stability and redefining their lives and roles in the

community. At Saint John's Hospice (SJH) and the Good Shepherd Program (GSP), due to our years of experience, we know and practice this patience and care for our residents.

**Managing Weeds:** In human life, there are obstacles and past experiences that, if given ongoing attention, like weeds, can be managed. Some are fortunate enough to have fewer challenges while others have many, but dealing with them as they appear works much better than allowing these challenges to take over one's life. Although homelessness, mental illnesses and poverty seem at times impossible for some to comprehend and others to overcome, they can be addressed through focused and consistent support from case management professionals, peers, medical professionals and access to additional available help in the community. Change is possible at any stage. There is no shame in having problems, and there is strength in seeking out the resources to assist in managing them.

**Accept Imperfection:** Every year, in my garden, there are flowers that die, weeds that persist, vegetables that are eaten by animals and plants that don't grow as expected —despite my efforts. I don't take this personally or get angered by this because I've come to realize that there is growth even in imperfection. Similarly, people aren't perfect, and success looks different for every person. Success could be learning to manage your addiction, seeking treatment for your mental illness, caring for your health or taking that initial step of applying for housing or employment.

Living things require immense patience, care, and understanding of their unique needs. The lessons we learn from our gardens can be meaningfully applied to our lives, fostering environments where we can all grow in healthy, nurturing surroundings.

I hope that you also will continue to grow with us by volunteering, supporting us financially or just remembering us in your prayers. Have a blessed Easter season.

Gratefully,  
Kris Jaeger

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# Newsletter

SPRING 2025

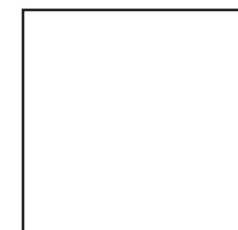


Programs providing crucial, life-sustaining services with dignity, respect, and compassion to individuals experiencing homelessness in Philadelphia.

A Division of Catholic Social Services of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia

Saint John's Hospice is a Catholic Social Services shelter for men located in Center City Philadelphia. St. John's provides crucial life sustaining services with dignity, respect, and compassion to individuals experiencing homelessness in Philadelphia.

[saintjohnshospice.org](http://saintjohnshospice.org)



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1221 Race St  
Philadelphia, PA 19107

# We are Grateful for our SJH Family!

## SJH Volunteer Spotlight: Meet Craig “40” Kilby

Craig Kilby, better known as “40,” is a familiar face at St. John’s Hospice (SJH). With his kind demeanor and quick wit, he’s been a dedicated volunteer for 24 years, serving five days a week. Yet, few truly know the path he took to get here. To understand Kilby, a West Philadelphia native, it helps to start with his nickname.

“I used to drink down at my old stomping grounds. I would drink a 40 every five minutes. The girls said, ‘We’re going to start calling you ‘40,’ and it’s stuck ever since,” he said. Drinking led Kilby to substance use, then to homelessness. Bouncing from shelter to shelter, Kilby finally found SJH, a ministry providing life-sustaining services including, shelter, meals, healthcare, and case management for 150 men annually.

“I was welcomed with open arms,” Kilby recalls of his time as a resident. But his lowest moment came in 2000 when he survived a mass shooting that killed seven people. The trauma still lingers. “I still go through it in my head. I still have nightmares,” he says.

Now, Kilby and his sister share a home in Philadelphia. SJH remains a huge part of his life, as he is regarded as one of the most dedicated volunteers there. He serves food, loads the truck, and helps in any way he can. It’s his way of giving back to the place that gave him a second chance.

Whenever residents ask when he plans to retire, Kilby has a simple answer: “[I] ain’t going nowhere.” As a piece of advice to those trying to turn their lives around as he did, Kilby offers this: “Keep up the good work, and God will show you good things.”



# SAVE THE DATE!



## Boot Up Philly



**Saturday, October 25, 2025 | 9:30 AM—12 PM**

222 N. 17th Street

ARCHDIOCESAN PASTORAL CENTER (CATHEDRAL PARKING LOT)

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## SJH Resident Spotlight: Corvell Green



Corvell is a storyteller at heart. He dreams of acting, writing, and directing, constantly jotting down ideas for future films. In his free time, he enjoys the gym, basketball, and spending time with family and friends.

***What keeps him going? “Seeing sunshine and knowing that it’s a new day—even if yesterday wasn’t good, there’s always today.”***

SJH has given him the stability to save money and get back on track. He’s grateful for the support and structure it provides, helping him focus on his goals. With his creativity and drive, his next chapter is just beginning—one step closer to turning his dreams into reality!

For those experiencing poverty and homelessness, winter isn’t just cold—it’s dangerous. No one should have to endure harsh weather without the warmth, comfort, and security many of us take for granted. That’s why we are hosting the fifth annual Boot Up Philly.

With your help, we will provide over 1,000 men, women, and children with new boots, winter coats, and essential cold-weather gear. These are more than just items. They are protection from the elements, a source of comfort, and a powerful reminder that no one is forgotten.

Get Involved! Your support is crucial—whether through donations, becoming a 2025 Boot Up Sponsor, or volunteering at the event.

***Scan the QR code or visit [saintjohnshospice.org/boot-up-philly](https://saintjohnshospice.org/boot-up-philly) for more information!***

