Dear LPCS Community,

Wow.

It is amazing how much has changed in just one week since our last formal LPCS communication. I hope this message finds you and your family well. We are, of course, focused on the health and safety of our Guests and Staff, but are also thinking about our entire extended LPCS Family & Community. Our Team and Guests so miss having our volunteers on site for meals, front desk shifts, classes and more. We are so appreciative to the literal hundreds of you that have reached out to check on us, support us and send well wishes (and even jokes!) to the Guests. *You have lifted our spirits immensely.*

**Update on COVID-19 Impact on Guests**

In our last communication, we shared some examples of the immediate impact of COVID-19 on our organization and our Guests, including: implementation of a limited onsite staffing model, inclusive of hazard/incentive pay; loss of employment for Guests due to restaurant and retail closures; and migrating to virtual case management, therapy and AA/NA sessions. These examples remain and our Guests and Staff are still adjusting to this new way of operating and adjusting. Compounding this are new changes implemented for Guest health and safety during the last week, including, but certainly not limited to the following:

- **LPCS took major steps to ensure Guest safety through social distancing.** If you’ve ever seen our interim housing dorms, you know that we have our Guests sleep in bunk beds. In normal circumstances, this works very well and enables LPCS to offer shelter to more individuals facing homelessness. Unfortunately, bunk beds are not optimal for social distancing. Thanks to our incredible partners and one of our founding churches, Lincoln Park Presbyterian Church (LPPC), we are now utilizing the church space (located just upstairs from our 600 W. Fullerton location) as sleeping quarters for 15 Guests in order to space out mattresses at least 6-7 feet for protection. We broke down bunk beds and moved 10 Guest mattresses from 600 W. Fullerton upstairs and an additional 5 Guest mattresses from 1521 N. Sedgwick to LPCC. Click here to read more about the steps our team took to make this happen.

- **The City of Chicago took major steps to protect homeless populations during COVID-19.** On Monday, March 23rd, Mayor Lori Lightfoot announced that the city would be partnering with the YMCA and select hotels to offer an additional 900 beds for individuals facing homelessness. LPCS and other organizations were offered the opportunity to shift select numbers of Guests to YMCA facilities should they not have the capacity to implement 6-7 foot social distancing onsite. Fortunately, thanks to our partnership with LPPC, LPCS has not yet had to use any of the City of Chicago/YMCA beds, making room for other organizations and individuals.

- **We’re finding ways to stay active and get our steps in.** As an organization, we are adhering to the statewide and city shelter-in-place orders, meaning Guests are required to stay on-site unless they have to leave for a verified healthcare appointment or employment. In order to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to get fresh air and physical activity each day, our team is leading scheduled walks twice daily at each facility. Additionally, Jameela (our volunteer coordinator extraordinaire) is leading group workout sessions every Friday.
COVID-19 Emergency Fund Update: THANK YOU!

We are absolutely FLOORED by the support that has poured in over the last week via our Emergency and Meal Funds, and through the foundation community. We are beyond humbled and so grateful to share that, thanks to you, we have not only met but surpassed our original goal, with a total of $61,781 raised to date to support LPCS through this unprecedented situation. This funding will support costs associated with the need for increased technology for virtual support and hazard/incentive pay for our frontline staff who have continued to show up and support our Guests with dedication, sensitivity and compassion 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

To all of you who donated online, made a contribution via Facebook, sent in a check, dropped off a meal, mailed us supplies and encouraged your friends and family to support us: THANK YOU. It is YOU who has made this imperative work possible during this very difficult time.

Join us for Virtual Metamorphosis Live! On April 24th

We are so inspired by the generosity this community has shown over the past couple of weeks. However, as this situation continues to evolve, we will continue to need your help. In order to provide the optimal level of support to our Guests, we have made further adjustments to our scaled down staffing model, adding another shift onsite during the evening hours.

As many of you know, our signature spring Metamorphosis Gala is not only one of our most favorite days of the year, it is an imperative funding source for our core programs. We depend on this event each year to not only sustain but grow our services. Therefore, we are very excited to announce that to adapt to the current situation, Metamorphosis has gone through a metamorphosis of its own and will be presented as a live, virtual event, inclusive of our LPCS COVID-19 Video Diary and most importantly, a proper celebration of LPCS’s 35th anniversary!

SAVE THE DATE:

VIRTUAL METAMORPHOSIS LIVE!

Thank you all again for your tremendous support and for following LPCS along in this unprecedented journey. We cannot do this without you, and we are so incredibly lucky to be able to count on you.

In community, with gratitude.

Lydia Murray