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THEMSELVES

CATHOLIC CAMPAIGN for  
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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Photos courtesy of Haley House

## HALEY HOUSE BAKERY CAFÉ COOKS UP OPPORTUNITY

BY BETH GRIFFIN

Ten years ago, a group of regular guests at Haley House's popular soup kitchen in Boston's gentrifying South End asked their hosts to teach them a trade. Haley House, which receives grant support from the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, responded by offering training in bakery skills after each day's last meal was served in the soup kitchen. The novice bakers proudly sold their goods at the front door, advertising only with the mouthwatering smells their craft generated.

The demand for both the training and the baked goods grew rapidly. Haley House opened a storefront bakery and later expanded the three-month course on breads and sweets to a six-month program that now includes preparation of soups, salads, and sandwiches along with instruction in customer relations and basic business principles.

More than 70 trainees have completed the program and found work in the Boston area. According to Haley House Executive Director Kathe McKenna, the

bakery profession typically pays a living wage and is one of the few industries open to people who may have a criminal record.

"We started the program with guests at the soup kitchen," explains Kathe, "but now 99% of our trainees are from transitional programs. They have acknowledged their problems, such as alcoholism or drug abuse, and are addressing them. The bakery training gives them pride, stability, and a sense of accomplishment."

Haley House is a 40-year-old organization that also includes affordable housing units, an organic farm, a monthly magazine that explores social issues, and a live-in community that staffs the soup kitchen and food pantry. The changing face of its home neighborhood, Boston's storied South End, compelled Haley House to reconsider its operation. "The poor and the homeless were being driven out of the South End into nearby Dudley Square by redevelopment," says Kathe. "We were determined to stay in the neighborhood, help keep it affordable through our housing program,

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Catholic Campaign for Human Development  
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## FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friend of CCHD:



**D**uring this holy season of Advent, we are nourished with anticipation, joy, and reconnection to our faith and our families.

*Nourishing our community while fostering economic independence* is the motto of Haley House's Bakery

Café in Boston, Massachusetts—a CCHD-funded project. The Bakery Café serves healthy local foods and other fair-trade products and provides job training for people previously on the margins of society. As you will read in this issue, lives are turned around as the business grows.

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development is proud to support the work of Haley House. Grants like these are made possible by the generous support of parishioners to our annual Collection, which was taken up in most Catholic parishes the weekend before Thanksgiving. *This important Collection generates 95% of our revenue.* I am grateful to all of you who contributed in your parishes.

If you are interested in getting involved with CCHD in your local area, contact us at 202-541-3210 or [cchdpromo@usccb.org](mailto:cchdpromo@usccb.org), or visit our Web site at [www.usccb.org/cchd/mission.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/cchd/mission.shtml). Thank you for your ongoing support of our anti-poverty efforts.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Timothy F. Collins  
Executive Director  
Catholic Campaign for Human Development

### WHAT IS CCHD?

**T**hrough the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD), of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), Catholics and friends of CCHD across the country help poor and low-income Americans to help themselves and their communities out of poverty.

Since 1970, the Catholic Campaign has contributed over \$280 million to more than 7,800 low-income led, community-based projects that strengthen families, create jobs, build affordable housing, fight crime, and improve schools and neighborhoods. CCHD requires that projects develop community leadership and participation so that their solutions to poverty will be long-lasting and effective, and so that CCHD's investment in people will help break the cycle of poverty. CCHD also educates Catholics about the causes of poverty and seeks to build solidarity between poor and non-poor persons.

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## SHOP WITH YOUR VALUES

CCHD's Economic Development Program promotes justice, human dignity, and self-sufficiency by supporting job creation and the establishment of businesses that provide decent wages, distribute profits more equitably, and ensure an active role for low-income persons in the governance of businesses. Consider purchasing your holiday gifts from an organization that has received economic development support from CCHD. Visit [www.usccb.org/cchd/edshopping.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/cchd/edshopping.shtml) to find out more.



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and be a part of the revitalization.” Working with a consortium of social service organizations, Haley House expanded into Dudley and now runs the bakery café and training program in a renovated warehouse. The direct service programs of Haley House remain in the South End.

“Before we opened in Dudley, the only lunch options were fast-food places,” says Kathe. “People come in every day to thank us for being here. We serve fabulous, fresh, wholesome food in a snazzy, hip café, and we’re modeling socially responsible business practices.” This includes paying the top manager only twice the salary of the lowest-paid employee, offering health insurance to all full-time employees, and including them in the decision making.

Kathe continues, “The whole café is like a classroom. It’s all about how we can eat in a way that is integrated and healthy and how we can impact a neighborhood that is on the cusp of a change.”

The bakery training program has expanded in several directions to meet the needs of the trainees and the demands of the market. On the bakery side, the trainees are producing muffins and organic pizza dough for wholesale clients. At-risk teens participate in a cooking class taught by the bakery café’s head chef and a local police officer. And so many nonprofit organizations in Boston asked for catering services that the catering department shows promise of putting the bakery café in the black during its march to profitability as a model business, according to Kathe.

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—Haley House Executive Director Kathe McKenna

“We think we can do our trainees a better service by expanding our catering focus,” says Kathe. “If we teach ‘improvisational cooking’ as well as baking, we can offer potential employers people who can think on their feet and make adjustments.” The cooking skills will also get more trainees into food service jobs that offer benefits, at locations such as hotels and universities.

The challenges to success at the bakery café training program are subtle and varied, says Kathe. “Failure has been a constant in the life of every trainee, and some find it hard to believe that they can actually overcome



HALEY HOUSE BAKERY CAFÉ STAFF CELEBRATES THE GRADUATION OF TWO WOMEN FROM THE BAKERY TRAINING PROGRAM. EIGHTY-FIVE PERCENT OF GRADUATES GO ON TO FIND FULL OR PART-TIME JOBS.

that. Each one has a different personal struggle and, while the themes may be common, we are helping each person to identify and overcome whatever is getting in the way of their success. Ultimately, we’re honing their work ethic to stay focused and move forward,” she says.

Haley House has an effect on the community, as well as the trainees. Sr. Linda Ballard, OSC, pastoral associate at Blessed Mother Teresa Parish in neighboring Dorchester, volunteers at Haley House with her Confirmation class. “Haley House opens the students’ eyes to peace and justice issues, and Kathe’s example shows what it looks like to live and breathe peace and justice 24/7,” says Sr. Linda.

The Haley House bakery training program has received two economic development grants from CCHD: to purchase equipment and medical insurance for the trainees, and to underwrite the stipends that help the trainees support themselves during the program. In addition, the current grant will help the bakery café expand its use of organic and fresh produce from the Haley House Noonday Farm. “We want to assure that the farm has a presence in the café,” says Kathe. “We’re trying to demonstrate to the trainees the link between sustainable agriculture and a socially responsible restaurant business.”

Kathe says that “the way we do what we’re doing is an important part of our mission,” which is summarized in the bakery café motto, “nourishing our community while fostering economic independence.” More information and virtual nourishment (in the form of a menu) can be found at [www.haleyhouse.org/cafe](http://www.haleyhouse.org/cafe), but readers who want to sample the fare will have to visit the airy café in person.

# MEET ERIC GRIMSHAW: BAKING HIS WAY TO SUCCESS

BY BETH GRIFFIN

**B**ack in the day, Eric Grimshaw started each morning feeding a drug craving with a shot of heroin. Next on the schedule, he says, was “robbing people, places, and things” to finance the next fix to “make it through the day and get to sleep at night.” For 10 years, his address was alternately a homeless shelter or a jail.

Today, at age 38, Eric is clean and sober, has a respectable full-time job and a fiancée, and plans for his own small business. In between, he encountered the Haley House Bakery Café training program.

“I was in a ‘wet’ homeless shelter, where they let you stay even if you’re doing drugs,” says Eric. “It smelled of vomit and worse and I saw people who were older than me and I saw a future I didn’t like. I thought, ‘This life is not for me.’”

With help from another group, Eric built on his considerable experience in the prison kitchen to learn to cook at a food services training program. But he really wanted to learn to bake. At Haley House, Eric started with the three-month bread program and then signed on for the three-month “sweet shift.”

The Haley House training helped Eric land a restaurant kitchen position in Copley Square. He moved on to several other jobs and hit a few stumbling blocks. When he was invited to return to Haley House as a baker trainer, he jumped at the opportunity. “I like




what they stand for and what they do,” says Eric. “Haley House depends on me and I don’t want to let them down. I’m around positive people and they keep me clean.”

With Haley House’s encouragement, Eric took a job

at Whole Foods. “I want to bake and there is so much more I can learn,” explains Eric. “I want to be like a sponge.” Eric’s preferred baked goods are breads and pies that require careful preparation.

The man who once saw a bleak future from his cot in a homeless shelter is now looking forward to marrying a woman he met when she was a volunteer at Haley House. Moreover, he expects that she will be able to stay home with their family.

Eric’s long-term plans call for self-employment as a pushcart vendor outside Fenway Park. He’s leaning toward selling cookies and brownies at family-friendly prices. The Red Sox fan figures he may have to liquidate some of his estimable baseball card collection to raise capital. “You have to give up something to get something,” says Eric, “and when the cart is successful, I can buy the cards again.” 

## THE POVERTY LINE

### JANUARY IS POVERTY IN AMERICA AWARENESS MONTH, A REMINDER OF THE CONSTANT STRUGGLE TO “HANG ON” FOR THOSE LIVING BELOW THE POVERTY LINE

BY BARBARA STEPHENSON

**I**n January, the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) will launch its seventh national public awareness campaign emphasizing the tragic reality that **37 million Americans now live below the poverty line** (U.S. Census Bureau). Timed to coincide with the beginning of *Poverty in America Awareness Month*, the new Campaign uses television, radio, and print ads to attract attention to the number of Americans living in poverty and to highlight the difficult challenges individuals and families face every day trying to make ends meet.

**The 2007 Campaign reminds Americans that millions of people are struggling to hang on.** Hang onto their jobs, their homes. Keep their families fed. And many are failing. It’s a bitter fact that 13 million of our nation’s poor are children. This campaign shows us what it’s like to live below the poverty line—where

millions of Americans live every day. That’s one in ten families. Many have a job. And many have children. They must make the hard choices between hunger, housing, and health care. The official poverty line for a family of four is **\$19,971**. Yet many families make more than this, and still it’s not enough.

Each January, CCHD commemorates the national Poverty in America Awareness Month by reminding Americans of these sobering realities and encouraging them to do something to help. For easy ways to raise awareness about poverty in your home, school, parish, or community, go to [www.usccb.org/cchd/focusonpoverty.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/cchd/focusonpoverty.shtml) or visit the Poverty USA Web site [www.povertyusa.org](http://www.povertyusa.org) (English) or [www.pobrezausa.org](http://www.pobrezausa.org) (Spanish). At the Web site, you can tour “Poverty USA” and learn what you and others can do to help.

