



Serving Hungry and Homeless Long Islanders
211 Fulton Avenue • Hempstead • NY 11550
(516) 486-8506 • Fax (516) 486-8105
www.the-inn.org

2024 Overview /Final

In the post pandemic world, 2024 proved to be the year The INN fully returned to “service as normal”. A strong indicator was the return of many volunteers and the arrival of many new volunteers. By year’s end 2,948 enthusiastic individuals—weekly workers, holiday volunteers, groups from community organizations, schools, and corporations—had come to The INN to remind us why we are here: to help those in need.

Volunteers Carol, Suzanne, and Andrea agreed that there is a commonality in their individual stories of volunteering. When asked, “Why did you decide to come to The INN?” each of their stories echoed the very personal attachment they feel for the guests and The INN. Here are some of their comments: “I get to know the guests”, “I am taking care of them”, “I make sure they have a meal”, and “I know I can make their day a little brighter because they have a lot going on in their lives”. The attention they pay to each guest is reflected in their reactions: “Guests are so grateful for what we do”, “When I hear, ‘This is the first food I got today’ from a guest, how can I not be here to help?”, and “The guests keep me realizing how grateful I am that I have what I have”.

The mission statement of The INN includes providing “essential services to assist those challenged by hunger, homelessness, and profound poverty”.

In 2024, The Mary Brennan INN soup kitchen began providing breakfast—two boiled eggs, a piece of fruit and donated bakery items. This has proven to be popular, especially in the cold winter months. Essence is a guest who had been coming to The INN almost every day with her partner. They were homeless through the winter, and they often stayed overnight at the warming shelter at Mitchell Field. The INN is the only place Essence knew that offers breakfast for those in need. After a particularly bad night, Essence came to MBI and said, “Thank God this place opens up early and provides food in the morning.”

Another deeply appreciated service is access to a shower. One elderly gentleman had lost his job and apartment. He was placed in a shelter, but there were no available showers there. Finding out that he could take a hot shower at The INN prompted him to say, “I need to tell the other guys (at the shelter) about this place and how wonderful it is.”

At The Edna Moran INN family shelter and The Donald Axinn INN men’s shelter, food and shelter are the cornerstones of the help The INN offers. And with the support of the shelter case managers and the staff at the Center for Transformative Change, the shelter guests can successfully apply for their ID papers, receive access to medical care and transportation, search for jobs, and apply for benefits that will help them afford housing.



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The story below is an example of the efforts and outcomes at one of the shelters.

Ben was a guest at the Donald Axinn INN. He had just been evicted by his landlord due to a dispute and was now homeless. After consultation with the Nassau County Department of Social Services, Ben was housed at the DAI. This gave him time to recover physically and emotionally from the stress caused by his eviction. The Donald Axinn INN requires the men to maintain their rooms and be courteous to staff and other guests. Ben excelled at these requirements, which made the staff enthusiastic about helping Ben find a permanent place to live.

Ben wanted to be helped, but his part time job at UPS did not pay him enough to afford housing. So, Ben secured a second part-time job in a tire shop. Just as things seemed to be improving, Ben was hurt on the job at UPS and was unable to work. As he got better, Ben wanted to return to his UPS job, and the staff helped him get his job back.

The staff next suggested that Ben would be a suitable candidate to move into the Donald Axinn INN Annex, a halfway house for those who are progressing toward independent living. Ben would be responsible for his own cleaning, cooking, and shopping, and maintaining an income that would allow him to contribute to the running of the house. After nearly a year of living in the Annex, Ben was ready to move on and find a place of his own. The staff assisted Ben with his application for Section 8 housing. Ben was approved, and he was happy to learn a landlord had accepted him, and he would be moving to his own “home” in February, 2025.

In 2022, the INN acquired a 23,550 sq. ft. building (adjacent to the Mary Brennan INN) in response to the growing service needs. A capital campaign (“Forward Together”) was begun to fund the development of this site. We now have pledges of \$11.8 million toward our \$12.5 million goal. The renovation of the new building will begin in the first half of 2025, and we are excited about all the ways a single, unified campus will allow The INN to grow the services we provide: among them are the expansion of Center for Transformative Change; the addition of sleeping pods for temporary respite; additional showers; expansion of the clothing boutique and an enhanced Dressed for Success work attire program; a new food pantry; creation of a dedicated space for medical insurance sign up and medical appointments, and on site mental health and substance-abuse counseling.

The above is just part of what happened at The INN in 2024, spanning from offering a hot shower to providing a nutritious meal to delivery of live-changing counseling. Please take a look at the accompanying 2024 Fact Sheet.