

The Rescue Mission of Trenton is the agency in the City of Trenton that serves the truly needy men and women who have no place to turn for shelter, food, and clothing. The Mission offers a safe, clean, warm refuge for the homeless, the hungry, the transient, and the addicted. We provide services and counseling to encourage individuals to reach their greatest potential. The Rescue Mission creates an environment where one can live with dignity, build self-esteem, and experience love, responsibility, and hope.

Vince's Place: Licensed by the State of New Jersey Department of Human Services as a Residential Addictions Treatment Facility. Provides long term, halfway house, and extended care level of service with a full range of addictions treatment and life skills treatment.

Outpatient Program: Licensed Outpatient and Intensive Outpatient substance abuse treatment for men and women. Provides individual assessment, group counseling sessions, and addiction education.

Permanent Housing: The Mission operates 4 specialty supportive housing units – Robinson Place, a DCA licensed Rooming and Boarding House, Brimmer House, a free standing 2-unit house, and 15 units of permanent supportive housing at 505 Perry Street and Clinton Avenue Women's Housing.

Weekend Soup Kitchen

Emergency clothing and furniture

Emergency Shelter: Shelter for single men and women. Licensed by the State of New Jersey Department of Community Affairs.

Transitional Housing

Work Readiness: Individuals are provided training in GED preparation, basic literacy, writing skills, job seeking skills, and computer and word processing skills.

Socially Responsible Recycling: Donated materials are collected and sold through the Carroll Street Store and warehouse.

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Fall

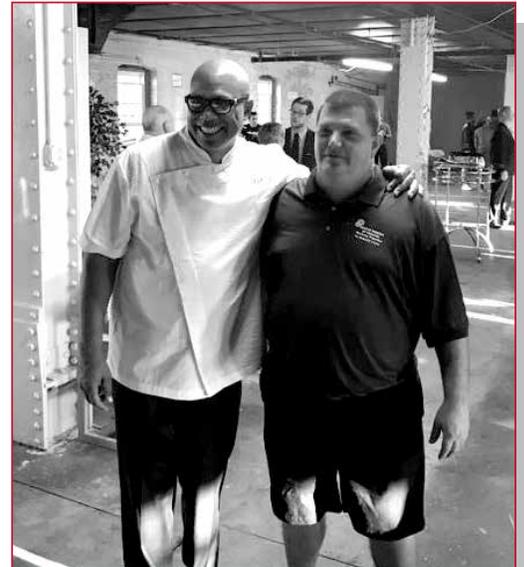
“Chef Jeff” Henderson Brings His Inspirational Message to the Mission

Jeff Henderson, award-winning chef, bestselling author and popular public speaker, brought his inspirational story to the Rescue Mission on Friday, September 15th. His appearance, which included a presentation and question session with Mission residents and other invited guests, was underwritten by the New Jersey Business & Industry Association.

The award-winning celebrity chef of “Flip My Food with Chef Jeff,” former host of Food Network’s “The Chef Jeff Project,” New York Times best-selling author of *Cooked*, and the focus of an upcoming film by Columbia Pictures, spoke about his life changing turnabout from convicted felon to former executive chef of Café Bellagio, where he worked until 2006. Henderson was also the first African-American Chef de Cuisine at Caesar’s Palace.

Jeff indicated that his journey from life as an imprisoned drug dealer to an award-winning celebrity chef demonstrates that with determination and grit anyone of us can achieve our dreams, no matter our stage of life. During his presentation, Jeff discussed the hard-knocks yet transformational life lessons he learned that can help everyone rise above their circumstances and realize their full potential. Following his presentation, Jeff responded to questions from the residents and then joined them for a meal prepared in the Mission’s own kitchen.

Michelle Siekerka, the CEO and President of New Jersey Business and Industry, the organization that sponsored “Chef Jeff’s” appearance, described Jeff as a “powerful voice for self-transformation. His story is extraordinary, as it demonstrates that if folks are provided with opportunity and support and they can discover their own gifts, they can rebuild, remake and reshape their lives.”



Chef Jeff Henderson with Rescue Mission of Trenton chef David Jawdzik.



See reprint of article on page two of *Town Topics* September 20th, 2017 issue for further insights provided by Jeff on facing adversity and taking personal responsibility.



From a Life of Crime To Fame: Chef Jeff Speaks at Rescue Mission

Reprinted with permission, September 20th, 2017 issue

By Anne Levin

It would be an understatement to say that Jeff Henderson had a challenging childhood in South Central Los Angeles. Raised in poverty by a single mother, he learned to make money — eventually, some \$35,000 a week — selling cocaine and crack. It all caught up with him when, at the age of 23, he was arrested and sent to federal prison for drug trafficking.

Fast forward a few decades, and Henderson, now known as Chef Jeff, has served as executive chef at several high-end restaurants. He has written a few books, appeared on Oprah, and started his own reality show series called The Chef Jeff Project. Most significantly to him, he is a motivational speaker who spends more time than his wife and five children would like making appearances across the country, inspiring those with similar back stories to transform their lives.

A recent stop was Trenton's Rescue Mission. Last Friday, Henderson gave a spirited account of his rise from a life of crime to a successful career, challenging clients — many former prisoners like him — to overcome their circumstances.

"I'm 53, and 30 years criminal-free," Henderson told the rapt audience. "None of us was born criminal. We came out of our mothers' wombs with a clean slate. But when you don't have value systems, you don't have freedom."

Henderson took no fee for his appearance at the Rescue Mission. The organization serves those in need of food and shelter, many of whom struggle with addiction, and it is just the kind of place he likes to visit. "I was in a shelter for abused and battered women and children yesterday, so I go to these places quite often," he said during a telephone interview before his appearance last week. "I'm looking forward to it."

Henderson has recounted his story countless times, but there was no trace of boredom in his voice during the telephone conversation. It was behind bars, he said, that he came to recognize his talents. "When you grow up in poverty and a broken home and dysfunctional family, without middle class values, you make a lot of poor choices," he said. "Sometimes they are born out of circumstances. Not being exposed to careers, art, museums, and books, I never discovered my gift until I was in prison."

That recognition came in the prison kitchen. Punished one day for an infraction, Henderson was sent to pot-and-pan detail. Right away, he recognized an opportunity.

"I love food. I was a hungry little boy and a hungry man," he said. "I realized, first of all, that the guys working there got the extra food. I said, 'Wow, this isn't a punishment.' Because food is one of the most important things to a person in prison, or the homeless. They started teaching me things. I loved the craft. I loved the art. It was a fast-paced kitchen. Before you knew it, I was head cook. And it was my salvation. I was finally doing something in my life that people praised me for, that was legitimate and legal."

Told he would never get a job because he was a convicted felon, Henderson studied the marketing experts and financial types who were his fellow prisoners. He knew he had "the gift of gab," he said. He took a Toastmasters course. He discovered the library. "I read my first book in prison," he said. "I had never been to a library in my life before then."

After serving 10 years, Henderson managed to land a job at Cafe Bellagio in Las Vegas, eventually becoming executive chef. He was the first African American executive chef at Caesar's Palace. His memoir, *Cooked*, has been out for a decade. "It's legendary in most prisons and jails in this country," he said. "I don't look like I used to. I don't talk like I did, or walk like I did. All of that is in the book. I can switch back to the old language when I want to."

That much was evident during the Rescue Mission talk. Wearing his white chef's jacket and trademark black framed glasses, Henderson paced back and forth with a microphone in hand — not that he needed one — and lapsed into street talk as he told of his transformation. The audience responded with enthusiasm.

"It was great for me to hear," said Mike B., a Rescue Mission client. "It's not that common to see that kind of success come from where he came from." Another client, John K., said, "It was inspirational and really hit home because I went down that same road. I was once successful and his presentation made me look in the mirror and see what I can be again. It helped me believe that I can get myself back."

Following the talk, Henderson joined the audience in a meal prepared by the Rescue Mission's kitchen. He made a point to talk one-on-one to as many people as he could. Mary Gay Abbott-Young, the Mission's chief executive officer, saw the effect Henderson had on her clients.

"When you have someone with such an incredible life experience that parallels the life of those we serve at the Rescue Mission delivering a message of personal responsibility on finding your gift and using that gift It's very impactful," she said.



"Chef Jeff" Henderson hugs Mary Gay Abbott-Young, CEO, Rescue Mission of Trenton.



Henderson flexes his biceps on his visit to the Rescue Mission of Trenton.



Speaking with clients at the Mission.



"Chef Jeff" Henderson speaks with clients at the Rescue Mission of Trenton.



Niel Siekerka, left, President, Board of Directors, Rescue Mission of Trenton, meets "Chef Jeff" Henderson.



Mary Gay Abbott-Young, CEO, "Chef Jeff" and Michele Siekerka, President and CEO New Jersey Business & Industry Association



Clients line up for coffee before the program.



Speaking at the Rescue Mission of Trenton on his life changing turnaround



Posing for a photo with clients at the Mission.



Walking on Carroll Street with clients at the Rescue Mission of Trenton.

Mission and TASK Launch Collaboration on Education

The Rescue Mission of Trenton and the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen (TASK) have worked together on a cooperative basis for many years. "Over the years, I developed a terrific relationship with all of TASK's Executive Directors. If the soup kitchen had a problem in their kitchen, or we had one in ours, we'd always make sure that our respective clients – many of which overlap – were fed," indicated Mary Gay Abbott-Young, the Mission's CEO.

Since 2014, TASK has been providing breakfast for the Day Center operated by the Mission at 98 Carroll Street. The Day Center is the place that the city's homeless can go during the day to avoid exposure to extreme cold and extreme heat in the summer. Beyond just the basic need or shelter, the Day Center is a gateway to housing, providing an opportunity to connect with case managers and outreach workers, as well as social interaction for clients.

The most recent example of TASK and the Mission cooperating to improve client services is a new partnership that has been developed to better serve the educational and job training needs of the respective agencies' clients. Effective winter 2016, Rescue Mission of Trenton clients can now participate in TASK's well-regarded HSE (High School Equivalency) Program that utilizes community volunteers to tutor TASK clients on a one-on-one basis. Over the years, this program has helped dozens of TASK patrons obtain their High School Equivalency and scores of others to substantially improve their reading and math levels.

Likewise, TASK's patrons can now participate in the Mission's highly successful TEACH Program, which over the last six years has helped hundreds of Mission clients develop marketable skills and secure jobs with growth potential. Specifically, TEACH offers reading and writing skills development, computer education, and job-search assistance placement.

According to Ida Malloy, Vocational & Life Skills Coordinator for the Rescue Mission of Trenton, "the program's strength has been job placement. We assist residents with resume development and interview preparation. Residents frequently partake in role-playing activities." Zane Gaines,

a former resident of the Mission who is currently an assistant night manager at Shoprite in Ewing says, "The program's mock interview prepared me extremely well for my successful interview. The practice questions were just like the ones I was asked on the interview."

According to Barrett Young, the Mission's COO, "The strength of TASK's program was its one-on-one high school equivalency tutoring. The Mission was strong in terms of job search and referral services. Meshing the two programs made infinite sense. Like an effective "job match" – a well-conceived collaboration embraces the respective strengths and weaknesses of the partners and plays to them."



Early indications are that the TASK/Mission collaboration is producing the desired results. Nicholas, a Mission resident, for the last 4 months has been going to TASK for individual tutoring and preparing for his high school equivalency degree. He rapidly improved his math skills and writing skills with the help of the TASK/Rescue Mission team. We are proud to report that as of September of 2017, Nicholas has secured his high school equivalency degree! He is making plans with Ida Malloy, Vocational and Life Skills Coordinator, for on-going study and also will continue to go to TASK and volunteer to help others in the program achieve the same goals that he did. "It's an amazing feeling to catch up on what I missed in high school...I'm very proud," says Nicholas of his recent accomplishments.

"In a time when government funding for America's charities is decreasing and the needs for social, educational, health and human care service is growing, charities need to look to collaborate to avoid duplication of service and improve the quality of services they offer. That is exactly what we are doing with our educational collaboration with TASK," concluded Mary Gay Abbott-Young.

JOIN THE 365 CLUB & SUPPORT THE MISSION EVERY DAY THIS YEAR!

Join the 365 Club and make a nominal donation each day to those who are homeless and hungry, and increasingly grappling with mental-health problems and substance abuse issues.

- 25¢/day = \$90
 50¢/day = \$180
 \$1/day = \$365
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Please send check and coupon to: **Rescue Mission of Trenton**, P.O. Box 790, Trenton, NJ 08605-0790

A View from Behind the Scenes of the Emergency Shelter

The Rescue Mission of Trenton Emergency Services Program is a gateway to housing. Between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017 over 120 individuals were housed as a result. The Mission is funded for several case management programs to assist emergency shelter clients exit homelessness - many of whom have substantial substance abuse disorders, mental illness, physical disabilities and/or a history of incarceration. Below, 3 members of the case management team share their experience:



*Aimée Maier,
Manager of Support
Services*

Aimée Maier, Manager of Support Services for the past three years, emphasizes the need for “possessing a big heart and lots of passion and empathy. You need to really understand where our clients have come from and the adversity they have encountered and to encourage them to persevere.”

Working at the Mission isn't the kind of job for everyone: it's a job that takes commitment, courage,

a sense of humor at times, and dedication. The staff is able to see the services that aren't available in the community, they are able to accept all walks of life that other facilities may not accept and reinforce the notion that no one is to be turned away. The community is represented both inside and outside of the doors of the shelter. When asked to describe her experience throughout the years, Aimée took a deep breath and began from the beginning: “It was definitely hard; you feel stressors differently than any other agency. Your clients sleep here, they live here and you're never able to take a break. It is very challenging but very rewarding work.”

“For example, there is a real sense of satisfaction when you can help a person in the shelter secure papers necessary for the provision of other services, link them to required support services or best of all when you can help them obtain housing or a job,” Aimée shared.

Clients who enter the Mission's programs come to trust the staff. They look to them as their advocates in a difficult system to navigate. “Frequently the Rescue Mission becomes their family, their emergency contact: those that work in the shelter are sometimes the only ones who are able to assist our clients and to help them continue on their path of survival,” said Aimée.

In order to best understand why this job is so important and rewarding, one must look at the case managers in the shelter and ask them the same questions.

Michelle Bostic, one of the Mission's Homeless Assessment and Referral Case Managers for close to a year, grew up with parents who both struggled with addiction, specifically alcohol and crack cocaine. She has a fundamental dedication to helping those in need to recover, stating “I have always wanted to help better people's lives, I love people, and having the personal experience of suffering

I have an even further dedication to reach out to others.”

Michelle is someone who puts herself before others in order to help the community and those in need. Speaking about a typical day at the Mission she explains that there are two types of clients who come through our doors: those who are familiar to the case workers (the “old clients”) and “new clients,” who are new to the shelter, many of whom are unaware of the services available.

Each day is dedicated to continuing to implement the client's treatment plans - reaching out to community providers to try and secure housing, identifying appropriate sources of income depending on the client's circumstances and needs, and connecting clients to other requisite services. Michelle concluded, “The staff relationship is crucial in order to help the clients, we all can benefit from a tight-knit team really working together.”



*Michele Bostic,
Homeless Assessment
and Referral Counselor*



*Dana Andreko,
Emergency Shelter Case
Manager, pictured with
City of Trenton Mayor, Eric
Jackson*

Dana Andreko, the Mission's Housing Placement Case Manager, mentioned that one of the many rewarding aspects of the job is helping the clients during a transitional process.

She emphasized the importance of understanding individual life situations. “Sometimes it's difficult because a guy can call who might be running late, doesn't have a job, but needs a good night's rest because he has an interview tomorrow.” The questions of where

and why to draw the line becomes difficult to answer when working with such a vulnerable community of people.

Dana explains that the most rewarding aspect of her job is to see the progress of all of the individuals who come through the shelter and to move the clients to housing as quickly as possible.

A very diverse group of people with significant needs come through the shelter on a daily basis, bringing a new challenge each day. For an individual who is matched to job requirements of the Case Manager role, this dramatic transition from day to day creates an exciting and energetic environment to work in; people from all walks of life enter the doors of the Mission - each and every individual is worthy of dignity and respect, with the ability to recover and overcome their current challenges. The staff at the emergency shelter is able to recognize that each individual may have different needs. They understand how important it is to address these diverse needs in order to give everyone a chance to rebuild their lives.



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The Rescue Mission of Trenton is not affiliated with any other organization in the U.S. listed as Rescue Mission. It is a private non-profit organization.

Did You Know... *Did You Know ...*

- ✓ **Bequest Giving Powerful Way to Help the Mission.** Making a bequest is one of the most meaningful ways you can support the Mission. Your bequest gift will help us carry on our mission and strengthen our efforts to rebuild lives. To learn more about making a bequest, contact Irwin Stoolmacher at Stoolgroup@aol.com to receive free information on making a charitable bequest through your last will and testament.
- ✓ **Mission Stages Night Out for Fifteen Years in Row!** Tuesday August 1st, 2017 the Mission again held a block party in observance of the annual Night Out which seeks to enhance positive relationships between citizens, police and local government and to oppose crime in our neighborhoods. More than 100 Mission residents, staff and neighbors feast on a barbeque meal prepared and served by staff. "We continue to be enthusiastic supporters of National Night Out and the clear message it sends that communities across the city are fed-up with crime and illegal drugs that are ravaging our neighborhoods," indicated Barrett Young, the Mission's COO.
- ✓ **A Shout-Out to Store Associate, Ron McEwen who is retiring after 15 years.** Thanks for a job well-done in making sure that the operation of our thrift store was run with precision and care. Your personable ways with the customers and smiling face will truly be missed and cannot be replaced. "I will miss being a part of this great service to the community," says Ron. The Mission family also holds Ron close to the heart because he is also a former resident; a shining example of coming full circle and rebuilding his life. We wish Ron and his wife an enjoyable retirement by the beach.
- ✓ **A Fond Farewell to Mary Chamberlain** After 12 years and 2 months, Mary will be retiring as Grants Manager for the Rescue Mission. When Mary joined the Mission, she was the coordinator of the TEACH program. She also worked Sunday shifts as the Managing Supervisor at VP, and monitored the meal service at the shelter on those days. After writing an article about a client in 2007, CEO, Mary Gay Abbott-Young invited her to take the position of Grant Writer. In addition to this, Mary has spent countless hours developing and establishing safety policies and orientating numerous Mission staff members to these safety measures that she carefully constructed and put into place. Prior to her 12 years, Mary was no stranger to the Mission, as her father was a staff member for close to 30 years. Upon retirement, Mary plans to spend her time traveling with her husband Tom.

