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BETHLEHEM HAVEN, PITTSBURGH MERCY, ACTION-HOUSING, & PROJECT PARTNERS WELCOME 26 WOMEN HOME TO UPTOWN
Preserved & renovated \$4.2 million trauma-informed, therapeutic environment promotes healing & encourages women on path to self-sufficiency.
First step toward completion of the Bethlehem Haven low-income affordable housing development.

PITTSBURGH (April 12, 2024) – Following a \$4.2 million investment and a year of preservation, extensive renovations, and facility improvements, [Bethlehem Haven](#), [Pittsburgh Mercy](#), [ACTION-Housing](#), [Mosites Construction Company](#), [LGA Partners](#), [SIGAL Development Services](#), [Montague Design](#), and [Anderson Interiors](#), today held a homecoming celebration and ribbon-cutting ceremony to welcome 26 women home to **Bethlehem Haven's 1410 Fifth Avenue location** in the heart of Pittsburgh's Uptown neighborhood. Today's event also marks the completion of Phase I of Bethlehem Haven's affordable housing development, which will result in 34 new units of low-income affordable housing in Uptown Pittsburgh.

1410 Fifth Avenue is a trauma-informed, therapeutic supportive service housing program that is home to women and gender non-conforming people who, due to complex physical and behavioral health challenges, poverty, and generational trauma, have experienced long-term housing instability. These individuals would not thrive in traditional community-based settings. They need comprehensive wrap-around services, whole-person supports, and care management to empower them in their journey to self-sufficiency.

Approximately half of the women who call Bethlehem Haven home are age 50 years and over. Nearly one-third of the residents have lived there for 10 years or more and consider it their home, a place of safety where they live, work, play, and thrive.

At Bethlehem Haven, the women have access to physical, behavioral, and mental health services provided by [Pittsburgh Mercy](#). Additional services include permanent housing navigation, workforce development, access to benefits, financial well-being education, life skills,

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and other vital wrap-around services and supports to empower them on the path to affordable permanent housing and self-sufficiency. Meals are provided, and colleagues are on-site 24/7.

PHASE I: COMPLETION OF THE 1410 FIFTH AVENUE RESTORATION & RENOVATION

The 1902 four-story brick and stone façade Classical Revival building at 1410 Fifth Avenue originally was purposed as the Merchant Savings & Trust Company, a bank. Decades later, it became Miryam's, Pittsburgh's first shelter and daytime drop-in engagement center for women who have mental health disorders and experience chronic homelessness.

Bethlehem Haven, which was located five blocks away from Miryam's and served the same population, merged with Miryam's and acquired its 1410 Fifth Avenue building in 2007.

Bethlehem Haven became a wholly owned subsidiary of [Pittsburgh Mercy](#) in 2016, further expanding Pittsburgh Mercy's award-winning homeless services continuum of care and the capacity of both organizations to serve even more of the most vulnerable.

The renovation of 1410 Fifth Avenue started in March 2023 with the preservation of important architectural and artistic assets that are important to the community, including the building's Classical Revival façade and "Urban Paradise," the colorful, four-story mural on the building's east-facing side. The artwork was commissioned by the Sprout Public Art Fund and created in 2006 by Pittsburgh artist, illustrator, and muralist Gregg Valley in collaboration with those who live, work, and play in Uptown.

The renovation also included substantial interior improvements to transform 1410 Fifth Avenue into a comfortable home, increase the residents' standard of living, and enhance their quality of life. The most notable change included the conversion from two-person shared dormitory-style bedrooms to private, independent, single room occupancy (SRO) units. This change is profound because it gives each woman greater dignity, privacy, and a room of her own.

"A home is more than bricks and mortar; a home is a family. A home is the individuals who live in that family, and where we all take care of each other. It's a safe space and a safe haven," stated [Annette M. Fetchko, RN, MHA](#), executive director of [Bethlehem Haven](#). "That's what Bethlehem Haven strives to be: a safe haven for every vulnerable individual we have the privilege to serve," Fetchko continued.

"Today's homecoming is an important milestone not only for permanent supportive housing in the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County, but more importantly, for the individuals who call Bethlehem Haven and Uptown home," stated [Tony Beltran](#), president and CEO of [Pittsburgh Mercy](#), one of the region's largest social services nonprofit organizations, serving over 18,000 vulnerable people annually.

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“This project could not have been accomplished by any one organization working alone,” Beltran continued. “The progress we are making in Uptown is a testament to all that we, as a caring community, can accomplish when we bring together an amazing group of community partners who share a common vision and work collaboratively together to create meaningful solutions that address needs and benefit the most vulnerable in our community. To our partners, board members, elected leaders, funders, the Sisters of Mercy, and the Uptown and Hill District communities – thank you. To those who call Bethlehem Haven home – welcome home.”

The three residential floors, located on floors 2, 3, and 4, each feature fully refinished private bedrooms, shared lounges and kitchenettes, private accessible bathrooms and showers, and shared laundry facilities.

The main level includes a welcoming reception area, offices, a community dining room, and a fully equipped kitchen.

The lower level also underwent a complete renovation. Previously usable only for storage, it now includes a large, welcoming gathering space for socialization and educational opportunities as well as a new break room to enhance colleague well-being.

Other major investments and facility improvements include new mechanical, plumbing, and electrical systems, a new roof, a new HVAC system, new insulation, new windows, and French doors to allow more natural light into the space, and a new elevator to improve accessibility.

ACTION-Housing Inc., who has a respected and lengthy history of improving lives through its work on affordable and supportive housing initiatives, was the consultant partner. LGA Partners in collaboration with Montague Design were the project architect, designer, and consulting partner respectively.

“We feel honored to have had the opportunity to work with Bethlehem Haven to renovate this historic building as affordable and supportive housing for women at risk of homelessness,” stated **Lena Andrews, AICP**, vice president of real estate development at ACTION-Housing Inc. “This renovation has created a safe, healthy, and beautiful living environment where residents will be able to thrive,” added Andrews.

“LGA has been working with Bethlehem Haven and the renovation team – ACTION-Housing, Mosites Construction, and SIGAL Development – for years to develop the renovation program, define the scope of work, and design a project that works within the budget,” said **Scott Bofinger, AIA, RA, NCARB**, partner at LGA Partners.

“From early planning to punch lists and final inspections, this project was a long time in the making. Along the way, we’ve been humbled by Bethlehem Haven’s commitment to make life better for the individuals they serve,” continued Bofinger.

“Their passion inspired LGA and the team to go the extra mile to get this project over the finish line. We feel blessed and honored to have been given the opportunity to work on it, and we hope that the residents and colleagues are as pleased with the results as we are!” added Bofinger.

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Mosites Construction Company was the general contractor.

“Mosites Construction Company congratulates Bethlehem Haven on the completion of the renovation of its permanent supportive housing program at 1410 Fifth Avenue,” said **Dean Mosites**, CEO and president of Mosites’ Building Division. “We respect Bethlehem Haven’s dedication to fostering safety and health for those most in need. Mosites Construction was privileged to play a small role with you to help end the cycle of homelessness as we build our communities.”

SIGAL Development Services was the project manager.

“SIGAL Development Services is honored to have been a part of this important development and support Bethlehem Haven’s mission to provide a continuum of care for homeless individuals that leads toward self-sufficiency,” said **Jason L. Sigal**, owner of SIGAL Development Services.

Anderson Interiors was the furnishings partner for Phase I.

Every decision was based on the principals of trauma-informed design. Understanding Bethlehem Haven’s unique history, mission, and values, as well as the preferences, likes, and dislikes of the women who call Bethlehem Haven home, were essential to the design process. The women were engaged every step of the way throughout the project. Their input helped to inform important decisions from the furnishings and finishes; the color palette of soothing blues, greens, and mauves; and the selection on soft furnishings for their own bedrooms.

Contributions from generous private individuals and corporate donors, an October 2023 gala, and a special fundraising campaign called “A Room of Her Own” helped underwrite the cost of essential soft furnishings, such as linens, bedding, and pillows; necessary items like lamps and clothing racks, and home amenities, including bathrobes and slippers. Each of the women was able to choose soft furnishings based on their individual preferences.

“It has been an honor to use our design skills to collaborate with the women to create a room of their own,” said **Catherine Montague**, founder and principal designer of Montague Design.

During the renovation, the 26 residents temporarily relocated to the former Family House facility in Shadyside. UPMC, owners of the property, established a community benefit program for rent during the term of occupancy.

“Pittsburgh Mercy and Bethlehem Haven thank UPMC for giving the individuals we serve a warm, comfortable place to stay during the year-long renovation,” stated Fetchko.

Integral to the process was working with the four community groups that serve Uptown and the Lower Hill District, including Uptown Partners of Pittsburgh, the Hill District Community Development Corporation (Hill CDC), the Hill District Consensus Group (HDCG), and the Hill District Collaborative (HDC).

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PHASE II: COMING SOON: THE UPTOWN FLATS LOW-INCOME AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

The completion of the 1410 Fifth Avenue renovation is significant because it marks another step in addressing the homelessness public health crisis and the completion of Phase I of the two-phase Bethlehem Haven low-income affordable housing development. To create more affordable housing in Pittsburgh and expand opportunities for individuals in their path to self-sufficiency, Bethlehem Haven and ACTION-Housing are partnering on the co-development of Uptown Flats, 34 new units of low-income affordable, supportive housing units in Uptown Pittsburgh with a preference for households at risk of homelessness and individuals with disabilities.

With an estimated cost of \$22 million, that investment got under way in 2017 when Bethlehem Haven acquired the neighboring 1404 Fifth Avenue property with this future project in mind. Since then, Bethlehem Haven acquired 1402 and 1400 Fifth Avenue to establish physical space for the new building.

Demolition of the existing buildings and construction of the Uptown Flats development is expected to start this summer and be completed in mid-2026.

For Phase II, ACTION-Housing is the co-developer. LGA Partners is the project architect. SIGAL Development Services is the project manager.

Uptown Flats is funded primarily through the federal and Pennsylvania Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program, which provides credits to housing developers to acquire, construct, and rehabilitate affordable housing for low-income individuals. Bethlehem Haven and ACTION-Housing received a 9% LIHTC award in the 2022 funding round and are working with the National Equity Fund and BNY Mellon as tax credit investors.

Major funding for both Phase I, the 1410 Fifth Avenue preservation and renovation project, and Phase II, the Uptown Flats low-income affordable housing development, was made possible in part by a \$1 million grant from [McAuley Ministries](#), Pittsburgh Mercy's grant-making foundation, and grants from the state's Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP), the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) of Pittsburgh, the Eden Hall Foundation, FHLBank Pittsburgh (FHLB), the Henry L. Hillman Foundation; the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development Local Share Account (PA DCED LSA), the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency's Pennsylvania Housing Affordability and Rehabilitation Enhancement (PHFA's PHARE) Fund, Allegheny County HOME American Rescue Plan (HOME ARP), as well as gifts from private individuals.

Just five short blocks away is **905 Watson Street**, home to **Bethlehem Haven's low-barrier, 24/7 emergency shelter** that serves up to 28 women and gender non-conforming individuals; **Pittsburgh Mercy Family Health Center: Uptown**, an integrated physical and behavioral health and wellness clinic for persons experiencing homelessness; and **Medical Respite Program**, which serves up to 29 individuals. Medical respite care is acute and post-acute care for people experiencing homelessness who are too ill or frail to recover from a physical illness or

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injury while living in a shelter or on the streets but are not sick enough to be in a hospital. Bethlehem Haven's Medical Respite Program, which opened in 2018, is the only medical respite program in Pittsburgh and one of only three in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; the others are in Philadelphia and York, Pa.

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Editor's note: Photos are available upon request. Contact [Linda K. Ross](#) or [Emilee Howells](#).

About Bethlehem Haven

[Bethlehem Haven](#), part of the [Pittsburgh Mercy](#) Family of Care and its award-winning homeless services continuum since 2016, has provided shelter and supportive services to thousands of individuals experiencing homelessness for more than four decades. Every person who lives at Bethlehem Haven is linked to supportive services, personalized for their individual needs. Bethlehem Haven's mission is to provide a continuum of care for individuals that leads toward self-sufficiency. The founding values of hospitality, compassion, integrity, and empowerment are at the heart of everything Bethlehem Haven does, even as it has expanded its offerings.

To learn more about Bethlehem Haven or to make a donation in support of its important work in the community, please visit at bethlehemhaven.org. Follow Bethlehem Haven on [LinkedIn](#), and [Instagram](#).

About Pittsburgh Mercy

[Pittsburgh Mercy](#) is one of the largest community health and social service providers and employers in Southwestern Pennsylvania. We offer help – and hope – to 18,000 of our community's most vulnerable in 60+ locations:

- People who have complex behavioral and physical health challenges.
- People who have intellectual and developmental disabilities
- People who are experiencing homelessness
- People who need wrap-around services to live safe, healthy, and well in the community.

We are the largest Integrated Community Wellness Center (ICWC) in Pennsylvania and the only one in Southwestern Pennsylvania. We are a five-time awardee of Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Certified Community Behavioral Health Center (CCBHC) expansion grants.

Pittsburgh Mercy is a member of [Trinity Health](#), serving in the tradition of the Sisters of Mercy. Our mission is to be a compassionate and transforming, healing presence within our communities. To learn more about Pittsburgh Mercy or to make a donation in support of its important work in the community, please visit www.pittsburghmercy.org. Follow Pittsburgh Mercy on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [X](#) (formerly known as [Twitter](#)).

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