

The Women & Girls Fund honors

Krista Pettit

with the 2019 Women & Girls Fund Award



KRISTA PETTIT is the Founder and Executive Director of Haven Ministries, a non-profit in Queen Anne's County that operates a homeless shelter, food pantries, thrift store, resource center, warehouse with job training, and street outreach program. She resides in Centreville with her husband, Chris, a United Methodist minister, and two children, John and Rachel, who are in high school and college, respectively. She is actively involved in many community groups, such as the Drug Free Coalition, fair housing committee, transportation committee, and roundtable on homelessness, which pursue the injustices of poverty. She enjoys hiking, reading, and crafting.

That's the succinct biographical sketch provided by Krista, but it's far from the whole story.

Krista shared that it wasn't until she was an adult that she was drawn to volunteering. As a young married couple, she and her husband experienced a severe financial hardship, and relied on family, friends, social services, and church to help them recover. Once on the other side, she had a clear understanding of how hard it is to ask for and receive help. The compassion for others in dire circumstances grew, as did her faith.

When asked what led her to open a shelter, Krista said she knew people were calling local churches for help with emergency shelter, rent, and clothing. During a Sunday church service, she received a call from God to start a homeless shelter. That pushed her to contact churches in the community to ask if they'd be interested in helping her – and, to her surprise, each one said yes.

Thus began Haven Ministries, which opened its doors to four guests in 2006 as a cold-weather emergency shelter at Kent Island United Methodist Church. During the 2018-19 season, the Shelter served 40 guests, including 12 children, the Resource Center assisted 30 people with bill payments and budget counseling, and the Food Pantries distributed food to 200 people who reached a total of 435 people.

Over the years, Haven Ministries has steadily expanded its services and along with the numbers of people reached. In addition to the October – April cold weather shelter there are three year-round ministries: Our Daily Thread Thrift Store (Stevensville), two Haven Ministries Food Pantries (Stevensville and Centreville), and Haven Ministries Resource Center (St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Centreville.)

Through these services, Haven Ministries provides "Hope for the Eastern Shore" by offering Hope with Shelter, Hope with Clothing, Hope with Food, and Hope with Resources. As these basic human needs are met, individuals can improve self-esteem, gain dignity, and have the motivation to get back on their feet.

Kathy Deoudes, a Women & Girls Fund board member and Queen Anne's County community volunteer, said, "Through these programs, Krista is fulfilling her vision of respect and dignity for all community members by providing shelter, clothing, food, and resources to lift up those in need of a hand. She and Haven Ministries are hopeful to one day own and operate a permanent shelter in the community."

With affordable housing a critical issue for the poor in Queen Anne's County, Haven Ministries is actively looking for property to add another ministry – Housing Assistance. Krista believes "hope is the opposite of fear," and is working to combat the fear some community members have for complex issues, which has held up attempts to purchase property.

"Krista's passion for those who live in the margins to be treated as equals is second to none," said Mia Cranford, former Director of Marketing of Haven Ministries. It takes passion, energy, perseverance, and hope to do all Krista has done, and continues to do, to pursue "the injustices of poverty." Of all these attributes, HOPE stands out above all.

Hope is truly an integral part of Krista's life and mission. A hope to continue to grow the ministry to help the poor. A hope to align churches, political organizations, non-profits, and individuals to work together to help those in need. The volunteer hours given by so many community members to make Haven Ministries' services possible give Krista hope. And her children provide the greatest hope and positive outlook for the future: having grown up around the homeless shelter, they are not afraid of people with differences or difficulties and are already looking out for others - - her daughter hopes to join the Peace Corps after college, and her teenage son is a volunteer fireman in Centreville.

It is our hope that more people will be called to volunteerism to work in their communities to help those in need. And so it is with honor, that the Women & Girls Fund presents Krista Pettit with the 2019 Women & Girls Fund Award.



About the Women & Girls Fund Award

The Women & Girls Fund Award was established to recognize and honor a community member who has made outstanding professional or personal contributions towards understanding and addressing the needs of women and girls in the Mid-Shore region. Candidates for this award will have demonstrated leadership, vision, integrity, compassion, cooperation, and generosity of time and talent in their efforts to improve the lives and opportunities of women and girls



Women & Girls Fund Awards — since 2004

- 2004 *Lois Duffey*
- 2005 *Harriet S. Critchlow*
- 2006 *Sandra W. King*
- 2007 *Maria Boria, M.D.*
- 2008 *Sr. Patricia Gamgort, OSB*
- 2009 *Tracy Davenport*
- 2010 *Sandra Redd*
- 2011 *Sara Jane Davidson*
- 2012 *Karen Murphy Jensen*

- 2013 *Kathleen Francis*
- Maureen Jacobs*
- Janet Pfeffer*
- Joy Price*
- Nancy Wilson*
- 2014 *Mary Lou McAllister*
- 2015 *Diana Mautz*
- 2016 *Kathy Weaver*
- 2017 *Ellen Rajacich*
- 2018 *Susan Stockman*

