Beginning March 1st, the STAR House will be operating on an extended schedule to provide evening services for our youth. In order to serve the youth during these hours, the STAR House hired four employees and recruited several volunteers. Sam Masters, a current student employee, will be a full time staff member working during the extended hours and is looking forward to offering the youth a place to go during the winter nights. He knows all too well that the options our youth have after the house closes are less than desirable.

“Youth aren’t super welcomed by other residents (at homeless shelters) and for those who do stay there, if they are not back by 8pm, they are out in the cold. We have at least 10 to 15 campers who sleep outside.”

Sam is also concerned about the safety of our female youth who have confided in him that they sometimes go home ‘with people they otherwise wouldn’t,’ in order to have a place to stay. Project coordinator, Jeana Patterson, agrees with Sam and says that youth were grateful when they learned our drop-in center would be open 24 hours during March.

“A lot of youth were relieved and some were thankful...this is one less night of hunting or compromising themselves in order to have an alternative option.”

Beyond filling the basic needs of our youth during the evening hours, Jeana is also glad we will be able to provide social support for them. “At night, when it’s quiet and dark, it reiterates how lonely you are.”

This 24 hour service would not be possible without the tremendous generosity of volunteers from Xenos church, who are...
People like you enjoy contributing to the OSU STAR House

Thanks to the Upper Arlington Baseball Boosters who donated 75 individually wrapped sub sandwiches for the youth

Thanks to Glenda L. Feliciano (and the Surgical Intensive Care at OSU) who is organizing the second golf tournament to raise money for homeless youth this May. Stay tuned for more information.

Thanks to Cathy Mayo for bringing her friends to the house and making a weekly commitment to giving the house a professional cleaning.

With your help, the STAR House will be open 24 hours in March (continued from p. 1)

providing an additional 500 hours of service next month. We have several volunteers from Xenos who already lend a hand to the STAR house and prepare weekly meals for our youth, but they jumped on the opportunity to work overnight shifts in order to make the extended hours feasible. The increased access for youth will lead to an extra usage of our resources like food, paper products, and trash bags. If there are any supporters who are able to donate these items, we would greatly appreciate it.

We are grateful our youth have this opportunity and know they are relieved that finding a place to go at night is not something they will have to worry about this month.*

“[This] is one less night of hunting or compromising themselves in order to have an alternative option” - Jeana Patterson
Last Saturday, the STAR House joined the Youth Empowerment Program and Project Connect to host the second annual Caring Hearts and Helping Hands dinner which benefited homeless youth in Central Ohio. The dinner was held at the Westin hotel downtown and was hosted by Charity Martin. Attendees enjoyed poetry from Will Speaks, a video from Meghan Thompson about the services for homeless youth in Columbus, and stories from youth who had previously been homeless and received help from our programs. There was also a silent auction which included items like a free massage, a Kindle e-reader, and gift certificates to Evolved and other local businesses.

Joyce Swayne, Director of Operations at the YWCA Family Center, purchased a table at the event for her staff and said the most meaningful part of the evening for her was the poetry read from youth in YEP.

“It was uplifting to hear youth speak about their experiences and the hope they have for their futures.”

For the staff hosting the event, this was more than just a way to raise money, but it was an opportunity to both celebrate the successes we’ve had thus far and express to our mindful community members that there is more work to be done. This intention was continued on page 4.

The STAR House table at the Caring Hearts and Helping Hands dinner on February 25th.

You attended!

In February 2012, we served over 150 youth and introduced 32 new youth to the center.

Two youth secured stable housing this month.

Four youth found employment this month.
Marilyn Smith from WOSU came by the house to be introduced to our staff and resources. While she was here, she engaged with youth and learned about their experiences of being homeless in Central Ohio. We are honored that she decided to highlight their stories on 89.7 FM NPR News. If you would like to listen to this story, here is a link: http://beta.wosu.org/news/tag/star-house/.

Ben Bays from the Big 10 Network interviewed Natasha Slesnick and youth last fall about the house. The video from this interview was posted on youtube earlier this month and you can watch it here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Q1BnmwLU8w

You attended! (continued from page 3)

not lost on Swayne who is a former educator and has worked with the homeless population for years. She knows far too well about the adversities our youth have to overcome, but hopes events like this one will raise awareness about the lack of programs for homeless youth in Columbus. “I understand the personal and social problems associated with the homelessness of our youth: lack of education, lifelong unemployment, increased vulnerability to being abused...More importantly, the lives of intelligent, talented people are unfulfilled or lost forever. This is an issue we all must take responsibility for.”

We want to thank everyone who attended the event and helped make it possible. Our programs are a success because you all have caring hearts and helping hands and you are willing to share them with us. We look forward to seeing you all next year.

“I understand the personal and social problems associated with the homelessness of our youth...This is an issue we all must take responsibility for.” -Joyce Swayne