



# Saranam

Central's Family Transitions Assistance

*Transforming the lives of homeless families...*

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<http://saranamabq.org>

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“Saranam”  
means  
Refuge

**Core Values**  
*Respect*  
*Transformation*  
*Empowerment*  
*Integrity*  
*Faithfulness*  
*Compassion*

**6 Steps to Self Sufficiency**

- Step 1: Intake/Orientation
- Step 2: Educational/Personal Development
- Step 3: Vocational Development
- Step 4: Job Placement/Employee Support
- Step 5: Independent Living
- Step 6: Independence

**Saranam Staff**

Eddie DeCristofaro  
Saranam Case Mgr.  
Nancy Grizzle  
Office/Program Coordinator  
Tracy Sharp  
Dir. Homeless Minist.

## The Labyrinth as Saranam’s Logo

What is a Labyrinth? Why is it used as the symbol for Saranam?

Labyrinths are symbols of a spiritual journey and renewal, combining the imagery of the circle and the spiral into a wandering but purposeful path. It represents a journey to our own center and back out again into the world. Labyrinths have been used throughout

history as meditation, contemplation and prayer tools. Labyrinths are frequently confused with mazes, however, they are fundamentally different. A maze has one real path with a beginning and an end, and many other paths that lead nowhere - making it a puzzle. There is only one way in and one way out of a labyrinth. You follow the path into the center and follow the same path out of the labyrinth. The journey does not have ends throughout. Though it may make a complete turn, it continues moving forward.

To move through the labyrinth is to create balance from within and to gain self-awareness. The paths loop and spiral, mirroring the places in life where we make transitions and carve



out new paths for ourselves. In the center, rather than the path simply coming to an end, the labyrinth Saranam uses has a wide circle at its core.

Because at Saranam, we work with people to transform their lives, and doing so is part of a lifelong journey, the labyrinth is an appropriate symbol. There are many twists and turns, and yet the walk continues. To walk the labyrinth is a spiritual, emotional and physical task. At Saranam, we are all on a journey to becoming who we can be - in all these arenas. The journey is not always an easy path. That is why we never have to take it alone. The labyrinth symbolizes our moving toward wholeness and health for ourselves and for our families.



## Tis' the Season...

As we all know this is the time of year when generous people donate time, money and goods to others in need. We have been so very blessed to receive many Christmas decorations, ornaments, trees, and linens this year. All of our residents have a Christmas tree in their homes and have done a wonderful job decorating them. The ladies were so excited to see all of the decorations and ornaments. They had a great time picking out what they wanted to go on their tree and to decorate their homes. Little things like giving Christmas decorations makes this such a magical time of year. Thank you for all of your thoughtfulness this giving season.

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## Voices...

This month our question was about their New Year's Resolutions or goals for 2008.

*"My goal is to handle one thing at a time, instead of trying to do everything at once."*

*"My new year's resolution is to get my legal issues taken care of, do good in school, get my son back,..."*

*"I want to be able to dedicate myself more to studying and doing my home work."*

*"To not make New Years resolutions anymore"*

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## Pictures with Santa

Do you remember going to the store and standing in line to get your picture taken with the guy in the red suit? Our Saranam families followed that time honored tradition by taking their small children, some infants as well, to Coronado Mall to get their pictures taken with Santa. We all got to practice the virtue of patience while waiting in line with excited, restless children and squirming babies and as all good things are, it was worth the wait to preserve this precious Christmas memory moment in time!

## The Chance to Give

Thanks to all of our parishioners we had a great gift card turn out. Our residents were able to budget their gift giving for their family and make the hard decisions of what to get their loved ones. If it wasn't for the Central family our families would not be able to give to their families. So we thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

## Our New Family Member



One of our residents has recently given birth to a beautiful baby boy. Roxanne welcomed Patrick John into the world November 29<sup>th</sup> at 12:42 in the afternoon. He was 19 inches long and weighed 7 pounds 11 ounces. They are enjoying getting to know each other and establishing their routine. Roxanne is doing great and resting when she can!

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## Saranam Program Update

During Spring Semester our new students will be attending CNM a half day and continue Life Skills classes at Saranam. They will be taking mostly pre-requisite courses at CNM. Their majors include Business Administration, General Studies, Cosmetology, Court Reporting and Fitness Technician. Our one year student continues her studies in Social Work. They are excited to begin college and we are excited and proud of them for beginning that first step toward their college education!

# Barbara Allender and Nancy Jackson: Committed Board Members

**Barbara Allender and Nancy Jackson**, both original members of the Council on Homeless Ministries, have served their full two terms and are going off of the board. They were part of the original group tasked with figuring out what to do with this endowment set up after Mrs. Ash left her gift to Central UMC.



The dedicated work of the original members of the CHM in identifying needs and resources for homeless families was exceptional. It required an incredible amount of time over a two year period to identify the needs and gaps in services in Albuquerque. In the words of Nancy, "Although the most nerve wracking experience for me when I was chair of the Saranam Board were the negotiations around purchasing the apartment complex, the most meaningful experiences were working with people whom I have grown to admire and from whom I have learned so much. These special people include those from the Board, the staff, and the families of Saranam. Having worked with many non-profits, I was comfortable during the first few years with the slow, creeping progress of learning and consensus building needed to start a program - even as one of my Board colleagues who worked daily with the homeless shook her head and said, "Rome is burning, and here we sit fiddling." Eventually Saranam was created. This unique new model of ministry to homeless families includes housing, education and building a community.

"The program that is now in place as a result of those two years of research and planning is something of which I am personally very proud," says Barbara. "The commitment of the CHM has only gotten stronger. It has been an exceptional challenge, but it has been an extraordinary experience."



"I wonder sometimes if I was a homeless mom carrying the burden of my past and struggling with demons, would I have the courage and fortitude to live through a long, and challenging change?" questions Nancy. "I'm not sure. But I do know that I have been blessed to witness and participate in the birth and growth of this wonderful program we now call Saranam.

Both Barbara and Nancy have served as chair of CHM and on numerous committees over their tenures. We are very grateful for the outstanding leadership they have given to CHM and for their insight and support. Thank you for being an integral part of the development of the Saranam program.

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## Volunteer Help

We have gotten so many donations that it is time to make sure the storage unit is up to par. I would love some volunteers to help me in the storage unit Monday January 21st. I will be at the storage unit around 10am-3:00. If you would like to help please contact Nancy at 299-6154 ext. 103.

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### eNewsletter

If you would like to receive the Saranam newsletter via email please contact Nancy at 299-6154 ext. 103

<http://saranamabq.org>

Please check out Saranam's new website!