

# *The Road Home*

STORIES OF **HOPE** FROM THE ARLINGTON LIFE SHELTER

**Arlington  
Life Shelter**

SUMMER 2025





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Our Mission:

To promote self-sufficiency by providing shelter, employment programs and transitional services for North Texans impacted by homelessness.

Arlington Life Shelter

325 W. DIVISION ST.  
ARLINGTON, TEXAS 76011

SAVE THE DATE

On October 9, the Arlington Life Shelter will host our annual Road Home Luncheon. This event highlights client testimonies — stories of hope made possible by the generosity of community members like you.

Sponsorship opportunities are available now. If you are interested in sponsoring or attending this year’s Road Home Luncheon, visit our website at [arlingtonlifeshelter.org/news-events/roadhomeluncheon.html](http://arlingtonlifeshelter.org/news-events/roadhomeluncheon.html).

Dear Friend,

As we get ready to welcome another North Texas summer, I want to take a moment to thank you. Your partnership is a key piece of the work we do at the Arlington Life Shelter, no matter what time of year.

The upcoming season can bring additional challenges to our neighbors — not least of all, the dangers that come along with high temperatures. But, because of you, summer can also be a time for hope and transition, giving North Texans a chance for a new day, home and life.

Because of your compassion, children, families and individuals of all ages have the resources, programming and support needed to alleviate the challenges of homelessness and move towards a stronger future.

We work 24/7, 365 days per year to ensure our neighbors have a place to go for help, whether that’s a person who’s been living without shelter for months or a family trying to make ends meet while living paycheck-to-paycheck.

Please, take a moment to read through our summer newsletter and reflect on the impact you’ve had for neighbors like Virginia and her son, Veridian, p. 4.

Thank you for sharing our mission. Together, we can make sure every neighbor has access to hope this summer!

Gratefully,

Stephanie

Stephanie R. Melchert  
President & CEO



Stephanie R. Melchert  
PRESIDENT & CEO

You Helped Valarie Heal

When Valarie, 61, reflects on the journey that brought her to today, what stands out is her unwavering resilience.

“I always knew if something didn’t work out, I could find another way forward,” she explains.

Valarie’s childhood was tumultuous, an experience she later recounted in a self-published autobiography detailing her experience in the foster care system.

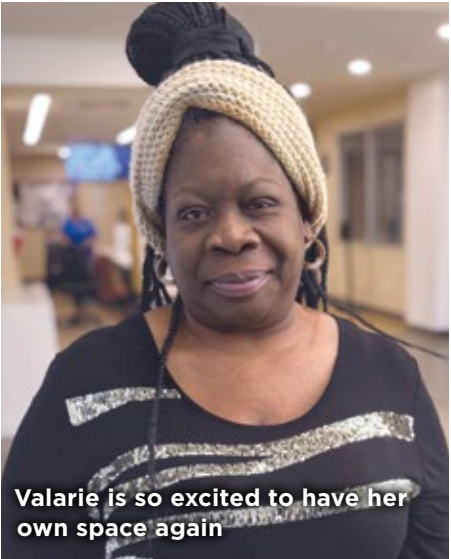
Nevertheless, Valarie was determined to build a stronger life. She earned an undergraduate degree in psychology and a graduate degree in education, then put her schooling to work in a career focused on

mentoring and advocating for young adults.

When Valarie made the courageous decision to leave an unsafe relationship, she came face-to-face with homelessness. But thankfully, friends like you stepped up to help her find a new day, home and life at the Arlington Life Shelter.

“I always knew if something didn’t work out, I could find another way forward,”

Here, Valarie had access to a computer lab where she diligently applied to new jobs, as well as many more needed resources. Soon, her case manager let her know about a promising housing program.



Valarie is so excited to have her own space again

“I was so relieved when they told me I qualified,” Valarie says.

Now, Valarie has the fresh start she needs to continue healing from her past and building a future focused on stability and happiness!



Some of Kirk’s youngest memories are of his mother cooking in the kitchen. Fast forward, and Kirk has returned to his love of food and cooking through volunteering in the kitchen at the Arlington Life Shelter. “I just wanted to do something to help,” he said.

Our mission is especially meaningful to Kirk, who experienced homelessness himself. For him, homelessness was tied up in a substance abuse disorder. Thankfully, Kirk has

Kirk Shares Hope Through Meals

regained stability. He dedicates his sobriety to his late father, Donald Oldham, as the reason he is thriving now.

Kirk has gone on to found a nonprofit, Meals with Meaning, to further his personal passion.

“One day, I was out serving food on a cold, rainy day, and I saw a pregnant woman with no shoes. That moment stuck with me,” Kirk shares, speaking on why he continues to donate time.

With each meal he creates for our guests, Kirk partners

with a different local chef or farmer. “It’s farm-to-shelter,” he jokes.

Now, the nonprofit is approaching 11,000 total meals donated. With each one, Kirk hopes to instill the value service in his children, ages 10, 5 and 4. “I want them to understand the importance of giving back.”

If you’re considering volunteering, Kirk encourages you to try it. “People think they’re too small to help, but that’s not true,” he says. “If I can do it, anyone can!”

# A New Mom Shares Heartfelt Gratitude

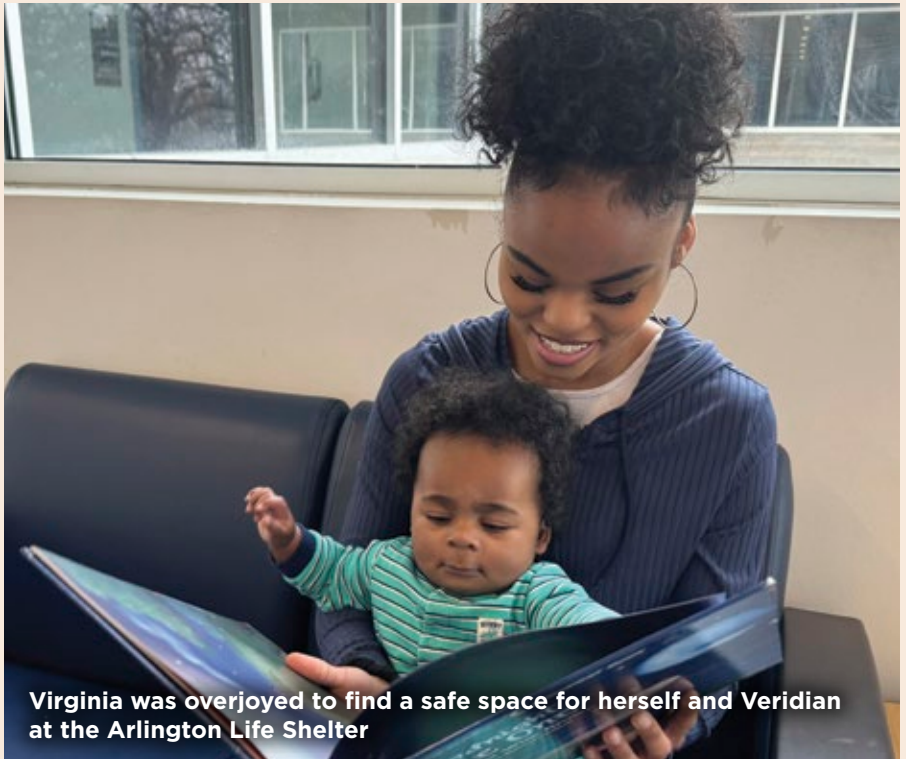
For any new mother, the transition to motherhood is hard, but rewarding. For Virginia, it was a transformation that would lead to new hope and a stronger future.

“Two weeks postpartum, I went through domestic violence, and I was homeless,” Virginia remembers.

**“I’m grateful. It really feels like the sky is opening.”**

It’s hard to imagine the stress of not having a safe, stable place to land — having to hop between friends’ houses just to survive. When you add in a newborn child to care for, the pressure only mounts.

Thankfully, your partnership showed Virginia that there’s always a helping hand. She called our number from a list of resources. “It was one o’clock, and they



Virginia was overjoyed to find a safe space for herself and Veridian at the Arlington Life Shelter

were like, “we just started intake. If you come right now, we have a family room available,” she says.

Here, Virginia and her son, Veridian, had the stable space needed to decompress, heal and begin planning for the future. Virginia secured a job in childcare at the YMCA, a job that lets her bring Veridian to work.

“I want to get my CDA and become a teacher,” she shares excitedly of her long-term plans.

To friends like you, who are helping her on the path to getting her driver’s license and an apartment, Virginia says, “I’m grateful. It really feels like the sky is opening!”

## STOCK THE SHELTER

Our fourth annual Stock the Shelter is right around the corner! We need your support in fulfilling shelter, hygiene, kitchen and clinic needs. You can get involved by shopping our wish lists and bringing, or shipping, your donations to our door.

Scan the QR code below to find our list of needs.



Send donations to:

Arlington Life Shelter  
325 W Division St.  
Arlington, TX 76011

Thank you for your generous contributions!

## STOCK THE SHELTER

June 1st - June 30th



**LET'S STOCK THE SHELTER!**

Arlington Life Shelter needs your help fulfilling shelter, hygiene, kitchen and clinic needs!

Your donations help us serve our increasing number of residents as they navigate their journey from homelessness to self-sufficiency

**Arlington Life Shelter**