



## MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*To say this has been a tough year is one of the biggest understatements ever.*

The pandemic has brought disruptions, hardships, illness and loss, and Tasks Unlimited has not been immune. True to form, we have endured, adjusted as needed, taken care of one another, and have moved forward. The definition of resiliency is an ability to recover from or adjust easily to adversity or change and Tasks clients and staff have proven they are the epitome of resilient. We adjusted, we recovered, and we supported each other through some very difficult times.

As vaccines begin to roll out and we allow ourselves to be hopeful that we are on the downward side of the curve, it's a time for remaining vigilant, but also a time for taking stock of how this difficult time has been an opportunity to grow and see how resilient we are.

We've seen resiliency in the way that lodges and work teams have come together and supported one another at a time when normal routines were disrupted and the potential for stress and isolation was great. We've seen it in the way our staff pivoted in reaching out to clients virtually while taking measures to keep themselves and our clients safe. We've seen it in the many ways that our donors have stepped in and helped us get needed supplies and support.

While this past year has been brutal in many ways, we are also thankful for our staff, our clients and our donors who have all come together to help us get through this year and we welcome 2021 with hope and the knowledge that together we can overcome great adversity because we are resilient; ***we are Tasks Unlimited.***



Karen Johnston  
Executive Director

## NEW PARTNERSHIP TO SERVE HOMELESS YOUTH



Tasks Unlimited is excited to announce a new partnership to connect homeless youth who have serious mental illness with employment and mental health services. Our new partner, Youthlink, provides basic needs and resources for homeless

young people ages 16-24. Based in downtown Minneapolis, Youthlink is also the host site for the **Youth Opportunity Center**, a unique collaborative that brings together a variety of organizations and agencies that offer resources young people experiencing homelessness may need – all in one location. Tasks will become a YOC provider starting this month, adding a unique focus on youth who have a serious and persistent mental illness.

Tasks staff will provide an array of employment services to help young people access career readiness skills, gain employment, and advance employment. Youth will also be able to receive diagnostic assessment and psychiatric services through Tasks. As Kassia Janezich, Tasks Director of Vocational Services, says:

***“There are large gaps in services for youth with disabilities, especially those experiencing or at risk of homelessness. We are excited to collaborate with other YOC providers and Youthlink staff to address these gaps and support young people in finding and keeping jobs.”***

While some employment services are eligible for reimbursement through the state, there are major barriers for homeless youth. The state approval process can take two or more months. Many youth are also wary of formal systems of services. It's important for staff to build trust to engage youth in the process. Donations help address these barriers, preventing young people from falling through the cracks and connecting them with supports to change the trajectory of their lives.

“ ***Writing when I am having a bad day empties out my thoughts, and I feel better.*** ”  
–quote from client participant in the Fall 2020 creative writing residency

# MEET OUR CLIENTS IN THEIR OWN VOICE

## LISTEN TO A MEMOIR PODCAST

We invite you to listen to a series of flash memoir pieces read out loud by their authors, all Tasks clients. The “Flash” Memoir writing residency, with COMPAS Teaching Artist Glenda Reed, was available in 6 one-hour sessions through Zoom for all clients last fall. Flash memoirs are true-life personal short stories that give us a look into the writer’s life. Get to know our clients and listen to one of their short stories in a podcast. Visit the link or QR code below to take a listen.

### RETIREMENT COAT

by Kevin

I like the coat I got at the work site.  
Because is not too hot or too cold.  
It must be an expensive one because it is  
a Columbia brand. The building personnel  
on the second floor gave it to me as a  
retirement gift.

### DANCING, WHAT I DO WELL!

by Jermaine

Shaking my hips to the music while my  
brain processes the lyrics, I can feel the  
beats throughout. Dancing has a way  
of bringing to both mind and body, my  
freedom and liberation. Bouncing my  
butt or spinning my hands or twirling  
and swiveling my ankles and feet, lets  
me experience the joy of being. While  
listening to artists like Beyoncé, Lady  
Gaga, or Joachim Cooder, my body  
tingles all over from the vibrations of the  
music. I jump. I clap. I snap. I sing along.  
And more importantly, I dance.

### PLAYING HOCKEY

by Mike

I would be playing hockey in the park  
right behind my dad and moms house  
right up until dark. My father would turn  
on the yard light or whistle, meaning that  
it was time to come home.

“Flash” Memoir was provided in partnership with the arts organization COMPAS and funded through the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council. We are excited to continue offering virtual art classes in partnership with COMPAS, including upcoming residencies in animation and manga this spring.

Many thanks to COMPAS Teaching Artist and writer Glenda Reed for producing and mixing the podcast.

### IN THE WOODS

by Brenda

When I was seven years old my play time  
would be to play in the woods behind the  
yellow house, that had four bed rooms  
and two baths. The woods had a trail road  
because people paid my dad to dump  
trash back there. My dad would burn the  
tires, the trash and the old mattresses.  
My woods had pretty flowers and trees  
with bright green leaves, orange and red  
leaves and pretty yellow ones. Walking  
quietly you could see blue jays, robins,  
and foxes and deer and squirrels. The  
woods was my home away from home.  
My friends and I would build club houses  
out of the junk, that people through away.  
The woods was my forest, it was my  
imaginary and mystery place.



USE YOUR SMART  
PHONE DEVICE TO  
SCAN THE QR CODE  
OR FOLLOW THE LINK  
BELOW TO LISTEN TO  
THE PODCAST:

[bit.ly/2ZDagDL](https://bit.ly/2ZDagDL)



This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.



**metro**  
regional  
**arts**  
council

## HERE'S HOW TO SHOP CRITICALLY NEEDED ITEMS

Many thanks to everyone that donated items from our Amazon wish list during our Holiday Donation Drive! Your gifts helped visitors to our Northeast Outreach and Opportunity Center (the NOOC) and other clients in need stay warm this winter. We are still accepting items from our wish list to meet urgent basic needs.

To view the wish list, login to or create an Amazon account. To purchase items from the wish list, click "Add to Cart" and pay like you normally do on Amazon. Items purchased from our wish list are automatically delivered to us!

*Due to COVID-19, we have stopped accepting drop offs without an appointment. To schedule an appointment to drop off new, unused items – contact us by email at [development@tasksunlimited.org](mailto:development@tasksunlimited.org) or by phone, at 612-871-3320.*

### OUR MOST URGENTLY NEEDED ITEMS:

- **TOILETRIES** - shampoo, deodorant, soap, lotion, menstrual pads, tampons, *no strong fragrances, full-size and travel-sized items*
- **WARM ADULT CLOTHING** - new socks, hats and gloves, long-sleeved shirts, sweaters and sweatpants, long-johns, *for men and women, neutral colors, medium to 3XL sizes*
- **SMALL BALANCE GIFT CARDS** - \$5-\$10 gift cards to restaurants and gas stations for people experiencing homelessness and/or living in their vehicle(s)

*The NOOC is located in northeast Minneapolis and serves adults experiencing homelessness and mental health challenges.*

**FOR EASY ACCESS, USE YOUR SMARTPHONE DEVICE TO SCAN THE QR CODES BELOW OR TYPE THE LINK TEXT INTO YOUR BROWSER:**



### AMAZON WISH LIST

Use the link below for a full list of items on our Amazon wish list or to purchase items pictured below:  
[amzn.to/2PPExeF](https://amzn.to/2PPExeF)



### AMAZONSMILE













Use the link below when shopping on Amazon and Amazon donates a portion of your purchase directly to us:  
[smile.amazon.com/ch/23-7087205](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/23-7087205)



[Explore more Charity Lists](#)

## Tasks Unlimited's Wish List - Our Greatest Needs

for [Tasks Unlimited Inc](#)

 \$21.99 0 purchased 10 needed Add to Cart	 \$17.99 0 purchased 10 needed Add to Cart	 \$17.99 0 purchased 10 needed Add to Cart	 \$21.99 0 purchased 10 needed Add to Cart
 See all buying options	 \$26.76 0 purchased 5 needed Add to Cart	 \$25.99 0 purchased 1 needed Add to Cart	 \$32.99 0 purchased 2 needed Add to Cart
 \$13.99 4 purchased 10 needed Add to Cart	 \$17.99 1 purchased 10 needed Add to Cart	 \$20.99 1 purchased 5 needed Add to Cart	 See all buying options