

New Non-profit Furnishing Futures for Young Adults Aging out of Foster Homes

*Founder-Design Director Mel McDaniel's **Marvin's Home** making a difference one home at a time*

LANSDALE, PA (June 8, 2022) – Mel McDaniel, the social-worker turned successful Philadelphia interior designer, has recently launched **Marvin's Home**, a novel non-profit that is literally furnishing the futures of young adults aging - and moving - out of foster homes and into their first independent residences. For Mel, the Montgomery County-based, all-volunteer organization is the result of a deep, personal identification with “chronic housing instability”. Raised by parents in a now-defunct religious order that arbitrarily uprooted and relocated (sometimes several times in the same year) its members and their children, she was voiceless, powerless and yearned for a “real home”.

“I know what it means to grow up deprived of a stable home, without the sense of security, safety and belonging that home should provide”, she explained. “My background in social work, along with interior design, gave me the idea to form **Marvin's Home** (that's Marvin with me in our yard). We are a federally-registered charitable organization, with a spacious, new 'On Main' Lansdale showroom, directly confronting one enormous challenge young people face when transitioning from foster housing,” she added. Proceeds from showroom (the 1920's-era building originally housed a car dealership) sales help cover program expenses.

Marvin's Home often partners with [Valley Youth House](#), a Pennsylvania-based nonprofit that provides critical services such as housing, counseling, skills training and more to vulnerable and homeless youth, including those leaving foster care. Collaborating with Marvin's Home, they refer clients that are working towards independent living. Volunteers collect and transport furniture and furnishings (often donated by Mel's interior design clients) to help turn an empty apartment into a home. “Many of these young adults have never owned anything, much less furniture. Witnessing reactions at the time of the ‘reveal’ has been extraordinary. We've seen how **Marvin's Home** – growing to meet the pressing needs of those it serves - is making an impact on these young people, giving them not only solid, gently-used furniture and furnishings, but a sense of belonging, safety and comfort in their own home and hopefully, a sense that the community cares about them.”

Kristin Hayes, a former Federal prosecutor who now teaches at a Pennsylvania law school, first met Mel as a design client, and is among those who are impressed with her motivation and mission. “She's truly a force of nature,” said Prof. Hayes. “While running a full-time business, she's been able to launch a non-profit that is helping to fill that void when teenagers make the difficult transition from foster care into independent living. She and **Marvin's Home** are often the reason these young people are able to have anything beyond a mattress on the floor, and enjoy warm and welcoming furnishings in their homes.”

Mel, a native Canadian, holds an undergraduate degree in social welfare from the University of Kansas and a master's in education from Arcadia University. Donations to Marvin's Home can be made through www.marvinshome.org



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