

**Subject:** House of Sufism (KH) May 2014 Brunch Update

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# Brunch Update

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## House of Sufism Charity Initiative

Addressing the most pressing needs of our community



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*"Everybody can be great... because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love."*

*- Martin Luther King, Jr.*





## **HAPPENINGS**

**A**pril has been a month of warming weather and even warmer conversations during Sunday Brunch. The food has been delicious, soul nourishing, and remarkably varied. One Sunday a pair of donors provided a colorful buffet of Moroccan couscous, tender lamb chops, and scrumptious roasted potatoes, all cooked with spices brought fresh from Morocco by one of the donor's mother. Another Sunday featured mouth-watering chicken potpies that made many recall memories of home.

This month we saw the return some former volunteers to serve Sunday Brunch and share post-meal stories and laughs. On one beautiful occasion, one such volunteer and guest of the shelter picked up a lively discussion on religion and politics – after a year of not seeing each other! It's truly a sign of community and loving friendship when people can recall and continue their relationship after such a long break.

In addition to the weekly brunches, the House of Sufism has seen the continuation and exciting expansion of its pick-up and delivery service of baked goods. This month, we collected about 1,850 pounds of donated pastries, which volunteers delivered to Boston shelters nearly every day of the week. Perhaps more excitingly, however, is that the Charity Initiative recently acquired a major new donor! Pepperidge Farms has revealed itself to be truly magnanimous, opening its warehouse doors and giving House of Sufism access to far more baked goods than our minivan can hold. The sky is the limit, so anyone interested in supporting this effort should contact us immediately!



*Volunteers serving Easter supper at a shelter in Boston*



## A LOVE FOR LOVE:

*An Interview with the McLoughlin Family*

**M**editate upon a tree's spring blossom, and you'll realize it's a remarkable event: after the stormy cold darkness of winter emerge

from root and trunk and branch and twig these precious flowers, bursting with color and perfume. The same wonder strikes one who considers the hearts of Mary and Kayla McLoughlin, twin sisters who at sixteen years old are blooming now into loving and lovely human beings. Recently they, along with their mother Karen, joined House of Sufism Charity Initiative by serving Sunday Brunch at local Boston shelter.

The McLoughlins brought ziti with chicken and broccoli to feed people's bodies, and they brought love and good cheer for people's spirits. After cutting up fruit, scrambling eggs, and serving the main ziti dish, they got to know the shelter's guests: the twins played dominoes with the residents, while Karen chatted with other guests watching the football playoffs.



Karen was surprised by the efficiency and ease of volunteering with House of Sufism. "I thought it was going to be a lot harder," she shared. "The people were lovely. It was very well organized. There was nothing difficult about it."

Such words of praise are quite an honor coming from a family with such a rich history of service. Karen's mother helped establish one of the first after school programs in Brookline in the 1970s. Her father was a neurologist at Boston City Hospital. "In their work they were helping people," said Karen, who believes that in part her family was inspired by its Jewish roots. In particular, she recalled a specific passage from the Talmud: "If you save one person, you save the world."



The twins' love for others originated from the love they received from their family. "We gave the girls a love for love," explained Karen. "Wherever they went there was always somebody in the family telling them they were loved. That must have left an

impression.”

To illustrate: while the twins’ high school requires twenty-five hours of community service for its students to graduate, Kayla has already racked up around 88 hours, even though she’s just a sophomore. She has done everything from making Thanksgiving pies for a food shelter, to collecting data on endangered sea turtles in Costa Rica, to helping out at the B-Ready after school program right in the House of Sufism’s neighborhood. She explained: “When volunteering I’m at my best. I feel what I’m doing is important.”

Mary, in addition to various service projects around Boston (Thanksgiving pie-making included), spent part of last summer volunteering at an orphanage farm school for middle school boys in Honduras. The trip taught her “at the end of the day we are all people: I’m a person, they are persons, we are all persons.” She also interned at Children’s Hospital with a social worker helping adolescents overcome substance abuse. These experiences have inspired her to become an inner city school teacher, believing that “if you’re not doing something for others, then it’s not meaningful.”

The dedication and joy that the McLoughlin family brought to their service at the Sunday Brunch illustrates why House of Sufism welcomes volunteers from all backgrounds. Despite our outward differences, all people are capable of approaching their service with lovingkindness and respect. We all have hearts; we all can love.





## HOW TO GET INVOLVED

1. Volunteer! Sunday Brunch is a time commitment of only two hours: 2 - 4 p.m. Help us cook and clean or just spend time with our friends in need! Also, we need volunteers throughout the week to pick up donations from bakeries and deliver them to food pantries the next day.
2. Monetary donations: If you would like to make a contribution to House of Sufism Charity Initiative, you can write a check (payable to KN), use any credit card, or wire money through PayPal.
3. In-kind donations: We are always in need for milk, eggs, fruit, plastic bags, etc. for our Sunday Brunch. We also accept donations of items like household goods and furniture.

All donations are tax-deductible.

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