



Zaban Paradies Center

Empowering Couples, Families, & Individuals Facing Homelessness to Achieve Self-Sufficiency

SPRING/SUMMER 2025

**Our Shelter Goes
24/7/365**

**Honoring the Memory of
Rabbi Alvin Sugarman**

2024 Impact Report

**2025 Programs &
Progress**

**A Message from our
Executive Director**



Zaban
Paradies
Center



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Atlanta, GA 30309



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This issue is dedicated to the memory of Rabbi Alvin Sugarman. See pages 6-7 for more details.

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FROM THE DESK OF OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A message from Danny Lester-Drew

Dear Friends of Zaban Paradies Center,

For forty years, Zaban Paradies Center (ZPC) has served as Georgia's only emergency shelter for couples experiencing homelessness. Without Zaban Paradies Center, couples experiencing homelessness must make the difficult decision between separating to receive shelter or remaining together with their loved one, outside and unhoused. As you may know, since 2020, ZPC has significantly expanded our services, moving from a seasonal to year-round shelter and adding housing assistance programs for individuals and families facing homelessness in our community.

Since I joined as ZPC's Executive Director in June 2024, our team has worked to build upon our emergency shelter services to more effectively transition resident couples from ZPC's shelter to safe, permanent housing. In October 2024, in support of these efforts, we established a move-in financial assistance fund in partnership with United Way of Greater Atlanta, and in the 6 months since, we have increased our rate of exits from ZPC's shelter to permanent housing from 25% in 2024, already at the high end of national averages for emergency shelters, to 58%.

In this newsletter, you'll read more in-depth about our programs and impact. Before you do, though, I would like to highlight a few key accomplishments and changes to the organization.

1. In 2024, ZPC assisted 321 households, including 395 adults and 200 children! Make sure to check out more details on our 2024 impact later in this newsletter.
2. In December 2024, we launched two new financial assistance programs with United Way of Greater Atlanta. In 2025, we are now assisting more than 20 new households per month with moving into housing or preventing housing loss!
3. This month, ZPC's operations will go through a major transition, as we will now be open to residents 24 hours per day, 365 days per year! Read on for more details on this exciting change!
4. We have launched a new dashboard on our website, where you can follow along with the amazing work and progress happening at ZPC!

On top of all that, it has become quickly apparent to me in my time here that ZPC is an incredibly special organization because of our deeply committed staff and our passionate, generous supporters, including our Board of Directors, donors, volunteers, partners, and our newly formed Young Professionals Council. I am constantly blown away by the hard work, dedication, and love for our residents that I see on a day-to-day basis from our team and you, our supporters. In what is an uncertain time for nonprofit organizations and organizations working on ending homelessness, you are needed more than ever, and your presence gives us hope and conviction. Thank you all!

Sincerely,

Danny Lester-Drew



MEET OUR TEAM



Aleema Kinchen
Resident Advocate
("R.A.")



Barry Wilson
Resident Advocate
("R.A.")



Brandye Hartwell
Residential
Case Manager



Danny Lester-Drew
Executive Director



Immanuel Umoojamay
Resident Advocate
("R.A.")



Ivy James
Resident Advocate
("R.A.")



Lekesha Reynolds
Resident Advocate
("R.A.")



Lorenzo "Lo" Prescott
Resident Advocate
("R.A.")



Maria Englehart
Development &
Admin Coordinator



Marty Ellin
Development



Michael Johnson
Resident Advocate
("R.A.")



Quiana Souder
Assistance
Coordinator



Ryan Nation
Performance
Manager



Sebrina Durden
Programs
Assistant



Shanese Parker
Finance
Administrator



Stacia "Stacy" Kelley
Assistance
Coordinator



Tish Vincent-Johnson
Center Manager

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Scott **Edlein** (Co-Chair)
Cindy **Lourie** (Co-Chair)
Penina **Richards** (Treasurer)
Jennifer **Legardy-Williams** (Secretary)
Stephanie **Aferiat**
Susan Prager **Banner**
Lawrence **Bayer**
Stephanie **Kupor**
Larry **Menter**
Bethani **Oppenheimer**
Karen **Botnick Paz**
Chad **Renegar**
Francie **Schwarz**
Wendy **Shoob**
Felton **Smith**

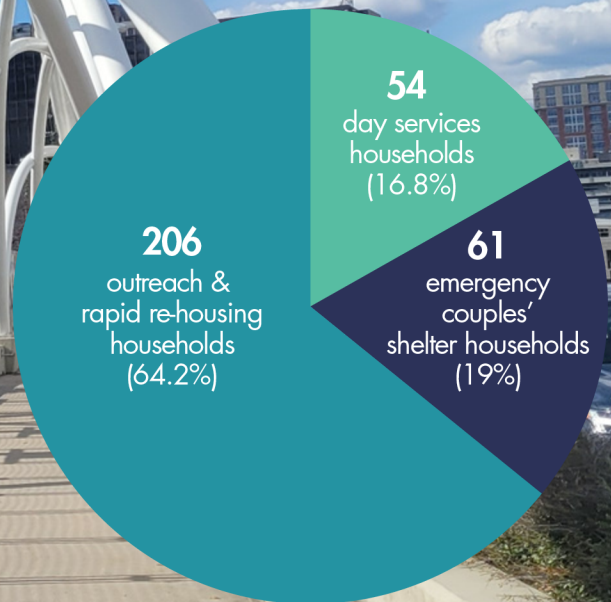
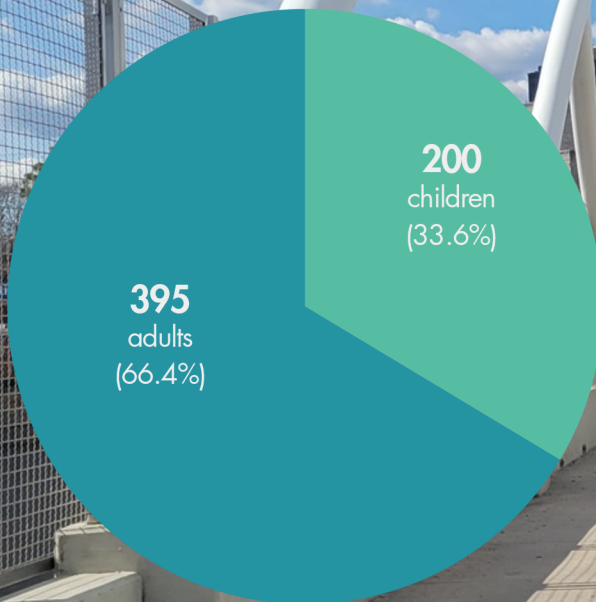
YOUNG PROFESSIONALS COUNCIL

Rachel S. **Barnhard**
Rachel **Feldman**
Scott **Jospin**
Melanie **Leon McCarron**
Ariel **Pinsky**
Danny **Raymon**
Lacey **Ricks**
Thaddeus **Rolle**
Aaron **Schrader**
John **Shaw**
Lauren **Tilashalski**
Jason **Warren**
Joelle **Wasserman**

OUR 2024 IMPACT

595 people served

**321 households served
across 3 major programs**



185
households moved into
permanent housing
with ZPC's help



CARRYING THE TORCH

HONORING THE
LEGACY OF

RABBI ALVIN
SUGARMAN

3 JUNE, 1938 -
17 JANUARY, 2025

SHARED WITH THE SUPPORT OF
BARBARA SUGARMAN

With Rabbi Alvin Sugarman's passing, our community bids farewell to a beacon of wisdom and compassion. We at Zaban Paradies Center know Rabbi Sugarman as one of the founders of our organization, but Alvin Marx Sugarman's impact extended far beyond the walls of ZPC; he was a guiding force in the broader Atlanta community, inspiring change, empathy, and connection wherever he went. He was an esteemed rabbi, a dedicated civic leader, and a cherished husband, father, grandfather, and friend.

A proud Atlanta native, Alvin found joy and purpose in his hometown. He attended Emory University, where he earned both his undergraduate and doctoral degrees. He began his professional journey in sales, but a deep desire to explore life's deeper questions led him to Hebrew Union College and ultimately the rabbinate. He served more than 30 years as Senior Rabbi at The Temple—the very place where he was raised, confirmed, and nurtured in faith.

Alvin shared nearly 60 years of marriage with his beloved wife, Barbara Dee (née Herman), whom he met on a blind date in 1964. He proposed just five days later, and his love for her remained unwavering throughout the years.

Alvin's core belief—that every person is a child of God, regardless of race, religion, or background—shaped his life's work. He inspired countless people with his kindness, generosity, and relentless commitment to helping others. His leadership was instrumental during a severe cold snap in 1984, when he mobilized The Temple to open

what would become our Zaban Paradies Center, Atlanta's first shelter for homeless couples. Building on that success, he later helped establish Genesis Shelter (now Our House), serving newborns and their families experiencing homelessness.

Alvin lived a life rooted in faith, compassion, and dedication to others. His impact is undeniable and his legacy will continue to uplift all who knew him and countless others affected by his kindness. So while the light in the world may shine differently now that he has passed, his glow lives on and guides us still throughout Atlanta and beyond. At Zaban Paradies Center, we remain steadfast in our resolve to walk the path he forged—with open hands and open hearts. Zaban Paradies Center is also honored and privileged to have a relationship with Mrs. Barbara Sugarman, who so beautifully shared in Rabbi Sugarman's values and lifelong dedication to serving others. Her continued commitment to uplifting the Atlanta community is a powerful reflection of his legacy, and we are grateful for her ongoing support and partnership in our mission.

We are deeply grateful that Rabbi Sugarman was able to witness and join us in celebrating ZPC's 40th anniversary in the fall of 2024. As we look to the future, we hold close his vision and hope that ZPC will always remain the refuge of dignity and compassion he so lovingly imagined. Now, more than ever, we feel called to honor Rabbi Sugarman's legacy—not only in word, but in deed—by doing our best to emulate his devotion to those who need us most.

To learn more about Rabbi Alvin Sugarman, please visit The Temple's website at the-temple.org.



From left to right: Rabbi Alvin Sugarman; Carol Bremen Nemo, the very first director of our shelter (1984 - 1988), co-founder of The Davis Academy, & daughter of M. William Breman & Sylvia Goldstein Breman (The William Breman Jewish Heritage Museum); Jackie Garson Howard, a lifelong Temple congregant and key catalyst behind the founding of ZPC (and owner of Paces Paper, Inc.); and (senior) Rabbi Peter Berg of The Temple of Atlanta (2008 - present). The group is pictured at ZPC's "40 Years of Believing" Celebration & Gala held on September 19, 2024.

KEEPING THE LIGHT

Shining

**A generous memorial gift from
The Zaban Foundation to power
critical improvements at our shelter**

We are honored to announce that ZPC was recently awarded a generous grant from the Zaban Foundation in memory of Rabbi Alvin Sugarman. This special grant in Rabbi Sugarman's name will have a direct and immediate impact on the couples we serve in our emergency shelter by funding a much-needed electrical project at our facility. This critical upgrade to our electrical system will allow for each resident room to receive upgraded air conditioning and heating, creating a safer, healthier, and more comfortable environment for our resident couples. The grant will also allow us to improve the lighting in the halls and common areas of our facility.

Ultimately, this gift from the Zaban Foundation carries on the legacies of Rabbi Sugarman, whose unwavering commitment to his community shaped the very foundation of ZPC's important work, and Erwin Zaban, whose generosity developed the space that we are fortunate to operate from. Rabbi Sugarman's dream of providing a place of refuge and renewal on The Temple's campus for couples experiencing homelessness will continue to thrive for years to come, and we thank the Zaban Family and Sugarman Family for their continued support of ZPC and our residents.



QUICK FACTS



now open
24 hours a day,
7 days a week,
365 days a
year!



able to
accommodate
up to 15
couples (30
individuals) at a
time



each couple
stays in their
own, private
room



residents must
be 21 years of
age or older



couples can
self-identify



residents
typically stay
for 60-90 days
as they create
& carry out
plans to stable
housing

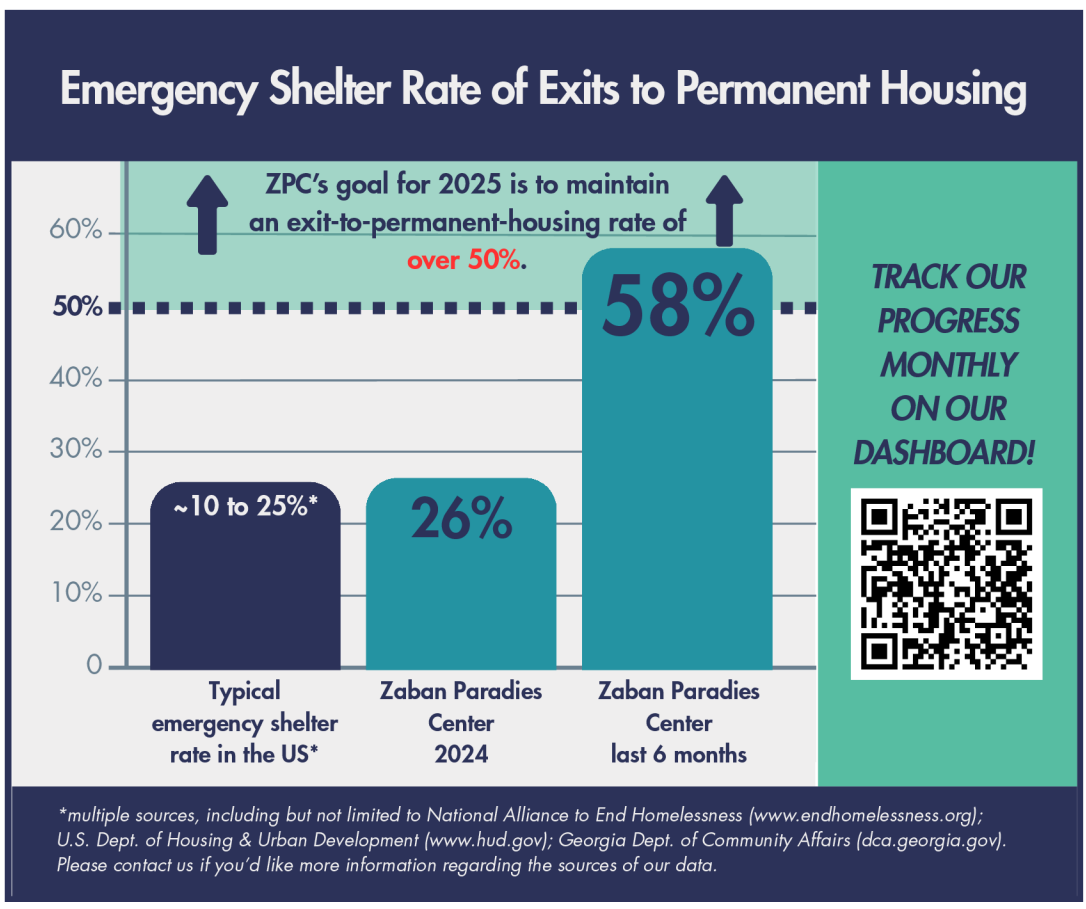


residents' basic
needs are met
while they
work towards
self-sufficiency



residents
receive robust
case
management &
wrap-around
services

From the beginning, our shelter has been at the core of who we are. It was our very first program and still stands as **one of the only emergency shelters in the nation that accepts and houses self-identifying couples, as they present, without requiring them to separate.** ZPC's shelter gives our neighbors in need a safe and supportive space where they can have their basic needs met and receive case management, wraparound services, community, and the opportunity to begin anew. Our team is dedicated to helping our residents lay the groundwork for building (or rebuilding) lives of independence.





What Changing Our Model Means for Our Shelter & Community

At Zaban Paradies Center, we have two primary goals for our Couples' Emergency Shelter that guide our decision-making:

- 1. Exit more than 50% of our residents to permanent housing.**
- 2. Offer a great experience for residents of our shelter while they are with us.**

With these goals in mind, we are excited to announce that our shelter will be available to our residents 24 hours per day beginning in late May 2025! Until now, our residents have left for the day at 7am and returned at or after 4:30pm daily except for Sundays, and we believe that the shift to 24-hour care daily is essential to achieving our goals.

Adding daytime hours will greatly expand opportunities for face-to-face case management and enrichment programming. With a full-time Case Manager available to our residents 40 hours per week, including during morning, daytime, and evening hours to reach our clients with varying work schedules, we expect to see enhanced outcomes on case management goals including securing or increasing employment, applying for benefits, accessing health services, connecting to community resources, and obtaining permanent housing.

Additionally, ZPC often serves residents who work evening or overnight shifts. Removing the requirement to leave by 7am will allow these residents to get the rest and rejuvenation they need after each night's work. Extended hours will also benefit our clients with mobility challenges or medical needs, and daytime hours will offer our residents additional protection from weather and safety concerns.

We are grateful to The Kallman Family, The Geller Family, United Way of Greater Atlanta, Imlay Foundation, William Josef Foundation, and The Temple for supporting this vision, and we are excited for the possibilities ahead!

regainin' peace



“As long as we were together & each of us knew the other was safe, we could focus & do what we we needed to do to get back into a home of our own.”

IMMANUEL + YOLANDA'S JOURNEY BACK TO STABILITY

For nearly a decade, Immanuel, a retired Army Veteran, and Yolanda, a retired elementary school teacher, enjoyed the comfort and stability of their rental home. Though on a month-to-month lease, their long-standing relationship with their landlord and their sense of home made them feel comfortable and secure. So comfortable and secure, in fact, that they often helped their loved ones by providing them financial support when needed.

That sense of security was shattered when their landlord suddenly informed them they'd be raising the rent by several hundred dollars and if they couldn't pay it, they'd have to leave. With limited time and very few options, Immanuel and Yolanda were forced to leave the home they had created together and move in with their adult children and their families. To make matters worse, one of their vehicles broke down and other expenses began accumulating.

Though their family welcomed them with open arms, the couple knew this arrangement couldn't last forever. It was actually their children's and grandchildren's generosity and acceptance that motivated them to find another way forward. Yolanda recalls it was when her granddaughter told her that she didn't mind if she slept in her bed that she made the decision that staying there wasn't an option. She understood how it felt to have your life suddenly disrupted and knew her children and grandchildren needed their normal spaces and routines to thrive.

But finding another place to stay wasn't easy. All the shelters they explored only accepted men or women—or didn't allow couples to stay together. Immanuel and Yolanda refused to separate and even considered sleeping in their car. They couldn't bear the thought of not being together to protect and lean on one another—especially during one of the most difficult experiences a person can go through.

Then, by chance during a visit to the VA, they learned about Zaban Paradies Center—a shelter unlike any other in Georgia, and one of only a few in the country, that provides private rooms for couples experiencing homelessness. It was the answer they'd been hoping for.

At ZPC, Immanuel and Yolanda found more than shelter. They found stability, support, and a sense of dignity. With their basic needs met and no longer burdened by the fear of separation, they were able to save money, access vital resources, and become active members of the ZPC community. During their stay, Immanuel and Yolanda became pillars of support for other residents. Their warmth and wisdom naturally drew people in. Whether it was offering a listening ear, helping with transportation, or leading group activities, their presence uplifted those around them.

Their commitment and positivity paid off. Immanuel and Yolanda moved into a beautiful, vibrant apartment community for active seniors—complete with amenities and a calendar full of events to help them stay engaged. Best of all, they now live close to their children and grandchildren.

Today, their journey has come full circle. Immanuel now works at ZPC as a Resident Advocate, using his own experience to support others walking similar paths. Yolanda, ever the teacher and nurturer, volunteers by his side.

Their story is a powerful reminder of what's possible when compassion meets opportunity. At ZPC, we're proud to be a place where couples like Immanuel and Yolanda can stay together, regain their footing, and step confidently into the next chapter of their lives—together.



BUILDING A *Dream*



CRAFTS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY FOR OUR COMMUNITY & SHELTER



Our team at Zaban Paradies Center is always exploring creative ways to serve more members of our community. However, our shelter's modest size poses unique challenges in meeting the diverse needs of our community because of limited space and resources.

But thanks to the remarkable generosity of partners like The Home Depot Foundation, we're finding meaningful ways to maximize every inch of our space to honor our mission. An organization deeply committed to supporting Veterans, The Home Depot Foundation has sponsored the "flipping" of one of ZPC's offices into a resident bedroom specifically for those who have served our country.

While ZPC has long assisted Veterans in need, this gracious gift enables us to provide an intentional, dedicated space just for them, has increased our bedroom count from 14 to 15, and allows us to serve four more couples a year while on their journeys to permanent housing.

This sponsorship goes far beyond providing furniture and decor to create a warm and welcoming space for two people - it covers the full cost of housing, meals, and comprehensive support services for anyone who calls this room home over the course of a year. It's an investment not just in space, but in stability, dignity, and the opportunity for a fresh start.

ZPC is profoundly grateful for this gift and for The Home Depot Foundation's continued commitment to making a lasting a difference in the lives of those we serve.

JOIN US IN CHANGING LIVES

Interested in sponsoring a resident room? Contact us today to learn how you can make a similar impact.

OTHER PROGRAMS WE OFFER AT ZPC

Here, you can read about the other programs we currently offer in addition to our couples' shelter.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		★				
		★				
		★				
		★				
		★				



**ALL ARE
WELCOME**



Day Service



MEALS



BATHROOMS/ SHOWERS



LAUNDRY ROOM



CLOTHING CLOSET



COMPUTER LAB



RESOURCE CONNECTIONS

Financial Assistance

In December 2024, we launched two new financial assistance programs funded through United Way of Greater Atlanta. These programs are designed to reduce homelessness in Atlanta by providing one-time financial assistance in the form of rental, utility, deposit, or arrearage payments. Home Again, the first of these two programs, targets the City of Atlanta. Households must reside within city limits and have either a senior (55 years or older) or child (younger than 18 years) living in the house. Eligible households that have obtained housing receive funding to cover the costs associated with moving in, that would otherwise prevent them from doing so. Additionally, Home Again provides eviction prevention, and eligible households receive funds to cover rental arrearages. If left unpaid, these incurred costs can lead to eviction and subsequent homelessness.

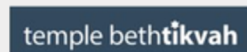
The second of these two programs is Street to Home Housing. This program targets the greater Metropolitan Atlanta area, without the same age restrictions as Home Again, and provides move-in assistance including deposits and first-month rent.

As of April 30th, we have assisted 100 households through these two programs.

Of these households, 18 received move-in assistance and 34 received eviction prevention assistance through the Home Again program, and 48 received move-in assistance through Street to Home. On average, we assist 20 households each month to secure housing or remain housed through this program. We are incredibly proud of this program's success and look forward to our continued partnership with United Way of Greater Atlanta.



It takes a village. Here's Ours.



Atlanta Foundation
Kallman Family Fund
Mary Allen Lindsey Branan Foundation

Thalia & Michael C. Carlos Foundation
Thomas H. Pitts Trust
Zaban Foundation

In addition to these partners, ZPC receives tremendous support from individual donors & volunteers.
Please accept our sincere gratitude.

Show you care with a meal.



DINNER IS TYPICALLY
SERVED AROUND 6PM.



ZPC TYPICALLY REQUESTS
THAT MEALS SERVE

40

*ZPC HAS A
WARMING KITCHEN
WITH A COMMERCIAL
OVEN THAT CAN BE
USED TO HEAT OR
RE-HEAT FOOD.



ZPC TYPICALLY
PROVIDES
DISPOSABLE PAPER &
PLASTIC GOODS
(CUPS, PLATES,
CUTLERY, NAPKINS,
ETC.)



WOULD YOU LIKE TO
STAY & HELP US SERVE
OUR RESIDENTS? JUST
LET US KNOW!



WAYS TO PROVIDE A MEAL:

- MAKE A MEAL OFF-SITE AHEAD OF TIME & DROP IT OFF (W/ OVEN HEATING/RE-HEATING INSTRUCTIONS, IF NECESSARY.*
- PREPARE A MEAL IN ZPC'S WARMING KITCHEN.*
- PICK UP A MEAL FROM A LOCAL RESTAURANT OR GROCERY STORE DELI & DROP IT OFF (WITH OVEN HEATING/RE-HEATING INSTRUCTIONS, IF NECESSARY.*
- HAVE FOOD CATERED/DELIVERED TO US.
- DONATE A GIFT CARD TO A LOCAL RESTAURANT OR GROCERY STORE THAT WE CAN USE FOR A MEAL(S).

ENTREE & SIDE IDEAS:



Chicken



Pork Loin



Meat Loaf



Pot Roast



Fish (like
cod or
salmon)



Lasagna



Pizza



Hot
Sandwiches
or Sliders



Tacos



Chicken
Alfredo



Salad



Veggies



Potatoes
(Mashed,
Baked, etc.)



Macaroni &
Cheese



Rice

NEARBY
RESTAURANTS
(FOR EASY
PICK-UP/DELIVERY):



Ready to sign up?
Visit our SignUp Genius
page to claim an evening!

Have questions? Want to coordinate a meal via
phone or email? Contact our Assistance
Coordinator, Stacia "Stacy" Kelley at 404-872-
2915 or skelley@zabanparadiescenter.org



OVER
2,800

of our Atlanta
neighbors sleep on
our city streets at
night.

AT ZPC,
WE'RE WORKING
HARD EVERY DAY
TO CHANGE
THAT

YOU
CAN
HELP

become a part of our mission



Credit/Debit Donations

ONLINE/PAYPAL

Visit our website at www.zabanparadiescenter.org and click on the "donate" button. This will direct you to our PayPal page. Or, you can visit our PayPal page directly by scanning the QR code to the right.



ZPC PayPal



Check Donations

Please make your check payable to:
Zaban Paradies Center

And mail it to:

Zaban Paradies Center
Attn: Giving
1605 Peachtree St NE
2nd Floor
Atlanta, GA 30309

To learn more about:

- other ways to give financial gifts
- providing or sponsoring meals for our residents
- in-kind donations & drives
- volunteer opportunities

and more, please stay tuned to
our website, call us, or email
giving@zabanparadiescenter.org



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