



Edition Sixteen

Community Housing Network, Inc.

Promoting Inclusive Communities Through Affordable Housing



Summer, 2008

Network News

Message from Marc: It's Time to Speak Out

"Housing for people who are homeless and those with disabilities simply has not been made a priority. This election year is an opportune time to loudly and strongly voice our concerns."

Marc Craig, CHN
President & CEO

I first want to share that I had the pleasure of volunteering for the Oakland County Taskforce on Homelessness and Affordable Housing's first warm weather homeless street count this spring. While the final numbers aren't in yet, the fact that there is anyone homeless in Oakland County is a tragedy.

I was deeply moved after finding an entire family living in a van behind an abandoned store in Troy. This experience gives one a very different understanding of, what I believe, is the long-standing stereotypical perception of homelessness.

We at CHN have had some success at bringing people who are homeless into our programs. But there is another strata of the homeless population that we have not, until recently, been able to help. We are pleased to be implementing two grants for new Homeless Housing Resource Centers in Oakland and Macomb Counties. The programs will now provide intensive outreach and case management to the persons who are homeless with disabilities we have not had the resources to reach.

Mr. Jeffrey Brown, Executive Director of the Oakland County Community Mental Authority is enthusiastic about the project. He notes, "Each year we mobilize to count the homeless in Oakland County. This year we are excited we will have additional services to assist the homeless to find housing, to find benefits, and to learn whatever is necessary to remain in housing. This grant will allow CHN to expand their housing resource center with specific outreach services to those that are homeless in Oakland County."

My second point is that we must all remember we are now in a significant election cycle and have a real opportunity to encourage candidates to listen and to become knowledgeable about the housing needs of the homeless and people with disabilities. It's time to speak out. Housing for people who are homeless and those with disabilities simply has not been made a priority. This election year is an opportune time to loudly and strongly voice our concerns.

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Home Run for Homelessness Dinner and Auction

September 23rd, 2008

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Upcoming Events

CHN Workshops

All workshops are held 10:00 a.m. to 12 Noon at the CHN Offices

September 11, 2008: Transitioning to Independence

Independent Living Club Meetings

Meetings on the 3rd Monday of each month, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. at CHN

September 15, 2008: Landlord/Tenant Law: What Are Your Rights

October 20, 2008: Self-Advocacy For Persons with Disabilities

Network News

The Rewards of Working as a CHN Peer Housing Advocate



Jamie Christofel is a peer support specialist at CHN, where she helps people who call the Housing Resource Center (HRC) for assistance. The HRC provides housing information and referral services to consumers, their families, support persons and members of the public. The majority of calls Jamie receives are from people with disabilities and/or low incomes in need of affordable housing, security deposit, or utility assistance. Many are homeless. Jamie is pleased and proud she can be there for them.

“Understanding how adversity, loneliness, and hopeless feels, enables me to offer a special kind of support to callers in the Housing Resource Center.”

Jamie Christofel,
CHN Peer Housing Advocate, Housing Resource Center

Years prior to coming to CHN Jamie had been homeless with an undiagnosed mental illness. Fortunately, she received help and is now functioning well in recovery. She learned about the position at CHN from her case manager at Training & Treatment Innovations.

CHN empowers their peer specialists to take on new

responsibilities as they continue their growth in recovery. Last year Jamie worked on a project about efforts to address homelessness in Oakland County, and later presented an HRC workshop on the subject. She also presented the “Green Your Life” workshop, about how to become more environmentally responsible at a low cost.

A call Jamie received last winter gave birth to a new CHN project. A woman who received social security had no funds to purchase personal hygiene or cleaning products. A new “Clean Drive” component was added to the annual CHN Spring into Action Week activities. Jamie chaired the committee which collected items to provide thirty households with products they could not afford.

Jamie looks forward to coming to work each day. “Working at CHN and helping in the HRC has changed my life. The contact with different people is very fulfilling.”



National City Bank Sponsors Community Appreciation Day



Employees from National City Bank worked hard to improve CHN homes.

On Wednesday, June 18th thirty-four employees from National City Bank and several staff members from Community Housing Network participated in a Community Appreciation Day. They volunteered to “spruce up” four Community Housing Network homes for persons with disabilities. Four hardworking teams cleaned up yards, planted flowers, painted, and otherwise beautified the homes located in Rochester Hills,

Troy, West Bloomfield, and Waterford. National City Bank also donated \$10.00 for each hour each of their employees worked toward the cost of supplies. It was a worthwhile day and the residents of the homes greatly appreciated everyone’s efforts. Thanks to National City Bank for their commitment, dedication, and support of the work we do on behalf of persons with disabilities.

Network News

Save the Date: Home Run for Homelessness Event

September 23, 2008 is our 8TH annual HOMES Coalition/Community Housing Network "Home Run for Homelessness" banquet and charity auction. The event will be held at Andiamo Italia Ristorante in Warren, MI, from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. All monies raised are dedicated to preventing and ending homelessness for people with disabilities in our local communities.

The featured speaker this year will be MITCH ALBOM, syndicated talk show host, renowned author, and homeless advocate.

There are a variety of ways you can help make this another successful occasion including:

Becoming a Sponsor – As a major sponsor your charitable contribution provides you and your business with distinct benefits

reflecting the HOMES Coalition and CHN's sincere appreciation.

Donating Items – Live and silent auction items are needed such as:

- Tickets to sporting events,
- Theater tickets,
- Concert tickets,
- Vacation packages,
- Spa packages,
- Jewelry,
- Sports memorabilia.

Volunteering – An extraordinary amount of time, effort, and energy is required to help make Community Housing Network 's mission a reality.

Attending the Event – Purchase a ticket and have a great time. Individual tickets are \$100 and a portion is tax deductible.

Contact Barbara Garrett at: 248-928-0111 or bgarrett@chninc.net for details.



Sponsorship Opportunities

Hall of Fame

\$10,000

Major League

\$5,000

Home Run

\$2,500

All Stars

\$1,000

Starting Line-Up

\$250

Team Players

\$100

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CHN Volunteer Opportunities

- Looking for volunteers to work in the 2008 CHN Adopt-a-Family program.
- Buying, recording, wrapping gifts.
- Photographer Services
- Marketing or Public Relations Assistance
- General Office Help

I Care About Independent Living Club Members by Jillian Alexander

As a CHN consultant, I have the pleasure of facilitating nine (ILC) Independent Living Club meetings each month. The meetings are for persons with disabilities who would like to build lives of greater independence in the housing of their choice. Some already live in their own apartments or homes. Others live with their families or in group homes. I suspect a few live on the street. Some like it where they are. Most want change. All are on their distinctive journeys of recovery; meeting the day to day challenges that life puts in their paths.

them as "clients". Each person is special and each has a powerful story to share. I tell them they are NOT their disabilities. They are unique individuals of substance and value. I know this is true because I have walked in their shoes. Once, someone believed in me. Now, I want to pass these good things on.

The meetings are held at clubhouses, drop-in centers, and the CHN office. Each month a new subject related to living independently is discussed, ranging from Stigma to Section 8. We also have a very good time. I try to give each person hope for their life and their recovery. They, in turn, give my life tremendous purpose and meaning.

It's these people that make my job so enjoyable. I do not see

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Community Housing Network, Inc., is a non-profit community organization dedicated to promoting inclusive communities through affordable housing.

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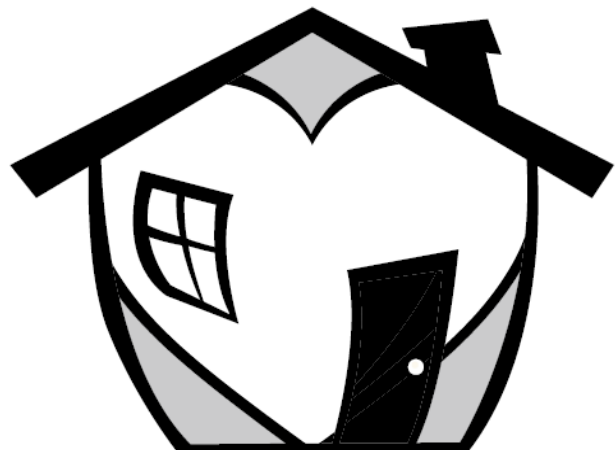
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