

Affordable Housing Link

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Community Housing Network, Inc., is a non-profit community organization dedicated to the acquisition, development, and maintenance of safe, affordable and desirable housing for individuals with disabilities.

CHN Board Members

James Merritt, Chairman
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 Gabrielle Frampton
 Kathleen Harris, JD
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Of Special Interest

The 2001 Oakland County Gaps Analysis and Consolidated Plans for many area cities indicate an immediate need for affordable housing for as many as 14,000 local citizens with low incomes and disabilities.

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Greetings From CHN President, CEO, Marc Craig

This is the first of what I hope will be many opportunities to communicate with people who have worked with and supported the efforts of Community Housing Network (CHN). It was only one year ago that CHN embarked upon a local initiative to create and effectively manage housing resources for people with disabilities in our community. This effort initially focuses upon addressing the rapidly escalating cost of group home leases and maintenance, and will ultimately include creating affordable alternatives to group homes such as home ownership and rental options.



Building upon the significant accomplishments of the last two decades, CHN is now refining the approach to housing for people with disabilities in our community. Significant changes will include:

1. A shift away from reliance upon for-profit investor ownership of housing toward creation of long-term economic resources dedicated to the benefit of people with disabilities.
2. Increased opportunities for home ownership by people with disabilities.
3. Promoting opportunities for partnerships between people with disabilities, their families, the service delivery system, and other funding sources.
4. Decreased reliance upon the group home model of service delivery.
5. A move toward supportive housing that includes people with disabilities, and other citizens in need of

affordable housing as part of a broad based community housing strategy.

I would like to recognize the significant contribution of dozens of community supporters in making

this effort possible. This has proven to be a community collaborative that includes support from business, government, and individuals. In particular, I would like to acknowledge our volunteer board of directors, the Oakland County Community Mental Health Authority, the more than twenty CHN member organizations, our advisory committee, and individuals such as Mark Wiedelman, Kit McDonald, and Mary Lou Herald to name only a few.

We are proud to offer our community with the long awaited Housing Resource Center. The Resource Center is designed to create a "one stop shop" for information about accessing affordable rental housing, purchasing a home, finding a person to share a home, and long term planning for supportive housing needs. The local response to the Resource Center has been overwhelming, with more than 15,000 inquiries on our web site in the last four months and scores of telephone requests for information.

Please watch for future editions of our newsletter for information about new housing development, home maintenance, and resources to promote affordability. Your feedback and support are always appreciated. You can contact us at our toll-free number 1-866-282-3119 or 248-528-2334.

CHN Awarded Grant for Homeownership Project

We are pleased to announce Community Housing Network, Inc. has been awarded a grant from the Federal Home Loan Bank, Indianapolis. Monies from this grant will be used to provide closing costs, down payments and developer fees for a new Homeownership Project. The project will provide permanent homeownership opportunities to low-income, first-time homebuyers with special needs in Oakland County. Twelve scattered site acquisition

rehabilitation homes will be purchased by consumers. All units will be made affordable by layering a combination of homebuyer assistance programs and mortgage products. CHN will work with the consumer's circle of support to coordinate all financial and supportive services required for successful homeownership. Kirsten Elliott will administer the project, which will begin in January of 2003.

Meet the CHN Staff

CHN staff and members of the CHN board have many combined years of successful experience providing housing services to special needs populations. The current support staff and board members have accumulated more than 80 years of experience serving persons with disabilities. Although a young organization, Community Housing Network, Inc. was conceptualized and built on a strong foundation of committed individuals who make up the CHN staff and who can carry it into the future:

President/CEO, Marc Craig, has over 20 years experience in developing and managing housing for people with disabilities as a residential development supervisor at Macomb Oakland Regional Center and as the co-founder and managing director of Springhill Housing Corporation. Springhill is one of the first non-profit housing development organizations in Michigan, with a successful tract record of developing housing for people with disabilities, now valued in excess of \$10,000,000.00.

Associate Director, Dawn H. Pischel, J.D., has over five years experience assisting families of people with disabilities in planning their housing needs and support services. While serving as Staff Attorney/ Advocacy Coordinator for the Arc of Oakland County, Inc., Ms. Pischel assisted people with disabilities and their families with accessing benefits and with addressing estate planning concerns.

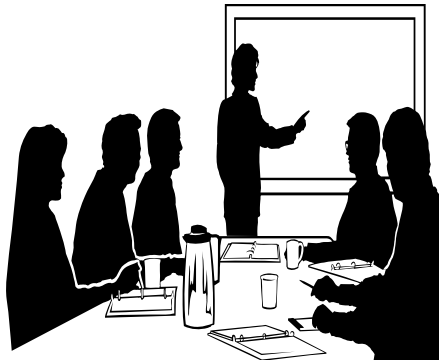
Housing Resource Center Manager, Kirsten Elliott, BA, is a parent of a disabled child and well understands the needs

of low-income and disabled persons. Ms. Elliott is a certified MSHDA homebuyer counselor and has created the CHN Affordable Housing database. She has extensive knowledge of various affordable housing programs and is helping to implement the HMIS system for Oakland County.

Resource Manager, Barbara Garrett, M.S.W., has advocated within the healthcare industry for the past ten years. Ms. Garrett served as a Support Services Supervisor and as a Professional Services Manager at Cranbrook Hospice for the past four years. Her responsibilities included oversight of business operations and program development. Ms. Garrett will initiate new program development at Community Housing Network, Inc., and will provide additional support to the CHN team.

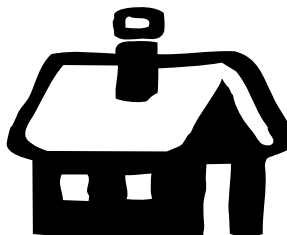
Resource Manager, Matt Brinkmann, served as a Support Coordinator at the Macomb Oakland Regional Center for five years. Mr. Brinkman has strong experience in property management, in contractor negotiations and in initiating supportive housing arrangements for persons with disabilities. Matt is currently obtaining a builders license in the state of Michigan.

Resource Manager, Shelley Brinkmann, served as a Support Coordinator with Macomb Oakland Regional Center for three years. Ms. Brinkmann has substantial experience in the areas of contractor negotiations, property management and in arranging supportive housing arrangements. Shelly is licensed to sell real estate in the state of Michigan.



Preparing Homes for Winter's Onslaught

Old Man Winter is on his way, heating costs are rising and the challenge to maintain a safe, cost efficient and cozy living space is confronting us all. DTE Energy notes many homes leak more than 60 percent of the inside air each hour, due to drafts that allow heated air out and cold air in. To reduce air leaks caulk all cracks and openings around doors and windows. Caulk all the openings and cracks in the joist areas between your basement and first floor. You may want to install foam board in these areas to further reduce leaks. In addition, consider a programmable thermostat. Each degree you lower the temperature saves you three percent on your heating bill. In addition, have your heating system cleaned and inspected annually by a qualified heating and cooling contractor and clean or replace your air filters monthly.



A Home Weatherization Program, sponsored by the Oakland Livingston Human Service Agency, offers free assistance to income eligible renters or homeowners in Livingston and Oakland counties by reducing their home operating costs and by increasing their home energy efficiency. Applicants must complete a Weatherization Application. After approval, OLHSA will inspect the home and determine what Weatherization repairs or replacements are needed. The inspection includes attic wall insulation, major sealing around windows and doors, health and safety inspection of furnace and hot water heater, roof, and foundation. Required home repairs or replacements will be completed within 8 to 10 weeks. Applications may be made on-line at or by phone at 517-546-8500.

CHN Housing Resource Center Launches Web Site

The creation of a Resource Center for people with disabilities in Oakland County has been a dream for several years. People with disabilities, their families, advocates and professionals have been asking for a "one stop shop" access to information about topics such as home ownership, affordable rental housing and available options for supportive living. Thanks to the support of the Oakland County Community Mental Health Authority and the hard work of Kirsten Elliott at Community Housing Network, this dream has become a reality.

Kirsten Elliott is the Manager of the Resource Center at CHN. She has compiled a wealth of information about subsidized housing and programs offering housing assistance to people with disabilities. The Housing Resource Center also contains up to date information on topics such as: how to purchase a home, weatherization programs, home modification resources, obtaining a mortgage, housing subsidy lists and information on homebuyer counseling. Contact Kirsten at the CHN office if you would like a group presentation on any Housing Resource Center related topic.

CHN is proud to announce the launch of a web site as

an important part of the Housing Resource Center. The web site offers immediate access to information about people looking for home sharing arrangements, available housing, links to advocacy and service provider organizations, and answers to questions about housing and supports. The goal of this project is to place up to date information directly in the hands of those who need it, enabling them to make informed choices and to lead self-determined lives.



An especially exciting feature of the new web site is the HomeShare Link. The Housing Resource Center manages this data base to facilitate home sharing opportunities for persons with disabilities. Hooking up with a previously screened, suitable roommate is often the answer for individuals with disabilities who are on fixed incomes and seeking companionship. The HomeShare Link is easy to use. Go to the web site at www.communityhousingnetwork.org and click on the HomeShare icon. State what qualities you are looking for in a potential roommate by filling in the fields provided. Profiles of individuals who meet your criteria will appear. Persons interested in having a roommate profile completed should contact the CHN office at 1-866-282-3119 or at 248-528-2334.

**COMMUNITY HOUSING NETWORK, INC.
MEETING AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEEDS FOR
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
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*Community Housing Network, Inc. is a 501 c
(3) organization. Donations are tax deductible
as allowable by law.*

*Creating Affordable Housing Opportunities for
people with disabilities*

***We're on the web
www.communityhousingnetwork.org***



Remember CHN and Honor a Loved One



Did you find a special envelope tucked inside your copy of Affordable Housing Links? Take another look now.... before you put it aside.

Are you looking for a special way to honor or memorialize a loved one?

Do you want to acknowledge a birthday or anniversary in a distinctive manner?

CHN wants you to become a part of our efforts to make decent affordable housing accommodations within the reach of persons with disabilities in our community. One way you can help is by making a charitable contribution. When economic times are uncertain, we rely heavily on the kindness of our friends and benefactors.

You can make a tax deductible donation to Community Housing Network as a special tribute to someone you love while helping individuals with disabilities

secure the housing they deserve and desperately need.

Your generosity will help ensure the continuation of housing programs and resource services to individuals with disabilities and their families. And, unless you request otherwise, your name will be published in Affordable Housing Links, as a special friend and benefactor of CHN.



To make it convenient and easy for you to donate, a pre-addressed, postage paid envelope has been enclosed. Your gift, regardless of amount, will be welcome and appreciated.

Please give some thought to helping us help persons with disabilities in the Oakland County community obtain and maintain the housing they deserve—a home of their own. For further information, please call our toll-free number at 1-866-282-3119 or 248-528-2334.