

## **Community Housing Network, Inc. Success Stories**

Community Housing has helped many homeless individuals and families with disabilities change their lives for the better by finding affordable housing through the Leasing Assistance program or the Home Buyer program. Below are just a few "success stories" we would like to share:

- **Thomasina** is solely responsible for a large family including the demands of caring for a child with special needs. Seven year old Destine was born with Cerebral Palsy and Hydrocephalus. She is non-verbal, requires 24 hours a day support, and uses a wheelchair. Thomasina left a domestic violence situation, moved her family, and is now attending college. She was referred to the CHN Home Buyer Program where it took her a year of effort to qualify for homeownership. Now, down payment assistance and special financing keeps her mortgage payment affordable. The family's new home is a symbol of the good life Thomasina has worked to achieve.
  
- **Ken** is an active, engaging thirty-eight year old man who is successfully living with mental illness and developmental disability. He has come a long way from living in a foster care home and now successfully resides in his own apartment. Ken began facing new challenges when he started working and living on his own. Fortunately, MORC and CHN entered Ken's life. He qualified for the CHN Leasing Assistance Program, which provides supportive services to help sustain independent living and will pay up to 70% of the monthly rent, depending upon income. With independence came responsibility. Ken has learned how to take care of his apartment, pay his bills on time, and save any extra money. His outgoing personality and overall appreciation of life has allowed him to make a big turnaround.
  
- **Karen's** teenage son lives with Autism. After a divorce, Karen and her two children moved to a small rented flat where Karen slept on a futon in the living room. She worked full-time but her salary was barely enough to make ends meet. The idea of being able to purchase a home never entered her mind. Fortunately, Karen qualified for the CHN Home Buyer Program and eventually moved into a three bedroom home in Berkley. She was especially impressed by the range of improvements made during the rehabilitation phase. Karen noted, "I am a hard worker but there is

no way I could have accomplished this on my own. I am very grateful the CHN Homeownership Program was there for my family.”

- **Joel** lived with quadriplegia for forty-two years. A diving accident at age sixteen ultimately sent him to a nursing home. He relied on an electric wheelchair and required assistance with daily functions such as dressing, eating, and writing. He had lost hope for a useful, productive life until he began receiving services from MORC and moved into the CHN managed 811 subsidized home he loves so much. The home’s rural location allowed him to enjoy wildlife and a beautiful view from his room. After moving into the home Joel started attending classes at a local college. His dream was to work in the computer field, with the use of voice activated assistive technology.
- **Donna** demonstrates great determination in confronting her mental health challenges. For several years she was among the homeless working poor. She slept on the floor when she did have shelter because she could afford no furniture. And when she had no place to stay at all, she would ride the bus for days and nights at a time. Donna knew she had to ask for help after shots were fired at a bus she was riding. Fortunately, she learned of the CHN Homeless Leasing Assistance program, which located an apartment near Donna’s work place. When Donna moved in she had only the clothes on her back. Today, she works, entertains friends, and is active in her church. By utilizing services from CHN and OCCMHA core providers, Donna has learned to live successfully and to motivate others with mental illness to do the same.
- **John and Kerry** became roommates through the CHN Roommate Database. They have created a partnership that works well. Both men live with disabilities and have worked hard to lead independent lives that include working and volunteering in the community.
- **Jamison** struggled to overcome episodes of debilitating depression most of his life. Since entering the CHN Homeless Leasing Assistance Program, he has succeeded in graduating from college and has started his own catering business, The Personal Chef Connection.
- **Terry** lives with Autism and had resided with his parent’s all his life. He wanted to remain in Michigan and needed another place to live when his folks told him they were retiring to another state. The CHN

Home Buyer Program helped Terry and his parents begin the process of purchasing a home in Terry's name. His monthly house payment turned out to be less than an apartment rental in the area. Terry is proud of his home and his story might seem like a miracle. However, solid family planning and guidance from the Community Housing Network, Inc. Homeownership Program helped turn his dream into a reality.