

# News from the road home

Summer 2013

## Housing & Hope Provides Affordable Housing

By Kristin Rucinski, *Executive Director*

Unfortunately, a lack of affordable housing persists in our city, county, state and country. The Road Home decided years ago to be a solution to this devastating issue. We began a capital campaign to raise \$4.5 million dollars so we could own and operate 30 units of affordable housing. Soon, thanks to our generous community, a total of 30 families will be in safe, affordable housing. We continue to partner with Meridian Group to provide the property management, letting them focus on their area of expertise while we focus on providing intensive case management to families in the program.

As many of you know, we have had 15 of these units occupied since November 2009. The first four families moved in the week before

extensive rehabilitation work to improve the buildings and are converting some 1-bedroom and 3-bedroom units into 2-bedroom units, which better fit our need for families with children.

We are excited about the location and have been welcomed to the neighborhood. We're close to Orchard Ridge Elementary School, Toki Middle School, the Meadowridge Branch Library, the Meadowood Neighborhood Center and a Joining Forces for Families office. I have been impressed with the work being done by community members and staff members to continue improving the quality of life for residents on the southwest side of Madison. The best news of all - we are on pace to move families in during the next two months!

Living in Housing & Hope brings stability, social support and dignity to families who have braved the plight of homelessness and helps them transition beyond crisis to be able to achieve life-long goals. I can hardly wait to see the faces on more children as they learn which bedroom will finally be theirs!



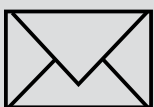
Thanksgiving and three of those four families are still in the program. They have been in stable housing for almost four years now after being homeless, sometimes in and out of homelessness, with no stability for years. Thanks to stable housing, these children are now able to attend the same school each year, which improves their social and academic skills.

### Move-in Plans for Phase II

In 2012, we purchased the second phase of apartments and I am pleased that these fifteen units are nearing completion. We are doing

### HOW YOU CAN HELP

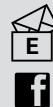
- 1** The need for financial support continues due to unfulfilled pledges, resulting from people's changing circumstances, and some unanticipated rehabilitation costs. Checks can be designated to Housing & Hope.
- 2** Create a "Welcome Home" basket for families who will be moving in this fall. Donations could include cleaning supplies, paper products, or any other items on our wish list (see page 3).
- 3** Join us at our "Housewarming" event to welcome the new families and hear from a family doing well from the first phase of Housing & Hope. Details to be announced soon.



The Road Home  
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# Program Report: January-June 2013

## IHN Shelter:

15 families (17 adults, 27 children) stayed in shelter  
83% of families who exited shelter are now in housing

## Housing Stabilization:

7 families participated  
6 out of the 7 families are Dane County residents

## Second Chance Apartment Project:

11 families participated in the program  
100% of families that could have reached one year in housing did so

## Second Chance Leasing Project:

7 families were housed  
100% of families that could have reached one year in housing did so

## Totals:

So far in 2013, The Road Home has served 103 families in all of our programs

## House-ability:

9 families served through The Road Home\*  
7 families increased their income during the first half of the year

## Housing & Hope:

16 families participated in the program  
6 families reached three years of stable housing during the first half of the year

## Rapid Rehousing:

38 families served through The Road Home\*  
100% of families successfully maintained stable housing for one year or longer

\* Partner agencies serve additional families in these programs

## Upcoming Events

Please join us at our office for a Homes for Families Tour to learn more about how The Road Home changes the lives of homeless families. During these short, powerful, and informative tours, you will learn about family homelessness in our community and how The Road Home is working to help families transform their lives. We invite you to meet us and to see our work first-hand. This is not a fund-raiser and we guarantee it will only last 59 minutes!

### Tour dates

Wednesday, August 28th, 6:30 p.m.  
Tuesday, September 3rd, 6:30 p.m.  
Wednesday, September 25th, 5:30 p.m.  
Wednesday, October 9th, 6:30 p.m.  
Tuesday, October 22nd, 5:30 p.m.  
Wednesday, November 13, 5:30 p.m.  
Tuesday, November 19, 6:30 p.m.  
Tuesday, December 10, 5:30 p.m.

### Homes for Families Fundraising Breakfast

November 7, 2013

Mark your calendars for The Road Home's 9th Annual Homes for Families Fundraising Breakfast, 7:30 a.m.-8:30 a.m. at the Alliant Energy Center.

## 2013 Nation's Housing Report

According to Harvard's *2013 State of the Nation's Housing*, a record 20.5 million U.S. households are now paying more than one half of their income for housing alone. These "severely cost burdened" households have increased by 6.7 million over the last decade. Paying 50% of income for housing is unsustainable, leaving little room for other necessities, and a reason there has been no decline in the number of homeless families.

Harvard's *2013 State of the Nation's Housing Report* explains "that households paying more than 50% of income for housing spend a third less on food, half as much on pensions and retirement, half as much on clothes and three quarters less on healthcare as families paying affordable shares of their incomes for housing\*."

In 2011, there were 12.1 million extremely low-income renters, an increase of 2.5 million since 2007. Meanwhile, as of 2011 there were 6.8 million housing units affordable to extremely low-income renters in 2011, 135,000 units fewer than in 2007.

An increase in the minimum wage would help. The federal minimum wage has not been increased since 2009, but housing costs continue to rise, especially for renters. Those paid minimum wage

have been losing ground financially for decades. The minimum wage paid in 1968 would be worth more than \$10.50 now when adjusted for inflation.

As paying too much for housing is unsustainable for families, the relentless rise in the number of severely cost burdened families is unsustainable for our nation. For more information please go to:

<http://www.jchs.harvard.edu/sites/jchs.harvard.edu/files/son2013.pdf>

\* *The State of the Nation's Housing 2013*, Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University.

"Given the profoundly positive impact that decent and affordable housing can have on the lives of individuals, families, and entire communities, efforts to address urgent and longstanding housing challenges should be among the nation's highest priorities".

*The State of the Nation's Housing 2013*, Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University

# Why I Volunteer

by Lynne Toseff

I rejoined Christ the King Catholic Church in McFarland about 14-15 years ago. I soon became a member of the Social Concerns Committee. Our congregation had just become a buddy congregation with McFarland Lutheran and United Church of Christ in the Interfaith Hospitality Network program. Doing something ecumenical, meeting new people and helping people to a better life and all rolled into one package. This was the program for me.

We housed the families at the smallest of the three churches - United Church of Christ. Our families would arrive on Sunday evening and lament on how small our space was and that we had no rooms to give them privacy. "We can't stay here," they would say. There were dividers to separate their living spaces. By the following Sunday morning, they were reluctant to leave because we all had become fast friends. Small spaces create many opportunities for sharing and communicating.

During one of the hosting weeks, upon arrival of the IHN beds/bedding, I noticed how

dirty the pillows. It hit me the wrong way that guests would have to lay their heads down on these pillows. So I started a program at my church called "Pennies for Pillows." A large container is kept in the parish hall and church members throw their pennies (other coins & currency as well) into it. It is still in operation today. As each guest arrives, they are given a new pillow and when they move on to permanent housing, they take their pillow with them.

During my 14+ years of volunteering with The Road Home, I have served as the coordinator for our quarterly visits, overnighter, driver, hostess for meals, hugger, and hopefully, as a friend. I am on the Road Home's Events Committee and have had the pleasure of working with many amazing people from so many walks of life to make things happen for the homelessness to housing mission of The Road Home. I am privileged to be the co-chair for the annual November breakfast for The Road Home.

A great honor was bestowed on me this year by being named one of the Outstanding Volunteers of the Year by United Way in the name of The Road Home. I accepted this award for all of the many volunteers working with The



Road Home and all volunteers from all agencies. I was asked at the luncheon, "Why do you volunteer?" I said, "It sure beats cleaning my house." Seriously, I think I am an individual who volunteers with several agencies and tries hard to supply information to each person to benefit their needs.

The Road Home is not a band-aid solution; it is the program that can heal the wound permanently.

## Newsletter Update

In order to conserve precious resources – both paper and funds, The Road Home is moving toward providing the newsletter electronically. This will allow us to both save resources and provide more timely information to you. **Please help us by sharing your current email with us.** We will NOT send frequent email communications – only the newsletter and an occasional update. As with all personal information, we will not sell or share your email address.

Please provide your email address by sending an email to Sheila Kirschbaum, Development Assistant at [sheilak@trhome.org](mailto:sheilak@trhome.org).



### Wish List

Diapers/pull Ups  
Paper towels  
Bars of soap

Baby Wipes  
Toilet paper  
African American  
hair care products

Cleaning supplies  
Feminine hygiene products

### School Supplies Donations Needed

As the summer winds down, and the back-to-school sales start appearing, please consider making a donation of school supplies for our families and their children for the upcoming school year. Drop off your donations to our office anytime between 7:00 am and 5:00 pm Monday through Friday.



There are a variety of ways you can help in the fight against homelessness. If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a volunteer or learning more about other ways you can get involved, please contact Alane or Juanita, our volunteer managers, at 608-294-7998, ext. 306 or email [vol.mgr@trhome.org](mailto:vol.mgr@trhome.org).

## 2012 ANNUAL REPORT

The Road Home Dane  
County's 2012 Annual  
Report is now available  
on our website –  
[www.trhome.org](http://www.trhome.org).

# Dear Road Home,

We would like to thank The Road Home for everything they have done for us this past year. Before the Rapid Rehousing program began in August 2012, my daughters and I were staying at The Salvation Army and doubled up with friends. I don't know where we would be if we were not in Rapid Rehousing. The Road Home helped connect my kids and me with resources. I also received donated furniture to furnish my apartment. My girls received school supplies and school clothes. The guidance of a case manager helped me be successful. My case manager also kept me focused on the main thing: housing, my job, and my kids. The rent subsidy made it possible to afford my rent for this year while I looked for better employment. When I started the program I was offered a part-time job and am still working there. It is the longest I have stayed at one company and recently was offered more hours and a pay raise. I also was just offered another part-time job. Due to both employment opportunities, I was able to renew my year lease and will be able to afford the rent without the rent subsidy. My biggest achievement ever was getting housing and keeping it.

Thank you for everything!

Travonda, Arrieonna, and Teonna



Please contact us if you prefer to  
receive this newsletter electronically.

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**the road home**  
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