

# News From The Road Home

Dane County

Spring 2018 newsletter

## We're Moving!

We're excited to share our big news with you! The Road Home is moving to a new location just down the road at the beginning of June. We've purchased larger office space located at 890 W. Wingra in Madison with twice as much square footage as our current rented space. We've grown a lot in the past few years and this new space will allow us to serve more families even more effectively.

## Our Growth

Thanks to the continued support of businesses, congregations and individuals, we've been able to expand our reach to more families experiencing homelessness in our community. We now serve 31% more families than we did just four years ago. To meet that need, our staff has increased by three case managers and an educational specialist. Because of this growth, some of our case managers are now sharing office space, making confidentiality and privacy for families challenging.

Not only do we serve more families, we also serve families more fully, offering more holistic wrap-around services that can help them not just find housing but maintain it. We work with families to set goals and address underlying issues. However, our current space presents limitations in what we can do. For example, we would like to offer skill-based learning opportunities but currently don't have a large enough space.

## Highlights of Our New Space

Our new building will allow us to address all these issues and better serve families who have experienced homelessness in Dane County. Here are a few of the things we're most excited about in our new building:

- Private offices for our case managers will enable confidentiality and provide opportunities for better trauma-informed care.
- Large program space will be used for skills classes as well as community-building recreational activities.
- Children's area creates a child-centered play space for children while parents attend meetings.
- Touchdown space provides an area for staff primarily located off-site to work when they stop in the office for meetings.
- Large conference room can accommodate staff and community meetings.
- Building has better accessibility for families, donors, and staff.



*The Road Home's new home*

We look forward to showing you our new space!

**For ways you can support The Road Home visit our website.**



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## Families Move into The Breese

It's been a busy few months at The Road Home as we partnered with Stone House Development, Inc., a local real estate and consulting firm, to create new affordable housing that opened in January. This new housing, called The Breese Apartments, includes nine affordable three-bedroom townhomes for families served by The Road Home. The location of these units is ideal: on multiple bus lines, across the street from Lapham Elementary School, a block from Festival Foods, in a mixed-income neighborhood and in a prime spot for family activities. The units include parking, a fitness room and free community space that can be reserved - ideal for a birthday party or other family gathering. The Road Home provides on-site case management to the families, in space donated by Stone House, to help families maintain housing and meet their goals. We'd like to tell you about one of these families that recently moved into The Breese.

Brianna and her three children have spent much of the past two years homeless—sleeping in shelters or sometimes in their car. Brianna was already accustomed to facing challenges. She suffers from a chronic medical condition that requires dialysis three times a week. Still, Brianna was holding down a job and her family was making it through. Then her father, the stabilizing influence in their lives, passed away

and Brianna's health took a turn for the worse, getting so bad that at one point Brianna fell into a coma. She was unable to keep her job and soon fell behind on her rent. It was not long after this that the family found themselves homeless. After losing her housing, Brianna found it difficult to find a landlord who would give her another chance. It was particularly difficult because she had three older children which limited which apartments she could move into.

After working with our case managers to find appropriate housing, Brianna finally got the call she had been waiting for: there was an apartment for her family in a new affordable housing unit at The Breese Apartments. Brianna now feels like she has her family back. "When we were homeless, all of our positive support of one another fell apart," Brianna says. "Now that we have a home, we are working on spending time together. Our goal is to re-start our family dinners, movie nights and game nights so we can all bond together." She wants her family to not just be stable, but to be even better than they were before.

We have other housing programs for families who have experienced homelessness in the works so watch for more information about those in the future. Thank you for your support that makes it possible for us to change lives by helping families with children find and maintain stable housing.

## Wish List Items Needed!

On March 31, The Road Home completed the phase-out of our shelter program to focus more fully on helping families find and maintain housing. (To read more about this, please visit our website.) We appreciate the many hours of heartfelt service our volunteers have devoted to helping families with children experiencing homelessness in our community. We look forward to continuing to partner with our amazing volunteers to help more families find and maintain stable housing.

There are still many ways volunteers can work with us to make a difference. In the past, many individuals, families, businesses and congregations organized wish list drives or donated items from our wish list. Often when a family has experienced homelessness, they are left with almost nothing. These wish list items are basic necessities that help families transition more smoothly into housing. Although we are not running a shelter anymore, we are still working with the same population—families transitioning from homelessness to housing. Your donations of wish list items are just as needed and important now as ever before. Please see our current list of most needed items. For questions on volunteering with us, visit our website or contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Alane Conn, at [vol.mgr@trhome.org](mailto:vol.mgr@trhome.org) or by phone at 608-294-7998 ext 306.

### Wish List

- Diapers/pull ups
- Baby wipes
- Cleaning supplies
- Paper towels
- Toilet paper
- Feminine hygiene products
- Hair-care products designed for African-American hair
- Gifts cards for gas and grocery

*For sanitary and safety reasons, please note that we can only accept unopened items. We also prefer full-sized (instead of travel-sized) items when possible.*

## The Road Home Achieves Platinum Status on GuideStar



Donors and volunteers can find many sources of information on nonprofit organizations. One of the most well-known, largest source of information on nonprofits is GuideStar. This site provides information about every IRS-registered nonprofit's mission, impact, legitimacy, reputation, finances, programs, governance and more.

The Road Home Dane County, a 501 (c) (3) organization, has earned the Platinum GuideStar seal of transparency, the highest level a non-profit agency can be awarded. Participating organizations earn levels of recognition based on their commitment to transparency in answering a series of questions.

## Program Report: January-December 2017

### IHN Shelter:

21 families (32 adults, 47 children) stayed in shelter  
89% of families successfully exited shelter into housing

### Housing Stabilization:

19 families participated  
100% of families that could have reached one year in housing did so

### Second Chance Apartment Project:

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

### Rapid Rehousing for Families:

13 families were housed  
This was the first year of the program

### Rapid Rehousing/Truax:

53 families served by The Road Home\*  
84% of families successfully maintained stable housing for one year or longer

### House-ability:

14 families served by The Road Home\*  
100% of families that could have reached two years in housing did so

### Housing & Hope:

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

### Totals:

In 2017, The Road Home served 171 families (376 children) in all of our programs

\* Partner agencies serve additional families in these programs

## Orchard Ridge United Church of Christ Continuing to Partner with The Road Home Post-Shelter

Like many congregations, over the years Orchard Ridge United Church of Christ (ORUCC) has responded to the call of the gospel to provide shelter and homes for people in need of them. For about 18 years, we were a host congregation for the Interfaith Hospitality Network shelter. We also supported a Second Chance apartment family and conducted special offerings to raise funds for The Road Home's work, as well as working with other housing programs. In 2017, ORUCC re-committed to promoting stable housing for families as a priority. ORUCC reached out to The Road Home, The Joining Forces for Families (JFF), Early Childhood Initiative (ECI) and community residents to develop a new approach called HEART ROOM. Through a focused fund-raising drive, HEART ROOM will become a reality this year.

ORUCC is committed to the vision that every family deserves a home. We are focused on housing for families with young

children, knowing this will increase their chances to grow up safe, healthy, happy and successful in school and life. We appreciate the opportunity to partner with trusted and respected partners - The Road Home, JFF and ECI.

HEART ROOM is a pilot program that will provide six families with opportunities to achieve housing stability long-term. Families chosen for this program will have young children; be struggling to secure or retain housing; not have other public or private housing subsidies such as Section 8 or public housing; and be able to benefit from HEART ROOM to create a pathway leading to housing stability.

HEART ROOM will combine three years of significant rental assistance with flexible and family-driven support and services. The Road Home will be responsible for housing, case management and distributing rental assistance. Families will work with JFF for employment needs and ECI for children's mental health.



Orchard Ridge UCC

ORUCC will fund the rental assistance. The program includes other connections to neighbors and landlords. Our faith calls us to help children and families living in poverty with respect and generosity, and to build good neighbor relations. We are excited that HEART ROOM allows us to live our faith.

Helene Nelson, Facilitator  
ORUCC Heart Room Mission Team

## The Road Home Receives Generous Grant Support

These foundations, businesses and organizations have recently awarded grants in support of The Road Home's programs. Thank you to these funders and all our donors for their generosity and commitment to The Road Home's mission.

**Bob's Discount Furniture Charitable Foundation:** \$2,500 for new beds for families at The Breeze Apartments

**CUNA Mutual Foundation:** \$40,000 for education services (second year of 2-year grant)

**Madison Rotary Foundation:** \$7,438 for rental assistance and transportation

**The Magic Pebble Foundation:** \$10,000 for general operations

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

## Upcoming Events

Please join us at our new 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 firsthand. This is not a fund-raiser and we guarantee it will only last 59 minutes!

### 2018 Tour Dates

Please check our website for tour dates this summer in our new building.

### Mark Your Calendars:

August 18, 2018

**Families Moving Forward Celebration**

12:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m. at Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish

November 8, 2018

**14th Annual Homes for Families Fundraising Breakfast**

7:30 a.m.-8:30 a.m. at the Alliant Energy Center.

Interested in hosting a table? Contact Peggy Halloran, Development Director at 608-284-7998, ext. 311.

## Dear Road Home,

Thank you so much for helping my family and me overcome homelessness. Even though being in the program we never felt that way, it always felt like home. The staff and volunteers welcomed us with open arms and warm hearts. The Road Home also helped to furnish my two-bedroom apartment. I remember when my four-year old daughter Avah came home from school. She was so happy to have her own room with a bed in it and with all her toys. She said "Come get me when it's time to eat." That made me feel so complete. Now I work at the school my daughter attends and am about to take classes to further my education in the field that I'm working in. Thanks to The Road Home

for all the support given to my family and me.

Sincerely  
Philicia



*Philicia and family*