

News From The Road Home

Dane County

Spring 2020

Coming Together to Respond to COVID-19



We believe in the power of community—especially during times of crisis. Here at The Road Home Dane County, we are working hard to adapt our services during the COVID-19 emergency. We wanted to let you know what we're doing here and how we can continue to work together to help families remain in stable housing during this time.

During this COVID-19 outbreak, we continue to provide essential services to families in our community who have experienced homelessness while striving to keep families, volunteers, staff and our community healthy and safe. Our office is temporarily closed to the public, although a staff member will be there for a short time to pick up mail including any donations that are sent. Our case managers are conducting visits by phone instead of in person and meetings have been cancelled or moved virtually.

An event like this requires us to work together as a community to prevent and alleviate suffering. We know that people in our community are looking for ways to help. Many families in our housing programs have lost much of their income that they depend on to cover basic necessities like food and rent. Having children home from school also creates challenges in fulfilling work responsibilities. Because of this, we are anticipating a steep increase in need for rental assistance as well as for groceries and basic items such as cleaning supplies. Please join us in being part of the community response by making a donation to ensure families in our community maintain stability during this crisis and beyond. If you prefer to donate wish list items, please check our updated wish list found on our website at trhome.org/wish-list. You can order online and have items delivered to our office at 890 W Wingra Drive, Madison, 53715.

Day 1 Families Fund Update

The Road Home Dane County was selected last November as the recipient of a \$1.25 million transformative grant from the Day 1 Families Fund to reduce and prevent family homelessness in our community over the next five years. In January, Executive Director Kristin Rucinski established a subcommittee of volunteers, donors, clients and staff to make recommendations to the Board on the best use of these funds. The committee has met several times and determined that in addition to establishing long-term goals, the COVID-19 pandemic's effect on homeless and low-income families warrants discussions with community partners on how a portion of this funding could be used for emergency response. We expect to make an announcement on short-term use of funds in summer and long-term goals in fall.



We have earned the Platinum GuideStar seal of transparency. GuideStar is a 501 (c) (3) that gathers and disseminates information about every IRS-registered nonprofit organization. Participating organizations earn levels of recognition based on their commitment to transparency in answering a series of questions.

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



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Facebook



[#TRHomeMadison](https://www.instagram.com/TRHomeMadison)

The Road Home Receives Generous Support

These foundations, businesses, organizations and congregations recently contributed \$2,500 and above in support of The Road Home's programs (through March 31, 2020). For a list of additional grants, sponsorships and contributions, please visit our website.

\$2,500 - \$4,999

- Blue Tree Network – general support
- Madison Rotary Foundation – rental and transportation assistance
- Members First Credit Union – general support

\$5,000 - \$9,999

- Messiah Lutheran – general support

\$10,000 - \$19,999

- Seva Circle – Second Chance Apartment Project
- Steve Brown Apartments – Second Chance Apartment Project and general support
- Orchard Ridge United Church of Christ - Heart Room

\$20,000 and above

- Attic Angel Association – Bright Future counseling services
- UW Health, UnityPoint Health – Meriter & Quartz – general support

Thank you to all our donors for your generosity and commitment to The Road Home's mission.

The Road Home Board of Directors

April starts our new board term. We appreciate the guidance of board members. We also would like to thank outgoing board members Linda Schaack, Joe Pleshek and Zaher Karp.

Adam Sweet, President
Monicka Whitehead, Vice President
Barbara Tormaschy, Treasurer
Jesi Wang, Secretary
Mustapha Drammeh, Diversity Officer
Leigh Becker
Ben Evans
Tess Klug
Mark Martin
Rennet Premnath
Jeff Swalve
Kate Weis

2019 Program Report

At The Road Home, we seek long-term solutions to homelessness by helping families find and maintain stable, affordable housing. In 2019, we worked with 229 families, including 550 children.

Not only do we help families locate existing housing in the community, we also partner with others to create new, affordable housing. We offer a range of supportive services to help families be successful in maintaining this housing. In 2019, 95% of the families we supported remained stably housed. This is a significant benchmark for families who have experienced homelessness.

Upcoming Events

2020 Tour Information Session Dates:

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, tours have been suspended until further notice. Please check our website for more information.

16th Annual Homes for Families Fundraising Breakfast

November 5, 2020

7:30 a.m.-8:30 a.m.

Alliant Energy Center

For more information, please contact Peggy Halloran, Development Director, at 608-294-7998 or by email at peggyh@trhome.org

Wish List

- Toilet paper and paper towel
- Cleaning supplies
- Baby wipes
- Feminine hygiene products
- Laundry and dish detergent
- 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.

Newsletter Update

In order to conserve precious resources, both paper and funds, The Road Home is moving toward providing the newsletter electronically. This will also allow us to provide more timely information to you. 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 help us by sending your current email address to Sheila Kirschbaum, Business/Development Coordinator at sheilak@trhome.org.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Works with The Road Home to Make a Difference

By Teresa Rankin, Congregation Ambassador



Youth volunteers pack up personal hygiene items for families experiencing homelessness

Our congregation, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day-Saints, Madison 3rd Ward, began our relationship with The Road Home in 2016. We joined with the Middleton Community Church and Good Shepherd Lutheran Church to help with The Road Home's Interfaith Hospitality Network shelter program. We believe in following the example of Jesus Christ and serving those who are in need in our communities. We also believe in and support The Road Home's mission of ending family homelessness because every child deserves a safe, stable and secure home.

When The Road Home phased out their shelter program, we were pleased to continue our relationship with them and our companion congregations by helping out twice a year with family celebrations, as well as supporting Healing House needs several times a year. Healing House fills an important need in our community by providing a place for homeless families to rest and recuperate after a significant medical event such as surgery, birth of a child or other medical procedure.

One of our congregation's favorite ways to be involved with The Road Home is by participating in their Sharing the Holidays program. We are provided with wish lists from families The Road Home serves and we pool our resources to provide holiday gifts. Because we work together, we are able to serve some of The Road Home's larger families. As a congregation, we have also had several campaigns over the years to collect some of The Road Home's most needed item such as personal hygiene items.

We hope to continue our relationship with The Road Home far into the future as they work to provide housing and support the needs of families transitioning from homelessness to housing. We are especially grateful to be a part of The Road Home's efforts to help children grow up in stable housing and to help families reach goals while in housing. Working with The Road Home has provided meaningful experiences to members in our congregation and gives us the opportunity to make a real difference in our community.

Peer Support Specialist at The Road Home

Takisha Jordan recognized the value and power of shared experiences while she was working as a receptionist and programs assistant at The Road Home. Sitting at the front desk, Takisha was the first point of contact for many families served by The Road Home, who often arrived in crisis. Takisha found that these families continued to seek her out. "They came to me for help because I looked like them, because they knew of my past involvement in advocacy, and because they knew of my previous personal struggles with homelessness. They wanted to know how I overcome those barriers so that they could overcome their similar barriers."



Takisha, Peer Support Specialist

When Takisha came across a policy paper titled, "Peer Support: A Tool for Recovery in Homeless Services," the idea of a peer support position at The Road Home began to take shape. Takisha did more research and presented it to the Homeless Service Consortium Board of Directors. The Road Home piloted the program at Tree Lane Apartments and, impressed with the results, decided to create a new position titled Peer Support Specialist this past September.

In her position as Peer Support Specialist, Takisha uses her lived experience to develop a supportive relationship with people in The Road Home's housing programs. She works in conjunction with case managers at The Breese and Housing & Hope to identify goals that she can help families work toward. An example was a mother who recently got a new job. Although the mother is excited about the new job, she dreads the five-hour roundtrip travel time on public transportation. She is anxious to work with Takisha to get a previous driving charge cleared from her record and to purchase a vehicle so that she will be able to get to work more efficiently and have more time to spend with her children. We are excited about this new position and feel like it has significant potential to help our families be successful with their housing and other goals.

Address Service Requested

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

Dear Road Home,

My name is Sheila and I want to thank you for the Housing & Hope program and everything you did to help my family. I was born and raised in the Madison area. In the summer of 2017 my kids and I became homeless. I suffered from a chronic health condition that made it difficult for me to work. Without income, my housing choices were scarce. My family stayed at a local shelter and I was able to get into the Housing & Hope program through The Road Home.

I moved into Housing & Hope late summer of 2017. I was relieved to find housing before the school year started. Opening the door to our own apartment made my kids so happy. This program offers a lot of support and kept me focused. I was able to work with a case manager onsite to set goals for me and my kids. My daughter loved our case manager and would often ask when she could see her next. During meetings while I was completing applications, they would read books

together. The entire staff at The Road Home is so kind and supportive. They helped connect my daughter to resources that I had never heard of.

I knew I wanted to increase my income, get subsidized housing, and purchase a car. At times I felt overwhelmed but my kids kept me going. We did experience setbacks from time to time, but with the support of the program, I increased my income and applied to subsidized housing. I enjoyed my time at Housing & Hope but I wanted to take what I learned and allow another family the chance to get into the program.

We are doing better than ever. I moved into a new subsidized housing development last spring. Rent is based on my income so I am able to afford it and budget. My kids are doing great and I recently had a baby boy. I feel like I went from surviving to thriving and The Road Home played a big part in



Sheila and family

my success. I am happy to report I recently purchased a car too. Thank you The Road Home for everything you do!