

News From The Road Home

Dane County

Spring 2023

The Road Home set to launch new rapid rehousing program as part of federal youth homelessness initiative

We are excited to announce that later this summer, The Road Home will launch a new rapid rehousing program to support youth aged 18 - 24 in our community who are experiencing homelessness. The new program is funded by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP), which has awarded a \$2.5 million grant to the Dane County Homeless Services Consortium for resources and technical assistance to create new approaches for combating youth homelessness in our community.

In addition to The Road Home's rapid rehousing program, the grant will fund Urban Triage's development of a transitional housing project for unhoused youth, as well as outreach, housing navigation and peer support services to be provided by both Urban Triage and the OutReach LGBTQ+ Community Center.

"The Road Home is grateful to partner with Urban Triage and the OutReach LGBTQ+ Community Center to address unmet housing needs throughout our community for young people," said Executive Director Cindy Browning. "We are very excited to expand our programming while recognizing the importance of collaboration."

The structure of the program is unprecedented for Dane County, says Housing Advocate Allie Grant, who has overseen implementation of The Road Home's portion of the project since the funds were awarded in September 2021. Instead of requiring specific service approaches, YHDP seeks to facilitate youth leadership, cross-system collaboration and partnerships among local providers to develop solutions to youth homelessness that respond to communities' unique needs, strengths and opportunities.

"The structure of the YHDP program responds to the fact that mainstream adult homeless services have not been adequately addressing youth homelessness," says Grant. "Young people typically have a hard time getting connected to services in the first place, and when they are connected, those services are much less effective. That means these young people tend to remain unstable for longer periods of time, and they often end up becoming folks who go on to experience homelessness later in life."

To foster innovation and collaboration, the YHDP grant funded an initial year of local needs assessment and planning, which provided stakeholders the necessary time and space to build relationships, identify opportunities and chart a course of action. This period also included the creation of the Youth Action Board – a team of young people from the Madison area with lived experience of homelessness that is responsible for project planning, onboarding and training project staff and monitoring overall program performance. In this way, YHDP goes beyond simply funding new services to empower youth with first-hand knowledge of the problem to take the lead on crafting local solutions.

The project's two-year demonstration period will run through the end of 2024. During this time, the Youth Action Board and lead stakeholders will have considerable flexibility to make adjustments to resource allocation and project policies as opportunities for improvement are identified. The lessons learned through this process will not only benefit local youth on their journeys to stable housing, but will help strengthen efforts to end the scourge of youth homelessness across the United States.

"The great thing about YHDP is that what we're doing doesn't have to be set in stone," says Grant. "The whole point is to collaborate and have the ability to be flexible in our response to a very difficult and complex problem, and ultimately to create a new system that is sustained and informed by young people with lived experience of homelessness."

Every child deserves a home

890 W Wingra Dr. | Madison, WI 53715

trhome.org



The Road Home Meet n' Greet Social Event

On March 23, The Road Home Dane County held an event for community supporters, donors and local partners to meet with new leadership. Held at the UW South Partnership Building, guests had the opportunity to meet with Cindy Browning, Executive Director, Meghan Salzwedel, Development Director and Dominique Christian, Program Director.

Board of Directors member Jeff Wendorf hosted the festivities, introducing the crowd to leadership as well as honoring long-time partner Ben Reynolds of Reynolds Transfer & Storage. Ben accepted the partnership award on behalf of his business and their years of assisting families in our housing programs with storage and moving of donated furniture. This support has been on-going for almost seven years, the equivalent of \$40,000 of support each year.

Learn more about The Road Home's leadership team and their drive to end family homelessness on our website's blog: trhome.org/blog



Pictured above left to right: Cindy Browning, Executive Director, Meghan Salzwedel, Development Director and Dominique Christian, Program Director.

Donate & Support Local Families

Every day in our community more than 100 families are struggling with housing insecurity. Often referred to as "invisible homelessness," family homelessness is frequently hidden away from the community, with families sleeping in basements, on couches, in their vehicles or in unsafe conditions and more.

"The Road Home believes in Housing First and provides innovative approaches that dare to resist the stigma imposed on families experiencing homelessness," says Cindy Browning, Executive Director at The Road Home. By donating today to The Road Home Dane County, you are supporting one child at a time, one family at a time, as they make the journey from homelessness to safe, stable housing.



Scan the QR code or visit trhome.org to donate today! You can also use the enclosed envelope to donate and support our mission of ending family homelessness.

Save The Date

The Road Home is pleased to announce that the 19th Annual Homes For Families Fundraising Breakfast will be held in person on **Thursday, November 9th** at the Sheraton Madison Hotel. We look forward to joining with you in support of our mission to end family homelessness in Dane County!

This free-to-attend event will include highlights from families served, staff, leadership and partners in a formal presentation for you to enjoy. Our venue sponsor, Sheraton Madison Hotel, will provide a light breakfast during the event.

We are grateful to the many community sponsors and table host ambassadors who've contributed to the success of our past Breakfast Fundraisers. Each year their dedication, passion and generous giving allows the Breakfast event to raise critical funds that support our housing programs, providing wrap-around supportive services for 250+ families and more than 500 children annually.

We are currently recruiting for table host ambassadors as well as event sponsors at the following giving levels:

\$1,000 FRIEND SPONSORSHIP

\$2,500 ADVOCATE SPONSORSHIP

\$5,000 PARTNER SPONSORSHIP

\$10,000 CHAMPION SPONSORSHIP

\$15,000 VISIONARY SPONSORSHIP

For more information, please visit our website trhome.org/breakfast or contact Meghan Salzwedel, Development Director at meghans@trhome.org

Thank You, Jordan Turner



Please join us in thanking Jordan Turner, a talented athlete who shows passion for the game on the football field and passion for our community in his free time. Recently, The Road Home welcomed UW Badger athlete Jordan Turner to our main office to present him with an

honorary "Housing Advocate Award." Turner was recognized for his support in raising thousands of dollars for last year's back to school event as well as our annual Fundraising Breakfast.

Turner, a defensive player on the UW Badger Football team, is continuing his partnership with The Road Home throughout 2023. He'll once again join the Families Moving Forward back to school event to which he'll bring added excitement as kids enrolled in our housing programs will compete in mini football challenges right alongside Turner.

Board of Directors

Our organization is grateful for the guidance and support provided by these dedicated community members. Please join us in thanking this group for their leadership and continued guidance.

- Jeff Swalve, President**
- Robin Matthies, Vice President**
- Steve Kelley, Treasurer**
- Joia Wodarczyk, Secretary**
- Nyra Jordan, Diversity Officer**
- Gabe Doyle**
- Matt Julian**
- Melissa Kehoe**
- La'Shawn Oliphant**
- Carole Trone**
- Jeff Wendorf**
- Jill Wipfli**

Why We Give: Degnan Design-Build-Remodel



I'm Abe Degnan, the owner of Degnan Design - Build - Remodel. We help people change their lives and solve their problems by remodeling their homes. We're really well known for the integration of our design and our construction because we have both those in-house, with full time employees doing the work and building relationships with the clients we work for.

Housing is such an important thing and it really sets the stage for a stable life for people. It is really important that The Road Home helps people not only to have a place to live, but also helps them with the whole process of changing their life so they're able to sustain and support themselves on their own. Rather than being reliant on other assistance, this sets

people up so that they are able to thrive. It's important to me to help families move from homelessness to housing because it's an issue of pride, and it's an issue of comfort and stability. Those things go together in order to provide people a sense of self worth and help them establish their lives in terms of working, stability, school and a future for their kids. I'm blessed that I have always had a home, but I'm also an adoptive parent. Three of my kids lived in an orphanage, so I can barely understand part of their life, and yet I know exactly the difficulties that creates. While we no longer have orphanages here in America, we have plenty of issues with homelessness.

I've heard about The Road Home on and off for ages, but it wasn't until my friend Jesi hosted a fundraiser for The Road Home that I really found out exactly what they do and how much more that they do for the community. When I discovered just how much was involved with setting people up for their future, I knew it was something I also wanted to be involved in – to help families move from homelessness into stability. As a business owner, I think that we have a duty to give back to the community and we have a duty to help people in need. And the thing about it is that when we help people, we're setting ourselves up as businesses for success, and we're setting up for the future. We're strengthening the already tight labor force. When a family is supported, the adult is on track to be a great employee and we're helping the children grow into stable adults who hopefully will never experience homelessness again and will learn the skills and coping mechanisms they need to be successful. They will see their parents be able to go to work and support their family and have a home.

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Contact Meghan Salzwedel, Development Director, for information on joining our Giving Society: meghans@trhome.org

We're excited to share that our organization has earned a 2023 Platinum Seal of Transparency with Candid!
Now, you can support our work with trust and confidence by viewing our #NonprofitProfile: trhome.org/who-we-are





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Dear Road Home Community,

There are many things I feel are important for our community to be discussing and I am proud to be an advocate and a voice for those experiencing trauma. As a mother who is now living in safe housing, attending school at Madison College and working as a Student Rise Advisor – I have come out the other side.

Have you heard of gang stalking? It's something people don't believe is happening, but it's real and it happened to me. It's a way for a group of people to try and control and manipulate you, sometimes without you noticing. My daughter and I were stuck in this unsafe situation where this type of stalking occurred in many areas of my life. It started in my neighborhood but had deeper roots than I realized. I felt isolated, paranoid and with no one to trust. After trying to find help in many messed-up situations, I became homeless and I was in an unsafe living situation with my daughter. That's when I got connected to a shelter program, where I was then connected to The Road Home to work with my housing advocate, Jen. Then I finally got into school (Madison College) and I've been thriving ever since. Before, I would say I folded when everything was happening, but now I don't let the fear take place. I've been able to talk about what happened to me and educate people on gang stalking.



Currently I have a 3.5 grade point average and I'm studying towards a liberal arts transfer: Arts and Humanities. My job here at the school (Student Rise Advisor) is basically giving students resources as far as if they need a tutor, if they need any kind of success coach, advisors, a place to study, support with bus passes, food. Basically, anything to retain and keep students in school and graduate. It feels good to help lift barriers for students so they can focus on studying. I'm more of a giver than a taker, and if I can give, I love random acts of kindness.

For career goals, I would like to open a foundation where families can get help with keeping custody of their children. My main goals would be that parents can attend school and focus directly on that, feeling secure with a roof over their head. I know what it's like when you don't have stable housing and you can't focus on school. So I want to help lift those barriers for others and see how they can thrive. In this foundation I dream of, I want there to be stress management classes, financial aid classes, support for families there. I want to give back.

When I dream for my children, I want them to be whatever they want to be. I like to say my youngest daughter is an astronaut ballerina. I would like to lift any kind of barriers for her, and all my children. I want them to know that you can do anything you want, explore, find what's right for you and grow.

- Lai'Kita