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Hospitality Network News

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Interfaith Hospitality Network of the Madison Area

Neighbor-to-Neighbor

When Jill* left shelter she had a job that she could get to, an affordable apartment, and no problem enrolling her kids in school. She was finally on her own. But there were still some things Jill needed help with. She had trouble organizing her bills and papers, she had difficulty finding transportation to appointments and the grocery store, and she wanted some emotional support in dealing with her teen-aged children. So, in addition to working with her IHN case manager, Jill requested a mentor through the neighbor-to-neighbor program.

The neighbor-to-neighbor program pairs a growing number of volunteers with families in the Housing Stabilization Program and Second Chance Apartment Project. Mentors' activities vary widely, depending on the program, the needs of the family and the interests and talents of the mentors. Mentors may provide social outlets, such as trips to the zoo or other community activities; practical assistance, such as rides to a food pantry; or more goal-oriented support, such as helping a family budget, tutoring for a GED exam, or developing an exercise program.



Mentors at a quarterly pot-luck.

Mentors have made some very significant impacts: one Second Chance Apartment parent found a full-time, professional job with her mentor's help. Another is researching career development. A third received a donated car through her sponsoring congregation, and the mentors are helping her get a license and registration. Several mentors are tutoring children. Mentors' families often participate as well, giving them an opportunity to volunteer together and develop relationships across cultural and socio-economic differences.

In the end, it is often these personal relationships that are most valuable to everyone involved. Stacy Sandler, one of the Second Chance Apartment Project mentors writes: "One of the things I enjoyed about my weekly meetings with Pam* was our walk after 'business' was done, to pick up 4½ year old Aaron* at his day care. Pam and I would talk about raising kids and other things and on our walk back to the house with Aaron we would talk about his day and the things he had been doing since the last time I saw him.... I feel that this program is making a huge positive impact on Pam and the kids and I am proud to be part of it and all that Pam has accomplished."

For further information about the neighbor-to-neighbor program or to volunteer, please call Shannon Hayes, Volunteer Coordinator, at 294-7998, ext. 306.

**Client names in this article have been changed to ensure confidentiality.*

Interfaith Hospitality Network of the Madison Area serves homeless families by mobilizing religious communities to provide shelter and meals, by working with families to overcome barriers to self-sufficiency and by raising awareness of social justice issues.

Program Report

January – December, 2003

Services:

- 28 families (59 children, 32 adults) stayed in shelter
- 14 families on the waiting list received case management
- 26 families participated in the housing stabilization program
- The Second Chance Apartment Project housed 7 families
- 15 families participated in the neighbor-to-neighbor program with 27 mentors
- 27 community members participated in the Tenant Advocates Group

Outcomes:

- 16 shelter families found housing; 3 remained in shelter as of December 31
- 9 waiting list families found housing
- 72% of families retained their housing 6 months or longer

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News of Our Graduates

Sandra and her daughters **Candice, Keandra** and **Janell** moved into housing this month. Sandra writes: "IHN helped me out a lot and I'm very grateful. I feel very blessed. Thanks to all the staff members and volunteers."

Patrice and her kids **Gevonini, Gevonna** and **Rena** moved into their townhouse in November. Patrice will soon be starting a job at Oscar Meyer and has been an active member of TAG (IHN's Tenant Advocates Group). She and the kids feel happy and adjusted in their new home and would like to thank all the folks who have supported them along the way.

LaShaunda was voted "employee of the month" at her job, where she has been an employee since October. Congratulations LaShaunda!

Employment Wanted

IHN Case Managers work with parents to develop needed job skills and to find and maintain suitable employment. If any of our readers is an employer or has connections to employers that may be willing to give an opportunity to an IHN participant, please contact Leslie at ext. 303.

Currently seeking: General Laborer position. Prefer full-time, any shift, Motivated individual with experience in construction, warehouse work and building maintenance. Will provide references.

Special Thanks

Everyone at IHN extends our sincere appreciation to...

...**Ron Wendt** for his two years of faithful, dedicated service as an IHN van driver. During his employment with IHN Ron built strong relationships with guests, especially children, and was a valued staff member.

...a **First Unitarian Society Member** for donating a car to their Second Chance Family.

...**Chrysalis, Inc.**, for preparing mailings for IHN several times each year.

...**Project Linus**, for making sure that every child at IHN receives a handmade "security" blanket

...The **Piecemakers Quilt Guild** for donating 75 handmade quilts.

...**Jonathan and Kitty** from **105.5 Triple-M** for treating the IHN staff to a "flower power lunch" and talking about IHN on the radio

...**Middle School Students** from **Wexford Ridge Neighborhood Center** for helping us prepare our winter mailings during two after-school volunteer trips

...**Datex – Ohmeda, John Lancaster Toyota, the Wisconsin Department of Administration** and several very **generous individuals** who adopted IHN families in shelter and housing for Christmas.

...**O'Mara Moving** who donated delivery of all those gifts to families in housing

...**Everyone** who gave items from our wish list and/or special gifts for the holidays.

Why We Give to IHN

By Richard Seaman, IHN Finance Committee Chair



My wife, Jennifer, and I worked as fiscal analysts over much of our careers. We are not liberals or conservatives, and we are not Republicans or Democrats, although we have supported candidates from both parties. We don't much care for politics. Hand-holding and glad-handing are not our thing. Like everyone else, if we spend \$10, we want a good

return on our investment, whether that's going to a movie or going out for breakfast.

Over the years, we have saved and invested, and at the end of each year we give back to the community through the United Way and other organizations. We were able to retire early, and as luck would have it IHN asked me to become a member of its board. I was leery at first. I asked what IHN did, and here's what I was told: "Our participating congregations provide shelter for homeless families, and the staff work with them in the development of life skills. We help them find jobs, and we help them find permanent housing and stay in permanent housing."

Frankly, that very clear and concise answer sounded too good. I asked for details: How many families were sheltered last year? How many found jobs and permanent housing? How many "graduates" are still in permanent housing? The answers were immediately forthcoming and the answers fully supported the statement of what IHN does. That was 15 months ago and I am proud to say that the answers today are even stronger. IHN, and its hundreds of wonderful volunteers, its participating congregations, and its great staff are "getting it done."

As a couple, we are proud to be a major donor to IHN. And, we have included IHN in our wills. As Chairman of the Finance Committee, I know first hand that our personal investment in IHN is yielding large and long-lasting returns.



The Ruby Slippers Benefit

Saturday, February 28, 2004

7:00 p.m.

The Edgewater Hotel

666 Wisconsin Avenue

Madison

The Interfaith Hospitality Network invites you to its Ruby Slippers Benefit. Click your heels and join us for cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, dessert and coffee. A silent auction will begin at 7:00 p.m. with a live auction, hosted by comedian Tanya Atkinson, starting at 8:30 p.m.

Tickets are \$25.00 per person. A table of eight can be purchased for \$200.00. For more information, call 608.294.7998. We thank our sponsors for their generous support:



Wish List

We are most in need of:
2004 Calendars/organizers
Diapers/Pull-ups
Laundry Detergent
Madison Metro Bus Passes

We also need:
Baby Wipes
Bleach
Cleaning Supplies
Deodorant
Dish Soap
Feminine Hygiene Products
Garbage Bags
Hair Grease
Hair Ties, Rubber bands, etc
Movies (Family VHS)
Paper Towels
Phone Cards
Pillows
Postage Stamps
Super Nintendo Games
Toothbrush
Toothpaste
Toilet Paper

*Financial gifts allow
IHN to direct resources
to the most critical need*

Dear IHN,

I would like to thank you for being so helpful and so patient with me and my baby, and for providing me with an apartment and being there for me physically, mentally and spiritually. I couldn't have done it without you. Love to all of you.

So many thanks,

Dorsey and D'Mya Bennett



To Support IHN:

Financial Gifts: Rachel Krinsky, Executive Director, 294-7998, x 302
Volunteering: Shannon Hayes, Volunteer Coordinator, 294-7998, x 306
Items for Families/Programs: Lissa Sundberg, Office Manager, 294-7998, x 301

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

A Community Response for Homeless Families
Madison, Wisconsin 53715
1121 University Avenue



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