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Hospitality Network News

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

2005-Preparing for Growth

In 2005, IHN served a record 75 families and helped 75% of those in housing to reach the 1-year mark. But there are still many homeless families in Dane County who cannot find help, so 2005 was also a year of preparation for growth. By strengthening our current programs and increasing our profile in the community, we have been paving the way for new directions. As we begin a new year, I'd like to share a few of these "behind the scenes" developments:

Telling our story:

In March, 2005 IHN launched our No Place Like Home Information Sessions. These monthly one-hour sessions are an opportunity for members of the community to learn more about IHN's unique approach to serving homeless families. In this first year, 240 people attended these sessions and gave us tremendous feedback. People who have volunteered for years told us that they felt re-inspired and learned things they'd never known. New people became enthusiastically involved as volunteers, board members and donors. The Homes for Families Breakfast (see page 2) created another new opportunity to share the IHN story. As we begin to plan for new growth and development, we want our community to understand what IHN is all about.

Building relationships with landlords and developers:

One of our identified goals in 2005 was to build stronger relationships with landlords and developers. These relationships are critical to our ability to place families in housing – particularly families with multiple barriers. Through personal outreach from board and staff members, and through the efforts above, we reached an unprecedented level of collaboration with property owners. By the end of the year, we had landlords and developers as board members, table captains, donors, Apartment Project sponsors, and – most importantly – as partners invested in helping us house families. As we continue to develop and benefit from these relationships, we are using the same model to build relationships with employers who can help our families enter the workforce.

Growth of the Housing Stabilization program:

It has long been our vision at IHN to support families well beyond shelter. However, when we began the Housing Stabilization program many families were understandably hesitant to have a case manager looking at their finances, talking to their landlords and asking personal questions when they had left shelter and it was no longer required. Over time, the trusting relationships we build with families in shelter and our proven track record of helping families retain housing have encouraged more participation. In 2005, program participation increased from 20 to 26 families and the retention rate for IHN families reaching one year in housing increased from 64% to 75%. Our ability to foster long-term relationships with families and to help them remain stably housed will be essential as we grow to serve more families in the future.

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, 2005

Services:

- 34 families (70 children, 42 adults) stayed in shelter
- 26 families participated in the Housing Stabilization Program
- The Second Chance Apartment Project housed 15 families
- 32 mentors worked with 11 families
- 22 community members participated in the Tenant Advocacy Group

Outcomes:

- 21 shelter families found housing (70%)
- 5 families graduated from the Housing Stabilization Program
- 4 families graduated from the Second Chance Apartment Project into permanent affordable housing
- 89% of shelter graduates maintained housing for six months or longer, 75% for at least one year

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Homes for Families

On November 10th, IHN hosted our first Homes for Families Breakfast with tremendous success. Sixty-eight table captains invited their friends, family and colleagues for a total of 530 attendees, filling a giant room at the Alliant Energy Center. Many were new to IHN, and many were new even to the issue of family homelessness, so just their presence was a thrill.

At the breakfast, we launched the *Homes for Families Society*, a new multiple-year giving society for donors who pledged \$1,000 per year or more for the next five years. We are delighted to have 27 founding members of this society. Between those gifts and the many others we received at other levels, we closed our budget gap for 2005. Multiple-year pledges gave us some funding to count on for our current programs in future years, and some flexibility in the budget to start planning for additional services in the future.

Many thanks to our Homes for Families Sponsors: **Cuna Mutual Group Foundation**; **Meridian Group**; and **The Great Dane Pub & Brewery** whose generous support allowed funds raised at the breakfast to benefit the families we serve.

Special Thanks

Everyone at IHN extends sincere appreciation to all of you who have given time, money or items to support our families.

The following individuals, groups and businesses purchased holiday gifts for IHN families: **American Girl**; **Door Creek Church**; **G.E. Health**; **Kelly Gill and Family**; **Laura Huggett**; **Hope Lutheran Church Preschool**; **Barb Keppler**; **Kathy and Tim Mazur**; **Jessica Rainbow** (& her Bible Study group); **Thomas and Janice Rucinski**; **Wisconsin Department of Administration**. Also, **O'Mara Moving Systems** donated time and a truck to deliver those gifts for the third year in a row.

Erica Sanders and Adrian Hegeman donated their Toyota and **Walter and Ruth Miner** donated their Dodge Dynasty for IHN families who need transportation to work.

A team of employees from **Johnson Bank** gave our Day Center a fresh coat of paint, built shelves for an upstairs closet and took the families out to lunch and to the movies on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

First Lady Jessica Doyle hosted IHN children at the Governor's mansion for a party and Christmas tree tour.

Land's End and **St. Vincent de Paul Society** each gave 20 warm blankets to keep our shelter families warm during the winter nights.

Many people donated items from our wish list, including a couple of families who specifically went shopping for the African American hair care products listed in our last issue. Thank you to all!!

Why We Give to IHN

by Laura and Steve Rose, Homes for Families Society



Our family has been involved in IHN from its inception. In addition to our monetary contribution, we have chosen different ways of giving to IHN on an individual basis.

Steve: I give my time to IHN as co-coordinator at Luther Memorial because the organization does good things for homeless parents and their children as well as our

church members. The parents we serve are very grateful for the three square meals and the safe, warm place to sleep we provide their families in our church. The respite and support enables them to continue or begin their employment, care for their children and work with IHN staff to arrange housing of their own. Church members who volunteer experience all the rewards of working with the nicest people in their congregation to actively carry out the best of their religious beliefs to the benefit of our community's neediest citizens.

Laura: I give to IHN as a board member, because I believe in IHN's holistic approach to ending homelessness in our community: through family empowerment, community awareness, and direct service. I give to IHN because I believe in the respectful, warm and hospitable way that the volunteers provide families with their basic needs while they get back on their feet. I give to IHN because the wonderful staff goes the extra mile with each family to make sure that their journey out of homelessness is "one way". I give to IHN because I believe no one in America should be homeless!

News of our Graduates

Phyllis, Harold and Jenelle moved into their new apartment in December. They would like to thank all of the IHN staff and volunteers and plan to keep in touch.

Denise and Keyanna also moved into their new home in December. They are enjoying their place and the stability and privacy that it provides them. Denise says "I would like to thank IHN for helping me get back on my feet. I couldn't have done it without you guys!"

Wish List

We are most in need of:

Baby wipes
Bar soap (full size)
Bleach
Brooms & dustpans
Diapers
Deodorant
Feminine hygiene products
Laundry soap
Lotion (full size)
Madison Metro bus passes
Mops & buckets
Razors
Shaving cream
Toothbrushes
Toothpaste
Towels
Wash cloths
Winter blankets

We also need:

African American hair care products
Cleaning supplies (full size)
Dishes
Game system i.e. Nintendo for the day center
Light bulbs
Paper towels
Phone cards
Pots & pans
Postage stamps
Silverware
Toilet paper
TV antenna VHF UHF FM

Financial gifts allow IHN to direct resources to our most critical needs

To Support IHN:

Financial Gifts: Rachel Krinsky, Executive Director, 294-7998, x 302

Volunteering: Shannon Hayes, Network Coordinator, 294-7998, x 306

Items for Families/Programs: Lissa Sundberg, Business Manager, 294-7998, x 301

Dear IHN,

My Name is Uniqueca Johnson. I am 25 years old. I have two children. My son Dedrick is 6 and my daughter Kalin is 1 year old. I moved to Madison in July 2004. I lived in the YWCA for almost 90 days before I was offered a chance to be a part of the Second Chance Apartment Project. I have been in the program for 1 year and 2 months. Since I have been in the program, I have established good relationships with friends, mentors and case workers. They have been a tremendous help in my life. I have been employed full-time in child care throughout my stay in this program and have been getting training and certifications in this field. I have also been able to pay off some things on my credit report, so I can rebuild my credit. I have received a lot of help through this program and I'm very proud of myself. I really enjoy being in this program. Thanks!



Love,

Uniqueca Johnson

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

A Community Response for Homeless Families
Madison, Wisconsin 53715
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OF THE MADISON AREA
HOSPITALITY NETWORK



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