

Summer 2021 Edition

CCH NEWS

The latest news from Citizens Concerned for the Homeless

30 Years of Service

Citizens Concerned for the Homeless, Inc. ("CCH") is blessed to have a well trained and experienced staff, participant clients who are willing to do the hard work, and a substantial list of solid community partners. With this combination of ability and resolve, CCH clients remain safe and healthy through this pandemic, always working toward their ultimate goal of permanent housing and sustainable self-sufficiency.

CCH's Grace Learning Center now features 17 classes and workshops developed to surgically remove participant barriers which have grounded them in the past. Whether taught by CCH staff or community partners, our participants — as well as the general public — receive specialized instruction not only to secure permanent housing, but tools and skill sets to return to self-sufficiency and sustain housing on a more solid foundation of behaviors and health management.

In addition to the Sand Castle Shelter, Grace Learning Center, Keys to Hope Community Resource Center and the Food Rescue Initiative programs, CCH partners with other organizations and programs to bring additional quality programs to CCH participants without duplicating services. CCH empowers its Participants to become reliable, skilled, and hardworking people who are now employed, pay taxes, live in homes they pay for and are no longer using social service resources that can be used for helping others.

Congregate living is challenging, but we power forward without closures or outbreaks while promoting structure and accountability throughout our systems. The Participants' willingness to trust our programs, its leaders, and our community helps them work through barriers and reach their goals. We are proud to serve, standing arm in arm with our partners to help people recover from the burdens they had to endure which led them to our doors in the first place. If you would like to become a part of the solution to end homelessness, see the last page for donation information. Thank you!

Jim Musial, Executive Director



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CCH FOOD RESCUE INITIATIVE

Feeding LaPorte County through Collective Impact

CCH expanded its Food Rescue Initiative program in 2020 and distributed more than one million pounds of food! This food is free to the thirty-four (34) programs with whom we collaborate in seven cities throughout LaPorte County. The partner programs have a common thread: they are either food pantries, soup kitchens or homeless shelters. They distribute this food to tens of thousands of people annually. CCH procures food from local vendors under the Feeding America nationwide effort and national programs such as the USDA Farmers to Families program, Hoosiers Feeding the Hungry and other local groups.

At the beginning of 2021, United Way approached CCH about being part of the food insecurity solution. United Way received grants to participate in two phases, the first being to purchase food from Food Bank of Northern Indiana for distribution through our network via drive through mobile pantry events. The second phase is the purchase of refrigeration/freezer equipment to help capacity building for food pantries, soup kitchens and pantries in CCH's network. We estimate the mobile pantries sponsored by Unity Way will yield another 50,000-60,000 pounds of food to the network.

The Food Insecurity Rate in LaPorte County is higher than both the state and federal rates, and it is through collaborations that we can make a difference. There is no more basic need than food, not just for better health but for survival. CCH wishes to thank the dozens of volunteers needed to facilitate each mobile pantry event, and also the volunteers (often senior citizens) who operate the kitchens, pantries and shelters we serve. Together we can make a difference to help our fellow brothers and sisters who struggle with putting food on the table to feed their families. Your contribution helps us to help them **today** and every day.



SANDCASTLE SHELTER

The long road home for 'T' and her family

Hello community and SC supporters, this is Tammy, the Operations Director here at CCH. I want to share the story of an amazing family who recently stayed with us at Sand Castle, to give you a glimpse into their life and journey, and let you know how I came to meet them.

This family of 6 came to Sand Castle in April. They had been staying in a motel for 3 months, in what seemed like an endless cycle of homelessness. T was paying over \$2,000 a month at the motel, which made it impossible to save for a security deposit and first and last month's rent to move her family into their own place. T called Sand Castle and completed the phone intake. When I called her number back the next day, there was no answer. I wanted to get this large family out of the motel room and see what we could do to help them. I tried for the next few days to reach her by phone to no avail. It was weighing heavily on my heart that I was unable to reach them. There was even a thought that came to mind that I should go to the store she was working at to find her, since employment information is always given at the time of phone intake. What a crazy thought, right? We don't normally track down people who call into the shelter. I didn't track her down, but I saw her nametag a couple of weeks later when I was shopping. I took a chance and asked her if she was the one who called us and if she was still in need. She said yes, and that she only had enough money to stay one more night at the motel. We made an appointment the next day to bring the family in.

During the meeting, HealthLinc called and said she tested positive for Covid. She immediately broke down in tears, but was quickly reassured her next stay at the motel was covered and would continue to be during their quarantine period. I was also advised they were at the end of their food stamps as well, so staff and I loaded up T's car with enough food and water to get them through the next 10 days. After quarantine and negative Covid tests, the family was brought into the shelter to begin the path to self-sufficiency. T worked hard, saved money and started working through her barriers. T and her oldest daughter took classes at Grace Learning Center and the Budgeting and Self-Sufficiency class making them eligible to participate in the Housing Assistance Program, which pays for first month's rent. They both were referred to our community partner at TRIO Services to enroll for classes at Ivy Tech. Then the father of the youngest two children called T and told her to come get the kids because one of them was positive for Covid. Back into the motel they went, for the second quarantine period! It just seemed like this family could not catch a break. After more negative Covid tests, they returned to Sand Castle to continue the work they had started, continuing to save money and work on self-sufficiency.

Because of T's hard work and perseverance, she was referred to Housing Opportunities and was approved for a three-bedroom HOUSE! After a long 2 ½ months, moving day came and it was "all hands on deck" to fill the house with donated furniture, household supplies, pots, pans and dishes from the community, and a big screen TV from my sweet sister-in-law. Volunteers from Keys to Hope assisted in the move and were fed lunch prepared by GLC Program Developer, Erica Morse, with food provided by CCH's Food Rescue Initiative Program. The family was provided with brand new mattresses and box springs purchased from our friends at Captain Ed's Furniture and a CCH grant called "Floor No More." The family's kitchen was also stocked with plenty of food from the FRI Program. The kids were excited to show me their new rooms as well as the entire house, including their very own back yard! This was the culmination of a lot of hard work and effort by our participant as well as staff. It was an exhausting day all around, and I wouldn't have missed it for anything in the world! T, we are so proud of you and wish many years of success and happiness for you and your family. T, you've come a long way and DESERVE every single blessing you have been given!



GRACE LEARNING CENTER

The story of 'J': from the streets to the sleeper cab

'J' came to CCH/Keys to Hope in February of 2021. After a few bad investments during the COVID-19 pandemic stripped him of financial security, his vehicle broke down in Michigan City, and he suddenly found himself homeless and in need of assistance. 'J' had a very specific dream: to become a truck driver and live on the open road. Becoming a trucker would allow 'J' to have the stability of a home in a sleeper cab, if he could only get his Commercial Driver's License (CDL).

Grace Learning Center's Program Developer, Erica Morse, requested to work directly with 'J' to make this dream a reality. With the assistance of Brian Lee from the Ivy Tech/DRIVECO CDL Learning Center in LaPorte, they found a state grant to fund 'J's immediate entry and participation into an expedited four-week driving course.

Without transportation, 'J' was going to have a difficult time traveling back and forth to LaPorte five days per week for his training. Thanks to our community partner, Lindsey Patty from Swanson Center's PATH program, a bicycle was donated for 'J' to ride every day. On rainy days, the PATH coordinators drove him to the school, and he utilized the Triangle Transit bus system to ride back to Michigan City.

In June 2021, 'J' graduated with his Class A CDL. When he showed up with certificate in hand, it was a tearful celebration. Within two days, he received an offer from a nationwide trucking company that included a \$5,000 signing bonus. The following day, our staff met with him to take photos and give tearful 'goodbyes', as he boarded a plane to Wisconsin to begin his company training. The day he went on the road, 'J' sent us a photo of his 'new home': a full sleeper cab that will ensure he is never homeless again. Other CCH clients are now inspired by his quick success and have expressed interest in obtaining their CDL as well. With a nationwide trucking shortage, GLC is now exploring the possibility of expanding this idea into a program to take persons experiencing homelessness—without substance abuse issues—and training them to become over-the-road truck drivers.



On June 14th, 2021, Horizon Bank made a generous donation of \$300 to Grace Learning Center for the purpose of 'furthering educational programs.' The check was presented by Lewis Scott, Vice-President, Senior Community Development Officer. Horizon Bank sponsors the Financial Literacy/Money\$mart class at GLC, along with offering the 'Fresh Start' checking account to those with past financial challenges.

Featured left to right: Lewis Scott, Horizon Bank; Erica Morse, GLC Program Developer; Jim Musial, CCH Executive Director.

KEYS TO HOPE

The Journey of 'ST': a homeless veteran

There is a major problem that needs to be addressed within the United States, and that is the plight of our homeless veterans. The top photo is prominently displayed on the Keys to Hope wall; visitors are greeted with this plaque upon entry.

The

second photo is but one example of what happens when an Armed Services Veteran takes advantage of the Citizens Concerned for the Homeless programs.

'ST' came to KTH in August of 2020, major physical and mental health barriers having wrecked his quality of life. Although there was strong family support, he was unable to maintain housing, and found himself with nowhere else to turn.

In desperation, he accepted our case management plan, which included a strong self-help program. Here, you see the picture of his success, which he proudly displays with an "Oorah"!



From homeless to housing in sixty days: the story of 'TS'

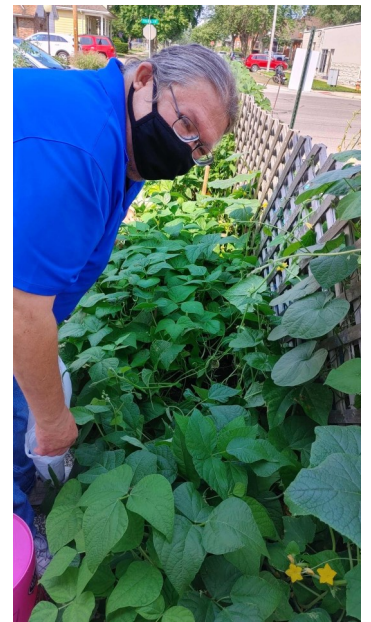
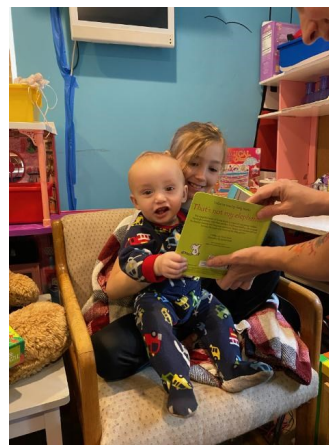
To be homeless, and to not have yet reached 30 years of age has become more prevalent throughout recent years. In our youth, many have made a few poor choices; for most, the consequences are minimal and valuable lessons are learned. For others, the outcome is much more severe, the result being institutional living. However, with the CCH Collective Impact model, the most resistant of barriers are not as difficult to overcome with a team of advocates on one's side.

TS paints the perfect picture of a 360-degree change.

When he first entered Keys to Hope, TS had already lived a hard life for his age. Impacted by the effects of street behaviors and living, his outlook for success was bleak. However, he hit the ground running, and within a week had obtained permanent, full-time employment. Sixty days later, an apartment was secured, with a brighter prospect for the future.



CCH IN ACTION



CONTACT US

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Erica Morse, Program Developer

HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

In late 2019, CCH partnered with local non-profit Homeward Bound, Inc. to form CCH's Housing Assistance Program. With a very generous donation from the Huizenga Foundation, CCH is able to graduate participants to permanent housing with help in the way of first month's rent. This is accomplished as our participants work the case management program established for them and if they achieve the following three primary goals. First, they must have sustainable income to pay their rent. Second, they must save enough to pay their security deposit and all utility deposits. Finally, they must complete a three hour Self-Sufficiency Workshop. All three preconditions must occur to qualify.

AGENCY WISH LIST

Paper Products:

Bathroom tissue
Paper towels
Kleenex
Plastic storage bags
Aluminum foil
Plastic wrap
Kitchen garbage bags (Tall-13 gallon)
School supplies for all ages

Cleaning Supplies:

Disinfectant wipes/spray
Multipurpose cleaner
Bathroom cleaner
Furniture polish
Glass cleaner

Baby Products:

Diapers, all sizes
New bottles
Wipes
Lotion/powder
Sippy cups

Furniture:

All types of household furniture
(Please call for appointment)

Laundry Supplies:

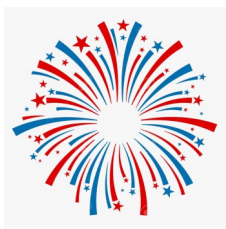
Laundry detergent
Bleach

Gift Cards:

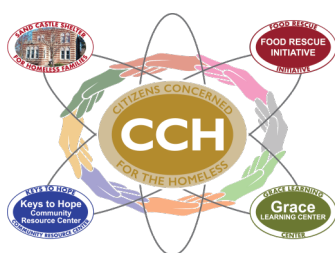
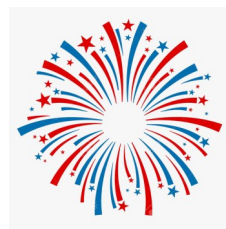
Walmart
Meijer
Lowes
Menards
Gas cards

Household Supplies:

Silverware
Dishes: bowls, plates
Coffee Pots
Crock Pots
Toasters
Kitchen towels/wash cloths
Pots and pans
Glasses/cups
Mops/brooms



30 Years of Service



Citizens Concerned for the Homeless, Inc.

Sand Castle Shelter for Homeless Families,
Grace Learning Center, Keys to Hope Community

Resource Center

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30 Years of Service

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