

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

BEDS Plus Care helps vulnerable individuals stabilize their lives through housing and supportive services.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

**SOUP
AND
BREAD EVENT**
BENEFITING BEDS PLUS

**8th Annual
Soup & Bread
Fundraiser**

**Sunday,
January 26, 2020**

William Tell Banquets
in Countryside

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for updates.*

Board Message: *from Isabel Martinez Noth*



Isabel Martinez Noth
Chair, Program Committee

Four years ago, my husband Hendrick, our children Martin and Lucas, and I had just moved to Western Springs and were looking for a way to make a difference in our new community. We started attending Emmanuel Episcopal Church of La Grange, one of BEDS' Emergency Overnight Homeless Shelter sites. People struggled to remain in or find housing in our former community, so I was not surprised to see them here, too. But I was impressed by how BEDS approached the problem and people affected by homelessness.

I met with Executive Director Tina Rounds, who explained that BEDS was turning to evidence-based practices to reduce and end homelessness. Human services strategies proven by two or more studies to have better outcomes than traditional models are designated as evidence-based practices.

BEDS commitment to these practices compelled me to volunteer and, ultimately, join the Board of Directors. Since that time, BEDS has grown and maintained a commitment to evidence-based practices in service delivery. For example, construction of Ogden Avenue Supportive Housing, acquisition of scattered site Permanent Supportive Housing units, tripling the number of case managers on staff, and, most recently, hiring a Clinical Director, Shannon Goad. She will substantially strengthen our capacity to help people manage their healthcare and mental healthcare needs.

If you have experience in mental health and addictions counseling, employment case management and chronic health management, I encourage you to volunteer on our Program Committee, which works closely with the BEDS case management team to determine how to best help our clients.

Thank you so much for your support.

Isabel Martinez Noth has a PhD in public health and chairs the BEDS Program Committee, which monitors program outcomes and develops responses to shifts in client demographics and need.

BEDS Supportive Housing Expands Units, Clients Housed

BEDS began delivering Permanent Supportive Housing services in 2016. We reach some of the most vulnerable people in our communities, and I want to share a little about them.

Chronic Homelessness

Permanent supportive housing is for people experiencing chronic homelessness, defined as:

[Having] experienced homelessness for at least a year – or repeatedly – while struggling with a disabling condition such as a serious mental illness, substance use disorder, or physical disability.

These conditions caused them to lose their homes, have been made worse by homelessness, and prevent them from regaining stable housing.

BEDS Supportive Housing

Permanent supportive housing programs must be in community housing, provide indefinite stays for residents, and provide case management, healthcare, and social services to help clients



live independently. Every day, we see the difference this program makes. Twenty formerly homeless residents live in their own studio apartments at our Ogden Avenue Supportive Housing facility. While the building at 9601 Ogden in La Grange is our most visible supportive housing, we also have 60 scattered housing apartments spread throughout our communities. We recently acquired a new building in our territory that adds 13 units to our supportive housing inventory.

I'm privileged to lead this service and see clients recover and thrive. Your support drives this proven approach to bringing people who have been chronically homeless back home.



Javon Harris

Director of Supportive Housing



55 Lives Transformed, Thanks to Supportive Housing

Last year, 55 chronically homeless men, women and children moved into permanent supportive housing. One was Richard Bell.

Bell was homeless and down on his luck before he found BEDS. For years, he lived on the streets. He sought help from another program but wasn't able to find a home.

“You can work hard all your life and never realize what you got until it's gone,” Richard said.”

Life on the streets was filled with worry — worries about where to go during bad weather, worries about

his safety, worries about the future. But life changed for Richard when he found BEDS. He was able to get off the streets and into permanent housing.

At BEDS, it is our mission to help vulnerable individuals such as Richard stabilize their lives through housing and supportive services because everyone deserves a home.

“Been on the streets for a long time. I was in another program. For years, they didn't help me,” Richard said. “BEDS did.”



Read the full stories online at www.beds-plus.org/fall-2019-newsletter

Volunteer Spotlight:

Jean Mirabelli

How long have you volunteered at BEDS?

Jean: I have been a BEDS volunteer for the past year and a half, working Tuesdays in the fall and winter from 11 p.m. to 3 a.m. at Wesleyan Community Church in Oak Lawn and one Friday night per month at St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church in Worth. In the summer, I help serve dinner on Friday at St. Mark.

What is the one thing people most misunderstand about homelessness?

Jean: The people in the BEDS program are individuals. I think many people lump all the homeless in one unappealing group or ignore them. Every civilization and religion advocates helping those who are less



fortunate. There are many reasons why someone finds themselves in a desperate situation, and I've seen it first hand.

What would you tell other people about volunteering for BEDS?

Jean: I'm afraid I don't have the eloquence to describe the sheer joy of volunteering! I can say, by volunteering at BEDS, one can feel they are being part of the family of humankind.

After a Fire, BEDS Was There to Help Displaced Families



On December 30, 2018, a fire consumed three apartment buildings in Justice, Illinois, instantly rendering dozens of households homeless. Twenty-nine families turned to BEDS. Now, all have been rehoused, thanks to the tenacious dedication of Joann Boblick, Manager of Prevention and Stabilization services.

Generous financial support from the Community Memorial Foundation, Lyons Township, Cook County Emergency Services, and generous individual donors made it possible to quickly respond to the crisis. Pillars Community Health assisted with medical and mental health care for members of the displaced households.

Within the first week of learning of the fire, Joann and others were meeting with the 29 families. Their 43 members included infants, the elderly, veterans, and people with chronic health conditions. These families had little to no income and lacked savings to cope with the crisis. Most were receiving Medicaid and food stamps and managing to get by, month to month.

While a handful of families located housing in new areas closer to family, most have been rehoused within Justice, which they consider home.

Staff Spotlight:

Max Eckardt Reflects on his Intern Experience



Student workers at BEDS explore a human services career while providing essential program support to the agency. Max joined the BEDS team for the summer of 2019 through the Tyson Foods Summer Community Internship Program.

Over the last three months at BEDS, I have learned and accomplished a lot. I was hired as the Tyson Foods summer intern, so my role focused on food, which is a serious need for the people we serve. Even the clients who we get housed are very low income and need food. I helped collect food from restaurants and stores for clients in shelters, daytime support centers, and housing programs.

Clients often share how lost they would be without our assistance. Homelessness can happen suddenly, but I have seen how positive changes can happen almost as quickly, whether they're getting people off the streets into shelters, getting people out of shelters into homes, or even keeping people in their homes in the first place.

Finally, it was amazing to see the work of volunteers across the organization. I'm glad that I was able to join them in a small way to help BEDS reduce and end homelessness.

Internships are available year-round at BEDS Plus. Contact Erin Molek at molek@beds-plus.org to learn more.



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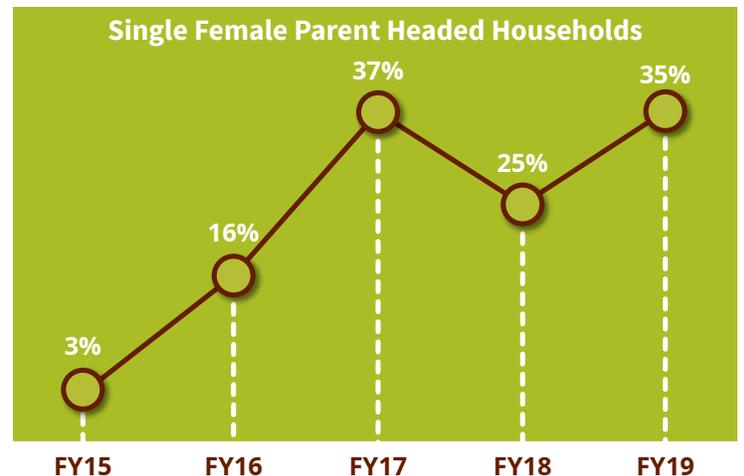
“Volunteering is your chance to really make a difference.”

Tony, a former board member, and his wife Tess Bezouska have been shelter volunteers for the 30 years that BEDS has offered shelter. Read more at www.beds-plus.org/fall-2019-newsletter



Who does BEDS help?

In fiscal year 2019, most BEDS clients were female (35%), the first time since 2016 — which was the first time in BEDS history that the agency served more female than male clients of any age. Much of this figure can be attributed to an increase in households headed by single female parents. BEDS Homeless Prevention & Stabilization services comprise many of these families.



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