

SUMMER 2015 VOLUME 4, ISSUE 1

Partners Welcomes a new Executive Director



"Hello! I'd like to take a moment and introduce myself! I'm Deb Newman, Partners for Affordable Housing's new Executive Director."

I join the organization with over 20 years of business experience working for companies such as Target, Caterpillar, and Taylor Corporation; most recently serving in the capacity of Vice President of Human Resources. Throughout my career, I have tried to be active within the community. I have had an opportunity to serve on the Board of Directors for the Greater Mankato Area United Way and Junior Achievement organizations and have participated on several Community Impact teams for the United Way, focusing on the needs within the Greater Mankato area, including the Nurturing Children and Youth and Emergency Services boards. I was the Co-Chair for the inaugural Women with Heart event and in 2012, was named United Way's Volunteer of the Year. I am currently serving on the YMCA's Personnel committee.

Last year, as a member of the United Way's Emergency Services Community Impact Team, I had the opportunity to hear Carrol Meyers-Dobler speak about the plight of homelessness within our community. I was surprised to learn how many people are turned away because of lack of shelter space but was hopeful when I heard Partners was looking at options to address this issue with a new, larger facility to help those in need. As a kid, my family was displaced due to a fire that destroyed our home and we became homeless. I am thankful for the good people who helped us in our time of need, but being homeless even for a short while is unsettling – for both parents and children.

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Proud to be a United Way Agency

The face of homelessness has changed. The individuals we serve are women, children and intact families. For every one person we serve today, we often have to turn away five. Being a part of Partners, I'm looking forward to working with the board of directors and community leaders about the prospect of bringing a larger shelter to our community. A lot of foundational work will need to be done and with these types of endeavors, we will need help from the giving people of Mankato to bring this new shelter to fruition.

Our mission at Partners is to help people secure long-term affordable housing. I'm proud to be a part of this dedicated team who helps offer a safe and nurturing respite to those in our community who suddenly find themselves with no other place to go. Additionally, Partners transitional housing program provides assistance to allow individuals to properly house themselves and their families in comfort and safety without disproportionately depleting the already stretched finances of the poor and homeless.

If you'd like to volunteer or donate to Partners for Affordable Housing, please contact us at 507-387-2115.



Carrol Meyers-Dobler Retires

After three years with Partners for Affordable Housing, Carrol Meyers-Dobler retired on April 15, 2015 to become a full-time Grandma! With Carrol's leadership, the Partners for Affordable Housing have been the recipients of foundation grants to assist with the rehab work of its properties. In addition, Carrol established a great annual fundraising event with Pedal Past Poverty. After three years, the fundraiser has raised almost \$240,000 for the organization. We want to wish Carrol all the best in retirement!!

We're about to get more active!



On social media, that is! Liz Zaruba has recently joined the Partners for Affordable Housing team as our Communications and Volunteer Coordinator. She takes on the role of working with all our amazing volunteers, planning our upcoming Pedal Past Poverty event in February

and of course, making sure the community knows all about Partners for Affordable Housing and the services we offer.

Liz grew up and graduated from Lake Crystal, Minnesota. She went to college at Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa, where she met her husband. She has spent the last 7 years living in Iowa, moving around a lot of working a variety of jobs. Liz worked as an Account Resolution Specialist, an Admissions Counselor and has done marketing for a few businesses, including a seed company, a nursing home and a tractor dealership.

Coming back to the Mankato area was an easy decision for Liz, her husband, Austin and their two year old son, Jacob, where they have many family and friends. Liz is very excited as she starts with Partners for Affordable Housing and helping work towards this great cause. There is much to do, so if you'd like to volunteer or donate in any way, please email Liz at lizzaruba.pah@enventis.net or give her a call at 507-387-2115.

Onnie's on the Move



We are pleased to share that **Onnie Brodkorb** has accepted the role of Shelter Manager for the Theresa House and Welcome Inn. Onnie previously held the Director of Volunteer Services role within Partners for Affordable Housing for the last two years. In this role, Onnie was

responsible for overseeing and growing our volunteer program, in-kind donations, and assisted with fund development activities.

Prior to joining Partners, Onnie worked as the Co-Coordinator for Children's Ministry at Messiah Lutheran Church. In her position, she recruited, orientated, supported and directed volunteers desirous of working with children. She also worked with others to build financial support for the youth groups' mission travels and Kids Against Hunger ministries. Onnie enjoys traveling, cheering on the MN Twins and watching 90's cartoons.

Please join us in congratulating Onnie on this new opportunity!!

Raw Fusion

The Minnesota River Builders Association hosted its fifth installment of Raw Fusion on May 8. Raw Fusion is an abstract, creative fashion show of costumes made of raw materials. Thirty one models took to the runaway with DYI and HGTV's Amy Matthews serving as hostess for the event. Each year, the MRBA chooses a beneficiary organization to donate part of the proceeds to. This year, Partners for Affordable Housing was lucky enough to be chosen by the builders association.

Maria FitzSimmons, a PAH Social Worker, served as our model. She wore a gown made of numerous materials including keys, wire, old t-shirts and T-vex house wrap. The gown portrayed the story of someone who was homeless and then finds a home. A team of creative volunteers helped design and construct the gown. On June 25th, the PAH team was presented with a \$17,500 check from the MN River Builders Association. A special thank you goes out to Ann Rosenquist Fee, Malia Wiley, Donny Gettinger, Jennifer Taylor, Carrol Myers-Dobler and Barb Dombrovski for their help in bringing our gown to life.





Giving Back and Making a Difference

Partners for Affordable Housing would not be able to do what it does without the help and donations from the great citizens around the Mankato community. From monetary donations to volunteering services, as a non-profit we rely heavily on the support of this network of people.

We'd like to take a moment to spotlight **United Prairie Bank** for their ongoing support of Partners for Affordable Housing. The United Prairie Bank system has deep roots in rural Minnesota and is locally owned by the Sneer family: James and Susan, Stuart and Ann, and Jennifer Johnson. The organization was formed in 1973 and has a strong emphasis in superior customer service, financial integrity and community involvement. Building a strong tradition of charitable giving and donating of their time are just two key values that are embodied by the employees and leaders at United Prairie.

United Prairie Bank's employees have been participating in a Denim for Dollars program. Each Friday, employees can pay five (\$5) dollars to wear jeans with their logo-wear shirts. Once the team has raised a targeted dollar amount, the corporate office will match half of all monies raised. Partners has been lucky enough to be the recipient of this on-going fundraiser since 2010 and in the last three years have raised over \$16,000!!

In addition, since the inception of our New Beginnings class that is attended by all of our shelter guests, members of the United Prairie Bank team have helped teach the financial acumen portion of our three part training. Three times a year, their team members are teaching financial acumen classes highlighting successful money management, understanding consumer credit, and reinforcing strong budgeting techniques.

We are also thankful for the leadership support of Doug Lago, Market President for his ongoing guidance on our Partners' Board of Directors. We want to express profound gratitude to Scott Bradley, Chief Executive Officer and the entire team at United Prairie Bank for their generous support to our cause. We appreciate their commitment to giving back to our community.



Grade School Philanthropist



Alexandra Heuss is proof that philanthropy has no age barrier. Two years ago at the encouragement of her parents, Alex, a fourth grader from a nearby community researched different organizations that may need some type of assistance. Eventually, she came across Partners for Affordable Housing. Alex toured the Theresa House and learned that many of the guests we serve are young children. She decided she was going to help in some way!! So, each week she set aside money out of her allowance to help buy items for her shoe box welcome packages. In addition to her allowance, Alex and her younger sister Maddy make jewelry and crafts that they sell at local events. Some of the money raised has helped Alex with her shoe box items. For the last two holidays, Alex has assembled boxes for young boys and girls with different toys, games, coloring books and crayons. She also assembles boxes with jewelry, colognes, books and games for older children. When young guests arrive at the shelter, they are given a welcome pack donated by Alex!! In her first year she donated over 300 books to the after school program and last year she provided 59 new hats and mittens. Now in her third year, Alex says she pays attention all year round for different types of toys or trinkets that could be added to her welcome boxes! We can't thank Alex enough for her thoughtfulness and the reminder that at any age, one person can make a difference!!

Partners benefits from Refresh Leadership Conference



Express Employment Professionals recently hosted the 2015 Refresh Leadership Conference at Minnesota State University Mankato. Leaders from throughout the area were invited to attend this video conference from a variety of host cities from around the US. Grant Moody, owner and CEO of Mankato's Express Employment Professionals branch approached Partners for Affordable Housing about wanting to partner with us and give back in some manner to the community. Because of this, Grant and his team were able to donate over \$3500 to PAH!!!

Express brought a distinguished lineup of inspirational speakers, each specifically chosen for their proven expertise and extraordinary accomplishments.

The 2015 speakers were:

- Liz Murray from Homeless to Harvard
- Daymond John from ABC'S Shark Tank
- Dan Aykroyd from Ghostbusters

This year's speaker, Liz Murray is directly connected to the plight of homelessness. Liz Murray is an author of Breaking Night, a stunning memoir of a young woman who at age fifteen was living on the streets of New York and who eventually made it into Harvard University. Liz completed high school and won a New York Times scholarship while homeless. She graduated from Harvard in 2009. She has been awarded the White House Project Role Model Award. A Christopher Award established by Father James Keller to salute media that "affirm the highest values of the human spirit." Their goal is to encourage men, women and children to pursue excellence in creative arenas that have the potential to influence a mass audience positively, as well as the Chutzpah Award which was given to her by Oprah Winfrey.

A special thank you goes out to Grant Moody and his team at Express Employment Professionals for supporting our worthy cause.

Property Updates



Several projects have been completed at our shelters - the Theresa House and Welcome Inn. They have been made possible through the City of Mankato's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. The CDBG program is a flexible program that provides communities with resources

to address a wide range of unique community development needs. Beginning in 1974, the CDBG program is one of the longest continuously run programs at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

At the Theresa House, the kitchen on the main floor has been updated with new cabinets and countertops along with new flooring in the kitchen and the shared living room of the shelter. We also had tuck pointing and new basement windows installed and a new entrance door for the upstairs apartment.

At the Welcome Inn, the upstairs kitchen has been remodeled with new cabinets, countertops, and flooring. In addition, the upstairs bathroom has been rehabilitated with a new toilet, vanity and some much needed wall repair! Drive by the Welcome Inn on South Broad Street and you will see our permanent siding! The unique and historical aspects of the home's peaks have remained intact. We have replaced the handicap ramp in the back of the building along with new front entrance doors.

Another project recently completed was the rehab at our Liberty Street apartment complex. This rehab includes replacing all the bathroom vanities and flooring, along with new electric heaters in the bathrooms. For outside enjoyment, a new back deck was put in for our tenants. Basement windows have also been updated and new lighting has been put in the halls and entrances of the building.

In addition to CDBG funds, Partners was awarded a \$5,000 grant from the Enventis Community Fund of the Mankato Area Foundation. This grant, received in March, allowed us to remodel the kitchen in our Theresa House upstairs apartment. The remodel included new flooring, new countertops and a fresh coat of paint to the cabinets. Thank you to Enventis for this generous grant!

In March, we experienced a fire at our Omalee apartment complex. Thankfully, everyone was safe but the fire completely destroyed one of the apartments along with extensive smoke and soot damage to the building. Work has been completed to remodel the unit that was destroyed by the fire and the apartment directly below, due to water damage. All units except one have been painted, along with the hallway.

We are excited to see the work completed on our buildings. It has been a much needed refresh for our shelters! With all the rehab and remodeling projects, we are also well underway with our regular lawn mowing and clean-up efforts at ten properties. One area we continue to explore is a "green space" in the back of our shelters for our guests. If you or a team of volunteers are looking for project related work or would like to donate to this need, please contact our main office at 507-387-2115.

From the President *Membership Makes a Difference* **Mark Piepho, President**



One of the easiest ways individuals can help those in need within our community is to become a member of "Friends of PAH". Why is this important? While we receive approximately 60% of our funding from government and corporate grants, we rely on donations to provide the matching funds required in order to receive those grants. We could not carry out our missions of providing shelter for homeless families and individuals without it.

How would your donation help? Our team at PAH works diligently to provide a stable and safe environment for those experiencing a temporary housing crisis in our community. Our shelters are staffed 24/7 with trained staff and social workers who provide supportive services such as life skills training, resource connections, transportation, and assistance in finding safe and affordable permanent housing. Your donation would help pay the utilities that keep our shelters warm in the winter and cool in the summer. Your non-cash donation of gently used furniture and household goods stock our "Free Store" that our clients are welcome to "shop" in when they do transition out of the shelter and into a home.

If you are already a member of PAH, thank you. If not, please visit www.partnersforhousing.org to submit your membership online or call Liz at 507-387-2115. Please spread the word to your family and friends. Share with them the important work we do, urge them to check us out and encourage them to join. More members equals more direct assistance to families in our local community who are in desperate need of temporary shelter.

Help us go green!

Help Partners for Affordable Housing go green as we try to reduce the amount of paper we print. If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically, please email lizzaruba.pah@enventis.net. All you need to do is put "E-Newsletter" in the subject line, then include your name and address we're currently sending the newsletter to and you'll be good to go! You can also call Liz at 507-387-211, ext 4 and make the switch that way! Thank you for helping us get a little greener!

Have you 'liked' us yet?

We plan to start increasing our presence on social media. Like us on Facebook (facebook.com/partnersforaffordablehousing) or follow us on Twitter (@PAHMankato) to stay up to date with everything happening at Partners for Affordable Housing! See who's been volunteering and look for ways you can help as well!

And stay connected – if you're volunteering, donating items or visiting us, be sure to tag us or use the hashtag: #PAHIfe





Pedal Past Poverty Nets \$84,700



Pedal Past Poverty 2015 is in the books and it was a huge success! Fifty-two teams of ten people each filled the YMCA blue gym. Awesome tunes from Radio Mankato, spurred on riders as they took turns riding as far as possible in 20 minutes. Our 3rd annual Pedal Past Poverty netted more than \$84,700 in profits to benefit Welcome Inn & Theresa House homeless shelters.

Crazy costumes such as hotdogs, 80's rock stars, chickens, moose, and construction workers created a circus

atmosphere that was tons of fun! Thousands of dollars' worth of prizes donated by local businesses were awarded to those who rode the furthest and given randomly throughout the day. Thank you to all of the teams who helped make this event a success! See you in 2016!

The new larger location was a hit with riders and gave us plenty of space to cheer each other on! At the end of the race, prizes were awarded for Most Creative Team: Pedal Now – Wine Later! And for Most Spirited Team: Slow Spokes.

A special shout-out to Sister Rose Anthony Krebs who raised an impressive \$4,195 for Pedal Past Poverty! Thank you!

SAVE THE DATE

The 4th Annual Pedal Past Poverty will be *February 27, 2016!* Mark your calendars and gather your team!

For more pictures of this year's event and race results, visit www.partnersforhousing.org/pedal



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Thank you to another 775 individuals and companies that donated to this event!

To view all contributors, please visit www.partnersforhousing.org/pedal

Partners for Affordable Housing Donors Thank You!

The following is a list of all donors who gave a cash gift between October 2014 and June 2015. If your name or business has been omitted from this list, or we have a typographical error, please let us know. We are extremely grateful to those who have chosen to support our work.

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We send a huge thank you to all the monthly supporters of Partners for Affordable Housing. Your faithful gift ensures a comfortable place for the homeless of our area. God bless you; from the guests, board and director of Partners for Affordable Housing. PAH Central Office 151 Good Counsel Drive, Suite 130 Mankato, MN 56001

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Summer 2015 Newsletter

PARTNERS 3 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Partners for Affordable Housing provides shelter for homeless families and individuals, and helps them to secure economically viable long-term housing.

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New Faces in New Places



Aubrey Corona: I am an Alcohol and Drug Studies major at MSU with a minor in Social Welfare. It is close to my heart as many of my loved ones have conquered addiction. I work at PAH because I am well aware of the correlations between substance abuse and crisis and I want to be a positive support for those trying to renew their life from past struggles.



Krista Brandt: I recently graduated from MNSU with a degree in Child Development/Family Services and a double minor in Child & Adolescent Psychology. I love the outdoors and being active: hiking, kayaking, biking, you name it. I love peanut butter! I work at PAH because I am passionate about serving the homeless population and connecting them within the community. And the staff is the bomb!



Brittany Wojtowicz: I just graduated from MSU-Mankato with my masters in Social Work. I'm also working part time at the Committee Against Domestic Abuse. I work at PAH because I believe in the mission and enjoy the people I meet.