



connections
FOR THE HOMELESS



MILESTONE CELEBRATION

A Reflection of Our Core Values in Action

Wednesday, October 26th

Doors open at 5:30, event from 6-7pm
Unitarian Church of Evanston

MISSION & VISION

Connections serves and catalyzes our community to end homelessness, one person at a time.

In support of our mission, we operate using the following Core Values to guide our interactions between participants, colleagues, and our community.

Equity and Inclusion • Community • Transparency
Generosity of Spirit • Resilience

NEXT MILESTONE

January of 2023

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In Memoriam

Sam Houston

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George Murray

Chris L., Drop-in Participant

Honored by Ayanna Brown, Supportive Housing Case Manager

We are honoring Chris for his resilience, generosity of spirit, and sense of community. When Chris moved back to Chicago from Georgia a few years ago, he found himself without a place to live. He visited Connections drop-in and was able to start the process to getting housed. While homeless, Chris slept on the train and then eventually in a tent. After a year of waiting, he was able to move into an apartment in Maywood.

Scott G., Drop-in Participant

Honored by Ayanna Brown, Supportive Housing Case Manager

We are honoring Scott tonight for his transparency, resilience, and generosity of spirit. He is soft spoken with a big smile. He has a lot of interests, including history and science. He even has his own blog. He was matched with supportive housing in March of 2022.

Joshua T., Former Drop-in Participant

Honored by Brittany Simons, Behavioral Health Specialist

We honor Joshua tonight for his generosity of spirit and resilience. He was struggling to find employment and stable housing when he came to Connections about 1.5 years ago. Joshua says that when he began working with Connections, great things started happening for him. Since being matched to Rapid Rehousing and settling in his apartment, Joshua has enrolled in school for audio engineering and has also found a stable job. Joshua has been highly motivated to reach his goals and has overcome a lot of obstacles to get where he is today. Despite what he has gone through, you will usually find him with a smile on his face and a willingness to help those around him.

Timothy J., Shelter Resident

Honored by Alaina Slempek, Community Health RN

We honor Timothy for his resilience. When Timothy was homeless, he was continually in and out of the hospital and at one point was admitted to a nursing home. Once he was able to move into the Margarita Inn in April 2022, he has managed his health care needs with resilience and hard work. He has been staying out of the hospital for months at a time and dealing with most issues on an outpatient basis. He is truly an example of how the stability of being housed is necessary to improve one's health.

Clarence D., Shelter Resident

Honored by Maria Ynot, Shelter Case Manager

We honor Clarence for his transparency and resilience. After learning about Connections through a family member, Clarence visited Hilda's Place drop-in and eventually was able to move into the Margarita Inn. Since then, he has been very proactive in his search for both housing and employment. He says that living in the shelter has provided him the help he needed to gain stability. He was recently offered a security position at Northwestern University and is working through their training program.

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Jack F., Former Drop-in Participant

Honored by Jamie Harris, Drop-in Supervisor

We are happy to honor Jack for his generosity of spirit, community, transparency, and resilience. When he was homeless, he was bouncing between sleeping at a friend or relative's house and sometimes resorting to sleeping on the train. He kept showing up at drop in and didn't give up on his goal of finding housing. He recently accomplished that goal and is housed. He credits God and the angels that work at Connections.!

Carrie D., Former Shelter Resident

Honored by Molly Bartholomew, Behavioral Health Specialist

We are honoring Carrie tonight for her resilience and her sense of community. She has been a great self-advocate, connecting and following through with important resources for both housing and health. She recently gave up drinking soda and is making some other important lifestyle changes. She has been very flexible during a long and complicated housing journey. She was also recently hired for a new job

Unitarian Church of Evanston, Community

Partners

Honored by Connections' Staff

UCE is a longtime partner of Connections for the Homeless and a perfect example of what it looks like when our community comes together to end homelessness. Here are some of the ways they partner with us. They sponsor hundreds of wish lists during the holiday season and supply thousands of sack lunches to our drop-in centers and shelter. They have logged many volunteer hours sorting donations and researching and developing a tenant training curriculum for our advocacy program. In addition, we have received generous grant support from the Endowment Committee for our food, housing, and youth programs. As you can see, I think it's safe to say UCE is involved in every part of our work.

Cake4Kids, Community Partners

Honored by Julissa Flores-Singh, Housing Programs Manager

Cake4Kids delivers smiles to foster children and at-risk youth by baking and delivering birthday and other special occasion cakes. The purpose of the organization is to show love to all and to raise a child's self-esteem with a seemingly simple gift on their special day. Our Housing team partnered with Cake4Kids to provide our families with birthday and graduation cakes. Many of the families we serve are living paycheck to paycheck, struggling to meet basic needs, are low-income, survivors of domestic violence, refugees, etc. Therefore, buying a birthday or graduation cake and celebrating a special moment for a child is not always feasible. By providing these cakes, Cake4kids is showing great compassion, acknowledgement, and support for our participants.

Patty O'Neill-Cynkar, Volunteer Award

Honored by Felicia Brown, Rapid Rehousing Case Manager

Patty has been a dedicated and regular volunteer at the Dewey drop in since March of 2019. She enjoys interacting with the participants, helping them find what they need, and hopefully brightening their day.

Daisy B., Housing Programs Participant Approved per Daisy Honored by Morgan Saunders, Case Manager Youth Services

We are happy to honor Daisy for her resilience. Ever since Daisy was referred to Connections Youth Services program, she has been making great strides to improve her life. She is currently working to save money and has started a three-month IT training program. She feels the staff at Connections has provided the support she needed to take these positive steps.

Debra H., Housing Programs Participant Honored by Julissa Flores-Singh, Housing Programs Manager

We honor Debra for her generosity of spirit and her resilience. She recently ended a short-term program with the YWCA and has been in our housing program for the past year. Debra always has a positive attitude and consistently advocates for herself. She appreciates the ongoing support she receives from Connections and would like to be able to give back through volunteering at the drop-in centers.

Jerry K., Housing Programs Participant Approved per Allison Honored by Allison Keller, Rapid Rehousing Case Manager

We honor Jerry for his generosity of spirit and his resilience. He was a participant in Rapid Rehousing from 2020 to 2021 and since then he has been focusing on his well-being. He has worked on his personal goals and on gaining stability. Just recently, he signed a new lease for a permanent subsidy!

Tiffany C., Housing Programs Participant Honored by Johnique Smith, TBRA Case Manager

We are happy to honor Tiffany for her resilience and generosity of spirit. While Tiffany was in the TBRA program, she worked hard to achieve her goals. She is very dedicated to her family and she is no stranger to hard work. Her end goal is to remain housed and she is steadfast in doing everything in her power to make that happen.

Grace G., Housing Programs Participant Honored by Monica Vanover, Supportive Housing Case Manager

We honor Grace for her generosity of spirit and community. For over 20 years, Grace has been volunteering at her church every Saturday. She works at the drop-in center for people experiencing homelessness. She became homeless herself when she was put out of her apartment and didn't have enough money for a security deposit. She was referred to Connections and we were able to help her find stable housing again. Grace is a strong believer in helping others and in treating all people with dignity and respect.

Staff Honoree

Julissa Flores-Singh, Housing Programs Manager

Julissa started with Connections in May of 2020 and she hit the ground running! She has proven to be organized, goal focused and at the same time empathic in everything she does. Julissa has a solid grounding in all of the core values, which are generosity of spirit, transparency, resilience, equity and inclusion, and community! She and her team built up the Rapid Rehousing program from 10 to 100 units in just a few months and was able to develop so many new landlord relationships. At the same time, she was training new staff and dealing with a lot of turnover. Julissa does her job with so much heart, always keeping a caseload herself so she has a perspective on the work her team does and helping in some of the most difficult situations with zest. She has moved mountains for participants and helped us build up our work with the Chicago Furniture Bank, Statewide Referral Network, YWCA, and Housing Authority of Cook County. In addition, Julissa is always there to use her bilingual skills to help our Spanish speaking participants making sure our services are accessible and inclusive. We could not have done our work during the pandemic without Julissa's energy, heart, and stellar management!