

OUR HOUSE

IN FOCUS



5 YEARS OF CAFSI

Meet members of our past and present CAFSI team and hear from the families they serve.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, CAFSI!

This month, our homelessness prevention program, the Central Arkansas Family Stability Institute (CAFSI), celebrated five years of operation with a gathering of Our House staff, press, and current and former clients. In the five years since its beginnings, CAFSI has served over 1400 individuals, over 90% of which in the last three years have avoided homelessness. Today, CAFSI remains one of our most successful programs at Our House and continues to grow with the addition of a third case manager as well as its first ever national service member. We're excited to share with you a look into the beginnings of CAFSI as well as the story of one family whose life was changed for the better thanks to all their hard work!





BEGINNINGS

"CAFSI is so important because it helps empower people to meet their goals. You have families that may be exiting homelessness but still have needs. It can connect them with the tools that they need for long-term stability."

-Jessica Suitor, Former CAFSI Case Manager

One of our first CAFSI Case Managers was Jessica Suitor. She remembers the excitement and challenges of the early years of the program. In its early years, only families with children aged 4-17 were eligible and only 60 families were served by two case managers. "I remember being nervous at first, but as time went by I fell into the beat of what we needed to do to serve these families." Within the first few years of operation, CAFSI had acquired enough funding to greatly increase its capacity and expand and serve even more families. Today, Jessica is glad to see that CAFSI has grown to see so much success and that it continues to serve an even greater number of people.

WHO WE SERVE



I was in a very big mess. In some ways I am still in a mess but now there is so much hope. I am blessed to have Ruthie in my life, I am thankful for who she is.

-Promise Ekoh, CAFSI Client

Promise Ekoh and her family are one of the many served every day by our CAFSI Case Managers. Promise moved to the United States from Nigeria twelve years ago after many years of attempting to secure a green card for her and her family. However, after settling in Paragould, Arkansas she left her husband and took her children to a women's shelter in Newport before eventually making her way to Women and Children First in Little Rock, who helped her exit out of homelessness. Despite having secured a home for her and her children, Promise struggled with finding a job and fitting in with people in the country she now called home. Fearing that she may return to homelessness, she enrolled in the CAFSI program at Our House and was assigned to case manager Ruthie Hokans.

WHO WE SERVE

After enrolling in CAFSI, Promise was able to receive the resources for her and her children that she had been looking for. Through Our House, Promise also found a job as a kitchen prep worker at Club Eco Kids, an after school program in Little Rock. At her job, she helps prepare and package food to be distributed to children all over the city. Soon she will complete the CAFSI program and dreams of becoming a chef in a restaurant, something she has been passionate about for a long time.





Want to learn more
about CAFSI?
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This issue of Our House In
Focus was written by:

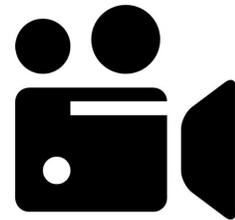


Nick Harrington
Communications VISTA



Ruthie Hokans
CAFSI Case Manager

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year celebration!



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Our House In Focus



*Special Thanks to Promise
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