



OUR HOUSE

30 Years of Growth

November 7, 2017



To commemorate Our House's 30th anniversary, we are planting 30 trees across campus to honor 30 organizations and groups of people that have been instrumental in helping Our House get where it is today.

## Our Founders

Our House was founded in 1987 by people from different backgrounds who came together address a clear need in our community. Our founders combined heartfelt service and thoughtful planning to create an organization that provided a pathway out of homelessness for those willing and able to work, an organization that met the needs of homeless families and individuals alike, and an organization that was welcoming and respectful of all.



The **Heart of Arkansas United Way** (then called United Way of Pulaski County) played an organizing role in the creation of Our House and continues to be a close partner. In 2012, the United Way made it possible for Our House to launch its first homelessness prevention program.



**Interfaith Arkansas** (then called the Arkansas Council of Churches and Synagogues) brought members of many different faith traditions together for the common purpose of helping the homeless, establishing Our House as an organization that welcomes clients and supporters from all backgrounds.



# The People We Serve

Deep respect for the people we serve has always been a cornerstone value of Our House. Our clients work tremendously hard to overcome homelessness and make a better life for themselves, and Our House strives to match that commitment, working in partnership with our clients to provide the “hand up” they need to achieve lasting independence.



3. Serving entire **families** has always been at the core of our mission, with our services evolving over the years into a dynamic “two-generation approach” that is gaining recognition as a national model. Our House served 301 families in the past year.
4. Our House serves more than 700 **individuals** each year, men and women, working hard to make a better life for themselves.
5. **Single mothers** lead 95% of the families we serve, and our services are optimized to help them meet the challenges they face in providing care for their children.
6. **Children** are important Our House clients in their own right. Our House served 558 children last year, providing quality-rated children’s programs, holistic family services, housing, and more.
7. Our House is the only program in Central Arkansas equipped to serve homeless **single fathers**.

*“Having preconceptions about what a homeless shelter is, I was relieved and impressed by the resources I have been able to utilize here. The kindness from both the staff and clients is just incredible.”*

*-Colleen Whitt-Hickman, Shelter Resident*

# A Community of Support

The broad and deep support Our House receives from people and organizations is the most important ingredient in our recipe for success.



8. **Volunteers** provide crucial support to our programs and make valuable connections with our clients. Last year 2,596 people volunteered with Our House contributing more than 14,000 hours of service.

9. **Meal serving groups**, including congregations, companies, and families, provide meals to our residents on a daily basis, a tradition that began with our founding and has grown to more than 100,000 meals served each year.

10. The generosity of **donors**, everyday people and families, is the lifeblood of Our House. Last year 1,051 families and individuals provided monetary support for our mission.



11. Our **Board of Directors**, comprised of leaders from all parts of our community, guides and supports our work.

12. **Companies** play many important roles in our work, as donors (154 companies provided monetary support in the past year), as volunteers, and as employers (291 companies provided full-time jobs to our clients in the past year).

13. Close coordination with more than 200 **partners** allows us to deepen our services to our clients.

14.

Our House receives a third of our funding from private **foundations**, 33 different foundations in the past year alone.

15.

**Landlords** in our community play a key role by providing housing to our exiting residents and homelessness prevention clients.

16.

The children we serve attend more than 40 different **schools** across four different school districts, and our close relationships with these schools and teachers help us better meet our children's needs.

17.

More than 40 **congregations**, from a broad range of faith traditions, support Our House's work as volunteers, donors, meal servers, and partners.

18.

Our House enjoys great relationships with our **neighbors** in the Pettaway Park neighborhood and surrounding areas.

Less than 25% of our funding comes from government sources, yet partnerships with public agencies and programs play important roles in our approach.

19.

The **AmeriCorps VISTA** program played an essential role in our founding, providing the original personnel that operated Our House. Today, that partnership has grown, with 18 full-time VISTAs now building capacity at Our House.

20.

Through the **AmeriCorps** program, Our House benefits from service of 18 AmeriCorps members who serve directly with the children and adults in our education and workforce programs.

21.

The **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development** has been a key funder of our housing programs for our entire 30-year history.

22.

The **City of Little Rock** has been a close partner, providing funding to launch innovative new programs such as our out-of-school-time youth program and our reentry program.

23.

The **State of Arkansas** supports our work in countless ways, including investing in the quality of our children's programs and facilitating access to state programs for our clients.



# Our Programs



Our House's programs are designed to support our mission of helping people help themselves. Our goal is to stay focused on the measurable impact of our work, collecting hard data while also listening to the people we serve to continually improve our services.

24. Our **Housing** programs provide a home for 110 people each day, helping 86% of them move up the housing ladder at exit.

25. Our **Career Center** provides job training and related services to more than 50 adults each day. Last year, the Career Center helped 520 adults find full-time jobs.

26. Our **Reentry Program** provides specialized support to help those who have been previously incarcerated to succeed in the workforce and housing. The program served 234 adults last year and helped 69% find employment.

27. **Little Learners** provides early childhood education programming of the highest quality (as rated by the State of Arkansas) for 65 children each day, helping 90% of them reach Kindergarten readiness benchmarks.

28. Our resale store, **From Our House to Yours**, operates in two locations in Little Rock and North Little Rock. It helps us manage the flow of donated goods to our clients and programs (more than \$1 million worth is donated each year), serves as a job training site for our clients, and generates revenue to support our mission.

29. **Our Club** provides out-of-school-time programming for 90 children ages 6-17 each day, helping 85% of them improve their Math and English grades.

30. The Central Arkansas Family Stability Institute, or **CAFSI**, provides case management and wrap-around services to 90 near-homeless families with children each day, helping 90% of them avoid homelessness while increasing their total household income by an average of 77% over 12 months.

# Our Mission

*“Without Our House, I don’t know where I would be. My mom and I had no home and Our House changed that, it’s as simple as that. We both have a future now.*

*-Hunter Martin, Our Club Student*

*“Living here is an experience that I needed. I’ve been given an opportunity to work again and I’m sure this experience will help me get back on my feet. I’m happy to be a part of it.”*

*-Manuel Williams, Job Trainee*

*“I am so blessed to have Our House in my life. Myself and my children have so much hope. It is a wonderful program where everyone gets the help they need.”*

*-Promise Ekoh, Homelessness Prevention Client*



New Executive Director Ben Goodwin talks with founding Executive Director Joe Flaherty in the Career Center

“I believe that everyone involved in Our House today, like me, realizes they are part of something truly special. In assuming leadership of the organization on its 30th anniversary of its founding, my challenge is to honor and nurture the things that make Our House special while leading the organization to grow, improve, serve more people, and create an even deeper positive impact in their lives.

Although we have come a long way, the work that Our House’s founders set out for us 30 years ago remains unfinished. Today, too many people in our community succumb to homelessness. Too many adults who are willing and able to work are nevertheless unable to provide for their own or their children’s basic needs. Too many children experience the trauma and uncertainty of not knowing where they will live or go to school from one week to the next. Our House’s success has shown that, with the right support and encouragement, these families can overcome homelessness, break the cycle of poverty, and create a bright future for themselves and their children. But until no more families in our community find themselves homeless, it is Our House’s solemn responsibility to be there for those who need some help to take control of their lives.

I offer my most heartfelt thanks to everyone who has helped Our House arrive at its 30th birthday as such a vital and impactful community institution. And I ask for your continued support as we work to provide a pathway out of homelessness for thousands more families and individuals in the coming years.”

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben Goodwin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.



Mission Statement: Our House empowers homeless and near-homeless families and individuals to succeed in the workforce, in school, and in life through hard work, wise decision-making, and active participation in the community.

[www.ourhouseshelter.org](http://www.ourhouseshelter.org)