

## A NEW BEGINNING: The Acosta Family's Journey Home

Our fall 2023 story of triumph comes from the Acosta family, who overcame numerous housing challenges to secure a safe and affordable home. Their journey is a testament to the transformative power of Community Housing Network's (CHN) committed staff and those who support our work.

### The Struggles of the Past

The Acosta family of five, faced countless obstacles in securing stable housing. Moving from one temporary shelter to another, Sandra and Antonio found it challenging to hold steady jobs and secure childcare for their three children.

Their journey was marked by a series of strenuous challenges; each one a testament to their willpower. From navigating complex housing and social services systems and financial constraints to encountering unresponsive property owners, their path to secure housing was far from straightforward. The struggles they endured were overwhelming, often leaving them feeling frustrated and hopeless. The constant worry loomed over them, making their quest for a permanent home all the more challenging. Their resilience, however, remained unbroken amidst the hardships.

### The Turning Point

Their lives took a turn when they encountered CHN. Our dedicated staff, understanding the urgency of the situation, quickly jumped into action. They provided the necessary resources and, more importantly, the emotional support that the Acosta family needed during this challenging time.

### A Home of Their Own

Today, the Acostas are proud residents of a comfortable, spacious, three-bedroom home. The children are able to sleep in their own beds, while Sandra has finally landed a stable job, and Antonio has started a small home improvement business. Their home has become a symbol of their resilience and determination.

*"There were times when we felt hopeless, like we were stuck in a never-ending storm. But the CHN staff stood by us, providing us with a lifeline when we needed it the most. This house is not just a building; it's our family's sanctuary, our happy place.*

*We are forever grateful to CHN for making this possible." - Sandra, reflecting on their journey*

### The Power of Your Support

The Acosta's story is an example of the many lives that are positively impacted by our work. But it's important to remember, we cannot do this work alone. Our ability to help the Acosta family, and many more like them, is due to the generous support of our donors.

As we enter this season of giving, we invite you to consider making a donation to CHN. Your contribution will not only provide housing but also hope and a fresh start for families in need. Together, we can help more families like the Acostas to not only dream of a better life but also live it.



# A Message From Our CEO...

## Dear Friends,

I am delighted to reach out with some transformative news regarding a leadership transition at Community Housing Network (CHN) that ushers in an encouraging new chapter in our mission. After serving CHN for over 22 years, I'm announcing my retirement in October 2024. Following several meaningful discussions and thoughtful deliberation by the board of directors, we are elated to introduce Kirsten Elliott as the new President of CHN.

It's hard to believe that it's been 23 years since CHN was founded. In that time, we've come a long way from our humble beginnings as a small property management company. Today, we're a leading provider of affordable housing and supportive services in Oakland and Macomb counties.

We take pride in the work we've done to help thousands of people find safe and affordable housing. We're also proud of the partnerships that we've forged to make a difference in our community.

Our mission, from the onset, was to ensure safe, affordable housing for individuals with disabilities, as well as individuals and families enduring financial hardships. We committed ourselves to making sure that all members of society had access to safe and affordable housing. Over the years, our services have expanded to meet the growing need for affordable housing in our community. These services include property management, housing resource center, HUD-funded homeless leasing assistance program, low-income housing tax credit development, homeownership counseling, and supportive services for people with disabilities.

As we look forward to the next 23 years, I am pleased to say we're in excellent hands with Kirsten Elliott, our new president. Kirsten has been a part of the CHN family for over 20 years, and her contributions have been instrumental in our growth and success. Her deep understanding of housing and support issues confronting people with disabilities, combined with her passion for advocacy, makes her the ideal candidate to lead CHN into the future.

Over the next year, I look forward to working alongside Kirsten to ensure a smooth transition of leadership. We remain committed to our mission of providing affordable housing and supportive services to those in need.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to each one of our supporters. Your contributions have been invaluable in our journey thus far and will continue to be as we move forward.

Best Regards,



Marc Craig  
Chief Executive Officer



## Meet Our Executive Team

Al Martin, Vice President of Real Estate  
Carrie Mendoza, Vice President & Chief Financial Officer  
Maggie Perry, Vice President of Operations  
Kirsten Elliott, President  
Shelley Brinkmann, Vice President of Programs  
Marc Craig, Chief Executive Officer

*Pictured left to right*

# Homelessness Summit 2023

Staff members from CHN's Programs Department attended a two-day summit in October at the Shanty Creek Resort in Bellaire, MI. Speakers came from across the world for the annual summit hosted by Michigan's Campaign to End Homelessness (MCTEH) to share and connect ideas on how to end homelessness.

Three of CHN's staff members, Taylor Eberhart, Dana Paglia-King, and Mellena Martinez, were presenters and Taylor was part of the planning committee for this amazing event! According to Taylor, "Participating in the Summit on Ending Homelessness is such an incredible experience. The days spent collaborating, networking, and learning with all the incredible attendees and presenters, are inspiring and gives me confidence that we are making strides in a better and more collaborative direction. While there is still a lot of work to be done, to see so many folks who are also focused on improving our homeless delivery system gives me hope."



## Thank You Volunteers!

Thank you to the incredible **383** volunteers and interns we had the pleasure of working with this last fiscal year! Together, over **3,311** hours of great volunteer work was accomplished. Volunteer groups built gardens, cleaned up and refurbished local parks, hosted events for children residing in our communities, and completed beautification projects at our housing developments.

At our annual fundraiser, *Bring It Home*, we presented our first ever Volunteer Award to General Motors! General Motors has done outstanding work with CHN, serving nearly **1,000** hours in a little over two years.

We rely on our volunteers and all of the wonderful work they do in order to keep our communities thriving! If you are interested in volunteering, please reach out to Katie Simons at 248-590-6143 or [ksimons@chninc.net](mailto:ksimons@chninc.net).





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**Executive Team**

Marc Craig, CEO

Kirsten Elliott, President

Carrie Mendoza, Vice President, CFO

Shelley Brinkmann, Vice President of Programs

Maggie Perry, Vice President of Operations

Al Martin, Vice President of Real Estate



*2023  
Holiday Giving Opportunities*

The holidays are just around the corner, and we are excited to offer another year of giving this holiday season! Your support will help us to provide ongoing supportive housing resources.

*There are many ways you can give!*

- **Make a Cash Donation**
- **Donate Holiday Gift Baskets**
- **Donate Welcome Home Baskets**
- **Host a Donation Drive**
- **Create an Online Fundraiser**

Contact Delphine Cooley to get started!

[dcooley@chninc.net](mailto:dcooley@chninc.net) | 248-824-7347

[www.communityhousingnetwork.org/adopt-a-family](http://www.communityhousingnetwork.org/adopt-a-family)

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SAVE THE DATE

★ COMMUNITY HOUSING NETWORK'S ANNUAL FUNDRAISING EVENT

*Bring It Home* 2024

THE COMMUNITY HOUSE  
BIRMINGHAM, MI

THURSDAY, APRIL 25, 2024  
DINNER, AUCTION & CELEBRATING 25 YEARS

