



**SIMPSON**  
HOUSING SERVICES

SPRING 2016 NEWSLETTER

## RESIDENTS FIND COMMUNITY IN SUPPORTIVE HOUSING



Coming Together to Build Community.

In 2013, Simpson Housing Services, Aeon, and Resource Inc. began a partnership to provide individuals an opportunity to transition from long-term homelessness into stable housing through supportive housing and enhanced services. One of these programs is at the Continental Hotel in downtown Minneapolis where 70 formerly homeless adults now have a place to call home. Over the years, staff has been working with residents to define and design what community feels like for them. Here is their story...

Each month a group of men and women gather in a small meeting room at the Continental. The warmth and spirit of the group quickly make a visitor feel welcome. After all, that's their goal, as members of the Resident Planning Committee, to create

and nurture a sense of community both inside and outside the Continental.

The committee is comprised of 12 men and women engaged in the process of sharing their voices and brainstorming ideas to make their residence a place of belonging. Each has experienced long-term homelessness and they come together to build community.

Simpson Housing Services provides supportive services to two of Aeon's affordable housing buildings. The program helps keep rents affordable and provides on-site support services for the residents. Lisa Holliday, Resident Connections Coordinator says, "Our objective is to increase housing stability along with community engagement for the residents. We connect folks with resources, do crisis management, and provide leadership opportunities as they try to get back on their feet."

*(continued inside)*

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### OUR MISSION

To house, support and advocate for people experiencing homelessness.

# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Steve with Lori Wall, President

This group has been working to build community for themselves and their neighbors. We're so impressed with all they and the staff are doing.

In December, at our annual board meeting, we welcomed three new members to our Board: John Green, an HR executive from Ameriprise Financial Advisors; Cindy Aegerter from InFaith Community Foundation; and community volunteer Frank Fallon. We look forward to the expertise they bring to the Board.

We also said good-bye to Bob Odman and Mark Laliberte who each served two terms on the board of directors, held various leadership roles on the executive committee, and made significant contributions to the agency. We are pleased that they will both continue to serve in committee roles this year. Mark will be serving on our IT committee and Bob will continue with our property committee. Thank you Bob and Mark for your service and contributions, we are grateful for your continued leadership with Simpson.

We're also tremendously excited for our upcoming 6th annual Art 4 Shelter event on May 11. Since the event's inception in 2011, this fundraiser has generated over \$300,000. This tremendous support has provided 10,000 nights of shelter. See the back page for more info. We hope to see you at this fun and vital event for Simpson.

I look forward to the year ahead and thank all of our supporters who enable us to positively impact the lives of men, women, children, and youth who are currently experiencing homelessness. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Steve Horsfield  
Executive Director

### Dear Simpson Community:

This time of year reminds us of renewal and fresh starts as we welcome spring. As we look ahead, I'd like to share some highlights from 2015. We continue to expand our work and the people we serve, due to the generosity of our donors, volunteers, and partners in the community. Thank You!

As you can see on page 3, we served over 3,500 men, women, and children experiencing homelessness and moved 1,038 people into stable housing. Of particular note, we increased the number of children and youth we serve in our education and mentoring support programs and now serve 10-14 year olds, a new age group! Our pilot group has completed their first year and we are looking forward to expanding the program in 2016.

In our feature story you'll meet the Resident Planning Committee at the Continental, one of our supportive housing residence programs for individuals who have experienced long-term homelessness.

(continued from cover)

## EMPOWERING RESIDENTS TO CREATE COMMUNITY

Grants from NeighborWorks America have provided this leadership group with training and resources to build community. The group has outlined what they feel is important for a sense of community. Their focus is to develop leadership skills and create programs. “The residents created a plan and are leading it,” Lisa says.

Most recently, a NeighborWorks America grant enabled several members of the group to travel to a national conference at the Community Leadership Institute in Cincinnati, OH. The group attended seminars on leadership skills and building connection in the community. They brought their learning back to the larger group to finalize a plan for their healthy living projects including organizing a food give-away and healthy cooking classes.

This development process also cultivated additional healthy living projects. The group hosts community engagement events such as Tuesday healthy snack movie night, recovery support meetings, and trips to the art museum. They’ve organized community meals and BBQs (a favorite) along with healthy living workshops on diabetes and heart disease.

David is a founding member of the group. “Neighbors used to look out for each other. That’s something all communities are missing out on these days.” David’s passion is cooking—he can usually be found manning the grill at the community BBQs. “The Resident Planning Committee began because residents wanted a platform, a space for sharing their voice and having more power in making decisions that impact them,” Lisa says. “The residents have been involved in every aspect from generating ideas to implementing them. Their work inspires me

and continues to bring up the importance of rallying behind social justice issues and strengthening quality of life. We wanted something that would be sustainable in moving forward and it’s working.”

Valley, another of the group’s founding members, is passionate about building community. “I’m a recovering addict. I was a hindrance to society but working with this group I’m now a part of society. I’ve reconnected with family after 30 years. Without my community this wouldn’t be possible—that’s what community and passion is about.”



Read more on the Resident Planning Committee at [simpsonhousing.org](http://simpsonhousing.org).



PEOPLE SERVED = 3766

PLACED 1038 PEOPLE INTO HOUSING

254 FAMILIES with 508 CHILDREN

2619 MEN & WOMEN received services at Simpson Shelter

INDIVIDUALS WHO MOVED DIRECTLY FROM THE SHELTER INTO HOUSING = 104



Non-profit Org  
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2100 Pillsbury Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55404

612.874.8683 • simpsonhousing.org



**6<sup>th</sup> Annual**



Art 4 Shelter is an exhibit and sale of over 1,000 original artworks on paper by emerging and established artists. Each 5"x7" piece will sell for \$30 and a selection of 8"x10" works will be available for \$90.

**Proceeds benefit Simpson Housing Services**

**MAY 11, 2016**

**Le Méridien Chambers Hotel**  
901 Hennepin Avenue, Minneapolis

**First Look Luncheon: 11:30 am - 1 pm**

Tickets on sale April 6 | \$200 each

**Free Benefit Sale - One Night Only**

Preview: 6 pm | Sale: 7-9 pm

[art4shelter.org](http://art4shelter.org)

[facebook.com/art4shelter](https://facebook.com/art4shelter)