

Happenings

HER SMILE IS BIGGER AND BRIGHTER THAN EVER, THANKS TO YOU!

When she first came to STH, staff were impressed by Charisma's style and big smile. But, as they soon discovered, her outward appearance was a mask. On the inside, this former cosmetologist—who ran her own business for five years and successfully raised three children—was trapped in a fog of trauma. The abuse that began at an early age continued for 35 years, and she desperately tried to escape by using drugs. Yet, Charisma told her case worker, she believed God wanted



to set her on a better path. Weary from bouncing from place to place and tired of her addictions, she was determined to make changes. While undergoing drug treatment, Charisma participated in STH's day center program where she attended recovery classes and received support and encouragement from other participants. With help from her case manager, she obtained permanent supportive housing assistance and moved into her own fully-furnished apartment. Eventually, she achieved her most important goal: sobriety.

"I can smile bigger and brighter than ever," Charisma says. "Now, my goal is to complete a nursing program so I can help others."

WHAT IS PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING?

The Center for Evidence-based Solutions to Homelessness defines Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) as subsidized housing with access to voluntary support services to help people with disabilities maintain stable housing and live productively in the community. PSH is generally targeted to people who are chronically homeless (disabled and homeless for long periods of time or repeatedly) or highly vulnerable because of chronic



disabilities (mental health issues and/or substance and alcohol abuse). It is intended to end their homelessness and improve their well-being by ensuring they are stably housed.

Following a mission to provide hope and help, STH manages 51 supportive housing units in Lake County through the Gateway Supportive Housing Program, and 36 units in the South Shore Commons in Gary. Rent is subsidized by state and federal funding.

Thanks to you, STH also provides vital support services to these 87 Gateway and South Shore Commons households.

THANK YOU, WALKERS!

On a perfect, sunny morning in June, our amazing teams, sponsors, and walkers rallied around the cause of ending homelessness. By June 30th, donations to the 2023 Walk for STH had exceeded our goal of \$110,000—raising more than \$112,000 to help serve more individuals and families in Lake County experiencing homelessness and hunger. THANK YOU!



EMPOWERING WOMEN TO OVERCOME BARRIERS

"We have all been thrown down so low that nobody thought we'd ever get up again."
Sojourner Truth



Our namesake was born into slavery but did not let that define her life. After she walked to freedom with her daughter in her arms, she changed her name to Sojourner Truth because she saw her life as a journey—one devoted to speaking out on behalf of abolition and women's rights. She helped free slaves, assisted black soldiers during the Civil War, and provided essential housing, food, and clothing to those previously enslaved.

Likewise, at STH we strive to be a vital catalyst for just transformation in the lives of women and their families—and not let their situations define them. Because of YOU, we can empower women and individuals experiencing homelessness to overcome intergenerational poverty, break addictions, become better parents, deal with mental health issues, complete career and job training, and obtain safe, stable housing.

"Life is a hard battle anyway. If we laugh and sing a little as we fight the good fight of freedom, it makes it all go easier. I will not allow my life's light to be determined by the darkness around me."
Sojourner Truth



(He)art Therapy Designing the future for 'CHAIRish the Children'

STH clients recently shared their artistic talents and imagination to help support Prevent Child Abuse Lake County's 25th annual "CHAIRish the Children" event. The "CHAIRish the Children" Art Project invites Lake County students in middle and high school art programs to design chairs that artistically represent what it means to cherish our community's children. Their designs reflect their thoughts about children, childhood, and what children mean to the future of our world. STH's project was led by Chasity Armstrong, an STH case manager who facilitates art therapy classes offered to adult clients, who also helped with this project. The STH chairs (pictured) were auctioned to raise programming funds for Prevent Child Abuse Lake County. Its organizational mission complements STH's "Moms As Teachers" program, which prevents child abuse and neglect by increasing awareness and advocacy.



MURAL BRIGHTENS STH CLASSROOM— AND CLIENTS

*"THEY ARE TAKING CHARGE AND
LITERALLY PAINTING THEIR FUTURES!"*



In May, Chasity also directed clients as they created a mural to cover one wall of the STH classroom. "We have 10 clients and counting who have contributed so far," Chasity said. "The contributions have been in cycles, as one group of clients find housing and leave Sojourner, another group comes in to contribute to the mural." The bright work-in-progress depicts the different aspects of STH and how staff work with clients. "Having a positive visual is useful in helping the women visualize their own success," Chasity explained. "The fact that they get to add it to the classroom—the place where they work on cultivating their mindset—is work in action. They are taking charge and literally painting their futures!

"When you see them regain their confidence, you see the change in their smiles."

Thank you!

to Our Foundation and Community Partners

We're grateful for the vital support provided so far in 2023 through the following grants:

- Raskob Foundation for Catholic Activities
- Old National Bank Foundation, STH Career Services Program
- SIA Foundation, new freezer for the Food Pantry Program
- Geminus Community Partners, Moms as Teachers Program

We Couldn't Do It Without YOU



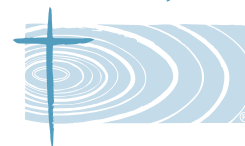
Volunteers are one of our most valuable assets! We are blessed by a core of generous volunteers who serve on our Board of Directors, work in our Community Garden, help operate our food pantry, and participate in our annual Walk for STH. You are critical partners in this work to provide hope and help to individuals and families in need, and we are grateful for you! In 2022, an average of 27 volunteers served each month, for a total of 5,915 hours. At the current value of \$31.80 per volunteer hour, (according to the Independent Sector), your efforts were the equivalent of \$188,097! Thank you!

For more information about volunteer opportunities at STH, please call 219-885-2282.



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Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ



Partners in the work of the Spirit

*Sojourner Truth House is a ministry of
the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ.*