Dear Friends,

On behalf of everyone at CFH, we thank you for partnering with CFH in order to empower the men we serve to move from homelessness to stable housing. We continue to have strong support from the Eastside cities, King County, United Way, volunteers, foundations, and individual donors. In 2016 hundreds of individuals were able to obtain permanent stable housing through accessing shelter and case management support in our programs. This amazing accomplishment is because of you and the generous support you have provided that equips CFH to provide a foundation and tools that empower individuals to permanently leave homelessness.

In 2016 almost 60 percent of the men who accessed the year round program shelter graduated into permanent housing, and 92 percent of the men in CFH housing maintained housing stability for 2 years or longer with the support of the case management team. With amazing support from the Eastside community CFH was able to serve 8,500 meals over the course of the year. These meals not only provide needed nutrition, but were often the start of transformational conversations that give respect, dignity, and hope to men who are stuck in the experience of homelessness. With your support CFH was able to provide life-changing support to over 1,400 different individuals in 2016; this is the most CFH has ever served in our 24 years of operation; Thank You! Furthermore, CFH was able to partner with United Way of King County to provide a new weapon in our battle against homelessness. United Way provided move-in funding for men, women, and families who were on the street and as a result, the CFH outreach team was able to support 70 men, women, and families in leaving the streets and moving straight into housing.

Your support also enabled CFH to grow our subsidized housing program to 80 units of housing for men exiting homelessness. In partnership with you we have been able to do amazing things in 2016, and we are excited about upcoming opportunities in 2017. That excitement extends to the opportunity to build a permanent shelter, service center, and low income housing in Bellevue. We are working with the city, neighbors, and other funding partners to help make this permanent building a reality in our community. Thank you to everyone who has supported this project which will ultimately result in those experiencing homelessness being able to escape that condition more quickly and with more stability than ever before. You have done great things this past year, thank you!

Blessings,

David Bowling
Executive Director
MEET EDGAR

“When I first moved into the shelter it was really hard...I felt that I did not belong there and could not come to grips with how this had happened to me.”

As a successful professional in technical sales within the software industry with a BS in Mathematics and Physics, Edgar’s life was going well until his company announced the relocation of his job to Chicago. He faced the choice of making the move or leaving the company. Due to his ties to the community he chose to stay and find other employment; unfortunately, after searching for many months to no avail, his severance package had been exhausted and he eventually lost his home. His situation was further compounded when he was diagnosed with corneal cancer. The subsequent chemotherapy, followed by multiple surgeries, left him seriously weakened, emotionally distraught, and nearing a state of desperation.

“I did not know if I was going to survive. I had never been in such dire straits and did not know where to turn or how to get started.”

Edgar’s inner drive, however, and his absolute resolve to set a good example for his 3 daughters, combined to keep him focused on moving forward.

He found CFH in September 2015 and was welcomed into our program. After observing his unrelenting dedication to getting his life back on track, he was offered the position of House Manager in our subsidized housing program, a position within which he flourished.

The safe haven provided by CFH, combined with CFH case management services, provided the foundation he needed to launch out of homelessness. As a result, he landed a position in national market development with a local company, and recently purchased his own market rate condo in the metropolitan Seattle area.

“So much of the stigma of homelessness works subconsciously. Seemingly small things such as having to store your belongings in garbage bags or not having access to hygiene facilities can take a significant toll on one’s self esteem.”

Robert, CFH client

“I would not be here if it weren’t for CFH” he stated. When asked what his goals are for the future he said he would like to share his personal story in the hope that it will encourage others faced with similar struggles. He also wants to stay involved with CFH and to help our clients in any way he can.
CFH Programs

Street Outreach
A CFH Case Manager introduces people living on the street to resources and services available to support them. This Case Manager is often the first point of contact to build relationships with individuals experiencing homelessness, and to lead them to our Winter Shelter or Day Center.

Day Center
The Day Center provides a place for men to enjoy warm meals and to access services such as showers, laundry, and computers. Here, CFH staff develop relationships further to help men start the path back to housing and stability.

Winter Shelter
The Eastside Winter Shelter is a life-saving, low-barrier overnight shelter that opens in November and runs through the following Spring. Here, men can have a warm meal and a safe place to sleep; CFH staff make the connections to needed resources and services. Men who visit the Winter Shelter, and who are ready to commit to moving out of homelessness, often enter into the Year-Round Shelter program.

Year-Round Shelter
The Year-Round Shelter, which is hosted by 12 Eastside congregations on a monthly rotating basis, is for men who are addressing the barriers that resulted in them experiencing homelessness and are working toward employment, housing, and stability. The men in this program are provided with a safe, warm place to sleep, three meals a day, storage for their belongings, Case Management support, medical and dental services, job assistance, training to prepare for housing, connection to community, and much more.

Subsidized Housing
CFH provides permanent subsidized housing for men who have come from experiencing homelessness. We offer both apartments and shared-housing in 10 man-aged houses, with rents set at 30% of a man’s gross income. Subsidized housing provides men with stability, a personal locked room or apartment, and a safe place within which to work toward independence.

Case Management
Case Management is at the heart of CFH programming and is key to helping men make the transition from homelessness to independence. Our professional Case Managers provide:

- One-on-one support
- Direction in establishing viable goals
- Advocacy in obtaining necessary resources
- Connection to medical, dental, and mental health services
- Support obtaining access to drug and alcohol treatment services
- Job search assistance
- Budgeting and financial literacy education
- Life skills training
- Preparation for stable housing
- Housing Navigation Services

Congregations for the Homeless offers key programs which work in concert to provide a path from life on the street to stable, independent living.
CFH volunteers are extraordinary people, who give generously of their valuable time and beautiful hearts to make our shelter programs possible. They give in a variety of ways…

• Volunteers prepare and serve restoring meals in our Year Round and Winter Shelter programs.
• A group of volunteers travel with the rotating shelter creating meaningful relationships in the process. Others form close relationships with men in our housing program, establishing bonds that help the men avoid slipping back into worlds of isolation and loneliness.

Our core group of liaisons, primary contacts within each host congregation, make the magic happen through coordination of volunteers from their respective congregations, ensuring that the men are provided with nutritious food and essential supplies, and providing an opportunity for the men to regain a sense of community.

Volunteers are a huge reason for our success and a critical component of our culture. Each and every volunteer brings a unique presence to our programs and fills a critical need in a manner that is truly irreplaceable.

Robert was born in Austin, Texas. He enrolled in the Army at the relatively young age of 21, serving 8 years as a cargo and logistics specialist. The Army not only afforded him the opportunity to travel, but also provided a skillset which prepared him for a civilian career in warehouse management.

“I was doing well after leaving the Army until the economy hit the wall a few years back. It was during that downturn that I lost my job, my home, and 2 cars.”

After struggling for a while he eventually found his way to CFH and was welcomed into our programs. CFH case managers provided the essential ingredients that enabled him to regroup and get back on track. He eventually landed a job in warehouse management and as a result was able to move out of CFH housing and into his own apartment. Unfortunately, as is so often the case, life’s misfortunes once again afflicted him, resulting in another job loss and consequently another bout with homelessness. Thanks to CFH case management’s relentless focus on long-term relationship-building and community, he was warmly welcomed back to CFH a second time.

“So much of the stigma of homelessness works subconsciously”, he noted, “seemingly small things such as having to store your belongings in garbage bags or not having access to hygiene facilities can take a significant toll on one’s self esteem.”

Robert has been associated with CFH for the past 3 ½ years. He’s currently a tenant in CFH subsidized housing and is employed by a local fast food outlet, a job which he describes as “a way to pay the bills for now.” His goal is to get back into warehouse management but he’s biding his time until that dream becomes a reality. A bit of wisdom he frequently heard from his dad as a young man recently came into sharp focus for him – “You don’t get successful doing what you like, you get successful liking what you do.” That bit of wisdom has helped him to maintain focus, to give his best work to his current employer, and to keep driving forward. “CFH is a wonderful organization and I commend its donors and facilitators. A message I have for its supporters is that CFH needs both capital and volunteers to continue its wonderful work.”

“I’ve been working with Robert for about a year and he’s become more like a friend and colleague than a client” said Ryan Murk, his current CFH case manager —“he consistently puts his spouse’s needs ahead of his own, a remarkable quality and solid evidence of his true character!”

Robert is making great strides and has notched several recent victories including paying off a few bills, regaining his driver’s license, and making it onto Auto Angels’ wait-list to receive a vehicle which will facilitate the search for his dream job.

LOVE OUR VOLUNTEERS!

In 2016 our generous volunteers donated over 17,000 hours and served over 83,400 meals!

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From homelessness to housing, one man at a time