

A white banner for Raincity Housing. It features a blue umbrella icon, the text 'raincity HOUSING', the tagline 'a home for every person', and the website 'www.raincityhousing.org'. The banner is hanging outdoors, and the background shows some greenery and a building.



# What we've been up to - Mark Smith, Executive Director



Being a part of a community means participating in that community, and the last 12 months have seen that in spades. Whether it was showing our Pride in the Pride Parade, getting involved in the Scotiabank Vancouver Half-Marathon, co-hosting BBQs, or being picked for third party fundraising events, it was a constant two way street - surprising our neighbours with good will and information, or being surprised by 16 year-olds that cared more about homelessness than we could know.

In October we took time to recognize all the amazing people and organizations that donate to RainCity Housing. We transformed the Roundhouse into a creative landscape that showcased artwork, photography and words of thanks, all of which were created by the people we have the privilege of providing homes and building relationships with everyday. Thank you, donors, one and all for your generous support.

It's starting to feel like a tradition, but it's a good one to keep up. In November we reopened all three of our Temporary Shelters, and it was bitter sweet for our staff to see a few folks that needed shelter again. But our Peer Program had a chance to really flourish. People that had stayed at our shelters last year and were now housed in our programs were able to connect to this year's shelter group in ways not possible for our staff. This led to amazing relationships being built and ultimately more people finding permanent housing.

One of our sadder moments in the past year was the loss of one of our programs. In April we said goodbye to the Harm Reduction Support Services

Team, a tightly knit group of gentlemen that have tirelessly worked in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside providing support, educating people, reducing harm, and most importantly, saving lives. While a few of the members will continue to work in other positions at RainCity, the team as a whole and their outstanding work as a group will be missed.

Why not eat *really* locally? We now have two wall gardens, one at the Lux and one outside Princess Rooms. Lettuces, herbs, peas, beans - all ending up in the food served at those sites. They also brighten up the neighbourhood and we're already getting compliments from our neighbours.

We ended our year on an enthusiastic note. All of our staff groups were asked at workshops what the work really meant to them. It was both exciting and reassuring to find out that not only did the expressed core values accurately reflect our organization's philosophy, but they did so across all programs, regardless of mandate, location, or size.

They were (and are): social inclusion; optimism, hope and transformation; leading edge practice; and accountability and transparency. These values support RainCity's vision and mission, describe the organization's culture and belief system, and articulate how the work is done.

So thank you to all the staff that make RainCity Housing the incredible organization that it is, thank you to our donors and volunteers, and thank you to the amazing individuals we work with and learn from every day.

**“I am happier - I'm not as depressed as I was before. This feels like home now.”**

- Ralph, ACT Team client

# A message from our Chair - Dr Jennifer Neumann



“How is RainCity different from other non-profits?” I’m often asked this when someone finds out I’m Chair of this great organization. While there are other service providers that offer similar services, the combination of the kind of support we offer *and* the extraordinary values that emanate from our staff is what truly makes us different, while we work towards creating a home for every person.

Values like social inclusion. Every human being has a right to belong, to be an integral part of society. Social inclusion means acknowledging the reality of each client and standing beside them as they build on their strengths and resilience, so they can have the rights that they’re entitled to.

It means an honest and realistic assessment of the challenges someone faces and the complexities of their lives, offset by the strong belief that each person has resiliency and strengths that are a direct result of their survival and lived experience, and the realization that this is often the first step towards positive change.

We provide support that is strength-based. This means recognizing how resourceful, courageous and persistent each person has been in order to survive homelessness and to see each individual as a person with talent, skill, ability and potential to create positive changes in their own life.

It means developing respectful, trusting relationships with each individual, creating environments where they are recognized as having strengths, and encouraging each person to reconnect with their strengths and build on them.

And we provide the right amount of support, not just the bare minimum, to all of our clients. We support self-advocacy and, when needed, advocate for our clients. This results in individuals reclaiming their rights and can ultimately result in a larger transformation of the systems that our clients navigate on a daily basis.

We consider Harm Reduction a best practice. Harm reduction is often seen as a worst practice, or that it can worsen a person’s situation. But the harm reduction ethic involves creating strategies to reduce the negative consequences of not just drug use, but untreated mental illness, survival sex trade, and all the negative effects of homelessness. Our clients also face multiple barriers to accessing services and have a variety of undiagnosed health issues like HIV, hepatitis, and diabetes. Reducing harm means increasing health and finding ways to make adaptive survival strategies as safe as possible.

Providing this kind of support with these values is a potent package, as it recognizes and resonates with the rights of the people we work with and keeps those rights front and centre every day.

Providing housing is important. But real change takes place *after* someone has housing. Housing becomes a home when people choose to stay, where they feel safe and have a voice.

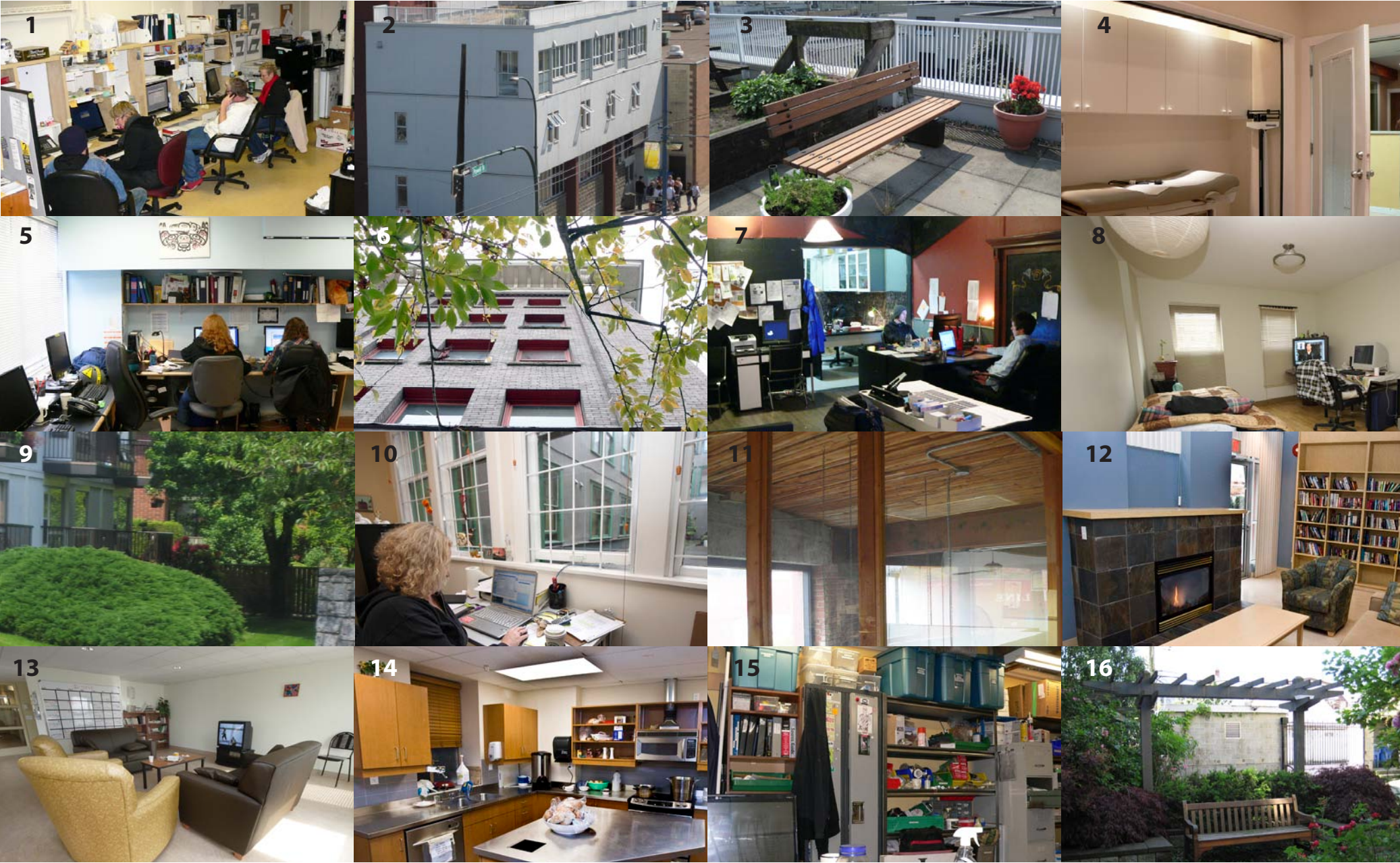
It becomes a home when they feel part of a community, and feel valued and respected. It becomes a home when someone says “I’m 42 years old and this is the first home I’ve ever had.”











# How well do you think you know RainCity Housing?

What do you think of when you hear the name 'RainCity Housing'? Housing, for sure, and probably shelters, but did you know we provide a wide variety of programs and services? See if you can figure out which program is shown in each picture. The program descriptions are on the next page, and the answers are below. Good luck!

1) Concurrent Disorders Outreach, 2) Triage Shelter, 3) Windchimes, 4) Princess Rooms, 5) Housing First ACT Team, 6) Dunsmuir Community Program, 7) Homeless Outreach Program, 8) Lux Transitional Housing, 9) Killarney Gardens, 10) Shaldon Hotel, 11) Administration, 12) Fraser Street, 13) Lux Apartments, 14) The Vivian, 15) Operations, 16) Bridget Moran Partnership



# Our Programs and Services

RainCity Housing offers a broad range of services and support for people living with mental illness, addictions, unresolved health concerns and complex housing behaviours. People that choose our supports are matched with the RainCity Housing program that best meets their specific needs, recognizing that each person is unique and has experienced challenging and unique circumstances.

## Triage Shelter

RainCity Housing's first line of support for people that are homeless. It provides emergency shelter and care for people living with mental illness, addictions and other challenges.

## Princess Rooms

Princess Rooms specializes in providing safe, supported transitional housing to high-risk, high-needs individuals that have a history of homelessness.

## The Vivian

The "Viv" is the first program of its kind in Vancouver, providing supported housing for homeless and at-risk homeless women living with mental illness, addictions and other challenges.

## Fraser Street

This alcohol and drug-free facility is located outside of the Downtown Eastside, specializing in providing supported housing for people who live with a mental illness and addiction but have chosen to live a substance-free life.

## Dunsmuir Community Program

A joint partnership with Atira, the purpose of this program is to house people and find innovative ways of encouraging involvement in the surrounding community.

## The Lux

Our newest building, the Lux operates two programs: a low barrier Transitional Housing Program with 24 hour support staff, and the Lux Apartments, providing long-term housing for people who have a history of homelessness.

## Windchimes

Since 1993 the Windchimes apartments have provided long-term housing for people living with mental illness and addictions.

## The Shaldon Hotel

This hotel, located in Vancouver's DTES, provides support and opportunities for tenants to become more involved in their community and work towards accessing long-term housing.

## Bridget Moran Place

This program is a partnership with the Neighbourhood Housing Society to provide homes to people living with mental illness and addictions.

## Killarney Gardens

This is RainCity Housing's first facility located outside of the Downtown Eastside, specializing in providing housing for people living with mental illness.

## Life Skills Support

RainCity Housing provides many supports: Community Integration Support Workers, money and medication administration, assistance with daily tasks, all working towards creating a social network and sense of community.

## Food Services

A wide range of quality, nutritious food services are available to the people involved in RainCity Housing programs, as well as to the broader community.

## Concurrent Disorders Outreach

The Community Outreach Team works with homeless people in the Downtown Eastside who are living with mental illness and addiction.

## Homeless Outreach Program

The Homeless Outreach Program works directly with people sleeping in public spaces and assists them in linking to appropriate services and housing, and accompanying them to appointments.

## Housing First Assertive Community Treatment team (HFACT)

The HFACT team provides a full range of treatment and recovery oriented supports, as well as rent supplements so that homeless people living with a serious mental illness can live in a community of their choice.

## Temporary Shelters

Set up in different neighbourhoods throughout Vancouver each winter to address homeless populations in those neighbourhoods.

“When I found out I was accepted at Fraser Street, I sort of got a little bit of self esteem going, like I knew in the future there'd be a better place for me. I'm a grateful resident of Fraser Street, and I'm grateful for this place.”

- RainCity Tenant



# The Healthy Living Program - you are *where* you eat!

**"I'm gardening again - I love to garden. It's the first time in years I've been able to do that."**

*- RainCity Housing Tenant*

The individuals using RainCity Housing's services are some of the most marginalized and vulnerable in our community. Because of traumatic histories, mental illness, substance use, and often a combination of all these things, many have developed survival skills and symptoms that are difficult to address.

In addition, many people are extremely undernourished, which can lead to compromised immune systems, and make it harder to fight disease. A lack of nutrition also leads to an inability to focus and to deal with basic life skills, something you and I may take for granted.

This often results in isolation from friends and family, lack of trust, lack of self-esteem or self-worth, and distancing themselves from the larger community.

We recognize that each person has their own story and journey, and that they might want a little help to reach their goals, whatever those goals may be.

With this in mind, RainCity Housing developed the Healthy Living Program, designed to help each individual that's new to housing start to make different, healthier choices - choices that move people from feeling overwhelmed, to feeling hopeful.

**"I want to engage more in life."**

*- RainCity Housing Tenant*

The budget for this program includes garden plots and their ongoing maintenance, community kitchen food supplies, administration costs (printing, copying), membership fees, and peer support honorariums.

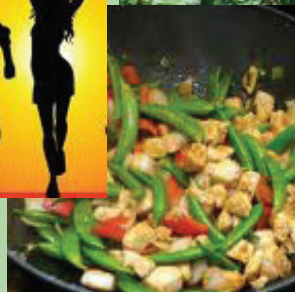
RainCity Housing has been fortunate to receive funding from a variety of sources and we are delighted to welcome Hollyburn Properties Ltd., as a Sustaining Sponsor of the Gardens.



## Gardening



## Active Living



## Nutrition and Cooking

While gaining these practical skills, other benefits also begin to take shape...

- Nutrition
- Peer support
- Social Inclusion
- Smarter purchases
- Building trust
- Building hope

And this all leads to more  
**Relationship Building and  
Community Involvement!**





Some of our Partners! Clockwise from top right: Home Depot paint and materials for our Pride float, swag from Dueck Downtown, Semperviva donates funds and mats, Joey's staff serving amazing food to our clients.

## Our Partners

Another way to be a part of a community is to have partnerships. These partners participate in a number of ways - through donations, program partnerships, sponsorships, and third-party fundraising.

All of these contributions ensure that many of our newer programs function, such as our Healthy Living Program. Donations are often paying for important programs not normally covered by government funding.

- Joey Restaurant Group
- Hockey for the Homeless
- Hollyburn Properties

- Owen Bird Law Corporation
- GBL Architects
- Progressive Builders
- Optimum West Insurance Co
- Orbis Client Services (Cda) Ltd
- Dueck Downtown
- Semperviva Yoga
- BC BioMedical Laboratories
- Flipside Creative
- Culinary Capers
- Baron Mastery Institute
- The Home Depot Foundation

## Even more Partnerships

Partnerships are also important ways of working with other services and non-profits. We partner with a number of agencies throughout the city. In each instance, we provide the support staff while the other oversees the operation of the building.

Our building partners are: Atira Property Management, BC Housing, Neighbourhood Housing Society and Katherine Sanford Housing Society. Looking for more information on partnerships or anything else about RainCity Housing? Visit our website!

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



Dunsmuir:  
Atira



Killarney Apts:  
BC Housing



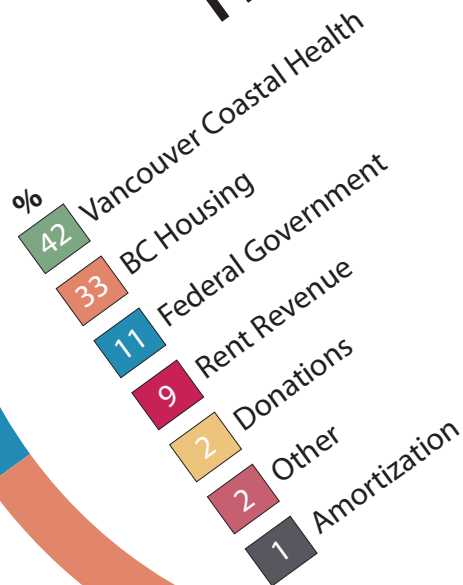
Bridget Moran Place:  
NH Society



West 2nd site:  
KSH Society



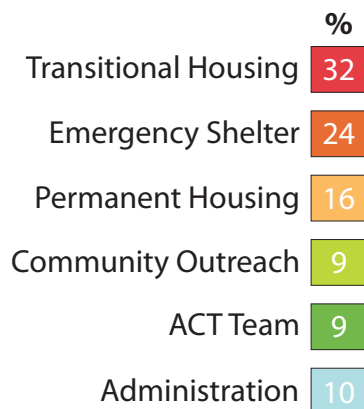
# money in



While most of our incoming monies are public, we get new regular donors every month.

Donations go into programing that's not covered by public funds.

Last year we provided housing and support to over 2000 people.



100 people housed throughout the city with a full array of supports

Over 360 people receiving daily support via community outreach

204 people with their own kitchen and bathroom, their very first home

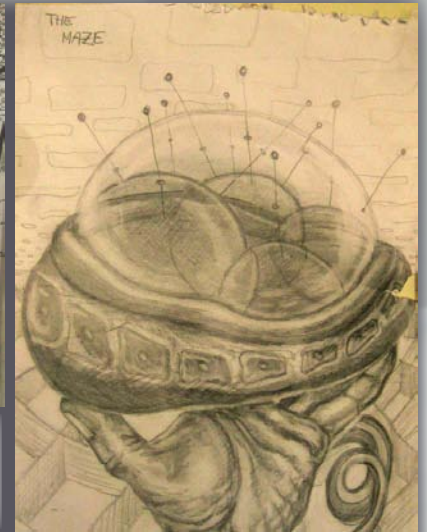
Over 1200 people came inside, some for the first time in years

202 people living inside with support 24 hours a day

# money out



# Art is everywhere...



**Our Photo Club** has been going strong for almost two years now. A dedicated group goes out into the world on a regular basis to capture all the kinds of beauty the world has to offer. It's a chance not only to create art, but to share time together in different places and in a different way. (Note: all of the artists have chosen to be anonymous.)

**Art at our Heat Shelters** was somewhat prolific. For three years now we've provided a warm, safe space to build relationships, search for housing, and produce works of art. Sometimes it was poetry, sometimes it was sculpture, and sometimes it was right (and write!) on the walls. (Note: all of the artists have chosen to be anonymous.)

## Creating art can build community - inside and outside!



# Thank You!

In the Fall of 2010 we wanted to publicly thank and recognize all the people that donate their time, money and support to RainCity Housing.

We gathered together at the Roundhouse and had the opportunity to meet, some for the first time, and share time and thoughts with like minded individuals.

It was also a perfect venue to show what takes place at our various programs, such as dances and gardening, and the amazing art work and photography that was created by our tenants and clients.

But the best part was tenants, clients, staff, volunteers and donors all sharing what they're thankful for, and talking about what can be done to end homelessness.

So thank you! We would not be the same organization without your help.

And a special thanks goes out the people and foundations listed below.

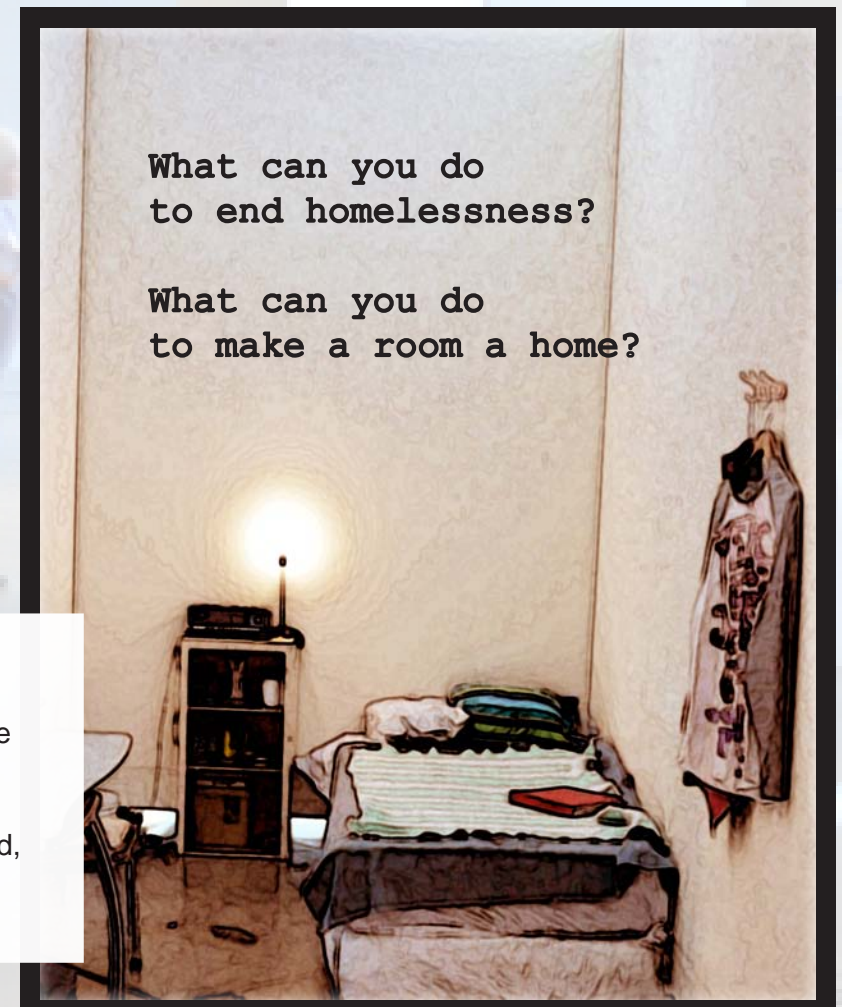
- The Ash Family
- Realtors Care Shelter Program
- The Lohn Foundation
- Fairbairn Foundation
- Zacks Family Foundation
- Warren Mitchell
- Marie Robinson
- Sandra Sveinson
- Schein Foundation
- Edward Gouge

## Our Board

**Dr Jennifer A. Newman, Chair**  
**Sarah Slack, Vice Chair**  
**Joan Russell, Treasurer**  
**Jane Larlee-Addison, Secretary**  
**Joan Williams, Director**  
**Jeremy Green, Director**

We had three Board members leave us this year and they will be sorely missed. Farwell to Lea Johnston, Marie Robinson and Andrew Rigg. Between the three of them they provided endless hours and over 10 years dedicated, compassionate support and wisdom. We can't thank you enough!

**"This made an incredible difference in my life. Not only was it life changing, but it was probably life-saving as well."**  
*- Emily, ACT Team client*





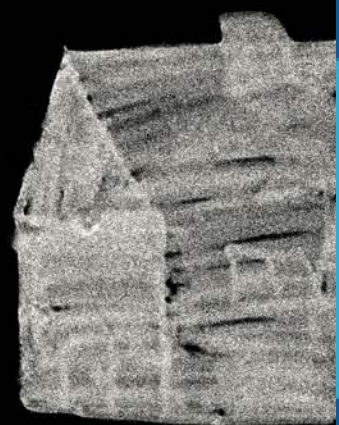
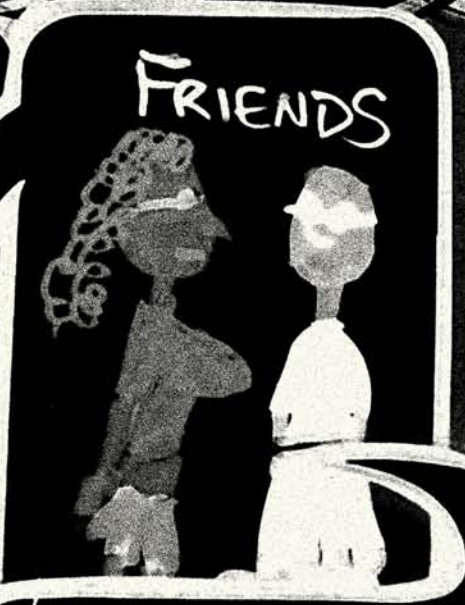
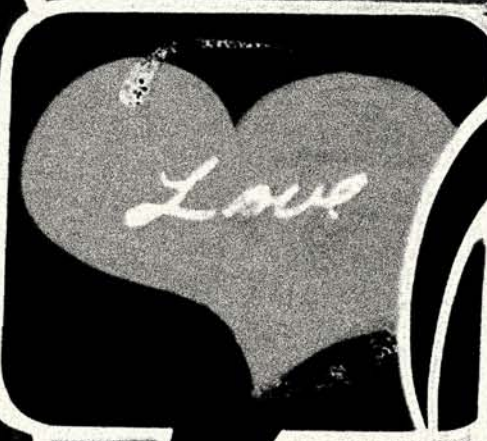
ARTS  
CRAFTS

this is supportive + safe  
place to stay May Creator  
continue to walk w/ staff  
+ clients I thank for your  
part in my journey  
Love Denise

THANK'S  
FOR ALL  
THE GREAT  
STAFF

the smile  
the empathy  
the BBC  
Ter

Indepence,  
and I'm also  
thankful fo be  
alive  
in 2010. LP



HOME

Thankful  
for Living  
here  
stan



I'M VERY GREATFUL FOR  
THE SUPPORTIVE STAFF,  
THE PLACE TO LIE MY  
HEAD. FROM HERE  
ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE.  
THANK YOU KRISTEN S R

Me too.  
Gale

