

Giving Thanks In A Crisis

Everyone Has A Place To Call Home
Winter 2021

**STEPPING
Stone**
ending homelessness

CELEBRATING TOGETHER

We're thankful for all of you and for your support through the ups and downs of this past year. Despite the recent COVID crisis at the shelter, we are anticipating the holiday season and celebrating with our residents.

The Santa Shoppe will be back this year! The Shoppe provides an opportunity for our residents to treat themselves or their loved ones to something special this holiday season.

"This year for Christmas, I want to thank you all for your hard work and dedication, I am so grateful! I had a better Christmas than the one I had last year!"
Past resident at the Santa Shoppe

How You Can Help During The Holidays

1 Collect new, unwrapped donations of items on our Santa Shoppe Wish List (right) from your friends, colleagues, family, neighbors, or place of worship.

2 Donate A Meal for the holidays. We need lunch and dinner donated every day, but especially Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, and New Year's Day.

3 Join us for Waddle Off Your Gobble, a community-led virtual walk over Thanksgiving, November 25-28. Check our website for upcoming details on this fundraising event.

4 Remember us when you consider your end of year giving.



Questions? Contact Valerie at valerie.jensen@steppingstoneeh.org or 612.325.8343

Help Make Santa Shoppe a Success

Consider collecting donations for our Santa Shoppe. These donations allow our residents to receive or give gifts to others this holiday season. We depend on our community to make this a success!

To see the full list, visit our website. Donations accepted from December 20-22.

Recommended items:

Adult items, please. Unfortunately, we cannot accept children's items.

- Pull-over or hoodie, ¾-zipper, or full-zipper sweatshirt (sizes L to 4XL, primarily larger sizes)
- Pajamas (sizes M to 4XL, primarily larger sizes)
- Slippers (all sizes, primarily larger sizes)
- Camisole/undershirt for women (sizes M to 4XL, primarily larger sizes)
- Gift cards to Walmart and Target, and Visa
- Throw blankets

Stocking Stuffer items:

- Flip Flop / Shower Shoes (M - XL)
- "Fun" feminine/manly item (perfume, cologne, jewelry, watch, wallet, purse etc.)
- Ear buds for phones and electronics
- Fidget spinners are good for anxiety
- Eye masks/ear plugs for sleeping
- Clear water bottles
- Drawing and Coloring Supplies
- Ethnic hair products
- Hair ties/barrettes or Hair brushes
- Crossword/word find/Sudoku puzzle books
- Chapstick/Burt's Bees/lip balm

IT'S BEEN A FALL LIKE NO OTHER

Julie Jeppson, Executive Director

October hit the shelter hard.

This pandemic has stuck around longer than any of us planned. We now navigate in a new "normal" by doing daily health checks, washing our hands frequently, and wearing masks. Because of these checks, it was soon discovered that a resident tested positive.

Initially, quarantining those residents who tested positive and sending home staff who tested positive, seemed like it would be effective. However, with 66 residents, and the small footprint of our shelter, we just couldn't create enough distance between everyone. The virus spread quickly.

It became abundantly clear that greater action was needed to combat the spread and help alleviate the workload for the remaining staff. On October 1, the decision was made to move our male residents into a local hotel. Then on October 11, we moved 100% of our residents to hotels.

This wasn't an easy decision. Why? Because it is a costly choice and prevents us from fully helping our residents.

Moving and being socially isolated adds another huge stress in our residents' lives. Adding to the difficulty, from the residents' perspective, is the fear of this virus and the uncertainty of their housing as they are asked to pack all of their belongings and move to the hotel. The mental toll of this crisis is immense.

Overall, to keep our residents safe and healthy, our costs increased to over \$75,000 per month.

We want to thank everyone that contributed to our online fundraiser. Your donations helped us extend the time that we could keep the residents safely in the hotel. We are still accepting donations. You can use the COVID crisis Hotel Cost Fundraiser button on our homepage at SteppingStoneEH.org.



Stepping Stone Team - from left to right: Jennifer Horton, Program Director; Jeff Conner, Development Officer; Julie Jeppson, Executive Director; Valerie Jensen, Development Coordinator; Lori Schulz, Business Manager

Despite the impact that this crisis has hit the shelter, we're thankful for the following good things that happened this fall:

1. Your support during our fundraising campaign.
2. Our partnership with the Minnesota Department of Health and the amazing certified nurse that monitored our residents.
3. No one was hospitalized.
4. Being able to host ParTee Fore A Purpose in September. It was our most attended golf event to date!
5. Our mission continues - the mission to find stable housing and guiding our resident's toward self-sufficiency.

As I write this, we look forward to a time of relative calm and a reopening of the shelter.

12 Days of Giving Thanks

December 6-17

Intentionally extending gratitude changes your perspective and your attitude even on those days where joy seems out of reach.

We invite you to join us. We will be completing twelve acts of kindness over twelve days this December.

- Twelve days to brighten another's day.
- Twelve days to give thanks.
- Twelve days to show your appreciation.

Follow us on social media for a prompt each day.

12 Days of Giving Thanks

December 6-17

STEPPING STONE ENDING HOMELESSNESS

*For each of the
12 days, give thanks
by bringing joy
to others
through acts
of kindness*

DAY	DAY	DAY	DAY
1	2	3	4
DAY	DAY	DAY	DAY
5	6	7	8
DAY	DAY	DAY	DAY
9	10	11	12

JUMP IN AND GIVE BACK

Marcia Hauck, Volunteer

Hello, my name is Marcia Hauck. My husband and I live in Andover; we have two married children and three grandchildren. I have been retired from my 38-year nursing career at Unity Hospital for almost four years.

While I was working, I occasionally volunteered at Stepping Stone at their health screening clinic. We also provided a few meals to the residents after the clinic. Once I retired, I knew I wanted to volunteer more at the shelter, so I jumped in!

Every Saturday morning my husband and I transport Costco food donations to the shelter. It is wonderful to see the excess food going to such a great place. And it is an easy way for both of us to give back.

I also volunteer at the annual golf event, ParTee Fore A Purpose, and the Real Stories One Stage event. I love making silent auction baskets and volunteering at the events. I am amazed at the many generous donors. It takes many hands to make these events successful; everyone brings a different skill, and we have fun seeing it all come together.



I often reflect on this quote: "We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give."

The residents at Stepping Stone have lost their way to make a living. The shelter gives them the resources to get their life back. Volunteering is an easy way to give back to our community.

**Have you thought about volunteering?
Jump in and give back!**

FAQ ABOUT VOLUNTEERING

1 Which volunteer opportunities are best for individuals or groups?

All Stepping Stone Volunteer needs can be met by individuals or groups. Some of the options that are best suited to groups include: kitchen help, Donate A Dinner, small group activity leader, and handyman, cleaning and decorating teams. Currently, for safety measures, volunteers will not have direct contact with residents, but we have many other opportunities available.

2 What is the volunteer time commitment?

We have a variety of opportunities for short term, long term, or occasional volunteers. We've found that volunteers get the most out of their experience when they volunteer at least once per month, but that is entirely up to each volunteer. Most volunteer shifts range from 1 hour (food pick up) to 4 hours (front office assistant).

3 What kind of training do volunteers receive?

It depends on what kind of volunteer work you choose. For example, we want to make it easy to Donate A Dinner, so Level 1 Volunteers don't require any specific training. On the other hand, Level 4 Volunteers work one-on-one with residents, so they are required to attend training and orientation. Our goal is for you to have a successful and rewarding experience supporting Stepping Stone and our residents, so training requirements are specific to each volunteer role.

4 How do I become a volunteer?

It's easy! APPLY ONLINE at SteppingStoneEH.org/volunteering or contact Jeff Conner at jeff.conner@steppingstoneeh.org.

YOUR IMPACT AT STEPPING STONE

\$130

BASIC LEVEL

You are helping our residents with their most basic needs. Even "smaller" items can become a burden to someone experiencing homelessness and living in unimaginable poverty.

\$390

MOVE-IN READY LEVEL

You help fund a variety of needs above the basic level including the search for an apartment, uniforms for work, and more. This allows our residents to get to the next "stepping stone" on their path.

\$1500

FUND A FUTURE LEVEL

You go beyond the basics and partner with us to help a resident take their final step on the "stepping stone" path and start a new life, including helping with rent and damage deposit.



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Our Guiding Principles

- Empower individuals to change their lives
- Treat each resident with dignity and respect
- Collaborate with partners in providing services
- Ensure strong stewardship in managing resources

Stay in Touch



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(763) 323 - 7006

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SteppingStoneEH.org