

# **CORRESPONDENCE**





# NAVIGATING A PANDEMIC

Stepping Stone Emergency Housing Newsletter



## AN ISOLATED COMMUNITY

Message from Executive Director, Julie Jeppson

It's been an incredible month! This pandemic has put us in uncharted waters. How do we handle social distancing? At the core of who we are, we can't react like the rest of the world. **We can't shut our doors.**

Now, more than ever, we have to stay open and available. **Our residents already feel isolated and anxious without the presence of a pandemic.** We have to provide support and a home for them, otherwise, who will?

We also have to keep our staff and residents safe, so we implemented various measures.

First, we limited entry into the shelter. For the past month, only staff, residents and essential workers have entered.

Second, we discontinued all volunteer opportunities, group activities, and tours of Stepping Stone. Our volunteers are sorely

missed by our staff and residents.

Third, one of our main fundraisers, Real Stories|One Stage, was rescheduled for May 27.

In my almost eight years of working at Stepping Stone, our waitlist has never been longer. Currently, it is at 385 individuals. With the closing of businesses and reduction of business hours, **this list is only going to get longer.**

Though our day-to-day operations changed, we've remained committed to supporting our residents by helping them become stably housed. One resident moved into her own home on April 1!

If you are interested in helping us at this critical time, please consider donating financially online or looking at other ways to donate on our website at [www.steppingstoneeh.org](http://www.steppingstoneeh.org).

## HOW YOU CAN HELP Money and Food!

With schools and restaurants closed, receiving food donations has stopped. Completely. But we can't stop feeding people. We need your help. Today. Financial donations can be made via our web site at [www.steppingstoneeh.org](http://www.steppingstoneeh.org).

Anything helps!

Below is a list of requested food donations.

- Boxes with individual pkts of instant oatmeal: flavored and maple brown sugar
- Bottled water -16.9 Oz size preferred
- Regular ground coffee
- Salad dressing
- Cuties
- Bulk canisters of lemonade powdered mix
- Bulk canisters of kool-aid powdered mix
- Bulk canisters of pink lemonade powdered mix
- Boxes of individual packets of instant powdered hot cocoa
- Saltines
- Ritz crackers or generic of this works
- Bulk bags of potato chips
- Nacho/Tostado chips
- Fresh apples, oranges, bananas & pears
- Canned fruit



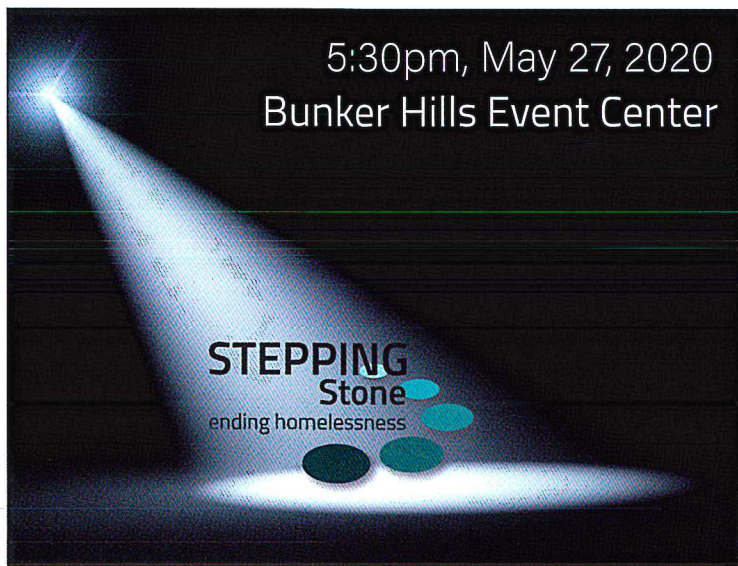


# REAL STORIES | ONE STAGE

## Reserve Your Seat

[www.steppingstoneeh.org/event/real-stories-one-stage-2020](http://www.steppingstoneeh.org/event/real-stories-one-stage-2020)

\*This rescheduled date is dependent on the state's orders regarding large public gatherings.



What would you say to someone who doesn't understand, or who makes assumptions about the homeless?

This question was asked of our residents, who not only shared some of their personal stories around homelessness, but what they would say to such a person. Even sharing how being homeless was a gift that provided lessons and brought healing to their lives.

The script is written and directed by Illusion Theater and stars both professional actors and Stepping Stone residents.

Seats start at \$80 and include dinner, the performance, and a silent auction.

### Sponsorship Opportunities:

Reserve a whole table and business recognition:

- Leading Role: \$2500
- Ensemble: \$1000
- Understudy: \$500
- Supporting: \$250

## MOVING TOWARD SELF-SUFFICIENCY

### *From Privilege, To Struggle, To Hope - A Resident's Story*

"I just wanted to thank you all for your help and care!

Thank you for making my time at Stepping Stone comfortable, safe, and easy. Without you guys, I would have lost my mind here. This was a very different experience for me.

So, I just wanted to write this in thanks to you all. Some days were hard but you all made me smile and remember that this was only temporary. You made me feel at home and loved. And, thank you all for your work, for getting to know me, and making sure that I was okay.

It was always patience, laughter, and support from you all. I've never been in a situation like this. I came from a pretty privileged background, but I never felt judged or looked at weird by any of you. You all inspire me.

So again, thank you for making this experience nice, for your support, and your hardwork."



## THE COLD NEVER BOTHERED HER ANYWAYS



Actually, it was really cold! In partnership with the Blaine Police Department, Julie Jeppson braved the frigid waters for a cold water rescue in support of Stepping Stone.

This event brought attention to homelessness in our community, while also recognizing the compassionate

efforts the Blaine Police Department has undertaken to connect people experiencing homelessness with resources and services.

Thanks to all our supporters! Over \$5000 was raised and matched by the Otto Bremer Foundation, totaling over \$10,000 in donations. Thanks!



# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Jeff Conner, Volunteer\*

\*Recently hired Development Officer



I was once someone who looked at people experiencing homelessness and wondered why they couldn't get a job. I thought if they have enough time to stand on a street corner and pan-handle for money, surely they could get a job. Then one day, I got to wondering, how bad would things have to be for me to reach the point where I could do that. It was

then that I decided it doesn't matter to me why they are doing it, I just want people to know I care and I see them. So, I started helping in that way every chance I could.

Initially, I helped Tammy in the kitchen, serving lunch once a week. I did this for a few months and then began to help out as a mentor to the residents. They were working on a plan to get back to self-sufficiency, and I wanted to help them do this. I helped keep them on track with setting priorities and offering guidance. **It's been wonderful to come along, beside people and help lift them up.**

After meeting and listening to many residents, I've been struck by the fact that there really isn't that much of a difference between us. We are all

human and all just trying to do the best we can to make it through life.

The circumstances that lead to homelessness happen to us at anytime. Our residents are just like you and me. There is no "face" of homelessness and on any given day, we could find ourselves unknowingly in the presence of someone experiencing homelessness.

Stepping Stone has taught me that I have a large capacity to love and care for others. I've learned that I don't always know the answers and that things are not always as they seem. **We can make a difference.**

"We just never know what people are going through, so always be kind and show compassion."

## *From Addiction, To Change, To Gratitude - A Resident's Story*

"I was given an opportunity to share my story, though I didn't think that I was worthy. Plus, the more I reflect on my story, the more I am unsure how I feel about it. I did a lot of stupid things and I should have learned many lessons along the way.

But here today, I'm more in order than I have been in about five to six years.

I was homeless and an addict. I panhandled to get by. I ended up in prison, made parole and repeated the same cycle a few times. I finally decided that I didn't want to go back to prison and my mom gave me a third chance. I felt like a burden. I became depressed and ran to drugs again. I hid it well, but knew it would start the cycle again.

I wanted a change and started researching shelters and found Stepping Stone. I am very glad that I did. I didn't have the motivation to change or to believe in myself for years. You all helped me in ways that you don't even understand.

You ACTUALLY care. You're compassionate. I have no way to fully express my gratitude for you. Even just smiling and asking how I'm feeling was different. I have a job, I have an opportunity. I have a stepping stone in life. Thank you."

## THREE WAYS YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

### SMILE

Make eye contact.

Nod your head in "Hello." Smile! Acknowledging the other person says, "I see you." Which is very special for those that may have gone "unseen" for years or decades.

### GIVE

Go ahead and give your money or don't. That is your personal decision to make. However, I ask that you do give them one thing... the benefit of the doubt. Give your kindness and compassion.

### ASK

Be bold and brave.

Take the step to speak and ask, "What do you need help with right now, today?" Those in the middle of crisis cannot physically think past the now.





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 Anoka, MN 55303

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 1301 81ST AVE NE  
 SPRING LAKE PARK, MN 55432-2116



## BY THE NUMBERS

In 2019, we served 514 individuals who needed a place to call home. This was a 9% increase from the previous year, which is on par with the state's increase in homelessness.

### Compared To Previous Years

- 7% increase in the number of veterans served.
- 4% decrease in youth served (18-24 year olds).
- 4% increase in 55+ year olds.
- An increase in the number of women, with a 61:38 ratio of men to women.

The average length of stay was 42 days, but 34% of residents don't stay longer than 1-7 days.

### Our residents struggled with more than homelessness

- 29% have a chronic health condition.
- 30% have a physical disability.
- 41% of women have a history of domestic violence in their lives.
- 30% of youth (18-24) have spent time in foster care, an increased from 20% in 2018.

## 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



3300 4th Avenue North  
 Cronin Building 14  
 Anoka, MN 55303



(763) 323 - 7006

## Donate Online



Sign up for Amazon Smile to see our Charity List of much needed items.



Donate online with confidence.

[www.stepsingstoneeh.org](http://www.stepsingstoneeh.org)



- Correspondence  
- file

April 6, 2020

City Of Spring Lake Park Mn  
1301 81st Ave NE  
Spring Lake Park, MN 55432-2188



Dear T-Mobile Cell Site Landlord:

**You've heard the news: T-Mobile and Sprint are now one.** New T-Mobile will shift the Un-carrier into overdrive, and we want you to know that accelerating innovation, intensifying competition, and securing America's lead in 5G are priorities for us. **We are aggressively working to integrate our two companies.**

**This transaction will unlock significant value for customers and stakeholders, and our cell site landlords will play an important role.** We will continue to **expect the highest quality, service and value.** We will honor the commitments made through this merger process including delivering 5G for all, closing the digital divide, and offering in-home broadband to consumers.

**Whether you are a cell site landlord or tenant on one of our cell sites, please keep the following in mind:**

1. **Right now, nothing is changing about your working relationship with us.** Your business contacts will remain the same and will continue to work with you on projects, deliverables, invoicing and payment. Do not change anything about invoicing us or receiving payment until you receive specific notice from our Procurement team. If changes arise through the course of the integration process, we will advise you and your team.

T-Mobile USA, Inc.  
12920 S.E. 38th Street  
Building 10  
Bellevue, WA 98006  
Attn: Lease Compliance, Site ID #

[PropertyManagement@T-Mobile.com](mailto:PropertyManagement@T-Mobile.com)

Toll Free: (877) 373-0093

2. **An updated Supplier Code of Conduct is now effective for all T-Mobile/Sprint suppliers and is highlighted in the enclosed document.** The Supplier Code of Conduct outlines New T-Mobile's expectations for your conduct in taking care of the deliverables for which you are contracted. Demonstrating integrity, doing business the right way, respecting people and the environment, protecting company property and information, and reporting violations are key tenets.
3. **For more information about New T-Mobile, please visit [T-Mobile.com](http://T-Mobile.com).**

(over)

**New T-Mobile:** We now have more than 100 million customers and a workforce of 80,000+ employees. By combining forces, spectrum and scale, we will continue to be a disruptor that goes far beyond wireless.

We are excited about the future and the role you will play to help us deliver on our promises.

**We won't stop.**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'MS', is positioned above the typed name.

Mike Simpson  
Senior Vice President  
Chief Procurement Officer



## Daniel Buchholtz

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**From:** Jurek, Colette C <colette.c.jurek@xcelenergy.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 7, 2020 6:51 AM  
**To:** Centerville - City Clerk ; Centerville - Public Works ; Circle Pines - City Administrator ; Columbia Heights - city manager ; Columbia Heights - Public Works; East Bethel - City Administrator ; East Bethel - Public Works ; Fridley - City Manager ; Fridley - Public Works ; Ham Lake - City Administrator ; Ham Lake - Public Works Superintendent ; Hilltop - City Clerk ; Lexington - City Administrator ; Lino Lakes - City Administrator ; Linwood Township - Clerk ; Linwood Township - Maintenance ; Daniel Buchholtz  
**Subject:** Xcel Energy: Operational Update/COVID-19 Management

To our service communities in the Anoka County area . . .

Each week I will be attempting to provide you with a brief message regarding Xcel Energy operational updates as we work to deliver reliable and safe natural gas and electric services to our communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Much of our work at Xcel Energy is proceeding as close to normal as possible as we begin the fourth week where many of our employees are working from home.

Many of our critical infrastructure employees are still out there working on projects to ensure reliability, respond to emergencies and complete new work. With a captive audience watching our crews, a common question is “why are there so many trucks on site?” In order to maintain social distancing, we are having employees drive separately to work sites. Because of this, a minor job can have the appearance of something much bigger to the casual observer. Other protective measures that are being undertaken are equipping crews with personal protective gear, maintaining proper distance and much greater use of mobile devices to communicate with our team and our customers. We are asking the public to keep their distance from crews in the field to help keep everyone healthy and safe. Another frequently asked question is whether tree trimming is necessary during the pandemic. There is no down time on the trimming calendar. This work is essential to ensure that we minimize the risk of trees or limbs causing outages when they are near our power lines. With spring storm season right around the corner, maintaining adequate spacing between trees and overhead facilities is critical.

We continue working with state leaders (governor’s office, legislature, public utilities commission) on opportunities to minimize financial impacts for our customers during the pandemic. As you may have already heard on the media, we will not disconnect residential customers for non-payment for the foreseeable future. Late fees have been waived on residential and small commercial customers. Our company (and industry, for that matter) are discussing other customer classes and methods to help our customers work through this difficult time.



I am working remotely from home and am plugged in and available for your questions, concerns and ideas. I am easily accessible by e-mail and cell phone. My contact information is listed below in my signatory block.

Be well,  
Colette

**Colette Jurek**

**Xcel Energy | Responsible By Nature**

**Manager, Community Relations and Economic Development**

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