



**Just Neighbors**  
Interfaith Homeless  
Network

**2015 ANNUAL REPORT**

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**JustNeighborsIHN.org**



## 2015 ANNUAL REPORT

**Our Mission:** To serve homeless families by uniting faith community volunteers and local agencies in a cooperative effort to provide shelter, meals, and comprehensive, compassionate and ongoing support.

**Our Vision:** Families who are homeless in our community will have access to the services and support they need to become self-sufficient.

### REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**Rev. Dr. Terry Anderson**

During 2015 Just Neighbors helped families stay together and successfully move from our shelter to stable housing. In addition, the majority of adults found employment during this process. We witnessed program growth, extensive volunteer involvement, community participation, and we adopted a new name.

Why a new name? The board recommended a new DBA name that would convey our compassion for every individual we meet and also represent our values of justice, independence, and equality. Our new name *Just Neighbors Interfaith Homeless Network* speaks to the universal human experience; we are all neighbors regardless of where we live or where we come from. The name *Just Neighbors* also refers to economic and social justice, eliminating poverty and its causes. Finally, our name pays tribute to our heritage and our current legal name (established in 1999), *Interfaith Hospitality Network of Greater Fort Wayne*. As our faith traditions instruct us, we welcome the homeless clients we serve as our neighbors and seek to be just in responding to their needs in the spirit of love.

Our shelter operates year-round at capacity. For those we cannot serve, we offer resources to lead families toward self-sufficiency. While we address the immediate needs of homeless families, we also participate in the larger community effort to work toward long term solutions.

Modeled on national programs promoting family stability and self-sufficiency, Just Neighbors opened its doors in November 2000. Originally, Just Neighbors used available space in local churches to provide night-time shelter for families. Each morning, the families were transported to Just Neighbors' day center in a small house in downtown Fort Wayne. The daily capacity of the program was 14 individuals. In February of 2009, Just Neighbors moved to a new facility on East State Street so that it could increase capacity to 40 clients and provide on-site services. Since 2007, Just Neighbors has more than doubled the number of families served annually. Today, **Just Neighbors is the only local shelter providing emergency housing for homeless families and serves nearly 300 individuals in 60+ families each year.**



In response to the crisis of homelessness, Just Neighbors provides food, shelter and clothing to meet families' immediate needs. We provide comprehensive case management, education and support groups, tutoring and mentoring to help families build the skills and resources they need to return to self-sufficiency. We help families arrange child care and assist children to remain in or return to school. We work closely with a variety of government programs, not-for-profit-agencies, and community ministries to connect our clients with a wide range of services for obtaining and maintaining employment and transitional or permanent housing.

Most families coming to just Neighbors have left difficult, desperate circumstances. They may have been living in an apartment without electricity or heat. They may have been living in their car. They may have been bouncing from the home of one family member to another. They may have been split apart to access services available only to homeless individuals. At Just Neighbors they now have safe, secure shelter while preparing a return to self-sufficiency.

While it is a key part of our mission to move families forward toward independence as quickly as possible, it is just as important that they feel welcome, accepted, and respected during their stay with us. The warm welcome so characteristic of Just Neighbors is possible because of our staff, our volunteers, and the private but communal atmosphere of our family center.

Annually, more than 800 volunteers from 30 local congregations provide volunteers as well as donations of food and other items families need. We routinely refer our clients to government and other nonprofit services and we work with the Fort Wayne School System's Homeless Task Force to ensure that children remain in school. Our case managers are knowledgeable about the resources available in our community and how to help families find the services they need.

We work with other shelters to refer single homeless individuals to the program that best suits their needs. Other shelters refer homeless families to our program and we refer individuals to other shelters that specialize in working with single adults or adults with addictions. Through the Planning Council on Homelessness (other agencies that serve the homeless and indigent, as well as United Way and the City of Fort Wayne) we also participate in community-wide efforts to address systemic issues that contribute to homelessness. These collaborations provide a more seamless transition for families; diminish duplication of services; increase community system-wide efficiency and effectiveness of services; and improve problem-solving.



Our goal is to help families become and remain self-sufficient. We strive to move families as quickly as possible out of emergency shelter and into more stable independent housing. The 2015 average length of stay was 50 days, significantly less than the 82 day stay four years ago. We believe, based on standards identified by the department of Housing and Urban Development and national surveys, that the current average length of stay of 45-50 days is an appropriate goal for an emergency shelter. While we continue our effort to stabilize and move people toward self-sufficiency as quickly as possible, such economic and social conditions as

under-employment and limited affordable housing have resulted in our family shelter remaining consistently at capacity. The Just Neighbors board and staff maintain the position that our clients will not be automatically exited after a specific time if they continue to be responsible and make progress toward self-sufficiency and they do not have safe, stable housing in which to move from emergency shelter.

Being responsible and making progress toward self-sufficiency in our program means that families must follow clearly defined policies. They must observe program rules, develop a personal goal plan, and follow this plan to achieve specific goals related to housing, employment, and budgeting. Families are required to attend to their own needs including laundry and other daily tasks. Children are required to attend school. Adults are required to meet with Just Neighbors staff on a regular basis to assess the family's needs and to determine progress on fulfilling educational goals, finding employment, and locating permanent housing.

Additionally, adults must be actively engaged in finding jobs and housing, working at a living family wage, and/or attending employment training and education programs. All this is done in negotiation and collaboration with the family so that they are determining their own future and choosing a path to self-sufficiency that develops accountability and self-discipline.

Just Neighbors can make a meaningful impact in a family's ability to access services in the community and to improve their housing and income. We track data on these outcomes and can report that we achieved them during 2015:

- 100% of families served will complete needs assessment
- 100% of families served will receive referrals to community support services
- 100% of minor children will remain in school during emergency shelter for homelessness
- 85% of family strategic goal plans will address specific issues related to children
- 70% of families served will successfully find safe permanent or transitional housing
- 70% of family members seeking employment will secure jobs or other stable income



Since Just Neighbors began serving homeless families in 2000, we have continually and consistently evaluated our programs to ensure we are providing the best service possible for clients. Based on our experience working with homeless families for more than 15 years and our staff members' extensive experience in social services, we have developed sound programs and practices, documented by such outcomes as:

- Seeing the percentage of families we serve moved from homelessness to stable housing improve from 55% in 2001 to 83% in 2015
- Noting a gradual increase to 73% for the number of parents obtaining living-wage employment
- The number of individuals served each year grew from 67 in 2000 to 294 in 2015. We expect this trend to continue with similar numbers of families being served in 2016.

**Our caring community enables us to serve our neighbors.** We are very grateful to every donor, funder, in-kind contributor, volunteer, church, business and community organization which supports our work. Our combined efforts enabled Just Neighbors to assist nearly 300 individuals in crisis. **Thank you for your many generous gifts which kept families together and transformed their lives.**

## OUR GUESTS

During 2015, we served a total of 294 guests in our Family Center. In addition, we provided referral and support services for 574 individuals in homeless families who were unable to be immediately housed in our facility. The following statistics describe the 294 guests at Just Neighbors.

### AGE

Children 63%:

Under age 5	26%
5 – 12	28%
13 – 17	9%

Adults 37%

18 – 24	14%
25 – 34	14%
35 – 44	6%
45 – 61	3%

### RACE

African American	63%
Caucasian	23%
Latino	5%
Multiple	5%
Asian	1%
Unknown	3%

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### EDUCATION OF ADULTS (18+)

Between 9 <sup>th</sup> and 12 <sup>th</sup> grade, no diploma	28%
GED high school equivalency	19%
High school diploma	42%
Post-secondary training/certificate	9%
Associates or bachelor's degree	2%

### GENDER OF ADULTS

Males	27%
Females	73%



## **2016 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

### *Officers*

*President* Susan Boyd, Rea Magnet Wire

*Vice President* Carla Kilgore, SCAN

*Secretary* Sherry Myers, Benson, Pantello, Morris, James & Logan

*Treasurer*, Vinod Vijayan, Eaton Corporation

Neil Bryson, New York Life Insurance

Angie Chasey, Parkview Foundation

Ahnee Conner, Community Volunteer

Iric Headley, City of Fort Wayne

Pam Leffers, Purdue University

Dr. Mary Spath, University of St. Francis



**Just Neighbors Interfaith Homeless Network**  
**Statement of Financial Position as of December 31**

<b>ASSETS</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 130,825	\$ 94,074
Receivables and prepaid expenses	38,587	99,870
Property and equipment	<u>704,785</u>	<u>708,103</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>874,197</b>	<b>902,047</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
Total liabilities	14,163	10,170
Net Assets:		
Unrestricted	821,330	812,389
Temporarily restricted	<u>38,704</u>	<u>79,488</u>
Total Net Assets	860,034	891,877
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 874,197</b>	<b>\$ 902,047</b>

**Statement of Activities**  
**For the Years Ended December 31, 2014 and 2013**

Public Support		
Government grants	\$ 81,273	\$ 33,064
Contributions in-kind	237,555	242,044
Contributions and grants	<u>232,225</u>	<u>257,040</u>
Total public support	551,053	532,148
Revenues		
Interest income	85	110
Loss on sale of fixed assets	(1,310)	500
Special events	<u>8,000</u>	<u>9,194</u>
Total revenues	6,775	9,804
<b>Total public support, revenues and other gains</b>	<b>557,828</b>	<b>541,952</b>
Expenses		
Program services	520,153	493,484
Management and general	48,167	42,991
Fundraising	<u>21,351</u>	<u>19,322</u>
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>589,671</b>	<b>555,797</b>
<b>Change in net assets</b>	<b>(31,843)</b>	<b>(13,845)</b>
<b>Net assets – beginning of year</b>	<b>891,877</b>	<b>905,722</b>
<b>Net assets – end of year</b>	<b>\$ <u>860,034</u></b>	<b>\$ <u>891,877</u></b>

This financial summary is taken from our most recent audit for the years ended 2014 and 2013.



### **SPECIAL THANKS**

Special thanks to LAURA RUDOLPH for arranging for a photographer and to JOHN ESCOSA for photographing families, volunteers and staff pictured in this report.

Special thanks to the CONGREGATIONS which bring hundreds of volunteers into our shelter 365 days a year with home-made meals, friendly conversation, and after-dinner activities for our children and families.

Special thanks to this community of generous DONORS and FRIENDS which keeps our doors open.

And, most importantly, special thanks to the FAMILIES which enter and enrich our lives.