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messenger

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Volunteers of America of Indiana

RICHARD LUGAR SAFE HAVEN FOR VETERANS: A SAFE PLACE TO CALL HOME

Homeless veterans in Fort Wayne now have a new place to call a temporary home. The Richard Lugar Safe Haven for Veterans, a 25-bed residential facility, opened in Fort Wayne to its first resident on February 5, 2014. Today, 22 men and 2 women stay at the shelter.

The shelter's key function is to serve hard to reach, hard to engage chronically homeless individuals with severe mental illness and/or substance use disorders while assisting them with personal safety and harm reduction. Safe Haven serves as a low demand facility where participants have access to needed services but are not required to utilize them. Many of these residents have not been able to comply with other traditional program requirements.

The Richard Lugar Safe Haven for Veterans is staffed 24/7 with at least two staff who are able to provide highly

"If I wouldn't have been able to come here, I know I would have died on the streets this winter. It was so cold out there."

supportive environment where an individual can expect a non-judgmental homelike atmosphere. A full time case manager on site works with residents on developing goals which include permanent, stable housing.

Within three months of opening, Safe Haven has admitted 32 residents and has discharged 8 residents, all of whom have gone to permanent housing or treatment facilities where they can receive higher levels of care. Recently, a resident who



came to the Safe Haven from living in a tent told staff that Safe Haven had saved his life. "If I wouldn't have been able to come here, I know I would have died on the streets this winter. It was so cold out there" said Kevin, a Navy veteran, who will be moving into his own apartment in June.

As the first Safe Haven model in Indiana, the Richard Lugar Safe Haven for Veterans has also served to educate others in new program designs in serving homeless. Recently, a group of students from Goshen College in Goshen, Ind. Spent some time at the Safe

Haven learning about the program design. "Spending time with these veterans really opened my eyes to the difficulties homeless persons in our community face." said Quinn Brenneke, Goshen College senior.

Plans are being made for a grand opening event at the Richard Lugar Safe Haven for Veterans sometime in June.

Goshen students with two Safe Haven residents.



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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

William Raihl
May 14, 2014

Finally the warmth of spring is in the air. Summer is just around the corner with all of the activities and adventures that will follow. It has been a long hard winter, the first in Indiana for my wife and me. I was reassured time and time again by many native Hoosiers to not judge Indiana too harshly because of the unusual cold and snow for this year. I think they were afraid that we might pack up and go back home to Washington State. Although I have to admit that the day the temperature fell to almost 40 below the thought did briefly cross my mind! But, now that the flowers are blooming and the trees are turning green I get to see another wonderful side of Indiana. Like everyone, I'm ready for summer!

At Volunteers of America, often we see people during the winter season of their lives. We see them in the hard times – just out of a correctional institution, maybe homeless, hurting, caught in addiction, a veteran down on his/her luck or simply being in

their sunset years living on a fixed income and needing a safe place to live. For many, it seems as though their winter will never end. No spring and summer in sight for them. No hope, no dignity, no way to change their circumstance.

Yet, with your continued help and support, through programs and services Volunteers of America – Indiana is able to provide, we can help men and women, boys and girls, through the tough times. Every day I see wonderful things happening in so many lives. Transformations taking place right before my very eyes. Men and women released from prison coming to understand that there is so much more that defines them than their past. Veterans finding that their service to our nation is not forgotten. The homeless are able to have a place to call their own home for the first time. Seniors able to sleep at night in a place that is safe and secure. Every day at Volunteers of America we are privileged to offer hope, restore dignity and transform lives.

THIS IS WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO.™



OUR MISSION

Offer Hope... Restore Dignity... Transform Lives...

Volunteers of America of Indiana is a faith-based organization that provides life-changing services to enhance the physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual needs of individuals by providing counseling, rehabilitation, job placement, and residential services. We serve individuals transitioning from the correctional system, the elderly and those dealing with chronic addiction and mental illness.

COMBATING VETERAN HOMELESSNESS IN INDIANA AND SUSTAINING PERMANENT HOUSING

Volunteers of America of Indiana, Inc. is one of 300 national agencies selected to administer over \$1 million through the Veterans Administration's Supportive Services for Veterans Families grant. These funds will help an estimated 200 households in the Indianapolis and surrounding counties and 85 households in Evansville and surrounding counties.

The goal of the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program is to promote housing stability among very low-income veteran families and individuals who reside in or are transitioning to permanent housing. SSVF-providers offer a range of short-term services that include case management, assistance in obtaining VA and other public benefits, and temporary financial assistance (e.g. rental assistance, security deposits, moving costs).

Volunteers of America's SSVF grant has had a dramatic impact in fighting Veteran's homelessness in central Indianapolis and 18 counties throughout Indiana. **Since program inception October 01, 2013, we have served over 175 families totaling over \$200,000.00 in direct financial assistance for rent, utilities transportation, moving expenses and childcare.** Larcina Hicks, Division Director of Veterans Services states that "VOAIN is truly living the mission of 'Offering hope, restoring dignity and transforming lives.'" Many of the individuals we see simply need that boost in an effort to obtain and maintain self-sufficiency and prevent homelessness.

For more information contact: SSVF Program Director Adam Hutton at: 1-855-332-VETS (Indianapolis) and SSVF Program Director Julie Freyberger at 1-855-840-4VOA (Evansville).

HOMELESS VETERANS GAIN PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING WITH SUPPORT FROM THE SSVF PROGRAM

Dave* was referred to the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program by Volunteers of America staff who worked with Dave while he was in transitional housing for veterans at Brandon Hall in Indianapolis, IN . The SSVF program assisted Dave in applying for a studio apartment at Lincoln Apartments, which provides permanent supportive housing for previously homeless veterans and assisted with the security deposit for the apartment.

Lincoln Apartments come fully-furnished, a major advantage as Dave had little more than the clothes on his back when he moved in. The bed provided was twin-sized and due to Dave's height this posed a safety concern. He fell out of the bed several times, wounding an already injured knee. SSVF was able to purchase a full-size mattress and referred Dave to Second Starts to obtain new bedding. Dave received a new sheet set and comforter the same day as his new bed.

SSVF has also been able to assist with bus passes, allowing him to attend senior oriented classes at Ivy Tech and medical appointments at the VA.

* Name has been changed to protect anonymity.



Dave is very proud of his new home and the amenities offered at Lincoln Apartments.

STRIVE INDY: MAKING A DIFFERENCE WITH EMPLOYMENT TRAINING

STRIVE Indy held its first Voice and Data Training Certification in April. Eight out of the nine students who enrolled in the program become Certified Technicians for the Voice and Data Industry. Two students have already obtained jobs in their new field!

The STRIVE Indy RExO (Re-Integration of Ex-Offenders) program opened to clients in January of 2014 and provides occupational and support services to adults males with criminal histories residing in Marion County, Indiana that will improve long term employment prospects. The program is gender responsive and trauma informed, designed to assist returning citizens with self-sustaining career based employment and life supports. STRIVE Indy is funded by the Department of Labor Demonstration Grant (DOL) and Volunteers of America. For more information contact James Brown, STRIVE Indy RexO Director at 317-200-3632



STRIVE Indy Services include:

- Occupational skills training (leading to degree or industry recognized certification)
- Intensive case management
- Individualized service and career planning
- Group and individual counseling
- Life skills development
- Job readiness skills
- Employment workshops
- Group and individualized mentoring
- Financial literacy training
- Paid/unpaid transitional employment
- Job placement/job advancement assistance
- GED/ABE classes

WWW.CARSHelpINGPEOPLE.ORG - VEHICLE DONATION PROGRAM



Still have that old clunker sitting in the drive? Need to upgrade to something new? Consider donating your vehicle to Volunteers of America to help people in need in Indiana this winter.

The toll-free number is (800) 333-6331 or you can visit the website above which is the Volunteers of America exclusive online vehicle donation center. Cars, trucks, boats (with trailers), RVs, and motorcycles are accepted. We come pick it up and tow it away for FREE. Cars are then sold at auction where the proceeds come back to benefit Volunteers of America.

Vehicle owners must have clear title and no liens against the vehicle. We also take care of all the paperwork and title processing so you can sit back and relax in 2014 when you get to take that deduction on your taxes for the sale amount of your donated vehicle! It doesn't cost you a thing to give your car to Volunteers of America. Go to www.CarsHelpingPeople.org today.



Sara E. Sanderson

Sara E. Sanderson died April 16, 2014, at Methodist Hospital, Indianapolis at age 75. She was a dedicated volunteer for over 5 years. Sara provided a bi-weekly journal writing class for Theodora House residents and served on our neighborhood committee. Sara's one-of-a-kind personality knew no strangers and appreciated each new day. Helping was her constant choice, and she left positive energy and feelings with those she encountered. Sara is deeply missed by residents and staff of Theodora House. Two women from Sara's journal writing class wrote the heartfelt letter below about the impact she made in their lives.

Theodora House Residents Reflect

Miss Sara,

She showed me how to write my emotions down and not feel bad about how I feel. She cared a lot about us. She didn't look down on us for our past.

We will miss her and we will think of her all the time. She showed us that people do care and not everyone will look down on us.

I have not felt cared about in a long time. If I could say one thing to her it's thanks for caring for us and we will miss her.

Miss Sara was a very special woman. She showed us how to care for our thoughts even without having to share them if we didn't want to. She was a very encouraging woman. She opened up my mind like no one else could. She made me think about things in my life like I've never had before. She was a great person for us to be around. There will never be anyone like her.

God Bless Her and her
Family



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make a difference
rebuild lives and strengthen communities

DIFFERENCE MAKERS

**Homelessness...
to transitional housing...
to permanent home.**

We start and end with home. No American veteran should have to sleep on the streets.

Be a *Difference Maker* with us by making a donation now or planning for one through your will or estate that will support generations to come.

Please contact Diana Anderson at Volunteers of America of Indiana for information on ways you can become a difference maker! Call 317.686.5807 or danderson@voain.org

Always consult your legal or tax advisor regarding charitable gift and estate planning.



THIS IS WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO.™