

2022 Spring Newsletter

**BETHLEHEMHOUSING.CA** 

# Empowering Our Clients



### Meet our Resilient Community Support Staff

Bethlehem Housing and Support Services has been serving the Niagara community for 33 years. Our dedicated team of Community Support Workers (CSW) play a vital role in helping our clients achieve stable housing.

We want you to hear the voices of our Support Staff, and what it means to be a Support Worker for BHSS.

"An important role, that I as a CSW consider to be one of the most important, is to listen, advocate for and follow through in the best interest of the client obtaining housing help". To be a Support Worker for Bethlehem Housing and Support Services means having the ability to serve in collaboration with our community. "What's great about providing support through Bethlehem is that I can meet that client where they are and walk with them through their journey."

Our team has stayed resilient through the many challenges and increased barriers with the ongoing pandemic and now the high cost of living, "The biggest challenge for me is the restrictions due to COVID in meeting the person one on one, to be able to hear and see their issues in order to help them with the next steps". Our team's creative efforts brought the Bethlehem community back together, "We now offer weekly Coffee Time at each building, pop up Fresh Food Markets, and gardening plots to help with food security".

The goals as a team are to continue to work together coherently to offer our clients and tenants the best service possible following our mission statement and values. "There are many rewarding aspects to my job but there are two that inspire me even when the role becomes heavy or challenging at times. The first is when families complete the transitional housing program and have worked hard and invested themselves into the groups and workshops - it is incredible to see the difference that our supports and our community partners make in individuals lives. The second, is that I can serve in the community that I grew up in".

As Bethlehem continues to grow with the prospect of a new building and new clients who need our support, we want to thank our Support Staff for all the amazing work that they continue to do for the Niagara community.

## Housing Hero Summer Party



#### You are invited!

Summer is just around the corner and we've been locked up long enough...

Join us at our summer party open house on Saturday, June 18, 2022 from 4:00PM-8:00PM at Lock Street Brewing Company for an evening of live music and celebrate all of our supporters as Housing Hero's!

Want to know the best part? This event is completely FREE to attend! Bring your family and friends. No registration is required to attend this event. However, feel free to RSVP if you'd like to receive event reminders and updates!

Proceeds from Lock Street's food and beverage sales will be donated back to Bethlehem.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Visit: bethlehemhousing.ca/housingherosummerparty to RSVP



## Message & Reflections

#### Why are we growing again?

The need for affordable housing in Niagara is great and increasing every day. Affordability is a very big economic topic for everyone, and it is affecting families, young people, seniors, people with complex needs and disabilities at low to mid-level incomes.

The greatest impact is on the most vulnerable low-income households in our community. They are being left further and further behind. We know this to be true because we see it every day. We receive daily desperate calls from people looking for affordable housing and support services. **There are over 500 families and individuals on Bethlehem's waitlist.** 

Housing First is a strategy that acknowledges people who are at risk need to be safely and suitably housed before they can succeed in other areas such as, employment, education, and family relationships. But housing is only the first important step in supporting families that seek to get on that path.

Without housing plus supports for vulnerable families, quite frankly, there is very little hope. Once housed, their journey often requires targeted supportive services to build back their quality of life and sustain their housing over the long term, such as:

- Problem solving, goal setting, advocacy, and developing good life skills.
- Connections and referrals to community services and supports.
- Targeted support for women and their families who have been impacted by and are victims of domestic violence.
- · Administrative housing assistance to navigate the system and learn how to be a good tenant.

Bethlehem delivers a supportive affordable housing model that works! Your contribution changes lives by providing one-to-one supports every day and for as long as it is needed for families and individuals to rebuild their lives and stay housed.

Together we need to do more! If we as a community want to solve the affordable housing crisis for as many families as we can. Non-profit housing organizations like Bethlehem Housing and Support Services, are well positioned to be the best solution providers.

Bethlehem retains affordable housing over the long term by making affordable housing deals that last decades – we will never remove families from their housing to conduct renovations. **You can make sure of it**, by investing in long term supportive housing through your donations to Bethlehem!

Bethlehem receives some government funding for programs and some tenants qualify to receive rent subsidies, but it is not enough to do everything that we know needs to be done. The most vulnerable individuals and families in our community need you! We need you! Please, be a part of our growing story!

Lori Beech
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### Geneva Project

## Breaking Ground

### It's Spring and we are poised for growth again!

Bethlehem Housing and developer partners Penn Terra Group are building another affordable housing project together at 320 Geneva Street in St. Catharines.

This property will offer over 200 mixed affordable housing units that will include over 50 affordable ownership townhomes in partnership with Habitat for Humanity, and 150 to 180 affordable rental apartments managed under the Bethlehem Housing and Support Services program.

We will partner with the Niagara Region, the City of St. Catharines, and other community service agencies to deepen affordability for many of families who will call this address home. A true multi-partner solution that we are proud to be part of once again! You too can play a part in this next chapter of our growing story!





## pennterra







Our Housing Heroes are creating a vibrant, caring and inclusive Niagara by using their time, talent or treasure to raise funds and awareness about Affordable Housing. Businesses, Individuals, Families, Sponsors and Groups are making an impact by contributing in unique ways.

Do you believe everyone should have access to affordable housing? If you do, you might be a Housing Hero. We need heroes like you to take the initiative and take action. What can you do? Your options are just about endless. You can donate directly or,... you can go all in and run your own fundraising initiative.

How can you have a greater impact? By being an ambassador and engaging your community of friends, family and colleagues to join you in your Housing Hero efforts! After all, fundraising is always more fun when you're doing it with your friends! Get inspired today and be part of the solution.



#### **Revel Charity Ball**

Revel Realty will be hosting their 2nd Annual Charity Ball on Friday, June 3, 2022, and Bethlehem Housing is their charity of choice!

This event is recognized as one of the grandest social events of the year in support of those who need a home.



#### Niagara Curling

Niagara Junior Curling League wrapped up a great inaugural season. Thanks to support from Curling Canada Grassroots grants, they were able to pay it forward by making a donation of \$950.00 to Bethlehem Housing and Support Services!

Niagara Junior Curling League are Housing Heros!



#### Niagara Jeep Fest

The Niagara Area Jeep Club will be hosting their 5th Annual Niagara Jeep Fest on Saturday, September 17th, 2022, and Bethlehem Housing will once again be their charity of choice!

See **niagarajeepfest.ca** for all information and event updates.

You too can become a Housing Hero!

Contact us to learn more. 905.641.1660 housinghero.ca

#BeAHousingHero

VISIT BETHLEHEMHOUSING.CA AND SUBSCRIBE TO OUR MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER FOR STORIES AND UPDATES



