

Five New Opportunities for Change



Names have been changed for anonymity.

Cedar House, unlike our other units, is our first supportive housing apartments dedicated to women transitioning from persistent homelessness to stable housing. With weekly house meetings and coordinated case management, each person creates short- and long-term goals to begin their journey to stability and self-sufficiency.

When the doors opened, five women, with different backgrounds, ages, and stories were able to move into their new homes. While their names are changed, we wanted to share a little about their stories and the incredible opportunities their new home is already providing.

Tanya was first referred to Willis Dady in the fall of 2020 after experiencing homelessness for years. With no support network in the area, Cedar House was the first opportunity for *Tanya* to gain true stability. *Tanya* is not afraid to admit that she struggled for many years and that housing always seemed like a far off dream, until she learned about Cedar House and the support she would be provided.

Rebecca was diagnosed with lung cancer one month before signing her lease at Cedar House. She had experienced homelessness for years, often being able to sleep on a friend's couch for a night or two before being told that she couldn't stay there any longer. She stayed in shelters off and on, but was never able to find a place to call home, until Cedar House.

Joanna and her husband were a team, taking on the world together, until he lost his battle with mental health, completing suicide in 2018. *Joanna's* mental health took a turn for the worse, and she ended up losing everything she had. Cedar House is the first step in the right direction for her, a new opportunity to change her life, after so many years of struggle and pain.

Sarah aged out of foster care without any family support. She lacked the skills needed to support herself and maintain housing. Initially, she moved into an apartment on her own, but quickly learned she lacked the skills needed to maintain the housing long-term. After losing her first apartment, she slept outside until she was able to transition to safe, stable housing at Cedar House.

Jessica has struggled with substance abuse and homelessness for most of her life. Choosing to self-medicate to assist her in overcoming the traumas she experienced as a child, she believed she would never find housing if she wasn't sober, and that she would never be sober if she didn't have safe housing. When she

learned about Cedar House, she realized it was an opportunity for her to achieve both.

Upon moving in, *Tanya* immediately jumped into action. She applied for all of the benefits she is eligible for, including health insurance and food stamps. She is a comfort to the other women in the house as she loves to listen and support others.

Rebecca cried while signing her lease, knowing that she would finally have a safe place to rest her head. And we are happy to announce that her last scheduled chemotherapy appointment occurred this month!

Joanna is ready for a new start on life. She is in awe everyday that she has been given an opportunity to change her life again.

Sarah is working with local organizations and learning how to be successful in housing and daily life skills. She is grateful to have the support she needs to be successful long-term.

Jessica is continuing to work on her sobriety. She is overjoyed to have a safe place to return to after treatments, and an opportunity to start new.

While each of these women work on ending their own cycles of homelessness and find ways to become self-sufficient, Willis Dady is proud to provide a safe and stable place for them.



Millie Achey

Housing Case Manager

Director's Notes from our Development Director

I began my journey at Willis Dady Homeless Services in December of 2015 and I never could have anticipated what a large portion of my heart this agency would take up. Every day, I wake up and come into work overjoyed to be a part of this organization. I am incredibly proud of our top-rated services for individuals and families experiencing homelessness or near-homelessness, and for the community surrounding Willis Dady, too.

In February of 2021, I stepped into the role of Development Director at Willis Dady. Prior to this change I thought I knew the importance donors, volunteers, and advocates had on our agency, but it was not until I dove into Development that I recognized just how important each and every one of you are to our mission.

We know the past few years have been a roller coaster ride, filled with ups and downs, twists and turns. The beginning of the pandemic called for additional funds to be spent, and therefore additional money to be raised, in order to cover the cost of PPE and cleaning supplies. The damage the Derecho caused required us to call in every volunteer we knew to help cleanup. We asked you to assist us in making sure we could continue to serve our clients with exceptional care during trying times for everyone. And you did more than we could have ever imagined.

I laugh that I wasn't a crier, until I stepped into this position. Now, I tear up on a regular basis, because I realize that Willis Dady isn't just a huge spot in my heart; it is a huge spot in your heart too. Thank you for recognizing how important Willis Dady is for so many people experiencing or near-homelessness, and thank you for helping us continue to empower clients to break the cycle of homelessness and become self-sufficient.



Azina
Development Director

Giving Tuesday Spotlights:

Thank you to everyone who joined us on Giving Tuesday this year! We set an ambitious goal of having 35 people join us as monthly givers. Although, we did not reach our goal, we are incredibly grateful for everyone who participated. We raised more than **\$4,500 from individual, one time gifts**, and had **23 individuals** join us with a pledged monthly gift. Thank you to the following individuals and families who joined us as monthly givers:

- Linda P.
- Jean S.
- Christine L.
- Elyse A.
- Alicia F.
- Matt S.
- Breck V.
- Lauren W.
- Emily Z.
- Vicki B.
- Jamie L..
- Kristin G.
- Andy A.
- Kari C.
- Stephanie L.
- Marilyn M.
- Rebecca J.
- Brody W.
- David S.
- John C.
- Sue O.
- Daniel W.

To become a monthly giver go to www.WillisDady.org/Donate or contact us at Development@WillisDady.org



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Our Mission

To provide shelter and prevention services to the homeless and near-homeless.

Our Vision

To empower clients to break their cycle of homelessness and become self-sufficient.



We are proud to display the names of those memorialized and honored by our donors from September 15, 2021-December 5, 2021

In Honor:

Cassie Dohmen
Jeannie Dvorsky
Nick Lenane
Ashlyn & Ron Lough
Bonnie Paulsen
Jeff & Tammy Tronvold
Dale Wirtjes

In Memory:

Sue Ellen Gardner
David Harris
Michael Kacher
Deborah Levin
Inez Pancratz
JP Ranck
Beverly Weyland
Howard Zimmon

Donation Spotlight

This year we reached out for support in providing an incredible holiday for our clients. Individuals, families, businesses, and organizations stepped up to assist us in doing so!



Thank you to everyone who brought in a backpack, wrapped gift, or an item needed in shelter.

Volunteer Spotlight

Willis Dady was incredibly honored to have so many people join us in preparing and serving a Thanksgiving meal for our clients at the Community Overflow Shelter and at our Emergency Shelter. Thank you for sharing your holiday with our clients!



If you would like to learn how you can support our clients through donating or volunteering at our Christmas Meal, please reach out to Sierra at 319-362-7555 or email Sierra@WillisDady.org

How You Can Help...

Volunteer



Volunteers with Willis Dady provide essential duties and much-needed program support every day. Interested in learning more? Go to www.WillisDady.org/volunteer or email our Volunteer & Operations Coordinator at Volunteer@WillisDady.org

Donate Items



We welcome goods donations! Whether they are purchased or gently used, these donations are needed daily. For a complete list of items visit www.WillisDady.org/donate, search our Amazon Wishlist, or follow us on Facebook to learn more.

Leave a Legacy



When you join our Welborn Society, you provide housing stability for years to come. Please contact Emily at Emily@WillisDady.org or by calling 319-651-8798 to learn more about how you can leave a lasting legacy.

Amazon Smile



Have you heard of Amazon Smile? When you shop Amazon through Amazon.Smile.com a percentage of your purchase goes back to the charity of your choice. Visit Amazon.Smile.com and select Willis Dady as your charity to start giving back as you shop.

Follow Us



Follow our Social Media pages to stay up to date on our current needs and all things Willis Dady! We love to receive comments, likes, and shares. Please join us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.



Financial Gifts



We couldn't keep our doors open without your support. **Thank you!** More than a quarter of our annual operating budget is funded by YOU, our incredible Willis Dady family.

Give Securely at www.WillisDady.org/Donate or mail a check to Willis Dady at 1247 4th Ave SE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52403



In conjunction with Willis Dady Emergency Shelter

1247 4th Ave SE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52403

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Willis Dady Swag

Our swag is still available on Bonfire.com! Join us in getting some comfortable clothing that gives back to Willis Dady. We have raised over \$300 from sales and received even more compliments on how awesome the clothing options are.



[Bonfire.com/store/WillisDady](https://bonfire.com/store/WillisDady)

Gold Star Award Recipient



Willis Dady Homeless Services was recently recognized for our commitment to transparency and accountability with a 2021 Gold Seal on our GuideStar Nonprofit Profile!

For non-profits, the importance of transparency and accountability cannot be overstated. We strive to manage government funds, grants, and gifts from private donors in a way that honors the spirit of those contributions and makes the most of every dollar.

Earning the 2021 Gold Seal from Guidestar means Willis Dady shared important information with the public using our profile on the Guidestar website. Now, our community members and potential donors can find in-depth information about our goals, strategies, capabilities, and progress.