

shelter & stability

Summer
2021

News from Willis Dady Homeless Services



From Shelter to Stability

JAMES'S JOURNEY OUT OF CRISIS



James came into the Overflow Shelter in March of 2020. He was 18 and still a senior in high school. After several nights at the Overflow Shelter, he moved to the Willis Dady Emergency Shelter, which was a better fit for someone as young as he was. He didn't have ID, a birth certificate, and didn't even know his social security number. We realized quickly how hard it was to accomplish anything towards getting him on a path towards stable housing and self-sufficiency without this information.

This is a situation many of our clients find themselves in. Without vital documents, it's a vicious cycle. They need ID to get a birth certificate, and they need a birth certificate to get an ID. And they need an ID to do just about anything. Over the course of the next several weeks we searched for a way to get his birth certificate from Cook County, Illinois. With the pandemic raging at that time, government offices were closed, or very limited in what services they could provide. Everything moved even more slowly than usual.

Without ID and without a social security number, getting James access to much needed resources like Medicaid and food stamp

benefits was impossible. Getting a job or going to school was also out of the question.

While we worked through these barriers, we were able to identify housing for James through our Rapid Rehousing program. He successfully transitioned from shelter into his own apartment. I continued to support James to help him break down other barriers and become self-sufficient during this time.

We finally came upon the idea of getting a copy of his school records, which had his photo, and using that as a form of ID when applying for his birth certificate. We had our doubts on whether it would work, but we didn't have any other options. We finally succeeded in getting a copy of his school record emailed to him, and we printed that out and included that as a form of identification with his birth certificate application. It did work and his birth certificate finally arrived in September of 2020.

Not knowing his social security number, we had to work with the Social Security Administration over a matter of weeks. They are rightfully resistant to sending out a person's social security number without ensuring that the person requesting it is who they say they are. After finally getting the birth certificate, we were able to ensure them that James was who he said he was and the Social Security Administration issued James a Social Security Card.

After several months of working our way through various governmental agencies, James finally had his birth certificate and social security card in hand, and we were able to get him a state issued ID, which opened up many opportunities that were closed to him without these documents. Through a Willis Dady employment program, he went to work for Frontier Coop. He opened a bank account. He was able to get food benefits which meant he had a stable and predictable source for food. And then this last January he enrolled as a full time student at Kirkwood Community College. In March of 2021, he moved into student housing and was able to pay for that housing himself through student loans and grants.

There were a lot of days that felt like we were making no progress, but each little step got us just a little bit closer to a successful outcome. There are still a lot of barriers we are working through, and there have been successes and failures along the way, but James is on a path to leading a stable and self-sufficient life. This is the kind of success that the team at Willis Dady tries to create everyday.

-Wes Shirley,
Street Outreach Case Manager



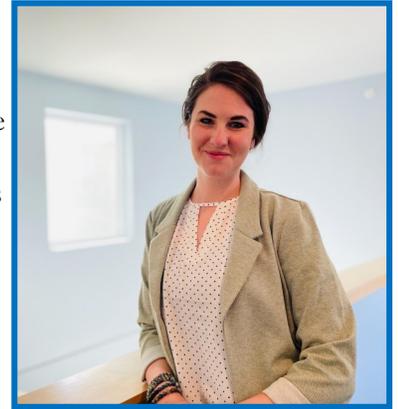
Generous gifts from our donors make it possible for these successes to continue. Thank you!

Director's Notes

This summer has been a busy one for Willis Dady. We started it with the closure of the Linn county Overflow shelter that had been open since November 2019 in May, worked diligently to keep individuals sleeping outside safe in the bearing heat, and just a couple of months ago shared the exciting news about Willis Dady Works. An opportunity for individuals and families experiencing or near homelessness to become stable and self-sufficient.

The Willis Dady Works project began in 2019 when we received a donation from an anonymous donor to start an Employment Hub: paid work, training, and one-on-one case management for individuals with high barriers to attaining employment on their own. At Willis Dady we recognize the importance of paid employment and how a steady income is necessary to maintaining stable housing. We also recognize that a portion of our clients are able and willing to work but have barriers that stand in their way from being ready for employment. Our Employment Program will work with each individual to identify their barriers and begin to break those down, whether it is physical health, mental health, substance use, criminal background, lack of education or work history, or a combination; we know everyone deserves the right to support themselves in becoming successful long-term. We are so proud of the support we have received from local corporations, businesses, and individual donors to bring Willis Dady Works to life. If you'd like to learn more about this project, go online to willis-dady.org/willis-dady-works or see more from me on Page 7 of this newsletter.

Looking into the fall we are excited for what is to come. As the weather grows cooler we are honored to be a part of the Linn County Overflow Shelter again this year as the staffing agent. The relationships and services provided to our clients at the overflow shelter are critical during the cold months, and we're glad to be a support for individuals and families experiencing homelessness in our community. In October we will be hosting our 9th Annual Run & Ride on October 23rd and wrapping up our Hops for Housing 2021 events. Thank you to everyone who has registered, volunteered, or shared a pint with us so far! These fundraisers not only support our shelter, but the incredible employment, housing, homeless prevention, and street outreach programs that help hundreds of individuals and families in our community. We look forward to seeing you out at our Hops for Housing nights, or bright and early at Run & Ride!



Alicia Faust, Executive Director

Volunteer Spotlight

Haley Cummings & Maddie Smith

We are incredibly grateful for the support we have received this summer from two incredible women, Haley & Maddie. Both chose to spend this summer volunteering with Willis Dady! Haley joined us through the AmeriCorps VISTA Program as our Communications Liaison. She has been invaluable at putting together resources and using them to implement new trainings with our front desk volunteers. Maddie joined Willis Dady as a summer intern with our Employment Program and has been developing new programs for Willis Dady Works, including a dress for success clothing closet and research on social enterprise best practices. They have both gone above and beyond for Willis Dady, creating blog posts, social media campaigns, and have shown a general dedication and commitment to our mission. We wish them the best of luck as they return to their second year of college, Haley will be returning to UNI to continue her studies in Nonprofit Administration, and Maddie to Macalester College where she is studying Economics.





Officers

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WillisDady.org **To Find Shelter:**
319-362-7555 319-366-7999

Our Mission

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

Our Vision

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

How You Can Help ...

Volunteer With Us

Volunteers with Willis Dady provide essential duties and much-needed program support every day. Our current openings are in our Overnight Assistant, Receptionist, Guest Blog Writer, Delivery Volunteer, Construction and Renovation, Donation Room, and our Client Callback positions.

Check our website www.willisdady.org/volunteer for the most up-to-date information as our needs grow and change. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to our Volunteer 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 willisdady.org/donate, search Amazon for our Wish List, or follow us on Facebook for the most updated needs!

Leave a Legacy

When you leave a legacy gift through Welborn Society, you provide housing stability for future generations. Please contact Emily at 319-651-8798 or Emily@WillisDady.org to learn more about the Welborn Society.

Use Amazon Smile



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

Follow Us



Make sure you are following our social media pages to stay up to date on our current needs and all things Willis Dady! We are active on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Make a Financial Gift

We couldn't keep our doors open without you. *Thank you!*

More than a **quarter** of our annual operating budget is funded by YOU, our generous Willis Dady family.

Give securely at willisdady.org/donate or

**Mail a check payable to Willis Dady to
1247 4th Ave SE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52403**

We are proud to display the names of those memorialized and honored by our donors Feb. 1, 2021 —

In Memory:

Clayton Chalstrom

Elinor Day

Gary E. Fisher

Gary Leo Halva

Deborah Levin

Joseph Pfiffner

Joseph Sindelar

JP Ranck

Pamela Touchberry

Robert E. Ford

Ruth E. Karpenske

Sue Patton

In Honor:

Andy Squires

Jack Veach

Thank You for honoring those who have had an impact in your life through a gift to Willis Dady!

Donation Spotlight!

Thank you, Alicia, Nathan, Amy and Emily!

These incredible staff and board members have joined the Welborn Society! We are so excited to have you in the fight against homelessness for the long haul. Learn more about leaving your legacy through the Welborn Society by contacting Emily at 319-651-8798 or by emailing Emily@WillisDady.org.



All Saints Catholic Church

This May, All Saints Catholic Church donated 23 cots and 24 pillows to the Community Overflow Shelter. With the extended 2020 Community Overflow Shelter season, many of the cots that had been used year by year began breaking down with long-term use. We are so grateful that All Saints Catholic Church filled this crucial need for our clients and provided a comfortable place for them to sleep at the overflow shelter.



Organization Collaboration Brings Clients to Safety



Willis Dady's Street Outreach team collaborates with numerous agencies and organizations on a regular basis to best support our clients. Recently, they were able to help two women move from sleeping outside with an abusive partner to a safe location where they could begin working towards gaining their own housing and becoming self-sufficient.

Our Street Outreach Case Managers work to build rapport with every client to best assist them in moving from the streets to housing and stability. The first of the two women had been working with our team for over a year and when she recognized that she was ready to leave her abusive partner she turned to our Street Outreach team, because she trusted them. They immediately connected her to Waypoint's Domestic Violence program, and they quickly moved her off

the streets, away from her partner, and to a safe location where she can begin working towards stability.

The second woman followed suit after seeing the success our team had in assisting the first woman. This woman was in a tougher situation, as her partner was physically present. He began to escalate and become irate, but our Library Support Navigator was able to intervene and de-escalate the situation. Our team got the woman safely to one of our Street Outreach Case Managers vehicles in order to transport her to a safe location. They sat in the vehicle for hours coordinating transportation with an organization out of town, Friends of the Family. When it was time to go, she needed her phone and wallet, both of which her abusive partner had. Our Library Support Navigator and myself were able to speak to the man and convince him to provide us with her property. With those items she was on her way to a safe location, where she could also begin working towards breaking her cycle in homelessness too.

-Aaron Terrones, Support Services Director



Willis Dady's 9th Annual Run & Ride Festival

Join Us On Saturday Oct. 23rd

Willis Dady is so excited to bring back our Annual Run & Ride Festival this year. We will be at the Prairie Park Fishery this year with some fun new additions to get the whole family involved! Learn more below, at the QR code to the right, or by going online to www.willisdady.org/events



5k / 10K Run

We have our 5k and 10k competitive runs! Registration starts at 8:00AM, with awards for the races at 10:00AM. Register today for \$30.00 to get your t-shirt!

Kids Ride-A-Thon givebutter.com/WDRun2021.

How many laps can you do in 5 minutes? Sign your child up to participate in the first ever Kids Ride-A-Thon and become a Changemaker for Willis Dady!

Riders will see how many laps they can complete around a circle course based on their age in 5 minutes. Have friends, family, neighbors and coworkers pledge to donate per lap completed, or give a general donation to support your child's ride! Learn more and register online at the webpage above.

Volunteer With Us!

We are looking for volunteers to join us for the Run & Ride Festival! We have opportunities to help with race and ride-a-thon check in, timing participants, and set up/tear down! If you are interested in volunteering, reach out to our Volunteer Coordinator, Sierra, at Volunteer@WillisDady.org. or give her a call at **319-362-7555**.

SATURDAY
Oct. 23rd
AT PRAIRIE PARK FISHERY
\$30 5K OR 10K RUN REGISTRATION
\$5 RIDE-A-THON REGISTRATION
Register Today!
GIVEBUTTER.COM/
WDRUN2021

SPONSORED BY:
Collins Aerospace Shuttleworth & Sons
UnityPoint Health Cedar Rapids Lisa's Place
AND YOU? EMAIL EMILY@WILLISDADY.ORG

New Volunteer Opportunity: Shopping Volunteer!

What is a Shopping Volunteer?

A Shopping Volunteer at Willis Dady is a new volunteer opportunity that allows you to give back while running your errands. You can get involved today by adding one of our high-need items to your grocery shopping list and pick it up when you're out shopping. You can drop it off to Willis Dady when you're already out and about, or if you do you shopping online, you can have it shipped straight to us!

Key responsibilities include:

- Meet with our Volunteer Coordinator to learn about Willis Dady's needs.
- Commit to purchasing a high-need item to donate to Willis Dady on a regular basis. (Example items: paper towels, toilet paper, pillows, 13-gallon trash bags, 55-gallon trash bags, cases of water, laundry pods, razors)
- Purchase or have the donation shipped to Willis Dady.



This is a very **flexible commitment!** All we ask is to know how often you'll be delivering the item you sign up for. It could be weekly, biweekly, or monthly. (Any other length of time will be considered a valuable donation but not recorded as a shopping volunteer.) Check our website www.willisdady.org/volunteer for the most up-to-date information as our needs grow and change. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to our Volunteer & Operations Coordinator, Sierra, at Sierra@WillisDady.org or 319-362-7555.

Hops for Housing 2021

12 Pints, 12 Nights, & Great Times Until Oct. 31st

This year's Hops for Housing fundraiser has been a blast! With your \$35.00 ticket, you get 12 free pints across Eastern Iowa to support local! So far we have raised over \$20,000 for Willis Dady, and we still have a whole month left to go! Come join us at the following nights to redeem your free Hops for Housing ticket pint with us from 6-8pm on the following Thursday nights:

- **October 14th** at Big Grove Brewery in Iowa City, IA
- **October 21st** at Parlor City in Cedar Rapids, IA (redeem your Single Speed Brewing Company pint!)
- **October 28th** at Iowa Brewing Company in Cedar Rapids, IA

Learn more about this event and get your tickets today at willisdady.org/events (or at the QR code to the right)



Willis Dady Works Q&A

Have you heard about Willis Dady Works? In July we publicly announced this new project to expand our Employment and housing programs. We're We are excited to offer additional opportunities that directly support our clients in becoming self-sufficient. . Learn more about this project through the following Q&A below, or online at <https://www.willisdady.org/willis-dady-works>

Why The Expansion To Include Willis Dady Works?

Willis Dady recognized the need to provide additional support and opportunity to individuals and families with high barriers to becoming self-sufficient. We know the importance that steady income has on stable housing and that a lack of appropriate employment can lead to repeated bouts of homelessness and continued poverty. We are also aware of the lack of affordable housing in our community, and how beneficial it can be for individuals and families who have experienced persistent homelessness. Willis Dady is incredibly proud to provide these new opportunities for our clients and our community.

Who Will Be Served At Willis Dady Works?

Anyone who is experiencing or near homelessness can be referred by a Willis Dady or partner agency case manager to our Employment Hub. We currently partner with the 6th Judicial District, Waypoint Services, Young Parents Network, Creating Futures, and many more organizations. Individuals participating in our trainings for high-demand fields will be unemployed or underemployed, while individuals participating in our Social Enterprise program will be unemployed and with high barriers to gaining employment. Our Supportive Housing units will be specific to individuals and families who have experienced persistent homelessness.



How Does This Support The Community?

Willis Dady Works will address community needs and gaps in employment opportunities and affordable housing. We believe that through the right forms of support, stability, and opportunity, anyone can move themselves out of poverty to self-sufficiency.

How Is Willis Dady Works Funded?

This project was funded through numerous grants. We are incredibly grateful for the support we have received from our community to make this project successful and nearly 100% funded.

Learn more about this project online at <https://www.willisdady.org/willis-dady-works>



How Did The Willis Dady Works Expansion Begin?

Exclusive Director's Note from Alicia Faust

Willis Dady Homeless Services is incredibly proud to announce Willis Dady Works. This project began in 2019, when we received a donation from an anonymous donor to start an Employment Hub: paid work, training, and one-on-one case management for individuals with high barriers to attaining employment on their own. At Willis Dady we recognize the importance of paid employment and how a steady income is necessary to maintaining stable housing. We also recognize that a portion of our clients are able and willing to work but have barriers that stand in their way from being ready for employment. Our Employment Program will work with each individual to identify their barriers and begin to break those down, whether it is physical health, mental health, substance use, criminal background, lack of education or work history, or a combination; we know everyone deserves the right to support themselves in becoming successful long-term.

When Willis Dady first began searching for a building to house the Employment Hub, we came across the old Chandler Pump Co. building. A historic, brick building on the NW side of town, with 7,100 square feet on the main floor to house the Employment Hub, and 7,100 square feet on the 2nd floor, it seemed like a perfect fit to include 13 Supportive Housing units. The units would include space for individuals, couples, and families, as well as an office space for a full-time case manager. Willis Dady has been growing our Supportive Housing units since 2018, as we know that many individuals and families experiencing persistent homelessness cannot make the transition to stable housing without the support of one-on-one case management. We have seen incredible success in our other programs and recognize the lack of this opportunity in Linn County and decided this would be the time to add additional units to support those experiencing persistent homelessness.

We began planning and working with a project team lead, construction team, architect, and the community on a private capital campaign to bring our vision to life. Shortly after the planning was finalized the August 10 Derecho destroyed the 2nd floor of the Chandler Pump Co. building. As a resilient agency, we did not want to shut this project down due to 140 mph winds. We understand the importance of Willis Dady Works for our clients and wanted to make sure we could still provide them with the opportunities they need to become self-sufficient. A few days after the storm, Willis Dady was presented with our own opportunity. The chance to buy the old McLanahan building, located on the same plot of land as the Chandler Pump Co. building, but facing 1st Avenue. The price had been decreased dramatically due to minimal storm damage and the insurance coverage McLanahan received. We jumped on the opportunity, brought our team back together, and began recalculating our plans. We decided to move the Employment Hub to the 1st Avenue location and to continue moving forward with the 13 Supportive Housing units on the sound foundation of the Chandler Pump Building. One year after the Derecho, we announced this project publicly. We have raised 95% of our 3.24-million-dollar funding goal and are ready to begin construction on both properties.

I am proud to lead an agency that is as resilient as our clients and does not back down when we know an important opportunity is available for us. Check out www.willisdady.org/willis-dady-works to learn more about this exciting project.

Alicia Faust, Executive Director