

# SHELTER & STABILITY

## WILLIS DADY HOMELESS SERVICES

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## BRIAN'S JOURNEY TO STABILITY

A childhood of abuse, neglect, severe dyslexia, and drug use set Brian on a rocky path. "The first time I ran away I really expected my parents to be worried about me, to come find me, but... when I came home they didn't even notice I was gone." During this time his drug use grew. "I began smoking pot at 8, I believe I was 11 when I first tripped on acid, and then by 14 I started doing cocaine, 17 methamphetamine, and 19 heroin." Drugs helped Brian survive with little as he escaped his abusive home." After a near death experience from a physical assault and liver failure, Brian asked to be taken to substance use treatment. "If I hit the streets again, I know what is going to happen: I'm going right back to drugs." The next several years continued to be a fight for Brian as he struggled with relapses and setbacks.

Our Street Outreach Case Manager Wes listened to Brian's story, and when Brian shared that he was a bad person, Wes interrupted him and said, "you're a good person, you've just done some bad things." Brian started staying at the Winter Overflow Shelter that year and reflected that "Overflow saved my life a bunch of times; I would have frozen to death out there." A Rapid Rehousing Case Manager worked with Brian to get him on Section 8, allowing him to afford his apartment as his rental assistance ended in our program.



Today 55-year-old Brian has been sober for 18 months, has become a Lead in our Mattress Recycling program, and has remained stably housed. Since 2020 Brian has been working in our Employment Services program through paid opportunities to rebuild stability.

Working at Willis Dady has given him a supportive environment to maintain his sobriety, avoid triggering situations, and drive to make the Mattress Recycling program successful. "It's a safe place to work; we've got nowhere but up to go with it!"

Brian is excited about the idea of moving on from Section 8. He's proud of being able to make more money through employment to cover more of his expenses. "I make enough money to pay for my own groceries, pay for my cat's food, and I can even do more than that now."

*Generous gifts from our donors make it possible for these successes to continue!*



## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT:

Thank you to all of the volunteers who helped with Hops for Housing on April 12th!

The day before the event, volunteers from Holmes Murphy and Cedar Rapids Bank & Trust gathered to assemble pretzel necklaces for event attendees. The day of the event we welcomed 38 volunteers who served a combined total of over 80 hours. They volunteered in roles ranging from setup and teardown to check-in and handing out our signature pretzel necklaces. In particular, we want to thank the Parrot Heads - fans of Jimmy Buffet - who volunteer every year at Hops. The event wouldn't be the same without their enthusiasm for service and good local brews. This year eight Parrot Heads volunteers at Hops. Thank you to everyone who supported Hops!

### Board of Directors 2024 Board Officers

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## LETTER FROM OUR SHELTER DIRECTOR

*Denine*



Beginning this spring we have several client trainings and events coming up! We're excited to have ASAC's Outreach team facilitating our 1<sup>st</sup> ongoing educational class on substance abuse at our Emergency Shelter. We'll also have Amy from ASAC facilitating our 2<sup>nd</sup> Trauma Informed Care Training at our Willis Dady Works location. CRUSH Iowa will begin a bi-weekly support group at Shelter. This started with our Veteran clients and recently expanded to all agency clients. Riverview Center will also reinstate their onsite classes in June at Shelter and Willis Dady Works. These are all needed supports that will assist clients in gaining long term success.

The Overflow season has ended and the shelter closed on March 31<sup>st</sup>. We had a successful season with many clients making connections to resources such as health care, mental health services, substance use support, connections to shelter, housing options, and case management. We had several clients who worked with rapid rehousing throughout the season and are now housed. On March 28<sup>th</sup>, a few days before the Overflow Shelter closed, we held an end of season Resource Fair. Several community partners came including Waypoint, Aging Services, ASAC, Linn County Public Health, Iowa Legal Aid, and a local hair stylist who cut over 40 clients hair on this day. We hosted a barbecue and distributed numerous supplies to support clients as the shelter closed.

We also upheld a 6 yr tradition of going out into the community after the end of the Overflow season to pick up trash within the neighborhood. This always allows us the opportunity to thank the neighbors for allowing us to operate the shelter in their community. This year a neighbor came out and passed out snacks as we were picking up trash on his block. The clients and staff all thanked him for his kindness and generosity!

Your support of Willis Dady through gifts, volunteering, or other talents directly impacts the individuals and families experiencing homelessness in our community. Thank you for your support!

### OUR MISSION

To empower all experiencing homelessness to build futures of self-sufficiency through advocacy, housing, and employment.

### OUR VISION

To have a community where everyone has housing, stability, and opportunity.

# DONATION SPOTLIGHT

Thank you to the Catholic Daughters of the Americas. Their group assembled comfort bags for our clients to have basic needs items such as a toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, soap, lip balm, razor, comb, notepad, pen, and some snack foods. We appreciate receiving these because the loving touch of having something assembled by community members goes a long way in showing our clients they aren't alone.



## 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](http://www.WillisDady.org/volunteer) or email our Community Engagement Manager at [Sierra@WillisDady.org](mailto:Sierra@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](http://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 Aaron at [AaronA@WillisDady.org](mailto:AaronA@WillisDady.org) or by calling 319-362-7555 to learn more about how you can leave a lasting legacy.

### 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](http://www.WillisDady.org/Donate) or mail a check to Willis Dady at 1247 4th Ave SE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52403

**We are proud to display the names of those memorialized and honored by our donors from January 13th, 2025 - April 13th, 2025**

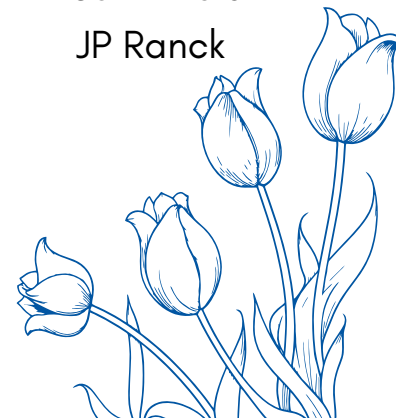
### IN MEMORY:

Beverly J. Weyland  
Bill Harnish  
Bob Rhame  
Bonnie & Okie  
Dan Rogahn  
Don & Ester Vorel  
Dorothy Higdon

Dr. Billie Willits  
Dr. Dean & Bonnie Bemus  
Garie Rae Hill  
Howard Zimmon  
John Field  
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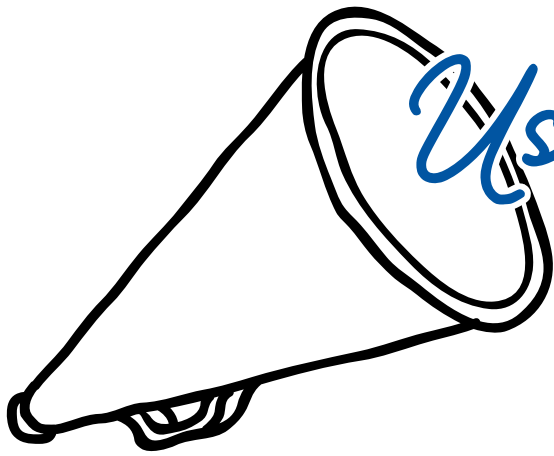
### IN HONOR:

Alicia Faust  
Arlene Sobel  
Irene Rossman  
Steve Shean



Have you ever wondered how to give a gift in honor or in memory of someone? Its easy! Write it on a note with a cash donation, in the memo line of a check, or check the box on our online form.





# Use Your Voice!

Tell legislators the things that you care about, such as homeless services, affordable housing, and nonprofit supports. Your voice is vital!

- 1** Learn who your representatives are
- 2** Contact their offices via phone/email
- 3** Stay up to date on current events and continue contacting



**Summer Fundraising Campaign:**

**Light the Way Home**  
*with Willis Dady*

*Donate Today!*

[willisdady.org/donate](http://willisdady.org/donate)





# Thank you for 10 years of Hops for Housing!

The support of our events from our community  
make fulfilling our mission possible!

Read more about the event on our blog at  
[www.willisdady.org/blog](http://www.willisdady.org/blog)

Thank you to our sponsors, volunteers, Board,  
brewery partners, musicians, and participants!

