



HOTEL INC

Community Engagement and Development

Fall 2021

Change is in the air – the leaves are turning to beautiful shades of red, orange, and yellow.



Our clocks were turned back an hour. Some additional restrictions have been removed with COVID-19. These changes are welcomed by all of us. Maybe not the clock changing but the change of the leaves and a lower COVID-19 positivity rate we can all applaud. But let's be frank – change is often hard, we often need support for it, and it is slow. Around here we call it the slow work of God.

Over the past four years we have been leaning in and out as we change not only as an organization but as people. When we first introduced the small group curriculum of *Seeking Shalom* four years ago many of us were challenged to reframe our actions and role in loving our neighbor. We have leaned in to being stretched as we grow in living out the **principles of Shalom – mutuality, participatory, holistic, mind, and impact**. Just as we think we are grasping each element we then dive into the parts of our work that still need to change.

So, if you have been reading along with us over the past four years in our newsletters or our website you too have been walking with us in our journey of change. While I can say it is professionally one of the hardest things I have ever done, I can also smile as I think about how each of us are thankful for the transformation God is doing in our lives and in HOTEL INC's role in the community.

This year as the vaccine became available it has allowed us to engage deeper with our neighbors to make space for **more change**. To begin to **build relationships** and strengthen older ones. To **share** in the work as our mission statement reads. To look at 10 years of data, assessments, surveys, and have conversations to see where **impact** was missing or needed to be improved. To begin the first year of our five-year strategic plan for **growth and development**.

I am excited to be **planning for 2022** and looking forward to sharing with the community the changes that will be happening. Partnerships being formed. **Community improvements** being made. **Voices heard** on public policy that impacts people's **opportunity to thrive** and not just survive.

For 40 years you, neighbors, congregations, businesses, and foundations have supported the mission of HOTEL INC. As we begin to wind down 2021 and ring in 2022, I pray you will continue to support us through financial contributions, in-kind donations, sponsorships, volunteering, and prayers. **It takes each of us to make the slow work of God a reality.**

~ Rhondell

Preferred Tenant Program

by Payton Hunt

Our 4th Cohort of the **Preferred Tenant Program** had many things to celebrate this fall!

Thanks to the Christ Episcopal Church, we were able to have graduation in a beautiful, large space to comfortably eat and honor the participants in the class.

Seven participants graduated by completing the eight-week program consisting of both weekly classes and navigation meetings. At the beginning of the eight weeks, four were experiencing homelessness, two were residing in motels, and one was precariously housed. Together they learned about renter's rights using the Barren River Area Renters' Handbook, setting goals, budgeting, credit, banking, and nutrition. They also met weekly with a Navigator to work on their individual goals.

During those eight weeks, they had a lot of accomplishments too! These achievements spanned from housing to health and beyond as we aim to work holistically.

- ◇ Two participants gained permanent, affordable housing and moved in the day after graduation.
- ◇ One reached the top of the city's Housing Choice Voucher list and began the process to obtain the voucher.
- ◇ One was referred for ESG (Emergency Solutions Grant) funding for housing.
- ◇ Three participants successfully signed up for Medicaid and SNAP and made appointments to reconnect with doctors.

- ◇ Two connected with mental health resources.
- ◇ One gained transportation.
- ◇ Two gained consistent employment.
- ◇ One gained cellphone access.

No matter how big or small the goal, all the participants worked hard and were persistent in fast tracking their endeavors.

Now the 5th and final Cohort of 2021 is underway for the Preferred Tenant Program, and we look forward to the continuing successes of past and future participants.



"I think the Preferred Tenant Program is an excellent way to help families with housing problems. They help individuals with financial and educational resources to find a home they can afford. The employees at HOTEL INC go above and beyond to help each person. I think the program and the employees are awesome!" — Jacquelyn



"I feel incredibly blessed with how everything worked out for me and my wife, and I'm very thankful HOTEL INC was a part of that process." — Jeff



Jack enjoyed blowing out the candles at Bruce and Lee Ann Crawley's dinner party as part of our 40th Anniversary *stay at home* Gala.

Thank you to everyone who participated in our Eat, Drink, and Be Giving celebration!

You, along with our sponsors **Anthem** and **Ridley and Hull Wealth Management Group** raised nearly 24K for us!

A Home of Their Own

by Melissa Cowles

Through the **Preferred Tenant Program** and coordination with community partners, we are approaching close to 50 households obtaining housing this year. We strive to empower individuals to have the tools to maintain their housing as well as continue to work with them through aftercare navigation. Join us in congratulating these families for their hard work and dedication to obtain and sustain their housing, health and nutrition.

Emma	Brenda	Stacey	Marchilla	Melissa	Jeff	Timothy	Edward
Alisha	Tiffany	Werhner	Tanya	Monique	Ellen	Freddy	Sarah
Jeff	Johnny	Michael	Peggy	Shimone	Louis	Ronnie	Britney
Briana	Toni	Miguel	Susan	Donald	Dalmatia	Pamela	Kelcey
Jenny	Matthew	Gerald	Michael	Carol	Bethany	Andrew	Caden
Lakeisha	Donald	Clay	Melanie	Kelly	Michael	Amy	



We are looking forward to doing the rehabilitation on this little gem through the winter. Thanks to our Community Development Block Grant with the City of Bowling Green this will be our third Transitional home.



National Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week is November 13th - November 21st.

Visit the link below to learn more and buy tickets to this year's annual chili and cornbread lunch!

www.hotelincbg.com/hhweek
= or =
www.hotelincbg.com/chili



HOTEL INC
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New Faces

My name is **Rebecca Troxell** and I have two amazing daughters that I love spending time with. I also enjoy being outdoors, reading and running. I have spent my entire career working in public education and non-profit advocacy. I began my career in Elementary Education as a Special Education teacher. I later spent several years as a Domestic Violence Survivor Advocate and a Housing Manager. My past experience in both of these fields has led me to aspire to be more involved with assisting others in a more comprehensive approach. I feel that HOTEL INC embodies that approach and I am beyond excited to be a part of such an amazing organization.



One of our past Preferred Tenant Program graduates, **Patty Lowery**, recently became our newest intern! Patty's primary role is assisting in food and nutrition, from stocking to prepping orders, and assisting other participants who are moving into housing with their first grocery shop. Patty says she loves her position here, it is very fulfilling to share her experiences with others and give back to her community. We are so thankful to have her on our team.

City Shapers BG

by Alan Casada



HOTEL INC spent the past two months gathering neighbors from Delafield and the West End to listen to their feedback as part of the Alignment Phase of City Shapers. This phase has focused on using their collective observations about relationships between neighbors while bringing residents together to align around ideas to improve these neighborhood relationships.

HOTEL INC has held two neighborhood meetings, helped to facilitate neighborhood events, conducted numerous conversations with residents, and worked with neighborhood partners, like The Foundry, to provide space for neighbors to express their ideas.

The neighbors have then worked to filter their ideas and feedback through the lenses of economic, structural, and social solutions and through asking themselves, "What is most important to me now." While it can be difficult to resist the urge to provide our own input and solutions to these themes, HOTEL INC's staff has leaned into the role of "facilitator" and it has been exciting to see the collective voice of our neighbors grow. Some of the initial feedback that they have provided has been their desire to improve the aesthetics of the housing and neighborhood, wanting more neighborhood events organized by the neighbors, and having access to a neighborhood grocery.

...their neighborhood does not deserve to be viewed as less than or treated differently than any other neighborhood in the City of Bowling Green.

Many of our neighbors, especially in the Delafield community, have rallied together to voice that their neighborhood does not deserve to be viewed as less than or treated differently than any other neighborhood in the City of Bowling Green. It can be difficult to work through this journey with our neighbors as they share their hurt and disappointment from years of feeling like they have been overlooked as a neighborhood. Still, it has been exciting to see the relationships growing between neighbors.

HOTEL INC is excited to continue listening to our neighbors through November and look forward to gathering with the other City Shaper teams in December to discuss what we have learned as being most important now to our West End neighbors.

Delafield Fall Clean-Up

by Shelley Carter and Beth Carroll

Some of our Delafield neighbors enjoyed the Delafield Block Party in July so much they were ready to throw another event for fall. Neighbors met to coordinate the neighborhood get together which was held October 30th with the theme “Fall Clean-Up.” The event focused on getting yards and homes ready for fall and winter through information about leaf pick up, planting, decorating, and weatherization.

Neighbors had an opportunity to meet other neighbors, share a meal, and begin building relationships. Some have reminisced about a time when neighbor helped neighbor and are dreaming about creating a way to build that strength in their community again. They had an opportunity to complete information about things they could do for others related to the “clean up” theme, as well as things they might need assistance with at their own homes.

The neighborhood event team also decided to have a door decoration contest. We had 7 entries throughout the neighborhood that were voted on and the winner received a \$50 Walmart gift card provided by donations to the event.

Below is a picture from one of our planning meetings and pictures of the event itself.



House Blessings

by Christy Allen - HOTEL INC Chaplain

I am so excited to be able to do **House Blessings** for our community and be able to celebrate this incredible milestone with them!

One of the things I love most about HOTEL INC is the many ways participants are supported emotionally, physically and spiritually. This opportunity just adds another layer of support and celebration.

A **House Blessing** is exactly what it sounds like, we will gather together to Bless the house and its occupants, asking God to continue to work in them and through them. This **Blessing** will also serve as a reminder of the community they have built through this process, that they now have a place to not only provide shelter but to provide them with a “sanctuary” where their hearts and lives can continue to strengthen.

This is a fitting testament to HOTEL INC's vision and values where each person is valued and has an equal opportunity to thrive and live a life of meaning and purpose as part of one community.



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