



HOTEL INC

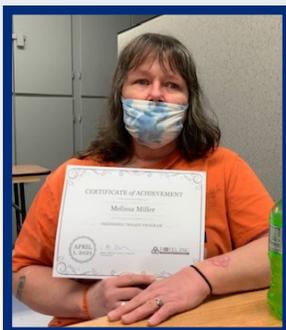
Community Engagement and Development

Spring 2021

As the first quarter of the Preferred Tenant Program for 2021 comes to an end, we can look back on the many successes of the participants. Navigating an in-person class during the pandemic is not easy, but the participants made it their own, set goals, and accomplished a lot. In the past three months, we had three class participants obtain their own housing. As we learned about budgeting and managing credit, they were putting the class material to the test in their navigation meetings to save money for housing deposits and furniture to fill their new housing. Furnishing a new place can get expensive, and we were incredibly grateful to partner with the Habitat ReStore to provide furniture vouchers as well for extra assistance. Newly housed participants were able to go to the Habitat ReStore, select the items they needed, and even request a one-time delivery for large items.



We also had three other participants receive or come to the top of the waiting list for the Housing Choice Vouchers. They each have goals to find housing in the first half of this year, and they have already accomplished an important action step for that major goal. Another goal many class participants have been working on is paying past due bills. As we all know, the pandemic has set a lot of people back financially, and money management was a big topic. Many participants were able to take the plunge in setting up payment plans, or in some cases, even making lump sum payments on bills improving not only their credit but their sense of accomplishment as well. The class participants have made a lot of progress toward their individual goals in the past 11 weeks, and I can't wait to see how far they come as we continue to work together. — Payton Hunt, Navigator



Melissa: "I am grateful for the checklist that I received in this class. Now if there is something wrong with the place I pick out, it can only be my fault."



Jenny: "I'm very grateful for this class. It has taught me so much about setting goals, and I will continue what I've learned and turn it into success."



Susan: "I enjoyed learning about renting. I now know what to check for when I look for a new place."

Local Churches Embrace *Seeking Shalom*

Seeking Shalom was a part of our education this past winter as we engaged community members with the opportunity to look at charity from a new viewpoint. This past cohort included members from community churches that are involved in outreach. The struggle to form new relationships in spite of our differences constantly enlightens us to the reality that we have more in common than we first thought. We discovered hope and opportunity as we dug deeper into giftedness while keeping our tendency to focus on deficiencies at bay. One of the key concepts of the *Seeking Shalom* course is that transformation occurs for both parties in a relationship not just the one who is living in economic poverty. I believe as we explored these new concepts we were all moved toward change. — Beth Carroll, Neighborhood Engagement Coordinator



"Seeking Shalom was such a great experience. The one thing I kept hearing was "listen" to the people you are serving. What are their needs, what are their plans, what are their abilities? Our organization is a believer in when helping hurts and not becoming a program people can't do without. The dignity of the individuals we serve is key and should be a part of the focus of each and every initiative we get involved in. We all are broken and in need. We each enter need at different levels" — Joel Hawkins

"Seeking Shalom helped me to see a different way of "giving charity"- a way that respects each person and empowers them to be all that God intends for them to be. I believe by implementing the teachings of Seeking Shalom, we can realize amazing and life changing results for individuals and our community."

"SS reinforced the need to approach charity with a mind/heart balanced approach using reasoned methodology to achieve lasting impact." — Charlie Cole

"While I was familiar with some of the basic concepts, the systematic review of principles for changing our approach to chronic material poverty was very helpful. The use of cases for applying the principles was particularly powerful. I could identify with many of the prepared video and written cases from within my own attempts to reach out to my neighbors. The final class where you guided us through an analysis of our personal cases was especially helpful. You helped me to see what might be less useful in our current work but with a very positive and constructive perspective that gave me hope and encouragement to make some changes." — Leslie Weigel



In the past, navigation was provided by separate departments: housing, medical and nutrition. Now, the Navigators support the partners in all three areas which allows a more intimate holistic approach for overall wellness.

A Familiar Face Returns



Paige Cato

HOTEL INC is an amazing place that holds a special spot in my heart. I completed my undergraduate internship at HOTEL INC in 2019 and I had such an enjoyable experience, which is why I applied for the Navigator position when I heard they were hiring! I began as a Navigator on March 15, one year after the Pandemic began, and I was shocked to see all the positive changes that have been implemented since I interned here. HOTEL INC has initiated several progressive changes, such as a holistic approach, focusing on partnerships with program participants, and emphasizing the value of empowerment.

HOTEL INC has opened my eyes to the value of working alongside others toward their goals instead of prioritizing easy solutions. HOTEL INC strives for long-term results that allow people to demonstrate their resilience and independence. HOTEL INC has also focused on their goals and objectives outlined in their Strategic Plan by educating program participants, volunteers, and staff members on the outcomes we are working toward as a team. HOTEL INC also encourages communication between everyone involved at HOTEL INC so that everyone can be heard. HOTEL INC is genuinely setting the stage in our community for partnerships and a new way of giving, and I could not be prouder to be a part of this team!

We invite you to review our 2020 Impact Report at www.hotelincbg.com/impact.

Thank you to everyone who made the past year possible.



We use the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) as the backdrop for our key measurements of impact with our partners.



Save the Date

September 23 — Empty Bowls of Bowling Green. Offering *lunch delivery* and regular dinner option.

Coordinating COVID Care



by Shelley Carter
Neighborhood Engagement

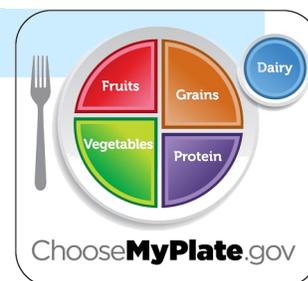
Longer days, early blooms, and a mix of warmer and cooler breezes culminating in storms tells us that Spring is here. But we were beginning to see the light return even during the dark days of winter when vaccines became available to frontline workers and our beloved 70+ population. The news mid-March that vaccine availability has opened up to everyone over the age of 16 at Med Center Health feels like a blue skies, full sun kind of day.

As we have engaged with people through the **Preferred Tenant Program**, food deliveries to those homebound, office visits, and phone calls to check on our friends and neighbors, we have made discussion about the vaccine a priority. During our conversations we have encountered individuals who have already been vaccinated, those interested but unaware how to make an appointment, or unable to, due to lack of transportation. Coordination with a local resource providing transportation has allowed those for whom a ride was their only barrier to successfully receive the vaccine. Providing phone numbers for scheduling, answering questions and sharing our own stories have helped others get scheduled. Due to health reasons, some are unable to get the vaccine and for them we must continue to be good neighbors and wear our masks as CDC guidelines suggest. We look forward to a time when engaging with our neighbors is not inhibited by COVID.

Aftercare

by Harold Bucy
Aftercare Navigator

Since I have started meeting with people in **Aftercare** we have been focusing on healthier eating habits. We begin discussing meal plans and how they might use one in planning meals before shopping and the benefits it could have on healthier food choices as well as their budget. When preparing our shopping list we try to follow the MyPlate guidelines provided by the USDA suggesting whole grains, fruits, vegetables and protein.



"The shopping experience taught me a lot and I really feel like an adult!"
—Amy

Having Meijer as a community partner has allowed me to go shopping with people once they have moved into permanent housing and shop with them to help fill their pantry with healthier options. While we are shopping we will check the nutrition label and ingredients to decide what the best option might be. It's important to look at the sodium content as well as the sugar content as many of our neighbors deal with health issues.

One shopper enjoyed canned beef stew so we discussed preparing it fresh selecting healthy cuts of beef. This reduces the sodium content and offers fresh vegetables. We also compared name brand items to store brand to determine what would be the better purchase. We were both surprised when we compared price per ounce of name brand versus store brand. Adding a variety of spices to the pantry is a great way of having flavorful, healthier options, and discovering how various spices have other health benefits makes it even more helpful and fun.

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Coffee & Conversation

- Moving into 2021 and Pandemic Recovery - April 22

Email director@hotelincbg.com by April 21 to register and for Zoom link

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