



Photos by: Darian Buck, Resident Advocate

HomeStart residents and staff make signs for the September House Us Now march.

connections

Fall 2022 • Volume 43, Number 2

After six decades and with your dedicated support, IFC is still going strong -- committed to the dream of our founders: A community that meets everyone's basic needs, including dignified and affordable housing, an abundance of healthy food, and meaningful social connection. **You continue to stand in the gap with us.** Thank you for that.

As we enter our 60th year, we are strong and steadfast -- yet we also face the substantial challenges of these times. Inflation is wreaking havoc on already fragile household budgets; skyrocketing rent is displacing our neighbors. The number of people experiencing homelessness is growing, and the economic fallout of the pandemic is a reality. We see it every day among IFC's members, shelter residents, and staff.

We know that what we need is housing for people with low income, no income, and fixed income. We need a home for the barista who makes our lattes, our restaurant server, our healthcare worker, our gardener. Our non-profit workers, school bus drivers, construction workers, and local retail workers need to live closer to their workplaces. Our seniors and neighbors with disabilities who are



Jackie Jenks
President and CEO

living outside during increasingly severe weather on both ends of the thermometer need a safe place to lay their heads.

As a community, we need to be courageous and take bolder steps if we are to realize our vision. **We dream big. We don't settle for band-aid solutions. We don't stay quiet when people are quietly suffering. That is not us.**

So what do we do? **We get fired up about affordable housing.** We center people with lived experience and truly listen to what they need. We read and share the powerful stories in this newsletter and take action:

- Vote for leaders who will support truly affordable housing.
- Contact council members and tell them that all remaining town-owned land should be considered for affordable housing, and encourage our loved ones and neighbors to do the same.

Together, we can help make our vision a reality. Imagine our buildings no longer needing to house 100 people every night. Imagine no one waiting for a hot meal, no one shopping for free groceries in order to afford medication or shoes.

*We can do this because
we dream big &
we speak up.*

capable & hopeful

Written by Antonette,
who resides at HomeStart

Before community college, I had never written an essay, because I was never taught how. In grade school, they stopped all academic programming for the kids with disabilities and solely focused on occupational classes. In order to graduate, we had to prove that we could work. They never saw us going to college because they didn't think we were smart enough. I have never been given the opportunity to reach my academic potential.

**I know I am capable,
but so many voices
told me I wasn't.**

I wish people could see my mind first. When they see my body, they assume I am broken. People become so wary upon meeting me and seeing my disability. It feels so dramatic to disclose my condition as if I were dying or something. They say to "be yourself"



as if I know what that is 99% of the time. I am almost tempted to lie that my disability was caused by some

tragic accident, because people want that story. But to say you were born like this, it forces them to confront their bias.

I often feel discouraged in finding housing. It can be overwhelming sorting out the emotional roadblocks that get in the way of the goal of housing. Usually, all I can do is take it 24 hours at a time. Before HomeStart, I was in a women's shelter in New York for two years and to come here and do it all over again has been exhausting. In New York, I had to become a person I wasn't to protect myself from the culture of that shelter. Seeing people dying from drugs and fighting for two years did something to me.

When you are a part of the vulnerable class of the people of this world, and you try to step out and create your own way of being, in an attempt to escape that class, only to be shut down is discouraging. I want to continue to be a contributor to my own future goals and stay hopeful. The hope gets me up in the morning. I want you to listen to your own voice, even if you aren't ready to speak.

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Jennifer Gill, Development and Communications Director
Mar'Lisa Wooten, Community Engagement Director

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Allan Rosen, Facilities

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Gunzo Bethea, Diallo Duffin

ACTIVATE! IFC

Quinton Harper, Activate! IFC Director

ACTIVATE! IFC MANAGERS

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**COMING
APRIL 2023!**

**WANT
TO
HELP?**

CONTACT KIMBERLY:
ChapelHillCarrboroCropWalk@gmail.com

PUBLISHED BY IFC



110 W. Main Street
Carrboro, NC 27510
(919) 929-6380
Fax: (919) 929-3353
info@ifcmailbox.org
ifcweb.org

Visit us on
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Instagram &
Twitter!



Designed By



what is community

“We seek a community that meets everyone’s basic needs, including dignified and affordable housing, an abundance of healthy food, and meaningful social connection.”

Many of you are probably familiar with IFC’s vision statement. Housing and food, while manifesting in slightly different forms, are easier to describe. But what about the other part? What does it look like when we find “meaningful social connection” within the IFC community?

We are known: We call each other by name, remember facts about each other’s lives and seek to understand each other’s experiences.

We care about and invest in each other: A member remembers that I needed surgery and comments that I must have had it because I am walking much better.

We trust and are trusted: By sharing our stories and receiving them with empathy and respect, we build honest and authentic relationships.

We have a place of connection and belonging: A member who appeared in our newsletter kept a copy for years, through various moves.

We feel safe and supported: We call on each other when encountering difficult situations and we share celebrations.

We share: A member comes through the lunch line and we have a conversation about how we are both trying to drink more water!

We learn: Through the exchanges we have, we grow as people and in our ability to hold space with others.

Engaging in these ways is not always easy, but these are necessary ingredients to a healthy, connected community. While we may not always agree, we respect each other’s right to make our own choices and to hold our own opinions. It is about being authentic and seeing and honoring each other’s humanity.

So what about IFC’s mission to confront the causes and respond to the effects of poverty in our community? Our programs are our response to the effects of poverty, but how do we confront the causes? **We center those who directly experience the issues. We live out our values of social justice and community power.** We show up together. We present the issues. We extend our voices outside the IFC community to express the need for dignified and affordable housing, an abundance of healthy food, and meaningful social connection. In the words of Cornel West: “Never forget that justice is what love looks like in public.” May we all love broadly, genuinely, deeply.



written by
Kristin Lavergne,
Community Services
Director

*The Community Kitchen
Staff Team (L to R):
Danielle, Erika, and Lance*



*The Community Market Staff Team (L to R):
Dyana, Gee, and Katina*



*Rashae of State Employees
Credit Union delivers the
first of several donations to
Community Services.*

*Pictured (L to R): Mar'Lisa and Jackie (IFC Administrative staff),
Rashae (SECUR), Dyana (Community Market staff),
Silas (Volunteer), and Crystell (Community Navigation Manager)*

**However you celebrate,
holidays are for sharing.**

Support IFC's Holiday Meals Program
with your donation today at ifcweb.org.

We would like to serve 200 families
in November and again in December.

Meals cost \$30 each.
Please support a local household today.

the magic of permanent supportive housing

written by Jennifer Gill,
Development and Communications Director



Imagine if no one in your life 'had your back' when times were tough. All too often this is the case among people who have faced homelessness. Relationships may have hit a bumpy patch, may be volatile, or perhaps lacking in trust. When someone with that experience enrolls in Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), the turnaround is often remarkable.

PSH does more than offer housing subsidies. Program staff, Debra Vestal and Tom Bainbridge, provide intensive case management for up to 18 individuals or families who have faced chronic homelessness and are finally living in a place of their own. **But this is not about paperwork; it's about relationships.** Debra and Tom are often called upon at all hours of the day in much the way a close friend or family member might be: to rock the baby of a weary parent, respond to crises, listen, reassure, and celebrate.



Debra and Tom are the only staff members of the Permanent Supportive Housing program, and go to great lengths to help members stay housed.

Commonly, PSH participants have rebounded from multiple evictions or are recovering from substance use or mental health issues. One PSH member had been battling physical pain and severe depression, spending days and nights in bed. Their contact with the world was mostly by computer. They yearned to go home to family, but did not want to be a burden. Once they got reconnected with the support of PSH staff they were asked to move back home and now live on family land, surrounded by old and new family members. **Debra explains that homelessness strips people of their basic human dignity. "If self-esteem and agency can be established, people make their way in the world. It's a slow but powerful process."**

Debra and Tom are fierce advocates with seemingly endless patience and resourcefulness. Often, PSH members are managing serious health issues or disabilities, which have been exacerbated by the trauma of homelessness. The range of challenges from logistical to emotional are where Debra and Tom find their calling, tirelessly working alongside each participant to identify strengths and opportunities. One veteran chose to live on the street with severe PTSD rather than burden their family with trauma. Working with PSH staff, this person obtained treatment, secured disability back pay, eventually started a business, and bought their own home.

Debra and Tom are renaissance case managers: part therapist, part coach, part home decorator and repair person. Their reputation is so positive that former shelter residents are eager to enter the program when openings take place, which is not often. The word 'permanent' is literal – once you enter the program, you are in it forever until you pass away or unless you opt out, which hardly anyone ever does.



These are a few of the folks who work hard to find housing for shelter residents, some of whom enter permanent supportive housing.

*Pictured top (L to R): Rhonda, Angela, Bernestine, Charlotte, Anna
Pictured bottom (L to R): Tra'von, Gunzo, Jessica, Al, Chris, Ron*

PROGRAMS @ IFC COMMONS

LOCATED AT

110 W. Main Street, Carrboro NC 27510
919.929.6380
J Bus Line

Community Kitchen

Free hot nutritious meals daily
M-F 11:15a-12:30p and 5:15-6p
Sat and Sun 11:15a-Noon

Community Navigation

Drop-in access to computers, phones, and
community resource support
M-F 9a-6p
919.929.6380 x2025

Community Market

Fresh food, pantry staples, and hygiene items
M-F by appointment
919.929.6380 x2000

Emergency Financial Assistance

Tuesdays leave a message at 9am to schedule an
appointment during the week
919.929.6380 x2024

Activate! IFC

Voter Engagement, Advocacy, and Leadership
Development
919.929.6380 x2065

SHELTER & HOUSING PROGRAMS

Contact the Orange County Partnership to
End Homelessness to explore housing options,
including shelter. M-F 10a-4p at 919.245.2655 or
housinghelp@orangecountync.gov.

Community House Shelter for Men

1315 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd, Chapel Hill
NS, HS, and T Bus Lines
919.929.6380 x3000

HomeStart Shelter for Women and Families

2505 Homestead Road, Chapel Hill
HS Bus Line
919.929.6380 x4000

Permanent Supportive Housing

Housing & case management support in units
throughout the community. Access by waiting list only.

In Memoriam

Donna Ellington Brady Wonderlynn Kinney

Grant Coleman Carol Ross

Paul Inman David Tabron

WAYS TO GIVE

Many households are seeking support
for the first time due to fallout from
the pandemic. The call to embrace our
community is stronger than ever.



ONLINE

Use your credit card at ifcweb.org for a single
donation or schedule a recurring gift.



DONOR-ADVISED FUND

Recommend a grant to IFC on a timeline that is
comfortable for you.

QUALIFIED CHARITABLE DISTRIBUTION

If you are 70 1/2, designate your RMD to IFC
with the use of a Qualified Charitable Distribution.



STOCKS OR SECURITIES

Complete a transfer electronically by
contacting Jennifer Gill at jgill@ifcmailbox.org
or 919.929.6380 x2031.

PLANNED GIFT

Ensure a lasting legacy with a planned gift to
IFC. Contact Jennifer Gill at jgill@ifcmailbox.org
or 919.929.6380 x2031 to discuss.



MAIL A CHECK

Give once or more frequently with a check
made out to IFC mailed to the address below.

Donations are tax-deductible. IFC's EIN is 59-1224041



**Scan a QR Code and purchase items from our
Current Needs, Amazon, or Target Wish Lists**

IFC | 110 W. Main Street, Carrboro, NC 27510
919.929.6380 | ifcweb.org | info@ifcmailbox.org



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Donna Carrington, Secretary
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TEAR HERE

**I believe in a community that meets everyone's basic needs.
Please complete, detach coupon, and enclose with your check made out to IFC.**

You may also make a secure donation at www.ifcweb.org or by calling 919-929-6380 x2031.

Card #: _____ Security Code: _____ Exp. ____/____/____
Name on Card: _____
Billing Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Email: _____ Phone: _____
Signature: _____

Here is my one-time gift.

☐ \$1000 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$50 ☐ Other: \$ _____

This gift is in ☐ honor ☐ memory of: _____

Please send news of this gift to: _____

I want to be a sustaining donor.

Please charge my card ☐ quarterly ☐ monthly
in the amount of: ☐ \$500 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$25

☐ Other: \$ _____

- ☐ I prefer not to be listed publicly as an IFC donor
☐ My employer will match my gift; contact me

IFC is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. All donations are tax-deductible.

THANK YOU!

FN2022




As we plan to reopen the dining room, we are in urgent need of volunteers for several shifts at Community Kitchen!

KITCHEN VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

EMAIL OR CALL
MAR'LISA TODAY

mwooten@ifcmailbox.org
919.929.6380 x2026



**TAKE OUT OR DINE IN - BUY GIFT CARDS & MERCH!
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8**



for



#RSVVPforIFC

“you got to have a foundation”

written by Nate Jones **Activate! IFC Manager**



Photo by: Vecino

“I live in a tent and have a medical condition that I need electricity for.”

“The police chief sets the culture and expectation for police and law enforcement staff. That person is hired by the town manager, who is hired by the town council.”

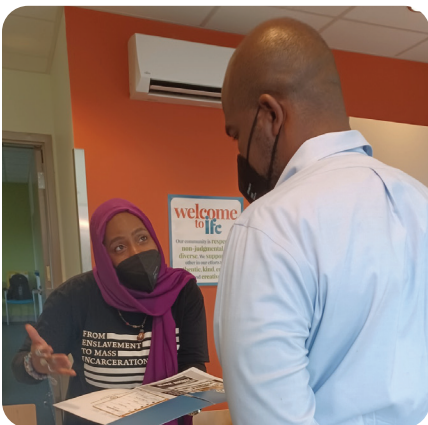
These quotes, including the title, are pulled from a series of conversations Activate! IFC facilitated for staff, volunteers, and members focusing on the importance of voting and telling our stories. IFC believes those who are closest to the issues are also closest to the solutions and it is through their leadership and political engagement that sustainable and impactful social change can occur. Last October, our community advocated in favor of affordable housing for individuals

living on fixed, low, or no income. Their leadership led directly to the development of three Pee Wee Homes, as well as to securing a significant increase in funding for our organization's direct services. The third House Us Now march took place on September 25th and once again showed how clearly our community understands the connection between their lived experience and the political process.

For a moment, return to the quotes above. **How would you feel if you were regularly sleeping in your car in the park, or in the woods behind an apartment complex in a tent?** What kinds of anxiety would you have not being able to receive your medication because you do not have an address? What would safety look like to you if you were constantly and justifiably weary of being targeted, harassed, and violated by the police and other segments of the community? Imagine trying to build a life, not unlike trying to build a home, but doing so without having a foundation to work from.

Poverty, houselessness, and incarceration are not merely the consequences of personal failure, nor are they simply the byproduct of an unlucky draw. In a system predicated on the idea of financial wealth being equal to personal worth, we cannot simply write off the struggles of our members and residents as a rough patch or rainy season. The root causes are systemic and historical. If we are to address them, the advocacy and political engagement of our community is paramount.

This November's election is critical. All across the country forces are mobilizing to strip our community of their right to vote and to overthrow the existence of free and fair elections. Let us take guidance from the leadership of our members and residents, those who are the most impacted among us, to cast our ballot in favor of a more equitable democracy. **Please make it a priority to vote and to help others get to the polls.**



The Activate! IFC team held a community celebration of Black August with a series of events, including a Safety Vanguard gathering that lifted up political prisoners, folks freed and in community transitioning from incarceration, and folks who are justice-impacted and struggling to navigate systems.



The House Us Now march makes its way to Lincoln Center for inspirational speakers, food, DJ O'Dizzle, and free hair cuts.

FY 2022

community impact

KEEPING PEOPLE HOUSED *by stretching household budgets:*

\$175,299 IN EMERGENCY FUNDS
provided for utility bills, rent, & other essential support

48,754 HOT MEALS
enjoyed by people who were hungry



11,790
BAGS OF GROCERIES
taken home by members of IFC

PROVIDING SAFE SHELTER *when someone loses their home:*

29,877
NIGHTS
spent in our shelters
by adults and children

57 PEOPLE
who left our shelters moved
into permanent housing

14 LOCAL LANDLORDS
partnered with us to offer lower
than market rate rent for
permanent supportive housing
members



NAVIGATING THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER *for resources that build resilience:*

58 HOUSEHOLDS ACCESSED
OUR COMMUNITY
NAVIGATION PROGRAM
in an average month



BUILDING COMMUNITY POWER *through voting, leadership development, and safety:*

203 PEOPLE REACHED
through training workshops
focused on BIPOC experience

60 IFC COMMUNITY MEMBERS
ENGAGED
through "Why Voting Matters"
conversations



6 SAFETY VANGUARD
CYPHERS
held to discuss how we keep us safe



vision

A community that meets everyone's basic needs, including dignified and affordable housing, an abundance of healthy food, and meaningful social connection.

mission

To confront the causes and respond to the effects of poverty in our community.

values

Mutual Respect We all have equal value and are worthy of honor, dignity, and security. Respect for one another is both a right and a responsibility.

Social Justice We advocate within political, economic, and social systems to promote justice as to the distribution of wealth, opportunities, and privileges in society.

Community Power Everyone benefits when those experiencing the problem lead us toward solutions.

Self-Determination People have a right to make choices about how to live their lives and work toward their goals.

Integrity We are authentic, ethical, and transparent.