

connections



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Jackie Jenks
President and CEO

Homelessness is solvable — if we choose to solve it.

It's become common to hear people talk about homelessness as if it were an unavoidable fact of life in the United States — a tragic but permanent feature of our society. But accepting that idea means accepting that human beings will always sleep on concrete. It means

numbing ourselves to the fact that young people, women, and older adults will continue to walk the streets all night because lying down makes them vulnerable to assault. It means becoming accustomed to watching our neighbors carry everything they own in a plastic bag. It means overlooking the fact that our Black and Brown neighbors are disproportionately living in our shelters and on our streets, once again getting the short end of the stick.

At IFC, we do not accept homelessness as an unavoidable reality.

Homelessness is not an inherent condition of modern life. It grew because, over decades, we stopped building affordable places for people to live. We cut funding. We tore down housing faster than we replaced it. We allowed rents to shoot up while wages barely moved. We didn't prioritize funding for social services to meet the increasing need.

Homelessness is the predictable result of decades of policy decisions at the local, state, and federal levels. And because it was created by us, it can be solved by us.

Modern-day homelessness took shape starting in the early 1980s, when federal investment in affordable housing dropped sharply. Since then:

- ▶ Deeply affordable homes disappeared by the hundreds of thousands;
- ▶ Rents rose faster than paychecks almost everywhere;
- ▶ Public housing was demolished and barely replaced;
- ▶ Local zoning rules were enacted that made it harder to build anything but expensive, single-family homes.

When you combine the lack of affordable housing with a single crisis — a lost job, a medical bill, a breakup, a disability, a rent hike — the road to the streets is short. And once you're out there, the road back indoors is long and difficult.

Despite the scale of the problem, communities across the country have shown that homelessness can be reduced when we commit to real solutions.

- ▶ **Housing First and Supportive Housing:** Provide stable homes paired with services for people who need ongoing support.
- ▶ **Rental Assistance and Eviction Prevention:** Help people stay housed when rents spike and during short-term crises.
- ▶ **Increased Supply:** Build housing that fits all income levels, and change zoning laws to do it.

We can all be part of the solution by:

Supporting the organizations doing the daily work, as you do when you contribute funds, time, and energy to IFC;

Speaking up in support of affordable housing when it's proposed in our community, including when it's in your neighborhood;

Voting for local funding that expands housing and services;

Dispelling myths around homelessness, and speaking up for people who are unhoused:

- ▶ Living without a secure place to lay your head is traumatizing and destabilizing,
- ▶ People in this situation are doing all they can to survive,
- ▶ Our community simply does not have housing that fits everyone's needs and circumstances;

And talking to community leaders about investing in real solutions — pushing them to think expansively and abundantly:

- ▶ Creatively fund and build housing that meets the variety of needs and income levels that exist in our community,
- ▶ Put safeguards in place so that people forced to live outside are not criminalized for their circumstances,
- ▶ Promote safe outdoor living by providing land that allows for camping and parking, warming and misting stations, and resource centers with laundry facilities, showers, and storage.



We don't have to accept a country where people sleep outside. Homelessness is a choice we made; it's time to make a different one.

Activate! IFC: Building Community Power through Connection, Leadership, and Civic Engagement

By Alyssa Hinton, Activate! IFC Program Lead

Activate! IFC is a leadership development, civic engagement, and advocacy initiative rooted in the belief that strong communities grow from strong relationships. The program works to demystify local government and expand participation through political education, voter protection training, and community-centered outreach. Its leadership development efforts focus on building confidence, expanding personal leadership capacity, and cultivating the collective power needed to influence civic and political processes.

At the heart of Activate is a commitment to elevating lived experience and centering the voices of those most affected by local challenges. The program's advocacy priorities — affordable housing, safe outdoor living, and tenant rights and responsibilities — reflect the issues most relevant to its members and the broader community. This people-first approach aligns with the guiding principle articulated by Coretta Scott King: “The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members.”

Activate is grounded in the belief that meaningful connection builds long-term power. Guided by the central question “What can we do together that is impossible to do alone?” the program creates accessible, low-barrier opportunities that build confidence, restore capacity, and strengthen community ties. Activities include collaborative art projects, affordable housing summits, Real ID workshops held in partnership with Community Empowerment Fund, and an ongoing documentary and discussion series.

Activate also develops interactive learning experiences designed to help members engage in civic institutions and build healthy relationships through games and discussion. A civic bingo series introduces local government processes and responsibilities, while a documentary series

featuring films like *Won't You Be My Neighbor?* and *The Devil at the Crossroads* sparks reflections on empathy, resilience, and what drives people to create change. These shared experiences help participants develop deeper connections with one another while expanding their understanding of local power structures. In the words of poet and playwright June Jordan, “I am a stranger learning to love strangers around me.”

By strengthening relationships, nurturing leadership, and activating our collective power, we can shape a future where everyone has a voice and a stake in the decisions that affect their lives.

Through both paid and volunteer opportunities, Activate uplifts the stories of those most impacted by systemic inequities and fosters care-based leadership. In 2025, members championed and widely informed the “Safe Outdoor Living Campaign,” designed to alleviate the immediate dangers of living outdoors while we advocate and wait for more affordable housing units. Together, members advocated for themselves, collected signatures through canvassing and phone banking, and tabled at local events.

Participants consistently describe Activate as a supportive space to grow, contribute, and take action together. Member leader Darin Campbell shares, “Knowing that I’m a part of a team that’s at the forefront of pushing the boundaries in Orange County is what’s most important to me.” Board member Tonya Adams-Ruffin reflects, “Activate helps me see that my voice matters and that when we show up together, people listen.” These voices speak to the shared power that emerges when community members come together with purpose.

As Activate continues to grow, it remains committed to expanding pathways for meaningful civic participation and building a more engaged, equitable community. The work is ongoing, but the direction is clear: By strengthening relationships, nurturing leadership, and activating our collective power, we can shape a future where everyone has a voice and a stake in the decisions that affect their lives.



Activate! IFC led a voter bingo to help us learn more about all the people running for local office. An informative and fun time was had by all, especially the knowledgeable and lucky winners!



PROGRAMS @ IFC COMMONS

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

Community Kitchen

Free hot balanced meals daily, open to all
M-F 11:15a-12:30p and 5:00p-5:45p
Sat, Sun and Holidays 11:15a-Noon

Community Navigation

Drop-in access to phones, showers, lockers, and
community resources support
M-F 10a-6p
919.929.6380 x2025

Community Market

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

Activate! IFC

Voter engagement, advocacy, and leadership development
919.929.6380 x2030

SHELTER & HOUSING PROGRAMS

Contact the Housing Helpline 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 NC 27514
NS, HS, and T Bus Lines
919.929.6380 x3000

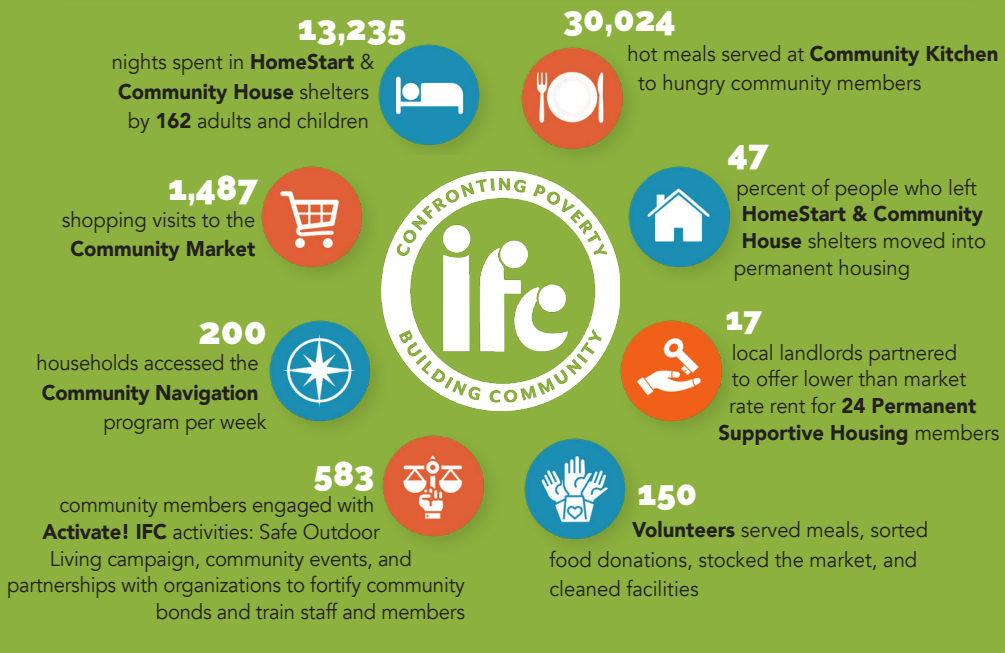
HomeStart Shelter for Women and Families

2505 Homestead Road, Chapel Hill NC 27514
HS Bus Line
919.929.6380 x4000

Permanent Supportive Housing

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

COMMUNITY IMPACT JUL 1 - DEC 31, 2025



You can support IFC's mission in many ways!



Donate through:

- Donor-Advised Funds
- Qualified Charitable Distribution
- Stocks
- Securities
- Planned Gifts
- Bequests

1. Donate online at www.ifcweb.org
2. Donate by check made out to IFC and mail to:

IFC
110 W. Main Street
Carrboro NC 27510

For more information, contact:
Katherine Hester Doehring
kdoehring@ifcmailbox.org
919.929.6380 x2031

In Memoriam

IFC has lost several valued members of our community in the past few months. They'll live on in our hearts.

Charles Murray Williams
Paul Nelson
Arlette Egan
Joy Wood
Kimberly Alston

Cassandra Carver
Claude Harwell
Edgar Clayton
Rashii Purefoy
Stephen Tenecyke

Tony Corral
Brenda Futrelle
Mary Wilmouth
Mae McLendon

Volunteers are needed in our facilities to assist with painting, maintenance, repairs, and landscaping. Fill out a volunteer application today at www.ifcweb.org.



SCAN NOW

Inter-Faith Council
for Social Service
110 W. Main Street
Carrboro, NC 27510

It's a safe space to be.
We listen and we don't judge.

Donte Illery,
Activate! IFC
Safety Vanguard Ambassador

I've been able to apply
knowledge and affect
positive change in my
life and the lives of my
folks at IFC.

Alyssa Hinton,
Activate! IFC
Program Lead

I love interactive training and
community engagement.

Cumun Fearrington,
Activate! IFC
Safety Vanguard Ambassador



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.