



NIGHTLIGHTS

FALL 2020

New Homebase is a Game Changer for The Night Ministry

After a multi-year search and months of development and construction, The Night Ministry has moved into its new headquarters in Chicago's Bucktown neighborhood. The facility at 1735 North Ashland houses the agency's central administration, Outreach & Health Ministry (OHM) staff and their vehicles, and The Crib overnight shelter for young adults.

"1735 North Ashland starts an exciting new chapter in the story of The Night Ministry," said Paul W. Hamann, President & CEO. "Our relocation not only enhances the quality and efficiency of our services to Chicago's homeless and poor, but also positions the agency for innovation and growth in the future."

The Night Ministry's most recent strategic plan, launched in 2017, called for the organization to address facility concerns at its headquarters in Ravenswood, including a lack of parking for the Health Outreach Bus and insufficient space to accommodate growth in staff, and at The Crib, which had been operating in a 900-square-foot room in the basement of a church.

Getting the Health Outreach Bus ready every night is a much simpler process at 1735 North Ashland, as there is overnight parking for the vehicle and a loading dock. The building is located off the Kennedy Expressway, which cuts down on driving time to the neighborhoods the Bus serves.

"These conveniences make it easier for us to serve our clients," said Faith Miller, Outreach Services Manager. "Staff can expend more energy on providing services than on the logistics of transporting the Bus back and forth from a parking lot."

At The Crib, guests are enjoying a dorm room and lounge and have access to computers and private shower rooms, among many



LaShaunda Battie (right), Manager of Youth Supportive Services, talks with a guest of The Crib during the shelter's first night of operations at 1735 North Ashland.

enhancements. The Crib's new location also houses the offices of The Night Ministry's Youth Outreach Team, whose members provide case management for the shelter's guests.

"I like it," said Shay, a guest of The Crib who had also stayed in the shelter's Lakeview location. "It's bigger. I get to sleep in a bed now."

Danitra Pope, Program Supervisor at The Crib, said guests have taken ownership of the new space. "When someone new comes in, they'll be quick to show them around and show them the ropes."

Visit www.thenightministry.org/tour-our-new-headquarters for a virtual tour. ♦

"1735 North Ashland starts an exciting new chapter in the history of The Night Ministry."

- Paul Hamann,
President & CEO

HOUSING • HEALTH CARE • HUMAN CONNECTION

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Flexible Housing Program Aims to Stabilize Homeless Youth in the Community

Young adults struggling with homelessness in Chicago now have more permanent housing options available to them, under a new partnership involving The Night Ministry and several other local agencies.

The Flexible Housing Pool for Youth provides subsidies for market-rate rental apartments across the city, along with case management services, to help stabilize homeless youth. The program builds upon one administered by the nonprofit Center for Housing & Health that is already providing permanent, subsidized housing and related support for adult populations.

“The Flexible Housing Pool draws upon the expertise of The Night Ministry while expanding the continuum of care offered by the agency’s Youth Programs,” said Erin Ryan, The Night Ministry’s Senior Vice President. “While we are not providing the housing units, we are contributing our experience with outreach and case management to support permanent housing for young adults experiencing homelessness.”

The program identifies young adults ages 18 to 24 who are in the City of Chicago’s homeless management information system and have utilized Cook County Health, although there are plans to extend it to homeless youth who have involvement with the criminal justice system. The Night Ministry locates these young people and helps them determine whether they would like to participate. The Center for Housing & Health then provides referrals to apartments operated by landlords with whom it has built relationships, with the goal of placement within 30 days. The Center for Housing & Health also administers rent payments.



Brooke Thomas, Housing Case Manager at The Night Ministry, provides support to young people participating in the Flexible Housing Pool, helping them stabilize in their apartments.

“Research tells us that it is more cost efficient to place someone in housing than it is to let them remain homeless. When people are permanently housed with the right supports, they are much less likely to rely upon emergency rooms and shelter services to meet their basic needs, or end up in jail. These are crisis systems which, in the end, are more expensive to maintain than housing,” said Betsy Carlson, Director of Youth Programs at The Night Ministry.

“Research tells us that it is more cost efficient to place someone in housing than it is to let them remain homeless.”

– Betsy Carlson, Director of Youth Programs

At current funding levels, the Flexible Housing Pool can support housing for as many as 200 young people. The Night Ministry provides case management and stabilization services for up to 20 participants. The case manager, and the outreach professional who works with youth to connect them to the program, are new staff positions at the agency. ♦

CORPORATE SPOTLIGHT: CALAMOS INVESTMENTS

In May, Chicago-area business leaders came together to mount the Sweet Home Chicago telethon and raise money to support nonprofits responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, including The Night Ministry. At the helm of the endeavor, which raised more than \$1.25 million, was John Koudounis, CEO of Calamos Investments, a global investment firm headquartered in Naperville.

“John foresaw that this crisis had a long arc to it,” said Jeff Kelley, Senior Vice President and Head of Marketing at Calamos. “At the time a lot of money was being raised for immediate needs such as personal protective equipment, but John had the foresight to say this was going to affect mental health, housing, hunger, and more, and that we should be supporting a diverse group of organizations that collectively make an impact in multiple areas.”

THE NIGHT MINISTRY SALUTES JOHN KOUDOUNIS AND CALAMOS INVESTMENTS FOR THEIR FORWARD-THINKING VISION AND THANKS THEM FOR THEIR SUPPORT OF OUR MISSION.



John Koudounis, CEO of Calamos Investments

ER Doc Brings Medical Experience to Board of Directors

As an emergency room physician, Dr. Claudia Beals has firsthand knowledge of the intersection between homelessness and the health care system.

Dr. Beals, who joined The Night Ministry's Board of Directors this year, trained in emergency medicine in the South Bronx, where she encountered individuals experiencing homelessness who came into the hospital, often for a safe place to sleep.

"During my residency, we would actually set up an area in the front hall of the hospital for the homeless with food and blankets," Dr. Beals said. "Security would wake them up early in the morning to leave before the hospital administration came in. We offered clothes and packed breakfast and lunch for them to take when they left."

After finishing medical school in Chicago in 2003, Dr. Beals first trained in internal medicine but decided it wasn't the best fit for her. She then trained in ER medicine at New York's Lincoln Medical and Mental Health Center, which is similar to Cook County's John H. Stroger, Jr. Hospital in Chicago.

"What draws me to emergency medicine is the fast pace and the variety of patients," she said, "and the ever-changing environment of the emergency department."



Dr. Claudia Beals, a board-certified emergency room physician, joined the Board of Directors in 2020.

"I'm a physician, and most of us have a calling to help others."
- Dr. Claudia Beals, The Night Ministry's Board of Directors

Dr. Beals, who practices at a number of emergency rooms in Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri, was recruited for The Night Ministry's Board because of her medical background and passion for service.

"I'm a physician," she said, "and most of us have a calling to help others."

Dr. Beals believes her medical knowledge and experience can help advance the agency's Health Outreach programs.

"I would like to give my perspective to help Street Medicine and possibly find additional medical volunteers for the Health Outreach Bus," she said. ♦

Addressing RACIAL INEQUITY

As a nonprofit organization assisting some of our most vulnerable community members, The Night Ministry has witnessed the impact of systemic discrimination and injustice on the individuals and communities whom we serve. The events of this past summer have accelerated an internal process which was already in motion to examine the agency's policies and procedures through the lens of racial equity.

During the summer, members of The Night Ministry staff gathered for open and honest dialogues around issues of race and discrimination. A task force is now drawing up plans for agency wide trainings around racial awareness. We look forward to sharing more with you in the future.

SUPPORT THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE NIGHT MINISTRY

Help us realize the next chapter in our story by making a contribution to The Campaign for The Night Ministry. Your gift will help The Night Ministry better serve our community today while positioning us to have a greater impact in the future.

The \$8.7 million dollar Campaign raises funds for:

- The construction project we undertook at 1735 North Ashland to prepare the building to house The Crib, Health Outreach Program, and central administration, as well as three years of increased operating expenses in the new location;
- Building our endowment; and
- Eventual enhancements to care at the Response-Ability Pregnant and Parenting Program (RAPPP).

We are close to reaching our goal. **YOUR CONTRIBUTION WILL HELP US GET THERE.** To make a donation, visit www.thenightministry.org/campaign or contact Christy Prassas, Vice President of Development & External Relations, at **(773) 506-6023** or christy@thenightministry.org.

Partnership with UI Health Brings Substance Abuse Treatment to the Streets

As opioid-related overdoses and deaths increase by alarming rates in Chicago this year, The Night Ministry has partnered with the University of Illinois (UI) to expand access to substance abuse treatment among Chicago's homeless population.

Through an innovative telemedicine program, the Street Medicine Team is connecting individuals it serves on Chicago's streets with physicians at UI Mile Square Health Center who prescribe Suboxone, a medication used to treat opioid addiction. Patients can have their appointments with a UI doctor over video chat or telephone call.

"The partnership directly addresses many of the challenges that folks we serve face in obtaining treatment, such as lack of transportation to in-person appointments and not having health insurance," said Stephan Koruba, Senior Nurse Practitioner at The Night Ministry.

"What this has done is really decreased the barriers in terms of access for patients," said Dr. Nicole Gastala, Assistant Professor of Clinical Family Medicine, UI College of Medicine, and Director of Behavioral Health and Addiction at Mile Square Health Center. "So, we've seen significant improvement in engagement in I would say our most vulnerable and underserved patient population."

In addition to coordinating appointments between UI doctors and patients, Street Medicine provides a mobile device for temporary use if the patient does not have their own phone. The team is also able to bring the medication to the patient directly or provide bus cards to get to a pharmacy. So far, there are more than 50 participants.

Koruba said plans are in place for the program to expand to include remote mental health services.



Andrew Wojda, Substance Use Advocate, is one of the Street Medicine Team members connecting clients to a new telemedicine treatment program.

"Substance abuse and mental health are some of the major factors in homelessness. This brings a lot of good care onto the streets that wasn't there before," he said.

Dr. Gastala credits the strong relationships Street Medicine has with its patients with making the program work.

"If I had gotten into a van and started talking to people, I would have never been able to do what they've been able to do," she said.

The program is also possible now because of temporary relaxations of federal regulations regarding Suboxone and telehealth, put in place because of the coronavirus, but set to expire at the end of the year. This worries Dr. Gastala.

"This is literally bringing services to the population who needs it the most," she said. "If these policies aren't continued beyond December, we're really limiting access again." ◇

"What this has done is really decreased the barriers in terms of access for patients."

– Dr. Nicole Gastala,
Mile Square Health Center

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Youth Share Pandemic Struggles with Congressman Quigley

Young people served by The Night Ministry, including participants in the agency's Youth 4 Truth leadership development program, shared the struggles they have endured during the COVID-19 pandemic with U.S. Congressman Mike Quigley of Illinois in August.

During a virtual meeting arranged by The Night Ministry, Kitty, a former resident of the nonprofit's Youth Programs, told Rep. Quigley how she contracted the coronavirus while couch-surfing and raising a young child.

"At the time I started getting sick, I was living with some friends," she said. "My wallet ended up missing. It had my ID, my LINK card, my cash card, and the medical cards for my daughter and me. Not having my medical card and ID made it much harder for me to find a place to get tested."

Maria, who had stayed with The Night Ministry in the past but now shares an apartment with her husband and their 2-year-old son, said she was laid off when the pandemic began, and it's been difficult for her to find employment again. The stimulus check and supplemental unemployment benefits helped keep a roof over their head, but that money has run out.

"I have no idea how I'm going to pay my rent in September. Since I don't owe any rent, I haven't been able to apply for rental assistance," she said.

"I'm trying to save money where I can. I'm washing clothes by hand and trying to make my son's clothing last longer. But he is about to go through another growth spurt."

Rich, an alumnus of The Night Ministry's Youth 4 Truth leadership development program, explained how the restrictions brought by the pandemic have impacted his mental health.



Clients of The Night Ministry's Youth Programs met with Rep. Mike Quigley to talk about the challenges they are facing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"For me, the hardest thing during the pandemic is that staying inside isn't good for my mental health. Being outside helps me with my everyday problems," he said. "I think we are going to need mental health care for everyone who has been struggling during the pandemic."

Although they are not currently staying at The Night Ministry,

Kitty, Maria, and Rich also informed Rep. Quigley about how the agency has continued to support them.

"The pandemic is having widespread impacts on our youth. Conversations with local organizations like The Night Ministry are important to understanding how we can best fight to ensure that families and communities have the resources they need to support our nation's children," said Rep. Quigley. ♦

"The pandemic is having widespread impacts on our youth."

- Representative Mike Quigley

HOW WILL YOU LEAVE YOUR LEGACY?



"Including The Night Ministry in my end-of-life planning was an opportunity to help ensure all of our community has access to the services we all need and deserve. While I hope this is many years off, making the commitment now was gratifying."

— Ellen Romberg, former Member of The Night Ministry's Board of Directors

After securing economic stability and providing for the needs of your loved ones, you may choose to make a lasting charitable impact with a bequest to The Night Ministry. If you have already included The Night Ministry in your will, please let us know — we would like to acknowledge your generosity and welcome you as a member of The Legacy Society.

Contact **Christy Prassas** Vice President of Development & External Relations
christy@thenightministry.org or (773) 506-6023.



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Thank You!

Your support is so meaningful during this challenging year. We hope you and your loved ones are in good health.



The Night Ministry and Its Clients Adapt to Ongoing Pandemic

It's a familiar refrain in the COVID-19 world: we're learning to live with a new normal. And that's certainly the case at The Night Ministry.

"When the pandemic started earlier this year, we were operating on a day-by-day basis, often not knowing what tomorrow might bring," said Paul W. Hamann, President & CEO of The Night Ministry. "Today we are better prepared because we have implemented plans that allow us to adapt and sustain our services in what is really an ongoing crisis period."

The Night Ministry is currently operating under a flexible coronavirus response plan that will last at least until the end of the year. Still in place are daily health screenings and isolation protocols in its Youth Housing Programs and restrictions on the number of people in Health Outreach vehicles. But volunteers, in limited numbers, have been brought back to work at the Health Outreach Bus and to serve meals at The Crib overnight shelter, and administrative and some direct service staff are splitting time between working remotely and at the office.

While keeping an eye on the current situation, staff are also looking forward to how to adapt services under changing circumstances, such as colder weather.

"Two things we have discussed specifically for the Health Outreach Bus are to either let clients back on the Bus, which



Nurse Practitioner, Chandra Matteson, checks a patient's temperature during a coronavirus screening.

we suspended in March, or to set up an outdoor enclosure to provide health care and case management services," said Mary Poliwka, Community Health Manager. "Resuming services on the Bus would require even more comprehensive sanitation procedures than we have now to protect client and staff health."

The Night Ministry's clients are impacted in multiple ways by the ongoing crisis, with the ability to maintain housing being a major concern, despite rental assistance programs and eviction moratoriums.

"If you are unstably housed, maybe staying with family and friends, and your name is not on the lease, or if you are undocumented or you have a warrant out for your arrest, you're not going to be in a position to be able to fight an eviction," said Noam Greene, Lead Street Medicine Outreach Worker. ♦

Thank you to those who generously gave at the \$500 level or higher between May 16 and September 30, 2020. Thank you as well to everyone who donated during this time period through alternate giving portals, such as Facebook, Amazon Smile, Workplace Giving, and more.



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