

*Holiday of*  
**H O P E**  
*2023*



## Hope Grows Here

Welcome to our annual **Holiday of Hope** publication. Each year, Hope House publishes this collection of staff reflections inspired by our work with **local families** who are determined to move beyond homelessness, poverty, and circumstance into **self-sufficient and hopeful futures**. Their **courage and growth** are supported by our dedicated and caring staff members and through others like you, who have **provided support** through your generous gifts and donations.

Like most people, Christmas evokes an **array of emotions** for me. Disrupted routines and expanding holiday to-do lists can create feelings of **stress and exhaustion**. On the flip side, the **anticipation of good things** to come generates **excitement and joy**, and family traditions provide a sense of **identity and belonging**.

I am struck by the similarity between these emotions and what our Hope House families feel as they navigate homelessness... with an important distinction. The **added strain and fatigue of being homeless** doesn't only occur on special occasions and holidays. It is an **all-consuming part of day-to-day life** for those grappling with this vulnerability as they try and figure out what their next steps should be.

**Hope House serves as a place of respite and hope**, linking arms with these individuals as they head down a better path. Our professionally case managed programs focus on **long-term solutions and empowering people** to rebuild their lives and **recapture their independence** through positive support and education, while working to reclaim their zest for life.

This ongoing coaching helps people **gain confidence and build life skills** that they can take with them out into the community. The more prepared our families are when they are **back on their feet and living on their own**, the greater the chance they will **continue on a positive path**, changing the trajectory of past decisions that may have led them to homelessness. And it works! **Historically over 80%** of those completing our programs are **still stably housed one year later**.

**Hope is a positive emotion** that is felt when envisioning a brighter future, **inspiring fortitude during hard times**. And the hope that is provided through our programs and the ensuing results compel me to agree with this definition.

**Thank you for helping Hope House** provide 33 years of opportunities to **instill hope** in those who are combating homelessness in Hancock County. Because of **your kindness and generosity** our clients have the opportunity to **embrace life** with a renewed sense of purpose and wellbeing. **Hope grows because of you!**



by Sue Lehman, CEO



Give hope now at [FindlayHopeHouse.org/donate](https://FindlayHopeHouse.org/donate)



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## HOLIDAY OF HOPE

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**Design**  
Val Shannon

Let it  
SNOW



The Templins

# what difference

*does Hope House make?*



212

individuals,  
transitioned  
**OUT OF**  
**HOMELESSNESS**  
during 2022



29

women  
and  
children

22

lived in the  
**HOPE HOUSE**  
**TRANSITIONAL**  
**SHELTER**  
in 2022



123

households

including

- MEN
- WOMEN
- COUPLES
- ELDERLY
- VETERANS
- DISABLED

were housed through  
rental assistance and  
eviction prevention  
programs



## How does Hope House do it?

- Transitional Shelter
- Permanent Supportive Housing
- Rapid Rehousing
- Homelessness Prevention
- Fair Housing Advocacy
- Housing Navigator
- Professional Case Management



MERRY  
*Christmas*  
AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

Sending our *warmest* wishes to you for a joyful holiday season!



419-423-9145 | info@hitchingsinsurance.com

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

FROM



*Happy Holidays!*

*from Jon & Laurie  
Poland*



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*Wishing  
You A Safe  
and Happy  
Holiday!*



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*Great Lakes*

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THE ACT OF GIVING IS THE HEART  
**OF HAPPINESS**  
AND COMMUNITY



WE PROUDLY SUPPORT HOPE HOUSE.  
CONGRATULATIONS ON 30 YEARS OF SERVICE  
TO THE PEOPLE OF HANCOCK COUNTY.

**Rowmark**

JOHNSON PLASTICS  
PLUS

## Community means everything.

That's why I'm proud to be  
here to help life go right™ –  
and to support Hope House.

If there's anything you need,  
call me.



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## Family Grows at Christmas

We have had **multiple additions** to my family over the last year and a half. We have been blessed with **four precious babies**, plus a **highly energetic and playful puppy**. With my children nearly grown, my home can be very quiet at times. So when I am able to spend time with our new family members, I realize that the **joy and happiness** I feel is a gift from above. Being around them makes my heart feel extra light and filled with laughter. The happy smiles from the babies and the puppy's excited tail wagging truly make my day.

**Thankfully, family can be more than just the people you are related to** because our Hope House family has grown as well. I truly enjoy working with and getting to know all of my coworkers. Just like any family, we are here to **support and comfort** one another through the ups and downs of life. It is a blessing to be part of such a great organization where everyone has a **heart for one another and the people we serve**.

I also love watching the **residents draw closer together and become like family** during their time at our transitional shelter. When they first arrive, many of them are unsure of what to expect, but time after time they tell us they feel **safe and welcome** here because of the **homelike atmosphere**. Sometimes the residents jokingly call me **Mom!** Often, they share how much they **appreciate the support** they receive from all of the Hope House staff. We are always happy when former residents reach out to us to give updates on how they are doing or when they stop by with their children just to say hi. Many of them even keep in contact and support each other after they leave. These relationships are important to me because I know that **God has intricately knitted all of us together** for such a time as this. **Celebrating Christmas with all of them** is the icing on the cake because who better to spend it with than family!



by Nicole Smith  
Transitional Shelter  
Case Manager

Happy  
Holidays!



Happy Holidays!



**We hope the holiday season fills  
your home with joy, your heart with  
love, and your life with laughter.**

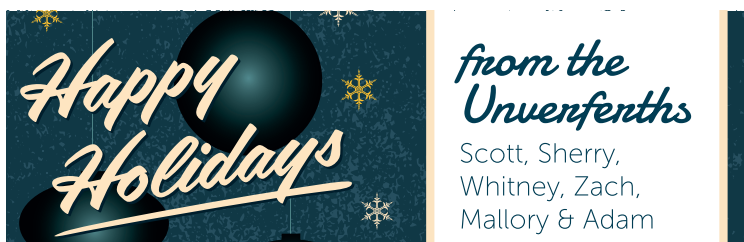
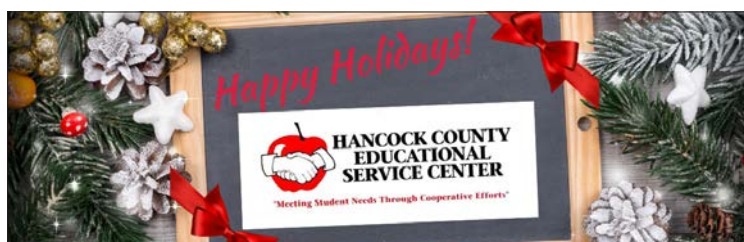
**Thank you, Hope House, for measurably  
improving people's lives in Hancock County!**

United Way  
of Hancock County



Complimentary ad space from Hope House









## Perspective Grows at Christmas

“You’ll have bad times, but it will always wake you up to the good stuff you weren’t paying attention to.” -Robin Williams.

The above quote by Robin Williams really resonated with me after this past year. My wife’s family are first-generation Filipino immigrants and have an **amazing sense of family**. When tragedy strikes, they **band together and help** in any way possible. This is one of my favorite aspects of **Filipino culture** and one that I try to emulate in my work. Unfortunately, two of my aunts have been diagnosed with cancer and are currently undergoing chemo and radiation treatment.

Seeing these two incredibly strong women fight each and every day and still have **smiles on their faces, laughing and joking**, has given me a lot of **perspective on what’s important** and where my priorities should be. Focusing on my health, being in the moment, and spending time with those I hold dear becomes even **more significant**.

One of the changes I have made is joining the Hope House family. My fellow staff members have been so **incredibly welcoming and helpful** during my transition, and I have **loved the opportunity** to work with a traditionally underserved population. **Seeing the impact** that can be made by an organization with a **common goal and drive to help others** is truly incredible. I am **beyond blessed** to be a part of this team and to be able to **help serve those in need** in my community.



by James Smith  
Rapid Rehousing/Homelessness  
Prevention Case Manager



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**YOU CAN CHANGE A LIFE. THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO VOLUNTEER!**

Contact us for more information. Call 419.427.2848 or visit [findlayhopehouse.org/volunteer](http://findlayhopehouse.org/volunteer)





## Gratitude Grows at Christmas

Working in the transitional shelter has been an **unexpected privilege** in my life. Day to day, my job is to support the shelter, my coworkers, and our residents, but to me it's deeper than that.

I listen to the most **heart-breaking stories** about how our residents **found their way here**. But I also **see their smiles** when they receive a certificate for the first time after completing a class. I **laugh with them** because we feel safe and comfortable enough to joke. I **give advice** when asked, **hugs** when needed, **comfort** in times of hardship and **celebration** for successes. And I am beyond grateful.

Not only do I get to **help other people grow** while they are here, but **I grow** in the process. **I am grateful** this holiday season for **my coworkers**, some of whom are the most caring individuals I've ever met. **I am grateful** for **our volunteers and the peers** I meet at partnering agencies who inspire me to work hard for this community. **I am grateful** for the **residents in the transitional shelter program** because I learn so much by walking beside them on their journey.

Finally, **I am grateful** to be a small part of the **collaboration, kindness and sense of community** that is created in Hancock County around the holiday season. Wishing everyone a holiday full of hope. And **thank you** for the privilege of serving.



by Abigail  
Shelter Support Specialist

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*Happy Holidays*



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*Mark your calendar!*

20  
24

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*"Hope Shines Bright"*

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Contact Laurie Poland at [lpoland@findlayhopehouse.org](mailto:lpoland@findlayhopehouse.org)

WE ARE THANKFUL FOR  
**those who** *give*



**LANDLORD OF THE YEAR**  
Rob Cleary



**VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR**  
Work Leads to Independence



**BUSINESS PARTNER  
OF THE YEAR**  
Dan Maciejewski, State Farm

*Find out how you can give hope too!*

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# HOPE

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 Phyllis Hays  
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 Kimberly Hess  
 Jeffrey & Sandra Hissong  
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 Ryan & Katie Hite  
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 Walt & Jane Homan  
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 Howard United Methodist Church  
 Matt & Julie Hull  
 Craig & Mara Hummel  
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 Bob & Jayne Inbody  
 Kyle & Abigail Inbody  
 Erica Johnson  
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 Dick & Yvonne Kepling  
 Sue Kibler  
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Michael & Kristina Knoll  
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 Reese Korkos  
 Gerald N Korte  
 Rodney & Kate Kramp  
 Aaron & Audrey Kruse  
 Greg Kuch  
 Erma Kummerer  
 Melissa LaRocco  
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 Cathy Lawrence  
 Starr Laytart  
 Matt & Stephanie Leddy  
 Shane & Jessica Leeth  
 Scott & Sue Lehman  
 Jordan & Emily Lehman  
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 Chris Makrancy  
 Marathon Petroleum Finance, Audit, & Tax  
 Jeff & Heidi Marchal  
 Melissa Marshall  
 Jill Mason  
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 James & Laura Mather  
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 Scott May  
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 Wendy McCormick  
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 Scott Miller  
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 Brett Montague  
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 Network for Good  
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 Marcia Noe  
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 Patricia Ricketts  
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 Jon & Karen Taschler  
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 The Granary  
 The Lavender Hour  
 Graham & Denise Thomas  
 Brynn Thompson  
 Diana Thrush  
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 Larry Todd  
 David & Lisa Todd  
 Sarah Tomko  
 Jim & Sara Tomlinson  
 William Trame  
 Phoebe Treece  
 Trends on Main  
 Kasey Tripp  
 United Way of Summit & Medina  
 Scott & Sherry Unverferth  
 Polly Vallade  
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 Michelle Vermillion  
 Matthew Vick  
 Nancy Virkler  
 Deanna Waaland  
 Cathy Wagner  
 Charles Wagner  
 Elizabeth Walker  
 Rod & Candy Walton  
 Ann-Marie Weasel  
 David & Yukari Weese  
 Steven & Martha Weihrauch  
 Robert & Ruth Wernert  
 Anne Whitman  
 Phyllis Williams  
 Amy & Rick Wilson  
 William & Lisa Wintrow  
 Kathryn Wise  
 Joe & Susan Wright  
 Jan Yingling  
 Lois Yingling  
 Todd & Lisa Young  
 Dennis & Barbara Zimmerman  
 Regina Zolnor



## Magic Grows at Christmas

For me, Christmas is the most magical time of year at Hope House. This year we are bringing back our fun-filled client Christmas party, and I cannot wait for the **magic to commence** when the **little one's faces light up** at the arrival of Santa.

During the holiday season at Hope House, there is a **flurry of activity**, and the **heartwarming feeling** that grows when we see families enjoying the holidays in spite of a particularly trying year. After several years of witnessing this excitement, this year I have a **renewed spirit** as I enjoy the magic from a fresh perspective. Additionally, we have enthusiastic new employees this holiday season who will get to experience these **traditions and joys** for the very first time.

There will be **gifts under the tree** on Christmas morning at the shelter and **holiday cookies baking**, their scent wafting throughout the shelter halls. With fresh eyes, I will again **thankfully rejoice** in the **magic of the season at Hope House**.



by Rebecca Padron  
Homeless Services  
Program Supervisor

# Happy Holidays

from all of us at HFCU

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## Appreciation Grows at Christmas

"It's an honor to be invited into someone's grief, an honor to be asked to witness the worst possible pain, an honor to be somebody another somebody finds safe."

While being part of the Hope House team for the last 10 years, I have had the **privilege** of witnessing people navigating some of the most difficult situations of their lives. It may seem as if being a witness to someone's struggle should be described as something other than a privilege, but after coming across the words above several years ago, **my perspective changed**.

Those of us in social services take on a tremendous role when we dedicate our lives to walking with clients through situations and pressures many would crumble under. In addition to supporting individuals and households as they **work to exit their homeless situations**, our staff is also navigating **emotions, disappointments, and successes**.

The programs we provide at Hope House have a **remarkable impact** on our community and those we serve, but the **WAY** we accomplish the work **brings joy and pride to my heart** when I see it in action. Every person we encounter is in their current situation due to a unique circumstance and is treated with **dignity and respect**, and given **attention, guidance and a listening ear**.

During the holiday season as I reflect over the year, there are a handful of moments that come to mind and help keep me focused on the

**things that truly matter**. In our office, these are known as "golden nuggets". Allow me to share a few with you...

"I don't know anyone else who cares about me having something to open on Christmas. It feels good knowing Hope House was thinking about me." Client

"My cup is overflowing from the time you spent trying to help me today. There were so many things I just didn't understand. Thank you so much." Hancock County Resident

"Thank you. You have shown me there are still solid people in the world who will offer help and not judge me for my situation." Homeless Individual

"I know I would never have gotten this far if it wasn't for your help." – Former Client

Our staff provides a **welcoming environment** for individuals and families to share their struggles and stories and learn about the resources available to them. **THANK YOU** for your support that allows us to **change lives every day**.



by Starr Laytart  
Assistant Director









## Smiles Grow at Christmas

This year has been about **Hope and Achievement**. As I started my job at Hope House I had all the emotions and fears. Will I do well? Will I connect with my clients? Will I understand my new job? Will my co-workers like me? And much more. Plus, all the emotions about changing the routine my daughter has known for almost three years. How will this impact her little life? Thankfully, I had my husband's support for such a big change in our lives.

**Fast forward months later...** I have worked hard at getting to know my position, leaning on co-workers for support. I've spent time with each of my clients to really get to know them and **build rapport and a relationship** with each one. Building trust with each client has taken **time, phone calls and visits** but as I **broke down walls**, my delight grew. I had a particular client that was not sure about having a new case manager. He had some health issues and seemed very gruff, but as I spent time with him, he opened up and started to **laugh and smile**. I made regular visits to check in on him and he shared his appreciation, admitting his feelings of loneliness and how **my visits helped him feel less isolated**.

I look back on this year and **smile** because I have achieved so much, working with amazing co-workers and building great relationships with my clients. Therefore, my **happiness grows** every day! The future looks bright, and I am so excited to see what the new year will bring!



by Emily Cramer  
Able Case Manager

Wishing you peace and joy  
this holiday season!



Happy Holidays

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## Love and Hope Grow at Christmas

I started as the Life Skills Coach at the transitional shelter this past February. I worked for many years as a Case Manager, but this was my first experience as a Life Skills Coach, and **I was so excited**. The staff was **very welcoming**, and I looked forward to learning how to **help my clients move forward** on their journey of Hope.

I tried out my rapping skills and became “**Cool Red**” asking for pillow donations while having fun in a video with my co-worker “**Nikki B**”. This taught me to **relax and have fun** with my coworkers. At the same time, I was able to do something **outside my comfort zone** for the people we serve. The support we received from the community was overwhelming!

We all face **challenges and trials**. Going through challenges myself in 2023, the **love, hope, and support** that I received from my coworkers was astounding and helped me to realize that “**this too shall pass**.”

When meeting with my clients, I **listen to understand** their journey of how they came to Hancock County and what led them to Hope House. We share **stories, tears, smiles, and hugs**, and as they reveal their challenges to me, I share with them the advice I received, “**this too shall pass**.”

For me, it is an honor to work with staff, clients, and a community that offers so much Love and Hope.



by Amy Wilson  
Transitional Shelter  
Life Skills Coach



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# Happy Holidays

**From Scott Snapp and  
the loanDepot Team!**



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## Growing Hope at Christmas

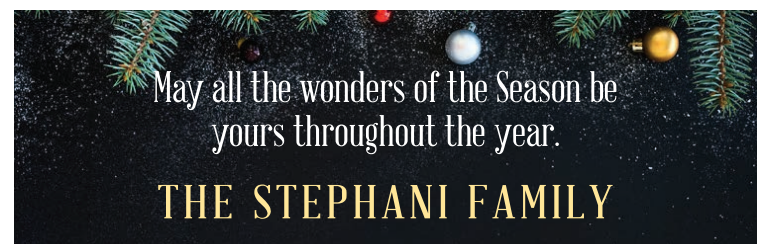
The seeds of hope  
Grow silently  
Invisibly  
Beginning as a dream  
A whisper, an expectation  
A moment of belief  
An assumption of possibility  
The predecessor of joy  
Shelter from storms

Hope grows out of faith  
Allowing us to see  
The same old world  
In new light  
At Christmas we celebrate  
The birth of hope  
And place trust in  
Its promise of love  
Of a new beginning  
And gift it to another

This Christmas I hope to **plant seeds of hope**  
and watch joy grow.



by Laurie Casati  
Housing Resource Navigator



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# The Power of Hope Grows at Christmas

**Last year ended on a hard note.** I lost my precious mom unexpectedly right before Christmas. Getting through that time was **difficult and exhausting**, particularly because it was also a very busy time at Hope House.

I know change is inevitable. We have also had some staff transitions over the past year. It has been hard to say goodbye to co-workers who have become like family, but **new opportunities and growth** are a part of life. While our hearts hurt a little, we also join our friends in **celebrating their new adventures**.

As we have added new staff members, we have created a **new dynamic** and it has been fun to get to know them and welcome them to the Hope House family. Although the faces may change, the commitment to **making a difference in our community** remains the same.

We have seen clients come and go. We have **celebrated** with some, **cried** with others and **rooted** for the success of them all.

Through all these changes, one thing is a constant for me... **the power of HOPE**. That feeling of knowing changes may bring heartache, but that heartache will turn to **good memories, new reasons to laugh** and **new opportunities to connect** with others around me. This power also allows me to continue to believe that **we bring real change to our community and those we serve**. It happens when we celebrate with a shelter resident who has gotten a job promotion. Or a family finds a new home. Or a child receives Christmas gifts because of our Family Adoption Program. **These events bring hope to clients and donors alike**. And this time of year it is more evident than ever that **Hope exists in our community**. And I am so thankful to celebrate that with you!



by Laurie Poland  
Development Director



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# Home Is Where Our **HEART** Is.

Cooper Tire is proud to call Findlay home and honored to support the important work of Hope House to eliminate homelessness and alleviate poverty in Hancock County.



Give hope now at [FindlayHopeHouse.org/donate](https://FindlayHopeHouse.org/donate)





1800 N. Blanchard St., Suite 106  
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Your donation to Hope House,  
regardless of the amount, helps move  
families facing homelessness back to a  
safe, stable home.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**YES!** I would like to give HOPE this holiday.

☐ \$25   ☐ \$50   ☐ \$100   ☐ \$200   ☐ Other

I would like to provide ongoing monthly support.

☐ \$25   ☐ \$50   ☐ \$100   ☐ Other

Name on Card \_\_\_\_\_

Card Type \_\_\_\_\_

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ Code \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Please contact me on how I can make a  
planned gift to Hope House.

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Make check payable to Hope House or donate  
now at: [findlayhopehouse.org/donate](http://findlayhopehouse.org/donate)



stocks a family's  
shelf in the shelter  
refrigerator with basic  
food necessities.



Covers a month of  
transportation to  
work for a Hope House  
family without a car.



provides shelter residents  
with new linens and pillows  
for her room that can go  
with her to her new home.



stocks a family's kitchen  
in their new home with  
items like silverware,  
bowls, cups and basic  
cooking items.



helps cover the  
first month's rent  
for a family moving out  
of a car or a tent and into  
safe, affordable housing.



transitions one  
homeless family to  
stable housing.

LIVES ARE CHANGED *changed* WHEN YOU CHOOSE HOPE HOUSE!

When you make a gift to Hope House, you help local families transition from homelessness  
to independence. You also give the gift of hope! Generosity comes in all shapes and sizes.

You don't need to make a big gift to make a big difference.