

CENTRAL IOWA
SHELTER & SERVICES

2023

ANNUAL REPORT

Central Iowa Shelter & Services is committed to providing low-barrier shelter, meals, and support services at no cost to adults experiencing homelessness while also facilitating their move toward self-sufficiency.



LETTER FROM THE CEO:

Dear Friends and Supporters of CISS,

I'll be the first to tell you that our mission here at Central Iowa Shelter & Services (CISS) is both profound and audacious. Every day, our staff works tirelessly toward one goal: ending homelessness in Des Moines. With each innovative solution that empowers our clients to achieve long-term self-sufficiency, we get one step closer.

In November 2022, we celebrated a remarkable milestone in our journey—the completion of the Schoen Greenhouse. This facility stands as a critical component of our vision for CISS and downtown Des Moines. Notably, it has expanded our greenhouse space by a staggering 400 percent, featuring a cutting-edge HydroCycle Aquaponics System. The Schoen Greenhouse serves multiple vital purposes: it combats food insecurity, facilitates on-the-job training programs, and supplies our community kitchen with free, nutritious food, all while generating a self-sustaining revenue stream for the shelter.

To better fight food insecurity for all our community members, our next focus continues to be our 4-acre community Agrihood. This project will utilize specially designed raised garden beds that float in the event of a flood. This innovation allows us to transform 4 acres of otherwise unused flood zone land into a valuable community resource, projected to yield an impressive 75,000 pounds of produce annually. Our dedication to revitalizing this downtown area received national recognition from the USDA in the form of a \$300,000 Grant for Innovation Production.

Generous individuals and forward-thinking corporations like Nationwide, which donated \$750,000, and Prairie Meadows, which donated \$200,000, are the foundation of our success. Your commitment to our shared vision of a vibrant, equitable downtown fuels our determination to build and drive lasting change. Together, we are reinventing our public spaces and investing in ideas that are not only changing lives but also transforming our community for the better.

We are incredibly grateful for your continued support as we push our community forward.

Melissa O'Neil
CEO, Central Iowa Shelter & Services



A THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

The work done by Central Iowa Shelter & Services is made possible through generous contributions from individuals, corporations, and grants. We are incredibly grateful for the continued support, advocacy, and partnerships that enable our team to continue serving the community and covering even more ground in pursuit of our mission.

You can see an estimated breakdown of these contributions below.

60% GOVERNMENT

4% FUNDRAISING & DEVELOPMENT

36% PRIVATE DONATION

Revenue sources: program revenue, contributions

Contributions breakdown: foundation grants, individuals, corporate contributions, government grants, special events

WHAT'S NEXT

As we look toward the future our sights are set on serving more unsheltered individuals in the community. The best way to do this is by expanding our Street Outreach team, which regularly makes trips to homeless camps to build relationships, deliver water, and connect them with critical medical care. This team meets face-to-face with people experiencing homelessness to ask them a simple question: **"Where do you want to live, and how can we get you there?"**

From there, we offer case management to help them apply for housing and jobs with a compassionate support system at their side. Our goal is to:

- Double client outreach capabilities by investing in another vehicle for the street outreach team.
- Increase housing placements and participation in job interviews with access to professional clothing and transportation passes.
- Reach more people, house more people, and save the lives of more people.
- Grow the Street Outreach team and CISS staff in general so we are never short of critical manpower.

SHELTER & HOUSING SERVICES

EMERGENCY SHELTER

The emergency shelter will always be at the heart of CISS' mission. The shelter is a low-barrier and safe place for unhoused individuals to sleep, receive meals, and get connected with additional services.

From July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023, the emergency shelter received 1,763 visits, with an average length of stay of 28 days.

During that time, **CISS helped 673 individuals** transition to permanent supportive housing, which **costs 4x less than a day in jail** and is a major stepping stone in the journey toward self-sufficiency.

STREET OUTREACH

Extreme lowa temperatures can be dangerous for vulnerable populations like the unhoused. This is where the Street Outreach team comes in. They oversee two crucial services:

- 1. HOUSING FOR SHELTER INTAKES:** The team sits down with individuals who enter the emergency shelter and help them develop a housing plan. This includes assistance with locating vital documents and working quickly to ensure housing is secured within the first 14 days of their stay.
- 2. STREET OUTREACH:** A couple of times each week, the team visits the unhoused camps throughout Des Moines to drop off clean drinking water and assess each situation. This helps them identify any individuals in need of medical care or other assistance from CISS.

From July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023, the Street Outreach team served 63 unhoused individuals and helped secure housing for 6 of those individuals.



ROLLING HILLS COALITION

The RHC assists individuals in eligible counties outside of Des Moines with the housing search, a deposit, the first month's rent, and a landlord mitigation fund.

The Rolling Hills Coalition has helped a **total of 782 people find housing in their area** from July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023. Of those, 523 were through the rapid rehousing program, and 259 were through the homeless prevention program. On average, individuals found housing after 21 days with the help of the RHC.

APARTMENTS

Our facility has **62 single-unit efficiency apartments on-site**, supported through Des Moines Municipal Housing and Polk County Housing Trust Fund. Our apartments provide an affordable housing option with close proximity to CISS support programs and resources.

19 apartments are designed to house veterans, and 24 are ADA-accessible.



VETERAN HOUSING SUPPORT

From July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023, CISS served 177 U.S. veterans.

Of those, 28 veterans were served through the Veterans Contract Emergency Residential Program (CERP).

From CERP, 8 veterans transferred to efficiency apartments provided through the Veteran Grant and Per Diem Program (GPD) — which served a total of 41 veterans.

The emergency shelter served 116 veterans.

The Veteran Grant and Per Diem Program is a partnership between CISS and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, **providing 14 efficiency apartments for eligible veterans** transitioning to stable housing.

The Veterans Contract Emergency Residential Program provides an **additional 5 efficiency apartments for veterans** in need of short-term, transitional housing.



DAVE JENSEN: A LIFELONG COMMITMENT TO CISS

Meet Dave Jensen, a true beacon of hope and dedication in the Central Iowa Shelter & Services community. For over two decades, Dave has been an unwavering force for positive change. He's more than a donor and volunteer, he's a testament to the profound impact CISS can have on people's lives.

In his own words, Dave shares, "It's important because I get to see firsthand the impact. It's one thing to write a check and hope you do good, but it's another thing when you support a cause and can see how it affects people's lives."

Dave has witnessed the transformative power of CISS programs. "You get to see people who come into the shelter, and you can watch them progress and eventually move on to get their own places," he says. "That's pretty rewarding."

Dave Jensen's commitment exemplifies the spirit of compassion and community that fuels CISS. His support, both in time and resources, serves as an inspiration to us all, reminding us that positive change is possible when we come together with purpose and dedication. Thank you, Dave, for being a vital part of our CISS family and helping us create a lasting impact.



FOOD RELIEF SERVICES



ON-SITE COMMUNITY KITCHEN & FOOD PANTRY

Our community kitchen provides fresh and healthy meals to those in need using a combination of ingredients and produce grown on-site, donated, or purchased. **The kitchen serves lunch and dinner, with about 55-65% of meals being donated by volunteers** (expanding our budget by at least \$20,000 per month). From July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023, the community kitchen **served 103,359 meals at the shelter.**

Additionally, the kitchen prepares and delivers more than **100,000 meals each year** across the Des Moines metro. Of those, **28,369 were passed out at no cost to at-risk kids** throughout the community – with **6,924 of those meals being served as part of the summer meals program.**

Individuals can also access the food pantry once per calendar month and may receive a three-day food supply for each member of their family.

From July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023, the food pantry received 925 total visits.

HEALTH & SUPPORT SERVICES

EXEMPLAR CARE

CISS partners with Exemplar Care to provide free, on-site healthcare at the shelter, available to anyone in the community. This removes the transportation and cost barriers that often prevent individuals from receiving medical services. The clinic provides quality medical care and assists with the coordination of mental and behavioral health service needs.



CLOTHING CLOSET

The clothing closet at CISS provides both warm and cold-weather clothing and accessories for adults of all sizes and is available to anyone in the community.

From July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023, the clothing closet had a total of 3,375 visits.





MULBERRY FARM & FOOD

Mulberry Farm & Food provides fresh, locally grown food for our kitchen program. The farm is comprised of our state-of-the-art Schoen Greenhouse and will be the home to our 4-acre Agrihood.

Since the greenhouse became operational in February, we have been able to grow **10,158 heads of lettuce**, sell **5,633 pounds of food to community partners**, and use about **2,500 pounds of food in the community kitchen**. This has **given CISS an additional \$13,186.20 in funds** and has increased the amount of local food consumed in Des Moines.

Mulberry Farm & Food is run by CISS staff and clients participating in the job training program.

SCHOEN GREENHOUSE

The Schoen Greenhouse at CISS features a HydroCycle Aquaponics System that produces a low-maintenance, self-sustaining source of tilapia and fresh lettuce.

AGRIHOOD

The urban Agrihood will feature innovative floating garden beds, allowing CISS to transform 4 acres of unused flood zone into a sustainable food resource for the community. The Agrihood is expected to be completed in 2024.



JOB TRAINING PROGRAM

An important part of CISS' mission is to help individuals gain long-term self-sufficiency, which can be furthered through skill-building and work experience. CISS offers three different job training programs to facilitate this.

FROM JULY 1, 2022 - JUNE 30, 2023:

- The Janitorial Training Program served 23 trainees.
- The Kitchen Training Program served 82 trainees.
- The Mulberry Farm & Food Training Program served 38 trainees.



GROWTH FINANCIAL SERVICES

Growth Financial Services (GFS) is a subsidiary of CISS and opened for business on May 8, 2023. GFS assists individuals with identifying and meeting their financial goals, including learning how to use their paycheck to pay bills, build a savings account, pay down any debt or past due bills, and work toward financial stability and independence.

This service is open to anyone in the community, and we charge a nominal fee of 2% of monthly income for those not receiving Social Security. For those who do receive Social Security, we are in the process of becoming approved to be a Payee Representative and will charge a fee as approved by Social Security.

Within three months of opening, GFS provided financial services to 9 clients. Of those, 2 are veterans, and 7 receive Social Security as their income.



**Donate today
to help us end
homelessness in
our community.**

<http://centraliowashelter.org/donate>



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1420 Mulberry Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50309
515-284-5719
515-883-1692
info@centraliowashelter.org
centraliowashelter.org