



# OTR CH COMMUNITY HOUSING

*Housing First. Community Always.*

## 11th Annual Celebrating Our Beloved Community

OTR's Got Talent!

Every October, Over-the-Rhine Community Housing gathers with over 300 of our dearest friends, partners, and residents at *Celebrating Our Beloved Community*, a fundraising and awards dinner honoring the many varied voices that make up our beloved community. This year we brought our special theme to life: OTR's Got Talent!



Elementz hip hop group, Image of Dance, with instructor Da'Shawn Mitchell

We showcased community arts organizations to celebrate the talent that exists in OTR and highlight how art connects and strengthens our community in unique ways. **SCPA's Meridian 8** ensemble kicked off the event with a beautiful a cappella jazz performance.

**Elementz** youth hip hop group **Image of Dance** blew us away with their impressive choreography and freestyle break dancing. Instructor Da'Shawn Mitchell was one of the first kids to participate in Elementz when they first opened and he shared how dance helped him find his voice. **Siri Imani** and **Triibe** serenaded the audience with a powerful spoken word performance. Guests laughed and cheered, and you could see the crowd bouncing and swaying as these gifted artists took us on a musical journey! **MUSE**, **Cincinnati Women's Choir** wrapped up the program with a performance of "We Are The Ones" and "This Is Me."

Each year we honor partners who have shown their enduring commitment to affordable housing and community-based development in Over-the-Rhine. We were thrilled to present the 2018 Building Our Beloved Community Award to **Cincinnati Development Fund** and **Georgia & Milton Keith!**



Georgia and Milton Keith and their family

Over-the-Rhine  
Community Housing  
**Winter Newsletter  
2018**

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# Jimmy Heath House Employment Program

## Suzanne's Story

Suzanne battled drug addiction for almost 20 years. She went in and out of various treatment programs trying to get sober. 6 years ago, Suzanne became homeless for the first time. She lived under a bridge with her partner and flew a sign to collect enough money to get by. After years of struggling to get back on track, she thought "I've had enough of this." Suzanne got connected with Jimmy Heath House and began her journey towards recovery and ultimately, stability.

Suzanne moved into Jimmy Heath House in December 2016. Stable housing was critical in her ability to recover from a decades-long addiction. **"Having a roof over my head was the first step that made recovery possible for me,"** she said.

After her first year in housing, Suzanne grew eager to establish a "normally-functioning" routine and began the job hunt. She connected with a temp agency where she secured employment at a warehouse. Suzanne was glad to be part of the workforce again, but the warehouse job was not conducive to her recovery or her health. Between the 10 hour shifts with a 2 hour commute each way and her early morning trips to the methadone clinic, Suzanne barely had time to sleep. She wanted something to change but with her busy schedule it was difficult to find the time. The Employment Program's location within Jimmy Heath House was critical for Suzanne to be able to take advantage of the service. Katie Fogle, the Employment Program Coordinator, said **"It was a miracle that she was able to handle this schedule for so long, all while staying focused on her recovery!"**

Over the next few weeks Katie and Suzanne met for a few minutes here and there to find more suitable employment. Eventually Suzanne was offered a position working the front desk at Anna Louise Inn, another Permanent Supportive Housing program operated by OTRCH. She enjoys the 8 hour shifts and her shorter bus commute. The women at Anna Louise Inn (ALI) have grown to feel comfortable around Suzanne because they've gone through similar experiences.

Suzanne enjoys being in the environment at ALI because she feels like this experience is helping her start her path towards a fulfilling career. Suzanne aspires to become a chemical dependency counselor! She also feels respected and valued as a staff member. "People there have asked me about what I need for the holidays. I never knew what it was like to have someone ask about my needs."

We're grateful to the supporters who have made the Jimmy Heath House Employment Program possible - the **Ruth J. and Robert A. Conway Family Foundation**, the **Hueneke Foundation**, **GE Community Service Fund** and the **CareSource Foundation**. In 2018 this program has served 68 individuals who experienced homelessness. Thank you for supporting Suzanne and many others in overcoming barriers to employment so they can achieve stability!



Katie and Suzanne

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New this year was the "Artist Silent Auction." Artists who reside in OTRCH affordable housing generously donated original works of art. **Jahmaiah Martin, Tom Fronczak, Darlene Nelson, Dionna Flowers, Thomas Fields, and Da'Mon Butler** donated gorgeous homemade jewelry, impressive paintings, sculptures and photography (pictured right). All of the tables featured housing-themed centerpieces created by young OTRCH residents from our after-school art program, **Children's Creative Corner**.



We're grateful to our friends from **Jeff Thomas Catering** for providing such a beautiful, delicious meal! We look forward to seeing everyone at Music Hall again in Fall 2019!

# Over-the-Rhine Community Housing Named Cincinnati's First Bank of America Neighborhood Builder



Through the **Neighborhood Builders** program, **Bank of America** addresses issues of economic mobility and advances nonprofit leadership to solve tough community challenges. Since 2004, they've invested over \$220 million in 49 communities, partnering with over 1,000 nonprofits across 49 communities and helping over 2,000 nonprofit leaders strengthen their leadership skills. 2018 is the first year that Bank of America invited organizations from Cincinnati to apply. Over-the-Rhine Community Housing is thrilled to have been selected for this incredible opportunity!

Each Neighborhood Builder awardee receives \$200,000 in flexible funding, leadership development for an executive director and an emerging leader at the organization, and the opportunity to connect to a network of peer organizations and access capital. OTRCH will use this support to help fund *Beyond The Building*, our Service Center expansion and renovation project. OTRCH Executive Director Mary Burke Rivers and Women of Over-the-Rhine Coordinator Angela Merritt will participate in the leadership development program.



Neighborhood Builder Celebration at Rosedale on 11/1

Angie said "I am grateful and honored for this opportunity. To have the chance to be able learn different ways to make a difference, grow and capitalize on many levels in my life, and to be able to help others in the community, especially our children, is a dream come true." Thank you, Bank of America, for helping us build our capacity so we can continue serving this community for years to come.

## Rosenthal Family Foundation Supports Permanent Supportive Housing

Over-the-Rhine Community Housing recently took on the management and service provision at Nannie Hinkston House. Named after longtime resident and youth activist Nannie Hinkston, the building provides 12 transitional housing beds for men and women who experienced homelessness and are recovering from substance use.



buddy gray and Nannie Hinkston

We're grateful to the **Rosenthal Family Foundation** for their generous grant that enabled us to hire Sherran Harris as our new Program Coordinator at Nannie Hinkston House and buddy's place. Sherran's role is critical because she helps residents achieve stability in their housing.

OTRCH is recognized for our success in providing supportive services in conjunction with affordable housing. As we continue expanding our affordable housing inventory, it's critical that we keep up with this growth in our Resident Services department. Our growing Resident Services team offers residents support with securing employment, treatment, medical care, education, referral services and anything affecting their housing stability.

Jeremy is a new resident at Nannie Hinkston House. He had been living outdoors for the past year even though he has had a job working in the kitchen at a downtown restaurant. Jeremy couldn't find affordable housing and was getting pretty desperate and losing hope. One day, he connected with a staff person at the Freestore Foodbank, who then referred Jeremy to Over-the-Rhine Community Housing. OTRCH staff met with Jeremy and matched him to a supportive housing unit at the Nannie Hinkston House. Jeremy has been in safe, affordable housing at OTRCH for one month and says "I've been living like an adult now, paying rent, walking to work every day and re-connecting with family. I love my new place."



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## Happy Holidays from Over-the-Rhine Community Housing!

We hit a milestone! 2018 marks Over-the-Rhine Community Housing's 40th Anniversary. Thank you for joining us in our belief that all people deserve dignified housing. Our legacy is rooted in the efforts of a small group of residents who began buying buildings in Over-the-Rhine to ensure community control of housing. Through their foresight and the generous gifts you've given, OTRCH has come a long way since 1978.

Over-the-Rhine Community Housing is on the precipice of continued growth so we can serve this community for years to come. There's still a deep need for affordable housing in this community. With your support, OTRCH is prepared to meet this need.

Will you include Over-the-Rhine Community Housing in your giving plans this holiday season? You are providing low-income residents with the stability of home and the support of a community that values and benefits all.

Please visit [donate.otrch.org/otrch40](https://donate.otrch.org/otrch40) to give!



We're grateful to our friends from the **Notre Dame Alumni Club** who served lunch for the 4th year in a row!



Santa and Ahmaree



The employees of **Rhinegeist Brewery** collected items for our holiday raffle baskets again this year. Thank you!

Our partners at **Zillow Group** (pictured right) generously donated gifts for the children. Thank you for all of your support in 2018!

