

community.

A publication of Shepherd Community Center



SUMMER2023

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Empowering Our Neighbors to Acquire Sustainable Jobs

We've all seen the signs "help wanted" and heard the unemployment numbers in recent days. When we think about our neighbors in poverty, we might think, "There are plenty of jobs; why don't they just take one of those?" Unfortunately for our neighbors, it is more than simply applying for a job they see posted or using their "network" to find stable employment - as many of us would do. Poverty takes away our neighbors' ability to advocate and navigate, creating hurdles and challenges our neighbors must overcome to obtain and keep a quality job. And since we know the way to the future is through working, empowering our neighbors to acquire sustainable jobs is essential to a poverty-free future.

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Empowering Our Neighbors to Acquire Sustainable Jobs

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In empowering job stability, the key is to develop intentional relationships with our neighbors. When we build a personal relationship, we can help identify their challenges, assist in overcoming those hurdles, and help them find a job that fits their passions and skills. There is no one-size-fits-all plan, but Shepherd's core initiative to empower our neighbors to acquire sustainable jobs means bridging the gap to help them get there.

How is Shepherd accomplishing this?

- **Transportation:** providing gas cards or bus passes
- **Education & Training:** ESL courses, certification, and job training
- **Soft Skills:** performing mock interviews, resume building, applying for a job, resolving conflicts, dressing appropriately
- **Childcare:** enrolling children in Shepherd Neighborhood Childcare at Minnie Hartmann

• **E2E (Education to Employment):** shifting our Middle & High School After-School programming to focus on long-term plans, employment opportunities, finding their passion, and creating pathways for these students to create a stable future before adulthood.

Is it working? Yes. Although this initiative is still in its infancy and this process is slow-moving, Shepherd is seeing results and has great hopes for the future of our neighborhood. In 2022, Shepherd helped 30 neighbors find full-time employment, improved the credit scores of 43 neighbors, referred over ten neighbors to training, and assisted 65 neighbors in financial training and budgeting. Additionally, 45 students and adults were enrolled in college or continuing education courses in 2022, including two neighbors receiving their GED. Our E2E program is helping students stay focused on their future, improving their grades, giving them unique opportunities/experiences, and instilling hope for a different future.

And Shepherd is not doing any of this alone. Our 95 partners – like MacAllister Machinery – are vital to providing our neighbors the training, certifications, and qualifications needed to place them in sustainable jobs.

“For MacAllister Machinery, we help Shepherd’s neighbors with education in our Skilled Training Programs (diesel mechanics) and with ongoing partner strategy meetings. Shepherd, in turn, provides ethic and diversity with candidates,” says Tammie Austin, MacAllister Machinery Senior HR Rep in charge of community partnerships. “In addition, MacAllister’s core value is to improve every day. Shepherd is a conduit for local community empowerment.”

Best of all, employment brings dignity and self-worth to our neighbors as they feel more empowered, stable, and in control of their future – a future free from poverty.

- **Advocating:** providing one-on-one job coaching and mentoring, hosting job fairs, helping our neighbors create a budget and manage their resources well
- **Partnering:** Shepherd currently partners with over 95 organizations and businesses to help our neighbors – from students to adults – experience new opportunities, provide training and certification, find a job, and establish a pathway toward stability.



meet

Gary Everling
board member

Gary Everling was part of the choir and church that founded Shepherd with a Thanksgiving dinner in the 1980s. Impressed by Shepherd's continuous focus on a Christ-centered hope that breaks the cycle of poverty, Gary has supported Shepherd over the years as a volunteer and donor and joined the Shepherd Board in 2019.

“I believe in the mission and work of Shepherd,” says Gary. “What I love most about Shepherd is how they love their neighbors in the toughest zip code, changing lives spiritually and economically, and generationally impacting our community.”

“I also love that Shepherd's strategic plan is based on a simple vision: ‘To be the light in our community on our neighbors’ journey of hope and transformation – spiritually, relationally, and economically.’”

A Hoosier by birth, Gary grew up and still lives in Plainfield, IN, with his wife, Jackie, of 31 years. They have a wonderful son, Jayce (25), and they became grandparents in February 2023. Gary has worked in healthcare for over 25 years and is currently the Senior Vice President and Chief Strategy Officer at Hendricks Regional Health.

The way to the future is by working! From students to adults, we want to help our neighbors find stable income, purpose, and positively impact our neighborhood. How do we do this? By intentionally walking alongside our neighbors.

For our teen students, our Education to Employment (E2E) program allows them to explore their future career opportunities, find their passion, and understand how God has uniquely gifted them. Once they see their future for themselves, we help them shape their plans. Whether by starting a business, attending college, gaining intern and apprenticeships, serving the military, or enrolling

in technical schools – we help our students make their future possible by assisting them to overcome any physical, emotional, academic, or financial barriers.

For our adult neighbors, we help them navigate this path as well, but from a slightly different strategy. It is through

an ABC model: finding A job, then a Better job, and then a Career. We offer our neighbors employment training, continuing education, budgeting, job fairs, and one-on-one coaching to help them move forward toward a sustainable career that fits their passions.

Regardless of their stage of life, we want to support our neighbors to grow their capacity to reduce dependency.

Let's continue to work together to continue empowering our neighbors to acquire sustainable jobs.

Development

Save the Date: Virtual Gathering 2023

Mark your calendars for Shepherd's Virtual Gathering 2023 on Friday, November 3 at 6:30pm on Zoom. Keep an eye on your email and Shepherd's Facebook for more details coming soon!

Lunch & Learn: Friday, October 6th

Join us for a *Lunch & Learn* on Friday, October 6th from noon – 1pm to discover how Shepherd is connecting, building meaningful relationships, supporting neighborhood families, and making a significant difference on the near Eastside of Indianapolis. Lunch provided. RSVP by October 2 at GiveButter.com/OctoberLunchAndLearn

Come See Shepherd!

Curious what Shepherd is really like? We invite you to come take a tour of our facilities and see first-hand the breadth of programs as well as the incredible impact being made in our neighborhood. Schedule a date and time that works for you! **Contact Kolton Williford at (317)375-0203 ext 286 or email koltonw@shepherdcommunity.org.**

• from
jay



Jay Height
Executive Director



Volunteers

Volunteer to Make a Difference

Drivers for delivering food to homebound neighbors: In partnership with Gleaners Food Bank, each volunteer receives a map and contact list of five or six neighbors to deliver boxes of food from Shepherd. Volunteers needed Monday – Friday, preferred delivery 9 – 11am.

Homework Helpers & After-School Clubs for Shepherd Community Academy:

Volunteers assist students with homework Monday – Thursday from 3 – 4pm.

After-School Clubs: Teach special interests clubs (ex: Legos, art, music, photography, etc.) to After-School students. Volunteers would run a club from 4 – 5pm, teaching them new things while also encouraging and building relationships.

Fall Festival 2023: Give our neighborhood children a safe, fun place to spend October 31. Volunteers are needed to decorate their cars, wear costumes, and hand out candy from their trunks as the neighborhood children celebrate in a safe environment.

Questions? Contact Director of Volunteer Engagement, Donna Alexander at DonnaA@shepherdcommunity.org or (317)375-0203.

Did you know?

Shepherd is partnering with IEMS to be the new host location of the IEMS, **running ambulances and medical services to our neighbors**

24/7.



Give In-Kind to Shepherd



Kleenex
Toilet paper
Lined notebook paper
Dry erase markers
Washable paint (bottles)

For a full list of our in-kind needs, visit shepherdcommunity.org/give/critical-needs/

Shepherd is a faith-based, non-profit organization established in 1985 with a simple but staggering goal: **to break the cycle of poverty** on the near Eastside of Indianapolis. Located centrally within the community it serves, Shepherd offers programs for children, teens, adults, and families. Our primary tools?

Education and love.



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www.shepherdcommunity.org

breaking the cycle of poverty

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Thank you to our partners for making Shepherd's newsletter possible.