



A Publication of
The Care and Share of Crookston, Inc.



The Caring Heart

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“At the end of our lives we will not be judged by how many diplomas we have received, how much money we have made or how many great things we have done. We will be judged by: I was hungry and you gave me to eat, I was naked and you clothed me, I was homeless and you took me in”

~Mother Theresa



Notes from the Executive Director, Carolina Alfonso



Self-Care and Healing After Trauma

After our recent tragedy and loss within our organization, we are looking at life through an entirely new lens. Our team and guests have experienced a highly stressful series of events. A feeling of helplessness and horror, and in some cases, the challenges of regaining safety and security in our lives is common after these events. This is how we continue to work through this trauma. We reached out to friends and family. We opened the lines of communication as soon as possible after this traumatic event and within 24 hours we had support reaching out to us via mental health physicians, board members, pastors, spiritual leaders and churches. This was an instrumental part in our recovery journey.

As tempting as it may be to try to ignore or forget this traumatic event, one of the key elements in recovery was learning to be OK with our memories of it and the things that trigger them without trying to avoid them. Facing our feelings head-on is important because we want to be able to take care of them in a way that helps us all move forward. Coping with trauma, what happened to you in response to what happened to you, is a tall order.

Especially when you're determined to cope by trying different ways to heal it rather than hide it.

To the team I stand alongside with, thank you for being one of those trying, I bow to you. From my own trying came newfound purpose and insight. Nothing erases the trauma, to be specific, I have found ways to heal that honor what I've been through, because it's become part of who I am now. I can only hope the same for all of us.

On that note, there are a few things I *think* I know about healing:

1. Some people survive through community, some in silence, some by creating, some through movement. And what works for each of us will probably change over the course of our lives.
2. Practicing mindfulness, emotional awareness, and supportive self-talk helps. Rarely do we heal by accident. We must actively participate in our own getting well.
3. Listening to understand, to others and to yourself, acquaints you with root problems and thus real solutions. You can see the sadness behind anger and the light in others. You see your own limitations and strengths. You can make more informed decisions without questioning yourself. You can rebuild your new life on the solid foundation of self-respect and humanity.
4. We owe it to ourselves to take responsibility for how we're cared for.

We have transitioned to our guests back to the main shelter today and the soup kitchen is again open to the community for lunch and supper. On the 19th the donation room and the New Hope Food Shelf re-opened to the community, as well as the Commodity Supplemental Food Program for those 60 and over. Starting the 22nd we will be adding new guests into the main shelter and new families at the Hope Center. We are very excited to get back to some form of normalcy as we continue to educate ourselves and others on the importance of mental health training. We took 2 weeks as a team and organization to work on healing and identifying what trauma is and how it affects us all in different ways. Our team stands united in our commitment to serve all those in need. We appreciate the community's patience and the abundance of support from the community and church leaders as they held us up with hope and grace. Our goal moving forward is to have a larger conversation around mental health and crisis response and help create awareness on working with individuals who dual diagnosis and how the use of de-escalation methods are critical skills in working with diverse population.

Thank you all for showing up and holding space for us during this time, your continued support is deeply appreciated.

Carolina Alfonso

We at Care and Share want to give a special thank you to Leah Winjum, Pastor Mike, and Pastor Greg for coming to us with hearts and hands open to help us in our healing journey.



Recognizing our Donors and Volunteers

The commitment of our volunteers and the generosity of our donors are crucial elements driving the current success of Care and Share

We want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to several collaborating agencies for their unwavering dedication and support during these recent challenging times. Special thanks to the volunteers from:



- First Presbyterian
- Trinity Lutheran
- St. Paul's Lutheran
- Cathedral
- Harvest
- Freedom
- Fisher/Bygland Lutheran Parish
- Concordia Lutheran-Fertile
- Community Health Services Inc.
- Polk County Public Health
- Tri-County Community Corrections



As well as to all those who generously contributed monetary donations to support this project.



Additional donors/volunteers



This is my story

First the Streets, Then Prison, Now Helping Others Leave Homelessness



"I was asked to share my story, holy moly did I ever get a little shocked! I also got nervous thinking about what others might think of me once they learn about me and my past. I decided the perceptions of others do not define the person I am today and maybe my story will affect someone in need." I used to be an addict myself a decade ago. It consumed my life so much that I ended up losing everything that I had. I lost my children, my home, my pets etc. Most importantly I lost hope. I became homeless, I had hit rock bottom for sure. I had to live in my vehicle due to not having anywhere else to go and no one that I "thought" were my friends was there to help me out. This all led to me going to prison where I was able to attend their CIP Program. It is an extremely stringent and aggressive program, and you can take away what you wish. I took everything I could from it because I

knew that I wanted my children back and in order to do so I needed to become a better version of myself. I promised myself when I got home, I would never use again, and I was going to do everything it took to get my children back home with me no matter what obstacles. I also wanted to give to those suffering what was given to me and be there for them to help them in their journey to success. After a tremendous amount of work on self and taking accountability, I got my children back home with me, while juggling college to get my associate degree in human resources, in addition an LADC certificate. After I completed all the necessary steps, I knew I had already succeeded in my intended goals and now it was time to become more successful. I had faced my inner demons, I no longer allowed drugs to control me, I was in control of my own life. I then came and applied for my job at Care and Share of Crookston, Inc. A place that I once lived in and called my home, it was safe for me, and I wanted to help others the way they helped me. I officially accepted a Case Manager position on October 17, 2022, which I continue to work at still 18 months (about 1 and a half years) later. I genuinely love what I do at Care and Share for numerous reasons, but most importantly for me, I know I can relate to everyone who walks through the doors in one way or another from my past lived experiences. I may show love or even tough love at times, but it is because that is what I needed from others when I was struggling. My passion behind my commitment to the unhoused is, I know that it is possible to change and make a new life after addiction and losing everything that means anything to you. I persuade them with compassion and strength to find employment, seek mental health services and search for housing. I do my job with vigor to make a difference in their lives, because it takes a lot of work to fight your addiction, to come out of homelessness, and I want them to find the happiness that they all deserve. Now you know me today for my triumphs. I want to thank my mother; she has been my biggest supporter through all my trials and tribulations with a heart of gold. She believes in me when I couldn't even believe in myself, showing me unconditional love and support. Also, my fiancé has been a huge support system of mine over the last 6 years with many more years to come to make more beautiful memories for our family. He has been a profound influence in my life and my children's life and has helped me build strength and courage to know that I am an incredible woman and that my past does not define who I am! It is my future and what I continue to make of it that counts from here on out. I appreciate all those that are there for me today and I look forward to a lifetime of memories that are worth remembering!

"When life gets hard, try to remember: the life you complain about is only a dream to some people." – Anonymous

Kayla Waslaski, Case Manager II (Care and Share)

Community Garden

This year, we launched a Community Garden to improve the services offered by Care and Share of Crookston. It has been a collaborative endeavor involving our staff, residents Polk County Public Health, and numerous other community members who have played a vital role in making this initiative a reality.



The Care and Share of Crookston is working in collaboration with Polk County Public Health to grow sustainable fresh fruits and vegetables to help our organization, food shelf/community & are looking for Donations in the form of:

- *GARDENING SOIL
- *FRUIT & VEGETABLE SEEDS

If you are able to donate any of these items please call or drop them off to Care and Share of Crookston, Inc. 220 E 3rd St Crookston, MN 56116




A huge thank you to Kay McLaughlin for taking such great care of the community garden.



Iced Tea & Gardening

Join us for Iced Tea while helping out in the Community Garden Thursdays 1:00-3:00
 The Care and Share of Crookston is hoping to attract lots of community members to come experience the fulfillment and therapeutic benefits of gardening as well as learning self sustainability. Anyone may come and help garden anytime however this is a time we will serve iced tea
HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!!



Care and Share of Crookston, Inc.
 220 E 3rd St Crookston, MN 56116



Board Member intro



Greetings, My name is Anna Corona. I have been married to a wonderful husband for 39 years. I am a mother of 3 adult children and a grandmother of 4 1/2 grandchildren. I have been a resident of Crookston for over 25 years. I worked for Public Health for 10 years and presently am employed by a Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Program. In assisting victims of domestic violence and sexual assault in Polk and Norman counties I have become so much more aware of the difficulties people in our area have acquiring basic needs. Connecting people with resources such as Care and Share assists people in having basic needs met. The hope Care and Share provides to many is why I decided to become more involved in our community as a board member. My hope is to bring some diversity and knowledge to the Board. Thank you,

Anna Corona

***** A special acknowledgment goes out to Richard Keller for his outstanding service as Finance Officer at Care and Share, Inc. After 20 years, his hard work and commitment to the organization have been incredibly valuable and greatly appreciated!*****

Have a great retirement Rick!! from all of us here at the Care and Share

Employee of the month

*June: Jayden Lopez July: Sofia Porter
& August: Jeanette Kay McLaughlin*

Care and Share of Crookston, Inc. is proud to announce Jayden Lopez as our employee of the month for June 2024! Help us congratulate Jayden!



"Jayden is a hard worker and has done a great job with the residents. He is caring and understanding in his position and demonstrates empathy and compassion. He is flexible with working different shifts and is an awesome team player. I am glad we met, and I enjoy working with him."
"He is always willing to help out and do whatever is needed around here. For being so new he picked the job up very quickly and does it with pizzazz. He also works well with others."

Care and Share of Crookston, Inc.
220 E. 3rd St.
Crookston, MN 56716

HELP US CONGRATULATE SOFIA ON BECOMING EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH FOR JULY 2024!!!

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

"SOFI HAS BEEN EXTREMELY HELPFUL WORKING WITH RESIDENTS WHO ARE BILINGUAL AND HELPING THEM TO FEEL VALIDATED AND HEARD"



SOFIA PORTER

"SOFI IS RELIABLE AND SHOWS UP CONSISTENTLY WITH COMPASSION AND EMPATHY FOR ALL GUESTS RESIDING WITH US"

THE CARE AND SHARE OF CROOKSTON, INC. 220 E 3RD ST. CROOKSTON, MN 56716



The Care and Share of Crookston, Inc. is delighted to name Kay M. as our EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH for August 2024.

Custodian

Jeanette Kay McLaughlin

The Care and Share of Crookston, Inc. 220 E 3rd St. Crookston, MN 56716

The Care and Share of Crookston, Inc &

New Hope Food Shelf

220 E 3rd St Crookston, MN 56716

218-281-2644

THE NEW HOPE FOOD SHELF

MONDAY 1:00 - 4:00P.M.
WEDNESDAY 1:00 - 4:00P.M.
FRIDAY 3:00 - 6:00P.M.

Bakery goods
& produce are
1st come
1st serve!



YOU'RE WELCOME TO VISIT 2X A MONTH

218-281-2644

www.careandsharecrookston.

CARE AND SHARE OF CROOKSTON INC.
220 E. 3rd St. Crookston, MN 56716

DONATION ROOM

OPEN HOURS
Monday & Wednesday
1:00 - 4:00 p.m.



Friday 3:00 - 6:00 p.m.

220 East 3rd St. Crookston, MN 56716

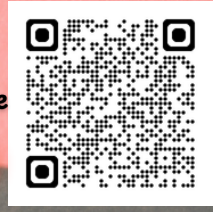
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