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HOME BONDS US TOGETHER

A PUBLICATION OF COMMONBOND COMMUNITIES

A Place to Call Home

Residents of CommonBond communities can receive support within their homes through Advantage Services. The proximity to helpful resources and a listening ear creates an environment of safety, empathy, and dignity. This sense of comfort and belonging aids in ensuring a stable foundation for residents to thrive.

Tonieh, Granada Lakes Townhomes resident, has expressed gratitude for the ways staff members have supported her throughout her time living in the community. "They always open their door for you. They are supportive and hardworking people," she says.

Tonieh has lived all around the world—from Liberia to

“
Home is the place
you can relax—
where you can be
comfortable.

-TONIEH

Russia to New York, and eventually, Minnesota. For many years, Tonieh worked in an assisted living home until she got injured on the job.

This was when everything changed in her life, and Tonieh became homeless.

She was in a constant state of worry. "Being homeless is not easy because you don't know where you are going to go. You worry about tomorrow," Tonieh says. Luckily, with some support, Tonieh was able to find housing and move into Granada Lakes Townhomes. She has been living there for the past five years. The moment she arrived, staff supported her through the transition in multiple ways. Staff on-site provided emotional support while they helped her gain employment, get back in school for her GED, create a budget, build credit for herself and her son, and much more.



Tonieh, Granada Lakes Townhomes

Tonieh says, "If you come to the staff, they are always willing to help you any time you have a problem. That's why I like it here." Our organization has continuously adapted to meet residents where they are and support them in getting where they want to go—so that home is not just a building with four walls but a place of power, comfort, and relief.

For Tonieh, "Home is the place you can relax—where you can be comfortable. You don't have to be on the street, worried about a place to stay. You can eat, cook, sleep, and cherish."

At CommonBond, we are dedicated to the stability and independence of all residents. 91% of housing exits were positive or neutral in 2021, and we attribute this success to our critical focus on housing stability.

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REFLECTIONS



As I reflect on this past year, I am grateful for the continued commitment our supporters have shown to our

shared vision of a world in which every person has a stable home in a flourishing community. Our ability to provide safe and affordable homes depends on your support.

Despite the many challenges our neighbors continue to face, I'm proud of the stories of resilience in this newsletter, and the continuation of our mission to build stable homes, strong futures, and vibrant communities. In this issue, we highlight stories of residents who have accessed community support, transitioning out of homelessness to live at a CommonBond property. We also meet a staff member of CommonBond Communities who shares a very personal connection to our work.

I am excited to share news about one of our newest developments—Rise on 7—a first-of-its-kind development combining homes and childcare to offer multi-generational services to low-income families. Imagine what a family could do with those two important needs met. We are currently raising money to fund the build-out of that childcare space.

Thank you for your continued support that will help us accomplish this and so much more. As Give to the Max Day approaches and you think about your year-end giving, don't forget that CommonBond Communities needs you more than ever. I hope you will continue to invest in our work because you make it possible. Together, we can continue to strengthen our communities with the powerful combination of housing and services.

DEIDRE SCHMIDT,
PRESIDENT AND CEO

RESIDENT STORY

Keys to a New Life

Having a home is key to achieving one's goals. However, due to lack of affordable housing, livable wages, health care, and more, homelessness is prevalent, and particularly so in veterans' communities.

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), about 40,056 veterans are homeless on any given night. This may be due to the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, or lack of employment opportunities that are transferable from military occupations.*



David, Upper Post Veterans Community

Not only is it a basic human right to have access to the safety and stability that a home provides, but home is also the foundation from which people can step into their dreams and thrive. David, who was previously sleeping roadside before he moved into CommonBond's Upper Post Veterans Community, was looking for this sense of home.

David was in the Marine Corps for three years. During this time, he learned a lot—the value of a dollar, people, friends, and much more. "It was quite an experience," he says. Later, after his service, life caught up with David and due to challenging circumstances, he found himself without a home.

Once he moved into Upper Post Veterans Community, life turned around. "When they handed me the keys, there was a big smile on my face. I knew I was going to be able to settle down, change as a person, and change for the better," David says.

Upper Post offers homes for veterans who have experienced homelessness and their families. Comprehensive services are offered on-site to support residents who are transitioning from homelessness into housing. "What this place has done is made me a person again," David says. "I learned to change when I came in here. I don't need to be that wild, tough guy anymore. I'm a whole different person than I was before."

David credits a lot of his growth to the staff on-site who supported him. "One reason I stay here is because of Advantage Services—they've done a lot for me, and they've always been there." Staff help residents with getting ahold of needed resources, engaging the community, financial education, and more. "The staff makes the place. We're all connected. Everyone who lives here watches each other's back."

A home offers so much more than just a roof over one's head. David is a testament to how it can truly impact one's sense of self, confidence, relationships, and future. He says, "I've worked on myself and my family and restoring relationships that I didn't think could ever be restored." □

*"Veteran Homelessness." National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, 4 Feb. 2021, <https://nchv.org/veteran-homelessness/>

COVER STORY continued

We pair housing with a range of services—from tutoring and mentor programs for students, to employment coaching and supporting residents with their goals—that meet residents where they are and help them build a better life for themselves and their families. In 2021, 1,825 adults received financial and/or employment services at our sites through our Education & Advancement programs.

These programs provide an encouraging environment in which residents of all ages can define and achieve their own success. This comes in the form of our enriching youth and teen programs, as well as supporting adults with employment and financial resources. We help with job searching, resume building, career development, budgeting, financial education, and more. It can be intimidating to jump into these objectives on our own, which is why the extra support can be life-changing for many residents.

Providing affordable housing is an essential part of our mission. We've seen that adding services on top of this housing is the key ingredient to success and stability for residents. CommonBond Communities is proud to be at the forefront of this work and watch residents flourish in their communities. □

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-TONIEH

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

A PERSONAL CONNECTION



Many CommonBond staff connect personally to our mission. This is true for Fekri, who is both a current Roving Property Manager at CommonBond Communities and past resident!

Fekri emigrated from Ethiopia in 2006 and moved into CommonBond community Seward Tower East. He and his family lived there for 10 years before becoming homeowners.

At Seward Tower East, a CommonBond Employment and Financial Coach helped Fekri earn his GED and complete maintenance training. Eventually, Fekri moved up the ladder in his career and obtained his current role at CommonBond.

Fekri is proud to provide residents with the same support he was offered. “This is where my career started,” he says. “And this is my real story.” □

GROUNDBREAKING FEATURE: Rise on 7



Rendering of Rise on 7

In August 2022, we broke ground on an exciting, new property—Rise on 7. A first-of-its-kind property in the state, Rise on 7 will be a co-located, 120-unit affordable housing and

childcare center in St. Louis Park, Minnesota. It is anticipated that construction will be complete with folks ready to move in by late 2023. Rise Early, in collaboration with Way to Grow, will provide on-site childcare and early learning programs for families and community members at Rise on 7. This gives families in the building and surrounding community members who have children access to affordable childcare—an ever-growing and vital need in our communities.

Not only is the groundbreaking of this unique project an exciting step for CommonBond, but Rise on 7 will positively impact the community as a whole. Affordable housing is a critical need in our society, now more than ever. Due to inflation and rising housing costs, access to affordable

housing is incredibly limited, and we are honored to step in to address this urgent need.

At CommonBond, we believe that expanding and offering more affordable housing not only impacts lives but also improves our communities. When our neighbors are thriving, the health of the overall community thrives too.

Rise on 7 is located in St. Louis Park near local transit, grocery stores, a shopping center, and local parks. Thank you to all of our partners' support for their role in making this project possible and impacting the lives of residents for generations to come. □



Groundbreaking event

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Nov. 17, 2022

Support CommonBond Communities on Minnesota's Statewide Giving Day

CommonBond relies on generous donors like you to support the nearly 13,000 residents who call a CommonBond community home.

Lenore, a CommonBond staff member who works with formerly homeless residents, put it best: "When you support CommonBond, you're supporting people's lives, livelihood, and wellness."

Our unique Housing and Services model incorporates access to resources and ensures our neighbors are stably housed at a time when many are challenged by the increasing costs of food, childcare, and other basic needs. We provide opportunities to succeed with school support, job placement, health and wellness classes, veteran assistance, and more. This can't happen without supporters like you. There's no better time to make a gift than November 17th!

Please make a gift today by going to givemn.org/commonbond or scan the QR code to the right.



When you support
CommonBond,
you're supporting
people's lives."



- LENORE




CHARTERED MEMBER