



Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter

SPRING 2019

The region's largest shelter serving individuals experiencing homelessness, providing food, shelter, clothing and hope for over 40 years

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A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Siena/Francis House Friends,
Happy Spring to you!

As of this writing, I have been Executive Director at the Siena/Francis House for 1 1/2 years, and I must admit that I absolutely love this organization and the great work our staff does in providing shelter, food, clothing and case management to people experiencing homelessness. They definitely continue to go the extra mile in the service of our guests, including the 3,579 people served in 2018.

On pages 4 and 5 of this newsletter, you will find our organization's 2018 Annual Report, detailing the impact of our services on those in our community who sought assistance, as well as last year's financial information. I hope you find this report helpful in understanding just how important your support is to the thousands of individuals who find themselves in need of our homeless services. For complete information regarding the Siena/Francis House – including publicly-disclosed financial documents – please visit our website at www.sienafrancis.org.

On our website you will also find the link to *Charity Navigator's* – America's largest independent charity evaluator – recent evaluation of the Siena/Francis House, and read why the Siena/Francis House has once again earned their highest – 4-Star – rating, in terms of how our organization ethically, transparently and responsibly utilizes charitably donated resources in accomplishing our organization's mission. In fact, of the 339 "homeless services" organizations from across the

(continued on page 2) ▶

SIENA/FRANCIS HOUSE MISSION STATEMENT

The Siena/Francis House welcomes, shelters and empowers individuals experiencing homelessness to navigate their own path to safe and appropriate housing.

ANN DELASHMUTT LENDS A HAND AND A SMILE IN KITCHEN & DINING ROOM

Once a month for the past 24 years, Ann DeLashmutt has dished up food and served homeless guests an evening meal in the Siena/Francis House's kitchen and dining room...and she's done it with a smile. Ann's smile is one of the reasons that homeless guests readily appreciate her volunteering, as well as have given her a friendly nicknames of "Maude" or "Bea Arthur," the late actor. "Some of the guys say I resemble her," states Ann. "I don't see it, but they get a kick out of calling me that, so I don't mind in the least."



In the mid-90s, Ann's church, Presbyterian Church of the Master, decided to focus on serving the homeless. This meant collecting needed donations for the Siena/Francis House, as well as serving our evening meal on the first Thursday of every month. Ann and her husband, Donn, decided to give volunteering a try. The couple enjoyed serving dinner to the homeless so much that they included their then high school-age daughters in this endeavor. (continued on page 2) ▶



A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (continued from page 1)

entire United States that Charity Navigator evaluates, the Siena/Francis House ranks #12 with a score of 97.03 out of 100. It's important to note that only 3 percent of the charities rated by Charity Navigator have achieved at least eight consecutive 4-star ratings, including the Siena/Francis House.

This newsletter also highlights the service of more than 3,600 volunteers who provide their time and talent annually to help Siena/Francis House fulfill our mission of serving people experiencing homelessness. Outside volunteers serve every evening dinner meal here at our shelter, as well as breakfasts on Sunday mornings. Other volunteers drive guests to appointments; sort clothing and personal care items; work in administrative areas; provide educational and recovery classes and musical entertainment during meals; facilitate creative, arts & craft classes; and assist with special events and other projects, like facility cleaning, painting and grounds beautification.

We held a volunteer luncheon in early April, where we recognized volunteers who had provided services on our campus multiple times within the last year. At the luncheon, we presented our organization's "Good Neighbor Award" in three categories: Partner, Business; and Individual. The luncheon was attended by 170 volunteers, staff and members of our board of directors, and was a tremendous success. I am very grateful for the opportunity to let our volunteers know just how important and integral they are to our mission of serving the homeless.

On the subject of volunteers, I am delighted to point you to a newsletter article on one of our once-a-month volunteers, Ann DeLashmutt. Ann shares her personal story of coming to the Siena/Francis House to serve the evening dinner each month, which she's been doing for 24 years. Ann's reflections demonstrate the profound impact that even one person/volunteer can have on our guests, beyond just serving dinner.

In closing, please know that – while we provide food, shelter and clothing to the people who end up homeless – our staff also works diligently in helping our guests be re-housed as quickly as possible, out in the community. This is a concerted effort, for sure, but is one to which both my staff and I are fully committed.

Again, thank you for all you do to help the Siena/Francis House fulfill our mission of serving individuals from our community who, for whatever reason(s), lose their housing option and end up homeless. Your support makes a real and meaningful difference to the thousands of homeless individuals we serve each year, and I greatly appreciate it.

Most sincerely,



Linda Twomey
Executive Director

ANN DELASHMUTT VOLUNTEER (continued from page 1)

Early in 2015, other friends in the White Hawk neighborhood where Ann and Donn live caught wind of the DeLashmutt's once-monthly volunteer excursion to Siena/Francis House, and similarly inquired about helping out. Currently, on the first Thursday of each month, folks from Presbyterian Church of the Master and "White Hawk Friends" (Ann's name for the group) comprise the volunteer contingent that serves the evening meal at Siena/Francis House.

In December of 2015, Donn suffered a serious health issue, which greatly affected Ann's ability to come to Siena/Francis House. Staying home to care for Donn, Ann curtailed her monthly volunteer commitment. However, it didn't take Ann long to return.

"A friend asked me, 'With Donn being sick, why would you take the time to still come down and volunteer?' My answer was 'It does me good. It fills my soul. It helps me think of others, rather than what I/we are going through.' I always feel better when I leave the Siena/Francis House than when I arrive to volunteer...ALWAYS! I get back way more than I give. My White Hawk neighbors always say the same thing...that they feel better. Volunteering and serving the homeless makes you appreciate your life and what you have," Ann said.

To emphasize this point, Ann tells a story: "Early on, once when I was serving dinner, one of the male guests who was eating, called me over and said to me, 'You have a beautiful smile.'"

"I thanked him, but he continued intently, 'You don't understand; NO ONE has smiled at me all day long, or even looked me in the eye. You did, and I just wanted to thank you for doing that, and for you to know how much I appreciate it.'"

"When this person told me that, a very real thought occurred to me: If you can make someone's day by serving dinner with a smile...why wouldn't you? And, why wouldn't I? Remembering this interaction with that man always makes me feel so good about volunteering. And that's why – when I'm serving dinner to the guests at the Siena/Francis House – I always have a smile on my face."



Above: UNO and Siena/Francis House Miracles Treatment Program graduate, Nathan Wood, moments after receiving his Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering diploma on May 3rd.



MEET SIENA/FRANCIS HOUSE MIRACLES PROGRAM, UNO GRADUATE NATHAN WOOD!

Like many other graduates this spring, Nathan Wood walked across the stage at Baxter Arena on May 3, 2019, and received a diploma. But what sets Nathan apart from his classmates is a different graduation ceremony that occurred over five years ago, when he completed the Siena/Francis House Miracles Addiction Recovery Program. Once homeless, addicted and hopeless, Nathan is now a sober, college graduate, working and thriving in the Omaha community.

When Nathan first arrived at the Siena/Francis House in October 2012, his life was so out of control due to addiction that his only wish was to fall asleep at night and NOT wake up the following morning. As a homeless guest in our men's shelter for eight months, Nathan kept hearing about our organization's Miracles Addiction Recovery Program. He observed men in that program serving our homeless guests, going to recovery meetings, making good life decisions and, above all, being happy. In July of 2013, Nathan became "sick and tired of being sick and tired" and submitted his application to enter the recovery program. "That was the best decision I have ever made in my entire life," Nathan said.

Siena/Francis House recently caught up with Nathan and asked him to share a little of his own personal story, including how our programs helped him turn his life around. These programs would not be possible without your support. As you learn more about Nathan's story in the following paragraphs, we hope you understand the impact your support of our organization has on so many people like him.

Q: Can you tell us a little about your childhood?

A: I'm the eldest of 5. We were always very poor. My father took his life when I was 10-months-old and that left my mother broken. He suffered from addiction, as I do. She tried to move on and remarried several times, but she was deeply injured. The men she chose to be with only injured her more. My childhood was painful. I carried a lot of responsibility as the eldest, but also suffered more of the abuse. For some reason or another, we always moved just shy of a year, and I didn't complete a full year in school until my sophomore year in high school, when I moved out. I wish I could paint a prettier picture of my past, but that's just how it was.

Q: What is/are your addiction(s) and how did it/they start?

A: I was always an awkward person in my youth...and felt nerdy, nervous, strange. When I reached high school I felt I needed a new identity. I started living the life I had idolized in culture. I became what fifteen year old me thought was cool: being the rebel. I started wearing punk clothes and had the punk hair, and began to do whatever drug came along. I noticed, but didn't care, that once I started taking any substance I couldn't stop. Others had restraint; I did not. Eventually, years flew by and everyone began to grow up, settle down and get careers. When it came time to give up drugs, alcohol and the lifestyle, they were able to do that. I found out that I couldn't. I was an addict.

Q: How did you end up at the Siena/Francis House?

A: I'm originally from Texas. At 28, I found myself jobless and living at my grandmother's in my old hometown. I was finally at full grip with the reality of my situation.

A strange set of circumstances had me reconnect with my brother. He has lived in Nebraska since he was 13. I told him what was going on with me and he suggested that I come to live with him and make a new start. Eventually, in October 2012, he had to kick me out. When the police picked me up for being drunk in public, they brought me to the Siena/Francis House.

During that time, I had a job working construction. When my boss heard that I was homeless, he let me borrow a company truck. I slept in that truck most nights in the shelter's parking lot. Not because there wasn't a bed inside for me, but because they wouldn't let me drink inside. The drinking had become entirely overwhelming and was the sole thing on my mind. I woke up on my 30th birthday, passed out in the truck. I had fallen asleep with the door open. It was 14 degrees that morning. I was drinking to near alcohol poisoning every night and I couldn't will myself to stop. I figured that this was the end of the road for me (and I truly hoped it would be). But because it was so cold, I decided to request a bed inside the shelter.

(continued on page 11) ▶

SIENA/FRANCIS HOUSE 2018 ANNUAL REPORT



Open & Staffed
24/7 • 365



Volunteers

3,613 volunteers provided **20,428 Hours** of service

Volunteer time in NE in 2018 from Independent Sector: **\$24.01 / hr**

Value of volunteers: **\$490,476.28**

Total Individuals Served – 3,579

Breakdown By Program*

Emergency Shelter - **3,435**
Miracles Addiction Recovery Program - **293**
Siena Apartments - **54**



*Individuals may have participated in more than one program.

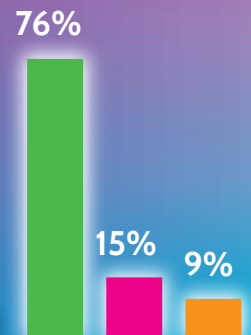


Overnight Housing Provided

All Programs in 2018

181,828 Nights

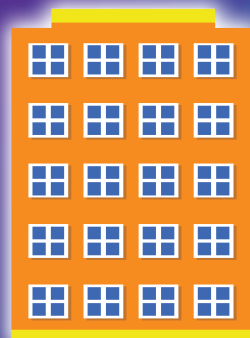
■ Emergency Shelter **137,252 nights**
■ Miracles Addiction Recovery **27,504 nights**
■ Siena Permanent Supportive Apartments **17,072 nights**



Apartments

54 Tenants

Average length of tenancy: **2.95 years**



Meals Served

Annually

2018 ..431,553

2013 ...416,338
2008 ...326,823
2003 ...256,075
1998 ...232,998
1993 ...120,212



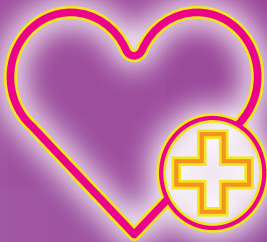
1,182
Average # of meals served each day



Emergency Shelter 376 People

Average # individuals each night

Of the approximately 5,600 people who experienced homelessness in the Omaha/Council Bluffs metropolitan community in 2018, over 60% were provided services at the Siena/Francis House.



Case Management

provided to **1,599 individuals**

Health care referrals	1,191
Mental health referrals	166
Dental care referrals	112
Educational support services	335
Rides/bus tickets to appointments	2,000 +
Instances of benefits assistance	563
Housing assessments provided	339
Individuals moved to positive housing	151

Your Support Makes a Real and Meaningful Difference!

2018 Financials

Expenses

By Category

Supplies/Program Activities	\$284,567
Equipment	\$158,596
Occupany	\$481,785
<small>(utiilities, maintenance/repairs, insurance, etc)</small>	
Professional Development	\$56,923
Communication.....	\$61,254
Travel	\$1,329
Assistance to Individuals	\$23,524
Overhead/Admin	\$422,358
Salaries & Benefits	\$3,074,442
<small>(currently 62 staff members)</small>	
Total	\$4,564,778

Revenues

By Category

Contributions	
<small>(from Individuals, Schools, Churches)....</small>	\$2,164,407
Foundations	\$1,004,044
Government	\$513,103
Estates	\$365,406
United Way.....	\$283,295
Businesses.....	\$175,661
Temporarily Restricted	\$156,226
Total	\$4,662,142

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION LUNCHEON AND GOOD NEIGHBOR AWARDS PRESENTATIONS

On Wednesday, April 10, 2019, the Siena/Francis House held our first ever Volunteer Recognition Luncheon at the Omaha Design Center. The luncheon was attended by 170 volunteers who served multiple times in the past year, staff and members of our board of directors, and was a tremendous success.

Volunteers are integral to the functioning of Siena/Francis House – all 3,600+ who volunteer annually at our organization. Our services to people experiencing homelessness could not take place without this volunteer work force who provided 20,428 hours of service at Siena/Francis House in 2018. This is a remarkable achievement, and we are so appreciative of their important work.

Luncheon attendees represented the following areas of volunteer service: Meal Serving/Kitchen; Drivers; Administrative and Development; Special Events; Educational Partners and Students; Educational Teachers in our Recovery Program and Shelters; Musicians; Clothing and Personal Care Item Sorters; and Food, Clothing, Monetary and In-Kind Donors.

To help reinforce how important volunteers are to our mission, the Siena/Francis House put together a video regarding volunteering, which we premiered at this luncheon. You can also watch this video on our website at: sienafrancis.org and clicking on the “How To Help/Volunteer” link.

At the luncheon, we also presented our organization’s “Good Neighbor Award” in three categories: Partner, Business, and Individual. Winners of the Good Neighbor Awards were recognized for their outstanding volunteer service and commitment to serving the homeless, and included:

GOOD NEIGHBOR AWARD BUSINESS



Baxter Auto Group employees receiving their Good Neighbor Award. Baxter Toyota’s General Manager, Kevin Ryland, is holding the award.

Baxter Auto Group

Baxter Auto Group employees have been serving the evening dinner meal at the Siena/Francis House on every 5th Sunday of the month since 2012. They’ve also sponsored the Siena/Francis House’s Annual Walk/Run since 2003.

Siena/Francis House is grateful for the many ways that our many volunteers help our staff further our organization’s mission of serving the homeless!

GOOD NEIGHBOR AWARD COMMUNITY PARTNER



St. Leo the Great Catholic Church’s staff and parishioners receiving their Good Neighbor Award. St. Leo’s Pastor, Fr. Craig Loecker is holding the award.

St. Leo the Great Catholic Church

Parishioners from St. Leo’s have been preparing and serving meals for the Siena/Francis House four times a month for the past 37 years – that’s over 300,000 meals! Over 250 volunteers from the St. Leo parish are involved in this ministry. In addition to serving and preparing meals, members of St. Leo’s have served on the Siena/Francis House Board of Directors and others have taught life enrichment classes in our Miracles Addiction Recovery Program.

GOOD NEIGHBOR AWARD INDIVIDUAL



Candy Murcek and Ngoc Ngoc-My Nguyen-Klish (first and third from left) receiving their Good Neighbor Awards. Also pictured are Siena/Francis House Assistant Development Director, Dawn Olijnek and Executive Director, Linda Twomey.

Ngoc-My Nguyen-Klish and Candy Murcek

Affectionately known by Siena/Francis House homeless guests as “The Craft Ladies,” Ngoc-My Nguyen-Klish and Candy Murcek have taught women’s shelter guests sewing, knitting, crocheting and other handiwork on a weekly-basis for more than five years. Ngoc-My and Candy also bring homemade food items to share with many homeless women attending their two-hour classes, including traditional Vietnamese dishes, chili, fruit and chocolate truffle candies, to name a few. Their weekly visits are a highlight for women staying in the shelter, teaching them hands-on skills and building community.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS... The 25th Annual

SIENA/FRANCIS HOUSE WALK/RUN

is scheduled for Saturday, September 7 at 9 a.m. at Stinson Park in Aksarben Village. More information – including how to register – will be sent later this summer. Or, go to our website at www.sienafrancis.org to utilize our online registration and credit card payment option to participate in either the 5K Run or 5K Walk. We hope to see you on Saturday, September 7 at Stinson Park in Aksarben Village!

SIENA/FRANCIS HOUSE DONOR BILL OF RIGHTS

Philanthropy is based on voluntary action for the common good. It is a tradition of giving and sharing that is primary to the quality of life of our community. To assure that philanthropy merits the respect and trust of the general public, and that donors and prospective donors can have full confidence in our organization, the Siena/Francis House declares that all donors have these rights:

1. To be informed of the Siena/Francis House's mission, of the way our organization intends to use donated resources, and of our capacity to use donations effectively and efficiently for their intended purposes;
2. To be informed of the identity of those serving on the Siena/Francis House's Board of Directors, and to expect the board to exercise prudent judgement in its stewardship responsibilities;
3. To have access to the Siena/Francis House's most recent financial statements;
4. To receive appropriate acknowledgment and recognition;
5. To expect that all relationships with individuals representing the Siena/Francis House will be professional in nature, and that information about your donations is handled with respect and confidentiality;
6. To be assured that donor information will never be shared with any other organization;
7. To be assured that those seeking donations for the Siena/Francis House are not hired solicitors, and that 100% of your donations are utilized by the Siena/Francis House;
8. To be assured your gifts will be used for the purpose of furthering our mission of providing food, shelter, clothing, case management and addiction recovery services to those most in need in our community;
9. To have the opportunity for your name to be deleted from our mailing list;
10. To feel free to ask questions when making a donation, and to receive prompt, truthful, and forthright answers.

Adapted from the American Association of Fundraising Counsel, Association for Healthcare Philanthropy, Council for Advancement and Support of Education, Association of Fundraising Professionals. Updated: May 2019

ANOTHER ★★★★★ RATING BY CHARITY NAVIGATOR!



Donors to charitable organizations are appropriately interested in knowing that their financial support is used efficiently, ethically and responsibly. Please know that the Siena/Francis House is absolutely committed to these principles, as well. Please take a moment to review *Charity Navigator's* – America's largest independent charity evaluator – recent evaluation of the Siena/Francis House. **Just go to: <http://www.charitynavigator.org> to read why the Siena/Francis House has once again earned their highest – 4-Star – rating for fiscal responsibility.** Type in "Siena/Francis House" in their charity search box to learn the details of why *Charity Navigator* has the confidence to award our shelter with their highest, "exceptional" designation.

DONATIONS KEEP OUR ORGANIZATION RUNNING!

The Siena/Francis House relies on the generosity of our community to provide all of our services. This includes receiving donations of all types – monetary, food, clothing, other in-kind, personal care items, as well as volunteer time. Here are a few examples which capture the essence of all of these areas of donations...and for which the Siena/Francis House is extremely grateful.



For the 15th consecutive year, CHI Health CUMC – Bergan Mercy sponsored an enormous, non-perishable food drive to benefit the Siena/Francis House, collecting and 48,839 pounds. Pictured is CHI Creighton University Medical Center Bergan Mercey President, Kevin Nokels, at the food presentation. This organization’s food donation is the largest we receive each and every year. Thank you, CHI Health CUMC – Bergan Mercy!

The 6th grade Student Council from Beveridge Magnet Middle School from right here in Omaha conducted a collection drive of socks for the homeless guests at Siena/Francis House. When all was said and done, more than 400 pairs of socks were delivered. With the extremely cold weather we had this past winter, we are sincerely grateful to these compassionate young people – and to their advisor, Anna Sparwasser.



The Siena/Francis House is grateful to the 135th & California Street Bank of the West and their corporate offices for their \$7,500 donation in support of financial wellness and education programming for our residents. We very much appreciate the financial expertise that Bank of the West’s staff shares with the many people who find themselves in need of our services. Pictured are Bank of the West’s Corporate Social Responsibility Regional Officer, Rob Trebilcock (far left) and Senior Vice President, Information Technology and member of the Siena/Francis House’s Board of Directors, Dave Naumann (far right), presenting the donation check to SFH Development Director, Tim Sully.



For years, the United States Postal Service’s Saddle Creek branch has conducted a non-perishable food drive, to benefit the Siena/Francis House. This year they collected 6,115 pounds of food – an amazing amount!



Siena/Francis House is grateful for a \$5,000 grant from Hayneedle to help shelter the homeless and empower them on their path to safe and affordable housing. Thank you Hayneedle team members for your support!

Folks from Spreetail stopped by with a donation - 40 EMPWR coats! These innovative water-resistant jackets can transform into sleeping bags and be worn as an over-the-shoulder bag when not in use. The non-profit that makes the coats trains and employs recently homeless women. Thank you Spreetail for your support of individuals experiencing homelessness in our community.



A gigantic thank you goes out to the employees from HDR who spent hours volunteering at Siena/Francis House earlier this year. This group worked amazingly efficiently, painting a couple of offices, cleaning walls in our dining room and a shelter space, as well as making hundreds of sack lunches. These volunteers were AWESOME! We are very grateful they chose to share their time supporting our mission of serving people experiencing homelessness.

We had some awesome volunteers from St. Cecilia Catholic School distribute and collect guest surveys during dinner twice this past semester. This once-monthly endeavor is important to our organization, as we ask for - and receive - important feedback from guests regarding our meal and shelter programs. Thanks to these four 7th graders for their great help!



Mayor Jean Stothert and her husband, Dr. Joseph Stothert - along with a number of folks from the Mayor's staff - helped serve our Traditional Thanksgiving Dinner to Siena/Francis House guests last November, as she's done for many years. Thanks very much to the Mayor and her crew!



Military service volunteers formed the color guard that presented and raised the flag on our campus on Veteran's Day. Awesome of these folks to take the time out of their schedule to honor the many homeless veterans we serve each and every day!



United Healthcare is integrally involved in supporting our homeless services, including making monetary donations, which we greatly appreciate.



Thank you to Johnstone Supply for donating a portion of November 2018 online sales to the Siena/Francis House! Kevin Van Houten, Manager at Johnstone Supply, stopped by to present their very generous check.

DAILY NEEDS LIST

PERSONAL HYGIENE

deodorant
shampoo, conditioner
bath soap
disposable razors
shaving cream
hand & body lotion
lip balms
toothbrushes/toothpaste
combs & brushes
adhesive bandages
antiseptic cream
antacids
pain relievers

PAPER/PLASTIC

toilet paper
feminine hygiene products
tissues
napkins
paper towels
trash can liners (13 & 55 gallon)
aluminum foil
plastic wrap
8 oz. styrofoam cups
paper plates
sandwich bags
brown paper lunch bags
rubber gloves (for cleaning, Large, XL)
plastic gloves (for serving in the kitchen)

KITCHEN

silverware
coffee cups

LINENS

bath towels
wash cloths
sheets (for twin/single beds, only)
blankets (for twin/single beds, only)
pillows/pillow cases

CLEANING PRODUCTS

dish soap
laundry soap
liquid bleach
liquid disinfectant (e.g. Pine Sol, Lysol)
disinfectant wipes
brooms & dustpans
mops, buckets, squeegees

CLOTHING (FOR MEN AND WOMEN)

coats, jackets
sweatshirts/hoodies/flannel shirts
jeans/pants/sweatpants/shorts
shirts/tops/blouses
underwear & other undergarments
long johns

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ACT NOW TO REDUCE YOUR TAXES AND REACH YOUR CHARITABLE GIVING GOALS

While new tax cuts went into effect last year, many provisions relating to charitable giving remain intact. **Most prominently, qualifying donors can still make direct transfers to charities from individual retirement accounts (IRAs) without first having to recognize the distribution as income.**

People over 70 ½ years old are required to make minimum yearly distributions from their retirement accounts – distributions that are taxed by the government. But qualifying donors are still allowed to give up to \$100,000 per year from these accounts to charity, which counts toward the minimum disbursement, without being taxed. You may make tax-free transfers from your IRA or Roth IRA if:

- You are 70 ½ years old or older.
- Your cumulative tax-free transfers to charity do not exceed \$100,000 per tax year (married couples can donate up to \$200,000 per year).
- Your tax-free transfers are made directly from your IRA or Roth IRA to a qualified public charity, like the Siena/Francis House, and NOT to donor-advised funds, supporting organizations or private foundations.

Transfers completed by December 31, 2019 will be free of federal income tax this year, and such gifts qualify for the 2019 required minimum distribution from donors' IRAs. Please act now to support the Siena/Francis House – and to fulfill your own charitable goals – by taking advantage of the planning options available to you.

If you would like us to coordinate with your fund custodian a direct transfer of funds from your IRA or Roth IRA to the Siena/Francis House, please contact our Development Director, Tim Sully, at 402-341-1821 or by e-mail at tsully@sienafrancis.org.

Thank you for considering this excellent charitable-giving opportunity!

HAVE YOU REMEMBERED THE SIENA/FRANCIS HOUSE HOMELESS SHELTER IN YOUR WILL?

Estate gifts go a long way in caring for those most in need
from our own local community.



MEET NATHAN WOOD (continued from page 3)

Q: How did you learn about the recovery program?

A: As a guest, I frequently interacted with the men in the Miracles program who helped with some duties around the shelter. I stayed there for 8 months and was able to watch these men – who were just like me – come into this program and change into something better. However, even staring the evidence in the face, I couldn't commit to the belief that I had a chance at recovery. I had tried quitting and failed many times. I believed if I couldn't get myself to quit then no one could. Like most addicts, I had a distorted view of what the disease of addiction is and I assumed, as most of the general public does, that it was a lack of willpower on my part.

Q: Why did you decide to join the recovery program?

A: Eventually, I was apprehended on a DUI and spent 3 months in jail. I made a firm resolution to quit drinking and finally turn my life around. Back at Siena/Francis House, I finally asked for an application to the Miracles program, and it took three days of overthinking before I handed it in on July 25, 2013...the last day I had a drink. I came in so afraid of my addiction that I decided to do whatever they told me, although I was sure I would fail.

Q: What did I learn about myself, others, and people experiencing homelessness while in the Siena/Francis House's Miracles Treatment Program.

A: The Miracles program introduced me to someone I've always known and ignored: a higher power. They showed me what is really important in life, and taught me how to give more than to receive. How to have empathy and love. How to finally feel connected and care. They didn't teach me how to quit drinking. I'd tried that, and it didn't work. They taught me how to live. By simply believing and living accordingly, the need for substance use disappeared from me.

Q: What have you been doing since you graduated from the Miracles Recovery Program?

A: I graduated the Miracles program in March 2014. I moved to a 3/4 way house and eventually became president there. I stayed at this home for 2 years while I pursued an associate's degree at Metropolitan Community College. I've always worked in the field of construction, so, while I was in school, I started doing a few odd jobs, here and there. With every job I had to buy a new tool, and with every job came a referral for the next one.

Eventually, I bought a truck and some business cards and started my own business: Nathan Wood Renovation & Repair. I've grown this business over the last five years, at times employing several people, as well as have taken on some really incredible projects. When I do need help, I often go to the Siena/Francis House and employ some of the men there. And, I continued to go to school, full-time, at MCC. In May 2016, I was awarded an associate's degree, graduating with a 3.9 GPA. This earned me a spot at UNO's College of Engineering. In May of this year, I graduated from UNO with a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering with a focus on structural engineering (known as one of UNO's toughest programs). The renovation and remodeling business has been good to me, but it is time to close up shop and go build something bigger.

Q: What are you grateful for and what is your perspective on life, relationships, etc.?

A: Today, I have hope for my future. I finally care about life and the people in it. I have reconnected with my family and have started my own with a beautiful, wonderful, smart, and kind woman that is way too good for me. I continue to avail myself to the recovery community and hope that I can spark the same change in others that the Miracles program gave to me. I cannot beat addiction; it is just part of who I am. But the Siena/Francis House taught me how to break that cycle, and to supplant it with a deeper meaning and purpose. Life is truly what you make of it. I just needed some direction and I got that from the Siena/Francis House.

DAILY NEEDS LIST

(continued from page 10)

CLOTHING (FOR MEN AND WOMEN)

socks
shoes/boots
footwear inserts (odor-eliminating)
gloves/scarves
belts
shower shoes/flip flops

MISCELLANEOUS

MAT bus ticket books
pens, pencils, dry-erase markers
spiral notebooks
maintenance tools
backpacks
duffel bags

FOOD

canned fruits & vegetable (larger, #10 cans preferred)
frozen meat (professionally-processed)
lunch "deli" meats (for sack lunches)
chips/treats/snacks (for sack lunches)
bottled water
coffee (caffeinated, non-flavored)
coffee creamer
eggs
butter/margarine
peanut butter
cheese
milk
pasta/egg noodles
pasta sauce
tomato sauce/tomato paste
pancake mix (larger bags or boxes preferred)
syrup
ketchup/mustard
mayonnaise
salad dressing
tartar sauce
vinegar
cooking oil
spices (especially chili powder, oregano, granulated garlic, parsley)
salt & pepper packets
salt & pepper (in bulk, for cooking)
sugar
fruit juice
salsa
instant potatoes
rice
flour
soup (larger, #10 cans preferred)
fresh produce

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DO YOU HAVE FRIENDS WHO MAY BE INTERESTED IN KNOWING MORE ABOUT THE SIENA/ FRANCIS HOUSE?

We would be happy to send them our twice-yearly Siena/Francis House newsletter. Please feel free to contact Kristi Miskimins at kmiskimins@sienafrancis.org or by phone at 402-341-1821 – for more information. Please also contact Kristi if you wish to only receive Siena/Francis House information toward the end of the calendar year, or to be removed from our database.

RECURRING DONATIONS SAVE YOU TIME AND HELP SIENA/FRANCIS HOUSE

Would you like to support the important work of the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter by making your donation recurring (once a month, for example)? Recurring donations assure the Siena/Francis House of having stable funding, year-round. Also, setting up a recurring donation makes it more convenient for you to support our mission of serving our community's homeless, as well as helps you budget for your philanthropic giving.

To set up a recurring donation, visit www.sienafrancis.org and click on the "Donate Now" icon. On the donation form, select "Recurring Donation." A drop-down menu will appear which allows you to select how often you wish your gift to occur: weekly, monthly, quarterly or yearly. You can make your recurring donation using a credit or debit card, or set up a transfer directly from your bank account. If you would like our staff to assist you in setting up your recurring donation, please feel free to call the Siena/Francis House at 402-341-1821.

Thank you for considering this option to further support the Siena/Francis House's mission of providing our most basic human services of food, shelter and clothing to the homeless right here in our community

IN-KIND DONATIONS can be delivered to our loading dock, located at 1111 North 17th Street. The dock is open from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. every day of the year. And, if you wish, you can receive a receipt for your tax deductible donation at the time you drop off any items to our loading dock.

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The Siena/Francis House
can be found at:

 [sienafranchishouse](https://www.facebook.com/sienafranchishouse)

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Gifts to Siena/Francis House are used to provide food, shelter, clothing, and care of the people who turn to us during their hour of need, and are greatly appreciated. All of our services are provided at no cost to our guests. All gifts to Siena/Francis House are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law. Our audited financial statements are freely available by writing to Siena/Francis House, P.O. Box 217 DTS | Omaha, Nebraska 68101. Our donor information is kept in strict confidence; our donor lists are never rented, shared, or exchanged with other organizations. The stories in our communications are real. Identifying details have been changed and file photos may be used to protect the privacy and therapeutic interest of our guests. For more information about Siena/Francis House or to include us in your estate planning, please contact Siena/Francis House Development Director, Tim Sully, at (402) 341-1821.