



Serving Hope to the Homeless

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## SIENA FRANCIS HOUSE

### Recognized with Two Awards

Community leaders are taking notice of the good work made possible by your continued partnership with Siena Francis House. This year, we were honored to receive awards from the Nebraska Investment Finance Authority (NIFA) and CommonSpirit Health.

**Nebraska Investment Finance Authority (NIFA) awarded The Cottages the Innovate Project of the Year 2023.** This award was accepted in April at the annual NIFA conference.

**CommonSpirit Health awarded Siena Francis House the 2024 The Lloyd H. Dean Institute for Human Kindness & Health Justice Award** that recognizes Siena Francis House for commitment and leadership towards advancing the common good.

# HOPE NOTES

FALL 2024



## Serving Hope to the Homeless

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## SIENA FRANCIS HOUSE MISSION AND VALUES

Siena Francis House is Nebraska's largest provider of services to individuals experiencing homelessness and is committed to achieving our goal to end homelessness by helping every guest secure positive housing. This list of values is the "moral compass" we use to not only set policies, but to guide our staff daily as we serve our neighbors in need.

- Advocacy
- Collaboration
- Stewardship
- Integrity
- Innovation
- Compassion

## WINTER NEEDS

Our guests need your help to stay safe in the cold months ahead. Please consider hosting a drive at your business or among your family and friends. You can collect food, warm clothes, hygiene items and more.

As we transition into colder months, unhoused people will need our help to stay safe. Please consider donating the following items to meet urgent needs this season:

- **Warm clothes:** Coats, long underwear, gloves and hats, heavy socks
- **Twin bedsheets and blankets, pillowcases, towels and washcloths**
- **Tissue/Kleenex**
- **Personal care hygiene items:** Razors, shaving cream, feminine products (tampons and pads), toothpaste and toothbrushes, dental floss, soap, body wash, deodorant, shampoo and conditioner, combs, brushes
- **Food:** Industrial cans of fruits and vegetables, rice, nonperishable food items and COFFEE!

Contact Silvia Rodriguez at [srodriguez@sienafrancis.org](mailto:srodriguez@sienafrancis.org) or 402-341-1821, ext. 3707, for more information.

## I WANTED TO BE AN INSPIRATION

Several years ago, Angie was facing significant jail time. Homeless and using drugs for almost a decade, addiction had nearly ruined her life. She knew she needed treatment and asked the judge to grant her that opportunity — if she could find a program willing to admit her.

A friend of Angie's who attended Siena Francis House's Miracles Addiction Treatment & Recovery Program had a good outcome, so Angie applied, too. The same day she learned a bed was open, she went to the judge for approval to attend. Six-and-a-half months later, Angie graduated from the program.

"It was a very fulfilling experience," she said. "It opened my eyes to a lot of things and helped me deal with suppressed trauma."

Angie was so moved by her experience that she decided she wanted to work at Miracles.

"I knew I had found my calling and that it would fulfill my purpose," she said.

When a position opened five years ago, Angie eagerly accepted it and was grateful to be on a new path. But on the morning of March 6, 2022, her life took another turn.

Thinking she was having a stroke while at work, Angie rushed to the ER. Hours later, she discovered she had terminal brain cancer.

"The diagnosis was traumatic. I went into a catatonic state," she said. "But my doctor encouraged me to make choices about my treatment. I felt empowered, and I wanted to empower others and be an inspiration."

Angie even kept working in the Emergency Shelter through dozens of rounds of radiation and chemotherapy. When asked why she keeps showing up, she explained, "I love my job, and I love the people I serve. In my soul, I feel fulfilled."

We are in awe of Angie's strength and determination. She uses her own struggles to relate to and support the women who seek shelter and help at Siena Francis House. Angie insists that friends like you play an important role in positive outcomes, too.

"Thank you for your donations," she said. "We work hard to serve those who come to us, and your generosity makes it so we don't have turn anyone away."

"It was a very fulfilling experience," she said. "It opened my eyes to a lot of things and helped me deal with suppressed trauma."



A Miracles program graduate, Angie has been part of the Siena Francis House team for five years now. Despite living with cancer, she continues working and serving others.

## READ HOW READ HOW YOUR SUPPORT IS EMPOWERING OUR CLIENTS, BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS, AND MORE.



## A PARTNERSHIP BUILT ON TRUST AND RESPECT

In 2021, Siena Francis House partnered with the Creighton University College of Nursing to create the Health & Wellness Series. The program consists of two eight-week sessions each year when Creighton faculty and students visit Miracles clients.

After assessing their needs, the nursing students educate our clients on things like nutrition, stress management, chronic illness, and addiction recovery. It provides students with real-world, hands-on experience in addressing complex problems they will encounter as professionals.

*"Students learn social determinants of health by being involved with the Miracles program,"* said Assistant Professor Jo Anne Genua PhD, RN, MN, BScN, CCHN-C.

*"They become part of the 'lived experience' and gain an understanding of the disparities that have an impact on people's health, well-being, and quality of life."*

As Miracles Clinical Director Rob Bauer explained, our clients benefit, too.

*"Participants value the expertise shared, and the partnership enhances our program from a holistic approach."*

Genua echoed those sentiments.

*"The atmosphere the students create is relaxed and nonjudgmental, building trust so participants share their experiences and concerns and ask questions,"* she said. *"They feel they are being listened to and are empowered to apply what they learn."*

Partnerships like these are key to educating our community about the realities of homelessness and inspiring others to help address the issue through meaningful action. Your support helps bring programs like this to life. Thank you!

Creighton University nursing students.



## YOU CAN'T GET VERY FAR WITHOUT HELP

Since 2000, Mike Ewoldt has donated 10,000 shoes to Siena Francis House. As the owner of Peak Performance running store, he encourages shoppers to bring in their gently worn shoes or donate new ones to benefit our guests.

Mike has also helped organize the annual Siena Francis Hope for the Homeless 5K Walk/Run since its inception 30 years ago. We asked Mike what motivates him to give back to Omaha's unhoused community so generously.

*"Running and life have a lot in common. You can't get very far without the right equipment or help,"* he said. *"I've been fortunate to have a supportive community behind me all these years. This is one way to show my gratitude and give back to help others."*

Thank you for all you do, Mike! Your boundless generosity is an inspiration to us all.



*"I've been fortunate to have a supportive community behind me all these years. This is one way to show my gratitude and give back to help others."*

Donor and running enthusiast Mike Ewoldt has supported Siena Francis House for 30 years.

## SUPPORT SIENA FRANCIS HOUSE THROUGH YOUR DONOR ADVISED FUND (DAF)

Donor Advised Funds are quickly becoming one of the most popular ways for people to support the organizations and causes they care most about. As we enter the season of giving and year-end planning, please consider supporting Siena Francis House through your DAF.

We asked Chris Bauer, Chief Development Officer, a few questions about DAFs and how contributing to Siena Francis House through your DAF benefits you and makes an impact for Omaha's homeless.

### Q. What are the tax benefits of giving through DAFs and IRAs at year-end?

A. Donors can receive an immediate tax deduction for their DAF contribution and donating long-term appreciated assets to a DAF can potentially eliminate capital gains tax.

### Q. What types of assets can be contributed to a DAF?

A. A DAF can accept many different types of assets including cash, real estate, mutual fund shares, stocks and bonds, partnership interests, life insurance and others.

### Q. Why would someone give through a DAF rather than give to a charity directly?

A. The immediate tax deduction is attractive to many donors as well as the opportunity to develop a philanthropic vision and have flexibility in granting funds to their favorite charities over time.

### Q. How do DAF funds make a difference for SFH?

A. Charitable assets in a DAF can grow over time increasing the impact of your philanthropy that helps our neighbors into safe, permanent housing. DAFs also streamline the grantmaking process which means your generosity helps Siena Francis House reach more people and expand programming even more quickly and efficiently.



## VOLUNTEER WITH US!

Siena Francis House is always in need of volunteers. If you or your company are looking for a way to give back, we'd love to have you! Contact [volunteer@sienaf Francis.org](mailto:volunteer@sienaf Francis.org) or 402-341-1821 ext. 1113 for more information.

For more information on supporting Siena Francis House through a Donor Advised Fund, please contact Chris Bauer, Chief Development Officer at [cbauer@sienaf Francis.org](mailto:cbauer@sienaf Francis.org) or 402-341-1821 ext.1161