



**FRIENDS**<sup>™</sup>  
of the **FAMILY**  

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**Everyone Has A Home**

"Absolute lifesavers. They really do everything they can for you."

- Former Client

2022-2023 **ANNUAL REPORT**



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*"Work, school, family events, meetings, and a whole host of other commitments keep us hopping all day. Pretty soon those days turn into weeks and months, and then we look up and a year has passed! We get so caught up in the day-to-day chaos of our lives that we seldom take the time to reflect on the blessings we have, the relationships we cherish, and the simple things that make our lives full and complete. A safe home, a consistent paycheck, and shoulder to lean on when things get tough. Friends, family, and a community that wraps its support around us when we need it. All these things, when we stop to reflect, create the people we are.*

*Now, for a moment, consider your life with those things absent. Where would you be, how would you cope with the day-to-day struggles, who would you turn to? For so many in our community working through challenges, living with the dream that tomorrow will be better, and hoping upon hope to create a secure and positive future for themselves and for their children, they turn to Friends of the Family.*

*As a member of the Board of Directors, I hear these stories. Stories of hope, of success, of life-changing events that lift people up and create a bright future and a stronger community for us all. I am fortunate to be able to spend some of my time interacting with the amazing people at Friends of the Family, to see their work, and to hear the incredible passion for service in their voices. It is humbling and energizing.*

*You can be a part of this community-changing work as well. I invite you to attend a Friends of the Family event or to simply follow them on social media. If you are as moved as I am by the commitment to creating safe homes, sustainable employment, and a stronger sense of community, but don't feel you have the time, I challenge you to contribute what you can to make people's dreams a reality. Volunteer, donate, lend your skills to a cause that will give you so much back.*

*Take a moment to reflect on the blessings that you have...and then...pay them forward."*

*-Mike Isaacson  
Board President*

## Finding Her Way Back

Julia\* had been struggling for a long time. Substance use, homelessness and unemployment were her every day reality. Upon entering a housing program with Friends of the Family, Julia was still overcome with a feeling of hopelessness.

Since receiving housing assistance and entering into a program, things are looking much different for Julia. She first obtained employment as a cashier and within two months, flourished in her workplace so much that she moved into the assistant manager position.

She has also maintained sobriety, which is no small feat to overcome after so many years of substance use. Julia has also become very involved with her community, using her new way of living as a chance to give back. She attends support groups as well, and has a sponsor she can turn to when days are a little harder.

Finding the path back to loving herself has also been part of Julia's journey. Knowing she can now accomplish her dreams gives her the self-esteem and feelings of self-worth she had been missing.

Meeting regularly with a Friends of the Family Housing Support Specialist is also now part of

her routine. They are helping Julia to complete her chosen goals in a timely manner and they will continue to support and encourage Julia on this journey of rebuilding her life and moving forward on to things that not too long ago may have seemed impossible.

We know life can be hard. If you or someone you know needs support, reach out to our housing services hotline at 319-233-3094 to learn about our services. Or if you need someone to talk to, call the 24/7 victim services hotline at 319-352-0037. We sometimes need a lending hand to find our way back to the life we were meant to live.

*"I'm now surrounding myself with "things" in my apartment that I love and that provides motivation to continue with sobriety. I have not felt this positive and hopeful in years."*

**-Julia\*  
Housing Client**

\*Name has been changed for confidentiality.



# A Safe Place to Lay Your Head

If you were asked the question, where will you sleep tonight, your response would most likely be at my home, in my bed. But for many people in the communities that we live in, their answers are a lot different; in a tent, in my car or even out on the street.

So often, things such as the safety of home or even a bed are taken for granted. When we truly stop to think about it, what would it be like to not have a place to lay your head at night? That is the reality for many of the people supported by Friends of the Family.

So, to provide those we serve with the best possible outcomes, we use the Housing First Model. What exactly does this mean? To put it simply it means before anything else, we want to make sure those we are working with have a safe place to sleep at night. It means that nothing in a persons past or present, be it mental health issues, drug addiction, criminal background; nothing excludes them from being able to be housed.

The goal is to ensure that they have a safe place to sleep and *then* move on to the next step, providing wrap around services to address the issues that may have led

to homelessness. If someone is struggling with substance use or mental health, we connect them to resources in the community that can help. If they have a lack of support, connecting them with local churches or other help is the next step. Whatever the need is, Friends of the Family does everything we can to connect them to it. And this is all *after* they have that place to sleep at night.

Although housing first is a simple model, its far from easy. There are many steps to the process such as recruiting landlords to house applicants with low income or credit or helping someone who has been homeless for years become reacquainted with being a tenant. But Friends of the Family are never one to back down from a challenge. Our staff work diligently every day to change the way homelessness looks in our community and make a future that ensures everyone has a home.

Our work is far from over and we will continue to use the housing first model to house more people year after year. We ask ourselves daily, how do we end homelessness for good in our community? The answer? *Housing* is the solution.

# Volunteers Share Their Talents

**Volunteers take their unique talents and share them with Friends of the Family.**

Candice Warby, owner of Whimsical Twist Calligraphy, wanted to take her talent for making beautiful art and find a way to give back. When she reached out to Friends of the Family, we knew exactly the right project for her, painting a mural in our shelter playroom. After volunteering 13 hours of her time, she created a piece of art that will be something those who stay in our shelter can enjoy for years to come. (Pictured top right)

That's just one example of the different and unique ways that you can share your time with FOF.

Volunteers are a big part of our organization and provide us with essential time that we need in order to help those we support.

**Last year alone, 195 volunteers gave 7,978 hours of their time to Friends of the Family.**

Volunteering with FOF doesn't have to look a certain way. Whether you are looking for a few hours or 100 hours, we are always needing people to come along side us. Those willing to share their time and talents and help move us toward our vision of everyone has a home.

Group volunteering is a wonderful way to get your business, organization or even book club involved in the community. Pictured above is a group from the Civil Air Patrol. They took a few hours out of their day to complete landscaping work for our shelter in Bremer County. While it may not be what you would see a "typical" volunteer doing, it was a great opportunity for them and a wonderful service for Friends of the Family.

Volunteering comes in all different shapes and sizes here at Friends of the Family. From admin work or phone calls to cleaning or working directly with clients, there is a space for everyone here at FOF. If you would like more information about volunteering or have any questions, please reach out to our Community Engagement Manager at 319-576-2232.



"The past year has led to new challenges that can test the human spirit of those that dedicate themselves to a larger purpose. At Friends of the Family, we have seen an increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness which makes us stop and think about how we address this issue differently. It is the challenges that can light the way to new solutions and build determination to meet the ultimate goal. Ending homelessness in 10 years remains our vision and goal. With you by our side this dream will be a reality and I thank you for your continued belief in Friends of the Family."

- Ben Brustkern  
Executive Director

**SHELTER** 5,114 nights of safe shelter; 268 adults, 77 youth served

5,114

**VICTIM SERVICES HOTLINE = 5,973 CALLS**

**RECEIVED**

- 820 calls seeking shelter: 36% accepted shelter, 64% successfully resolved
- 3256 calls for general crisis support

5,973

**HOUSING** 886 adults, 476 youth served in housing programs

- averaged 20 days from homeless to housed
- 82% successfully exited to permanent housing

82%

**CLIENT ASSISTANCE** \$1,973,150 spent on direct client assistance

\$1,973,150

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270 NEW donors gave

\$50,613

963 total donors gave

\$157,326

(7/1/22-6/30/23)

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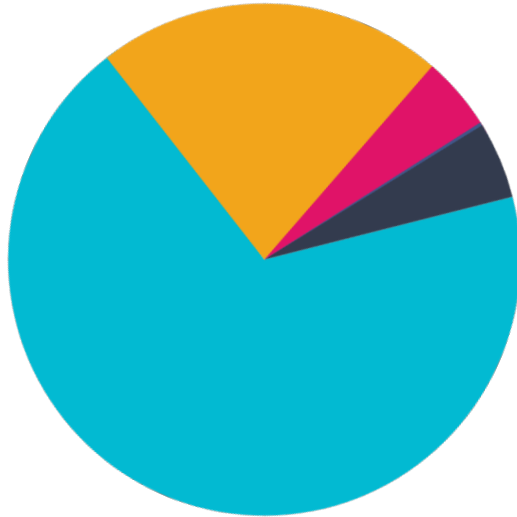
We are thankful that we continue to see the number of new supporters rise year after year.

**A Night In Italy** presented by Farmer's State Bank again sold out and raised over **\$58,000**. The evening had a fun Italian theme complete with a pasta bar from Hy-Vee, a wine tasting, and a gelato tasting with Chocolaterie Stam. There may have even been some singing by the emcee Mike Isaacson, Board President!

The 2nd Annual **Putt an End to Homelessness** presented by Green State Credit Union raised over **\$27,000** and was a HUGE success. Everyone enjoyed the beautiful golf course at Beaver Hills in Cedar Falls. We're excited to continue watching this event grow bigger year after year!

**Chefs Take a Stand** presented by The Paladin Group was held at the Hilton Garden Inn and raised over **\$36,000**! Best Dish Award winner was Chef Jami from Wartburg College Dining Services and Best Beverage Award winner, Tim from Happy's Wine & Spirits!!

# Income Overview



- **FEDERAL/STATE/COUNTY GRANTS: 68.90%**
- **LOCAL GRANTS & FOUNDATIONS: 22.08%**
- **EVENTS/CONTRIBUTIONS: 4.65%**
- **MISC. INCOME: 0.21%**
- **UNREALIZED GAIN: 4.88%**

"In any way possible, I enjoy extending my hand to those grappling with homelessness through my support for Friends of the Family, I find purpose not only in offering a helping hand, but in uplifting spirits, and restoring hope for those that need a hand in their life journey."

-Tyler Mahncke  
Board Treasurer

"For me, Friends of the Family is one of the organizations in Iowa that has consistently been in the forefront of finding innovative ways to provide assistance to individuals in crisis. I feel confident knowing my dollars will be spent wisely and in a manner that provides the greatest benefit to those in need."

-Cheryl  
Donor

## Income

Federal/State/County Grants	\$3,135,206
Local Grants & Foundations	\$1,004,012
Events & Contributions	\$211,621
Misc. Income	\$9,758
Investment Income (Loss)	-\$37,084
Unrealized Gain	\$222,090
<hr style="border-top: 1px dashed black;"/>	
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$4,545,603</b>



# Expenses

Payroll	\$1,922,933
Client Assistance	\$1,976,386
Employee Benefits	\$129,930
Payroll Taxes	\$160,612
Travel & Training	\$94,915
Contract Services	\$108,329
Rent	\$104,487
Other	\$37,365
Supplies	\$130,838
Repairs & Maintenance	\$45,435
Insurance	\$43,142
Communication/Phone	\$41,358
Utilities	\$25,215
Advertising	\$64,641
Fundraising/Outreach	\$36,317
Depreciation Expenses	\$37,224

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**TOTAL EXPENSES** **\$4,960,157**

# Amount Spent on Client Assistance



FY18-19	\$601,617
FY19-20	\$468,947
FY20-21	\$972,549
FY21-22	\$1,475,765
FY22-23	\$1,976,386

## OUR TEAM



Abby Carver,  
Housing Support  
Specialist



Alyssa Boranian,  
Diversion & Assessment  
Specialist



Alyssa Trapp,  
Grants Manager



Amela Moeller,  
Case Operations  
Manager



Amie Kujabi,  
Housing Support  
Specialist



Anna Blake,  
Housing Support  
Specialist



Danny Cash,  
Housing Support  
Specialist



Dawna Penrose-  
Engelhardt,  
Crisis Advocate



Dee Roby,  
Housing Navigator



Emily Camargo,  
Housing Advocate



Emma Wendel,  
Housing Resource  
Specialist



Erin Langenberg,  
Development  
Director



Kristine Denning,  
Housing Resource  
Specialist



Lisa Pelz,  
Housing Support  
Specialist



Liz Hartshorn,  
Housing Support  
Specialist



Madison Gaffney,  
Community  
Engagement Manager



Maz Laughlin,  
Housing Advocate



Mo Lotonuu,  
Outreach & Diversion  
Specialist



Sydney Hall,  
Crisis Advocate



Tammy Anderson,  
Crisis Advocate



Tory Thompson,  
Housing Support  
Specialist



Will Bird,  
Director of Operations

Not Pictured: Emma Askildson  
Overnight Crisis Advocate



Ashley Schneider,  
Housing Support  
Specialist



Bailee Burks,  
Crisis Services  
Manager



Ben Brustkern,  
Executive Director/  
Visionary



Caitlin Atkins,  
Housing Projects  
Manager



Caitlyn Kupka,  
Service Access  
Manager



Candi Lanning,  
Director of Finance



Grace Epley,  
Shelter Site Supervisor



Jen Dixon,  
Housing Advocate



Jennifer Wolff,  
Crisis Advocate



Jerra Nash,  
Diversion &  
Assessment Specialist



Jessica Foster,  
Executive Assistant



Kelley Schmitz,  
Integrator



Monique Wise,  
Office Manager



Morgan Stone,  
Housing Support  
Specialist



Nicole Jacobs,  
Outreach & Diversion  
Specialist



Nicole Winters,  
Housing Support  
Specialist



Nikki Marcurella,  
Housing Support  
Specialist



Sarah Pavelec,  
Communications &  
Events Manager

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Mike Isaacson,  
Board President



Melissa Haberstich,  
Secretary



Roshawn Berry



Jazzlyn Douglas



Jeff Conrey



Michele Knaack,  
Vice President



Tyler Mahncke,  
Treasurer



Jordan Shanks



Heidi Solheim

# HOTLINES

HOUSING SERVICES HOTLINE  
**319-233-3094**

24/7 VICTIM SERVICES HOTLINE  
**319-352-0037**

EMAIL  
**admin@fofia.org**

Friends of the Family is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit agency providing victim services and homeless programming to 25 counties across Northeast and Northcentral Iowa.

Serving the following Iowa counties: Allamakee, Benton, Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Cerro Gordo, Chickasaw, Clayton, Delaware, Dubuque, Fayette, Floyd, Franklin, Grundy, Hancock, Howard, Jones, Kossuth, Linn, Mitchell, Tama, Winnebago, Winneshiek, and Worth.

## CONTACT US

Ph: 319-234-0232  
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## OFFICE LOCATIONS

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Waterloo, IA 50702

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