



Room at the Inn

ANNUAL REPORT, 2007–08

ROOM AT THE INN TRANSFORMS LIVES, ONE PERSON AT A TIME

The jovial group gathered in the lower level of Manchester United Methodist Church laughed over dinner. At one end of the table, the chairman of the board of a St. Louis utility was promising the homeless architect that she would hear from the head of the utility for a job interview. At the other end, the group of 20-somethings was laughing like old friends, although they had just met. In between, motherly types were offering comfort and encouragement to the apprehensive young woman on her own for the first time.

This scene plays out night after night when Room at the Inn clients stay at our partner congregations. Rarely is it an uncomfortable assembly of strangers. Rather, the evening gathering quickly becomes a celebration of caring. Room at the Inn volunteers quickly come to understand a fundamental fact: people who are homeless are people first. Their homeless status is almost always a new and fleeting circumstance; it does not define who they are. Each person who arrives at the shelter has his or her own personality, his or her own history.



Volunteers and clients strike up a friendship while striking a pose at Manchester United Methodist Church in Kirkwood.

The clients gathered around that dinner table included an expectant mother, a mother with her son, single women, an older woman, and a married couple. There is no single face of “the homeless.” There is no one story. Each year, we see 200 individuals, 200 different causes of homelessness, 200 different heartaches and 200 different paths to self-reliance.

“We are here to serve everyone,” says Program Director Sr. Joann Nowak, OSF. “Sometimes our clients are homeless because of bad choices or financial mismanagement, but sometimes they were doing everything right when a crisis struck. Regardless, they all need and deserve our help.”

Room at the Inn has more than 50 agencies available to help meet the individual needs of our clients. Every program participant creates a plan, a roadmap to regain self-reliance. Room at the Inn staff guide them, referring them to agencies whose services fit the particular needs of the resident. For instance, Lesly Jackson, a former client, completed a six-week housing class, which helped her qualify for an apartment. Room at the Inn helped Lesly pay her back utility bills, removing that obstacle to housing. “They assisted me with resources to help me get back on my feet,” Lesly said, noting that Room at the Inn also got her to a health clinic and helped her with medications. Financially stable once again, Lesly gives back by serving on the Room at the Inn program board.

***People who are homeless are people first.
Their homeless status does not define who they are.***

Room at the Inn is about people helping people. It’s about restoring a vision, a hope, a dream. It’s about transforming lives. While at the shelter, clients learn new skills and new ways of looking at the world. They learn that life is manageable. They learn they have the power to direct their lives.

MISSION STATEMENT

Sponsored by the Sisters of Divine Providence, Room at the Inn provides emergency shelter and a stabilizing support system to women and families in need in St. Louis County, using a collaborative, interfaith effort of congregations and organizations throughout the St. Louis region.

ROOM AT THE INN
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITY AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2008

REVENUES

Grants and Other Contributions	\$ 190,920
Sisters of Divine Providence	80,000
Interest	<u>1,843</u>
TOTAL REVENUES	\$ 272,763

EXPENDITURES

Services to Clients	\$ 228,198
Management and Administrative	52,191
Fundraising	<u>14,419</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 294,808

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	\$ (22,045)
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	<u>\$ 119,163</u>
Net Assets, End of Year	<u>\$ 97,118</u>

IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

Partner congregations provided:

- ♦ At least 21,230 hours of overnight accommodations, plus transportation, meal preparation and service, and other hospitality.
- ♦ Approximately 14,600 meals (two each day for up to 20 people).

CLIENT OUTCOMES

100% of clients received transportation to needed services.

100% of heads-of-household were made aware of housing options.

100% of school-aged children were either attending school or in the enrollment process within three days of arriving at Room at the Inn.

100% of clients staying more than four days were made aware of and referred to appropriate outside social service agencies.

100% of adult clients staying more than seven days received a physical health evaluation.

100% of adult clients staying more than seven days received a mental health evaluation.

85% of adult clients staying more than seven days received a substance abuse evaluation.

94% of clients had incomes below the Health & Human Services Poverty Guideline when they entered Room at the Inn; average income was **41%** of the poverty level; **20%** had *no* income.

Average stay was 34 days.

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With Sincere Appreciation

The Sisters of Divine Providence are grateful for the contributions made to support the mission of Room at the Inn. Following are the names of those who made financial contributions to the shelter during the twelve months July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008. We thank you most sincerely.

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We try very hard to make sure all our donors are recognized, but sometimes we make mistakes. We sincerely apologize if we have made an error, and we want to know about it. Please contact Colleen Price at 314-209-9181 or cprice@divineprovidencesisters.org. Your assistance will help us avoid making the same mistake in the future. Thank you!

Thank you to our generous friends who have chosen to remain anonymous. While your name does not appear on these pages, it is recorded in our hearts and spoken in our prayers.

LOOKING FOR A MEANINGFUL GIFT?

Honor a special person while helping the homeless! When you contribute to Room at the Inn in honor or in memory of someone, Room at the Inn will send notice of your gift. Simply provide appropriate contact information when you send your contribution. The enclosed envelope has a space on the flap for this purpose.

Please consider this meaningful gift for graduations, birthdays, weddings or anniversaries.

VOLUNTEERS MAKE DIFFERENCE IN LIVES OF OTHERS

It's not often one has the opportunity to help change a life, but Room at the Inn staff and volunteers do just that every day. Many people feel compassion for the homeless of our community but are unsure of the best way to help. At Room at the Inn, our volunteers transport, shelter, feed and interact with our clients. It is a personal, hands-on way to help neighbors in need.

Room at the Inn volunteers number well into the hundreds. Every evening, volunteers from Room at the Inn's partner congregations transport our clients to their church or temple, where they provide an evening meal, companionship and a safe place to sleep. In the morning, the volunteers serve breakfast and return the clients to the permanent shelter in Bridgeton.

"I admire the people who step up to host because they have it in their hearts ... they're the angels, I'm an organizer," said Peggy Bennington, night site coordinator for Manchester United Methodist Church, which has hosted Room clients for nearly 16 years. Peggy notes that her parish involvement with the shelter has helped raise awareness of life outside their immediate community. She encourages others to get involved: "Try it, you'll like it! What you get back is far more than what you give the guests."



Westminster Christian Academy students serve dinner to Room at the Inn clients.

GRANTS AWARDED

The Sisters of Divine Providence and staff at Room at the Inn thank the following donors for their generous support during the past fiscal year:

Blessed Teresa of Calcutta Catholic Church	\$ 3,500
Emergency Food and Shelter Program	\$ 4,000
Employees Community Fund of Boeing St. Louis	\$10,000
Federal Emergency Shelter Grant	\$23,730
First Book	\$ 248
Missouri Attorney General's Office	\$ 2,538
Missouri Housing Trust Fund	\$10,000
REALTORS® Housing Assistance Fund	\$ 5,000
Regal Foundation	\$ 4,000
Racine Dominican Mission Fund	\$ 5,000
St. Louis Christmas Carols Association	\$ 500
St. Louis County Housing Resource Commission	\$32,834
Suburban Journals Old Newsboys Day	\$ 600
The TJX Foundation, Inc.	\$ 5,000
Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, N. St. Louis County	\$ 5,293

CLIENT STATISTICS

7/1/07 through 6/30/08

Bed nights	6,332
Individuals	200
Number of families	45
Single women	79

Minor children by age:

o Newborn to age 2:	23
o ages 3-5:	16
o ages 6-9:	17
o ages 10-12:	7
o ages 13-18:	<u>13</u>
Total	76

Room at the Inn is a Sponsored Ministry of the Sisters of Divine Providence



CONTACT ROOM AT THE INN

Phone: 314-209-9198

Fax: 314-209-9207

Mailing address: P.O. Box 3009, Bridgeton, MO 63044

Program Director: Sr. Joann Nowak, OSF, at ProgramDir@divineprovidencesisters.org

Volunteer Coordinator: Sr. Stephanie Turck, CDP, at VolunteerCoordinator@divineprovidencesisters.org

On the web at: www.divineprovidencweb.org/room



Some funds for the Room at the Inn emergency shelter program for homeless families are provided by government grants from the Department of Housing and Urban Development and administered by St. Louis County Human Services.





Room at the Inn

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Room at the Inn Celebrates 15 Years of Aiding the Homeless

Room at the Inn celebrated its 15th anniversary during the past fiscal year. The Sisters of Divine Providence assumed the administrative and financial support of Room at the Inn in April 1993. During the intervening years, we have helped approximately 3,537 homeless adults and children with safe shelter, medical care, training and basic necessities. That's an accomplishment worthy of celebration! It's also worthy of thanks: *thank you* for helping us to help the most vulnerable members of our community.



Nadia is one of the more than 1,932 children who found safe refuge at Room at the Inn since 1993.



In April, 2008, the Room at the Inn program board marked the shelter's 15th anniversary of changing lives for the better. Celebrating are (left to right): Julie Stein, Rose Mary Green, Bob Miller, Victoria Gonzalez-Rubio, Maria Fest, CDP, Betty Sundry, CDP, Chairperson Zita Telkamp, CDP, Client Coordinator Angela Hamilton, Mary Fran Weir, Mary Michael McCulla, CDP and Program Director Joann Nowak, OSF.