EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM HELPS REBUILD LIVES

COLUMBUS (December 9, 2013)—Community Housing Network’s 50 Jobs in 50 Days program is matching interested employers with eager employees; many whom have struggled with mental illness, histories of homelessness or substance abuse.

“The main purpose [of the program] is to help our [residents] rebuild their lives and feel better about themselves by earning income,” CHN Employment Specialist Bill Palmer said. “We also want them to motivate other [residents]. Hopefully, by seeing folks actively seeking employment, others will become motivated to do so as well.”

The 50 Jobs in 50 Days program was modeled after Make It Happen, an employment program developed by National Church Residences. The program has been immensely successful. To date, 43 residents have received employment through the program—17 in the first 15 days, and 39 at the half-way mark. “We are extremely proud of our residents, and thankful for the support we’ve received from employers throughout the community,” CHN COO Anthony Penn said. “We have nearly a month left in the program, and are looking forward to surpassing our goal and making a lasting impact in residents’ lives.”

Approximately 125 residents from CHN’s supportive housing units are participating in the program, which is also open to residents living in CHN’s single-family properties. CHN offers incentives to help motivate participants, which include “Employment Works” bracelets, a pizza party and gift cards for those who fill out the most applications, attend the most interviews and remain employed the longest.

CHN is the developer, owner and manager of supportive housing—permanent housing that provides linkages to social and health services—so many residents often deal with compounded disabilities that make obtaining employment difficult. “Part of the support is to help them find employment,” Palmer said. “[This program] gets them to change their thinking and culture.”

“A lot of people don’t want to give you an opportunity,” said CHN resident Fletcher McDaniel. Prior to entering the program, McDaniel struggled with multiple disabilities, including long-term unemployment, which resulted from providing full-time care for his ill grandmother. “I thank God for the opportunity,” McDaniel said. “This is a renewal of the spirit.”

The 50 Jobs in 50 Days Program is part of the comprehensive employment services CHN provides to residents through its service partners.

About Community Housing Network, Inc.
Community Housing Network, Inc., develops, owns and manages housing across Franklin County, Ohio, and provides affordable apartments to people disabled by mental illness, substance abuse and who have histories of homelessness.

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