

Highlighting our achievements in the fight against family homelessness



A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Dear Friends,

Home for the holidays. The expression is everywhere this time of year—greeting cards, movies, TV ads, even songs on the radio.

No other time of the year focuses so intensely on the concept of home. It's assumed that this is where everyone will be, joining family and friends to celebrate with comfort food, good cheer, and warm feelings.

That Norman Rockwell image may be prevalent, but the reality isn't quite so perfect. Across the country in big cities, leafy suburbs, and rural countrysides, there are families who face housing insecurity throughout the year, even now.

For more than 90,000 family members last year, Family Promise was the buffer between them and the threat of homelessness. But we didn't do this solely by providing hospitality in our 200-plus Affiliate locations. That's just one aspect of our work. Family Promise isn't only about emergency shelter; we offer a vast and varied range of holistic solutions to family homelessness.

This means efforts like the diversion program in our Denver, CO, Affiliate that keeps families from falling into homelessness as they run out of options, providing case management and resources so they can remain in their homes and aren't forced to seek shelter. Or the rehousing program in Grand Rapids, MI, that has moved more than 100 families into home ownership after having been homeless.

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Microenterprise: Jobs of the Future

What does the future of employment look like? Rapid advancements in technology are changing the nature of work. In 2017, a consortium of business, technology, and academic experts reported 85 percent of the jobs that will exist in ten years haven't been invented yet. And a recent Oxford University study found that more than 40 percent of all jobs will be threatened by automation in that same span of time. Talk is rampant of a "gig economy," a labor market of short-term contract or freelance work, as opposed to permanent jobs.

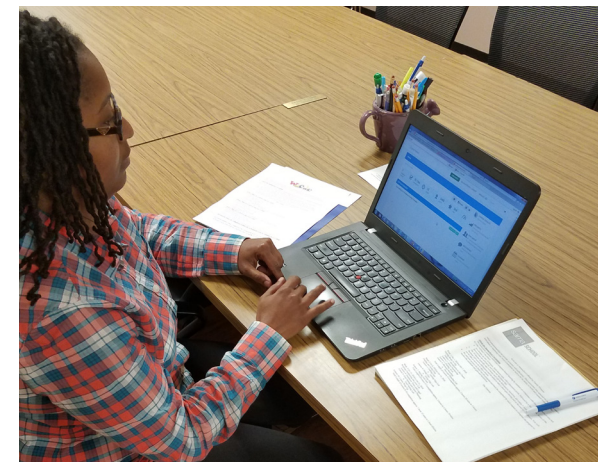
Such change affects workers at all levels, but low-income families are at the highest risk.

Small business for big results

Small entrepreneurial business, or microenterprise, is one way to empower families to achieve lasting independence. Collaborating with long-time partner Woodforest National Bank, Family Promise has developed a microentrepreneurship program that helps at-risk families create new opportunities to attain financial stability.

The online course, piloted with Affiliates earlier this year, offers a curriculum that helps users identify marketable skills, understand financial and tax issues, learn to manage projects, and more. Upon completion, families are better equipped to pursue viable microenterprise opportunities like service businesses, product sales, or online work.

"This program gives families the skills and knowledge to start a new enterprise or optimize a side business," says Woodforest's



A proprietary online program helps Family Promise graduates stay current in today's rapidly changing job market.

Daniel Galindo, who was instrumental in implementing the program. "It aligns with our shared mission with Family Promise to help families achieve financial independence."

Preparing for the next step

Randy Vanstory, Board Chair of Family Promise of Greater New Braunfels (TX) and facilitator of the program there, believes the program's strength lies in its ability to give students a thorough understanding of microenterprise.

"The program sets students up for success by forcing them to view a business opportunity from every angle to understand what the enterprise would entail," he says.

Tiffany Jones, program facilitator and case manager at the Amber (PA) Affiliate, agrees, adding, "Even if students haven't developed a detailed business plan by the end, at least they've started thinking about opportunities. This is another way for Family Promise to help families prepare for the next step."

Leading Voice on Homelessness Joins Family Promise Board



Robert Marbut believes sustainable recovery is the key to reducing homelessness.

offering shelter and services that address the root causes of homelessness. He developed *The Seven Guiding Principles of Homeless Transformation* in the belief that homelessness can be reduced through holistic measures that emphasize recovery.

Dr. Marbut has long been a friend to Family Promise, attending past national conferences and working with many Family Promise Affiliates.

"I'm excited to be joining the Family Promise board," says Dr. Marbut. "There are many programs out there, but very few focus on recovery the way Family Promise does."

Family Promise welcomes Dr. Robert Marbut, Jr., a pioneer in the field of homelessness, to the Board of Trustees.

Dr. Marbut was Founding President & CEO of *Haven for Hope*, a center

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Family Promise® is a national nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization addressing the crisis of family homelessness in the U.S. Through a comprehensive set of solutions involving prevention, shelter, and stabilization, Family Promise empowers families experiencing or at risk of homelessness to reclaim and maintain their independence.

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Or programs like the free temporary childcare in Gainesville, GA, that enables parents to seek employment or attend classes; the financial capability training in Las Vegas, NV, that reinforces smart budgeting and spending practices; and the Call to Community program in Lawrence, KS, that provides families with ongoing mentorship even after they've graduated from Family Promise.

These are just a handful of examples of the more than 1,500 programs Family Promise Affiliates operate that offer much more than shelter—they *prevent* families from becoming homeless and *stabilize* families who have experienced the loss of home or are at risk of homelessness. Prevention, shelter, and stabilization: *this* is what Family Promise is about, and this is what home means to us.

You may have received our year-end booklet in which Family Promise graduates and volunteers share their stories of how Family Promise has helped shape their ideas of home. It's the unparalleled dedication and generosity of our supporters that empower thousands of families each year to transform their lives and build a new and stronger version of home.

Home isn't simply a place to celebrate the holidays. *Home* means the ability to maintain housing even after a catastrophic event. It means acquiring the skills and resources to ensure the family home is a permanent, stable one. With Family Promise, *home* means ensuring children can have the future every family deserves.

Best holiday wishes,

Claas Ehlers

The Value of Volunteers



Family Promise volunteers – more than 200,000 across the country – play a vital role in helping families battling homelessness regain their independence. They do so in countless ways: providing meals and companionship; sharing life and work skills; offering transportation, childcare services, and move-in assistance; even making celebrations like birthdays and holidays as “normal” as possible during a time of crisis.

Now it's even easier to get involved using the new online **Family Promise Volunteer Portal** where you'll find a wide range of opportunities to help children and families in need. Prepare a meal. Tutor a child. Help

a parent practice budgeting skills. The possibilities are as diverse as the families we serve.

Go to <https://familypromise.org/get-involved> or use your smartphone to scan the QR code below and select **VOLUNTEER: LEARN MORE**



YOUR SUPPORT CHANGES LIVES!

A child's future begins at home. As you gather with loved ones and embrace the comfort and joy of home this holiday season, we hope you will remember those less fortunate – the families struggling to regain stability and give their children the future every child deserves.

Please make a gift to Family Promise by December 31 and offer hope and the promise of home to a family in need.

Go to: <https://donate.familypromise.org/HOME> or use your smartphone to scan the QR code. Thank you!



Why I Give VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: THERESA PINGER

Ask any teenager and they'll tell you the high school years can be a rollercoaster. But Theresa Pinger had to overcome an extra hurdle during those formative years when she and her mother left an abusive family situation and found themselves homeless.

“It was the best decision my mom could have made, but it left us without a home,” she says.

They stayed with family and friends and spent time in a motel before finding Family Promise of Anoka County (MN).

Theresa appreciated having other families with whom she could share common struggles but says the stigma of homelessness was difficult to ignore.

“You can't always tell what someone's going through by what you see on the surface.”

“I was embarrassed to be homeless and hid it from most people,” she admits.

In fact, family homelessness is often referred to as an invisible crisis. Families are ashamed, and parents worry social services might

remove their children. Most homeless families go to great lengths to hide their situation.

“You can't always tell what someone's going through by what you see on the surface,” Theresa says. “Hiding my homelessness made me feel isolated.”

Now a college junior majoring in Human Resource Development, Theresa acknowledges the role Family Promise played in helping her and her mother regain their independence. Family Promise worked with them to obtain housing, find steady employment for Theresa's mom, and bring a sense of structure and stability to their lives.

Theresa says Family Promise also inspired her college studies and instilled a desire to help others. She currently serves on the Guest Advisory Council (GAC), a body of Family Promise graduates using their experiences with poverty and homelessness to help shape organizational policies and initiatives.

“We're dispelling misconceptions of homelessness and giving a voice to those

often ignored by society,” Theresa says of her work with the GAC. “We let people know it's ok to step out of the shadows and ask for help.”

She believes the GAC is living proof that homelessness is a situation, not a label, and hopes to serve as an example for children in need.

“I want them to know they can still do great things with their lives,” she says. “There are people fighting for them.”

Theresa is one of them. She dreams of one day establishing a nonprofit to help youth and teens battling issues like homelessness and abuse.

“No one deserves to feel alone during a time of need,” she maintains.

Volunteers keep Family Promise running. Regardless of background or level of experience, everyone has a talent or skill they can share with children and families in need. See the “The Value of Volunteers” (on the opposite page) for more information on how you can get involved and help transform lives.



Theresa Pinger wants children who have experienced homelessness to know they can still find success.

30th ANNIVERSARY EVENTS

Family Promise is turning 30, and we'd like to celebrate with you! Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, we raised over \$725,000 at our 30th anniversary gala in October. Here's a sneak peek at some of the exciting events we have planned for our 30th year. Please join us!

JANUARY 26
1980s THEME PARTY
Summit Elks Lodge, Summit, NJ

FEBRUARY 22
PADDLE TENNIS LUNCH
Beacon Hill Club, Summit, NJ

MAY (date TBA)
FAMILY FUN DAY
Summit, NJ

Save the dates and look for more details at: www.familypromise.org/30th-anniversary-events