Welcome our new staff members!

Rachel Ahee, Basic Services Supervisor and Housing Case Manager

Rachel rejoined the CAH staff on May 5, 2014 as Basic Services Supervisor and as a Housing Case Manager with the Community Housing Partnership program. A transitional housing program run collaboratively by CAH and Good Samaritan Ministries. She received her Bachelor’s Degree in Social Work from Grand Valley State University in 2009. Shortly after graduation, she began working at Community Action House as a Case Manager specializing in Homelessness Prevention. When that assignment ended, she worked at the Kent County Housing Commission administering Section 8 vouchers and providing supportive services to voucher holders. In April 2014, she graduated with her Master’s Degree in Social Work. Rachel states, “Community Action House is about commitment. They are committed to serving and supporting the community AND committed to the success and well-being of their staff. For this reason, I have developed an admiration for the agency and a desire to be part of this team. I am happy to be back.”

Meagan Maas, CHP Case Manager

Meagan joined CAH staff on May 12, 2014 as a Case Manager with the Community Housing Partnership program. A transitional housing program run collaboratively by CAH and Good Samaritan Ministries. She just graduated from Grand Valley State University with a Bachelor’s Degree in Social Work, and served as an intern with Community Action House during her senior year. Meagan states, “I really connected with the people and culture of CAH. I love that they are continuously striving to learn and grow as an agency. Spending time there made me come alive and I was told once by someone that I respect that you should pay attention to what makes you feel alive and do it!”

Upcoming Classes & Events

Community Action House
Monthly Food Distribution
Friday, July 25, 2014 • 1 PM to 3 PM

Home Buyer Education
One-Day Workshop
Friday, August 22, 2014 • 9 AM to 3 PM

Ottawa County Quarterly Commodities
Food Distribution
Friday, August 22, 2014 • 1 PM to 3 PM

For more information, visit communityactionhouse.org/events

Volunteering

With us is a tangible way for you to support Community Action House by helping us help others!
**Felicia’s Peanut Butter, Oatmeal, White Chocolate, Butter Scotch Cookies**

- 2 sticks of butter
- 1 cup of white sugar
- 1 cup of light brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 3/4 cup of creamy peanut butter
- 1 tablespoon of vanilla extract
- 1 1/2 cups of white flour
- 1 teaspoon of baking soda
- 1 pinch of salt
- 1/4 cup of white chocolate chips
- 1/4 cup of butterscotch chips
- 1/4 cup of oatmeal

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

In one bowl:
- Beat 2 sticks of butter with mixer until light and fluffy. Add 1 cup of sugar and continue to beat until butter and sugar are thoroughly mixed. Add 1 cup of brown sugar to the mixture. Mix well. Add 2 eggs to the mix. Add 1/4 cup of peanut butter to the mix.

In separate bowl:
- Mix flour, baking soda, and salt. Sift all dry ingredients together. Pour dry ingredients into your bowl of wet ingredients. After wet and dry ingredients are combined, add the oatmeal and both kinds of chips to the mixture.

Spray cookie sheet with cooking spray or coat with butter. Place cookie dough on a baking sheet, one spoonful at a time, 5 inches apart. Bake until golden brown. Let cool and serve.

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**EPIC Corner**

Ryan Cotton, Holland’s City Manager, is a supporter of the EPIC Program and set aside one of his annual internships for an EPIC participant. Felicia Thompson is EPIC’s first City Hall intern. She enjoys her work with the City Manager’s Team and the mentoring she receives from Ryan, his assistant Sinka Babinec, and the City Hall Team. Ryan submitted these words in support of Felicia:

“We are fortunate to have Felicia’s ready assistance in our office as a Project Administrator. She assists the City Hall team in our daily activities, including developing a new Family Orientation Project in coordination with the Superintendent’s office of the Holland Public Schools, representing the City of Holland at the Multicultural Affairs and Juneteenth Celebrations, assisting me to prepare my annual budget message, and coaching me with cultural knowledge. We are happy to get to know Felicia and look forward to supporting her continued growth in education and employment.”

Felicia wrote an article about her experience in the EPIC Program and working in City Hall.

I found my way to the City of Holland through my participation in the EPIC Empowerment Program offered by Community Action House. Through this program I found my way home to myself. By that I mean I’ve developed greater self-awareness, but more than that, a deeper sense of purpose and more meaningful relationships with others. A positive relationship with myself has led to greater confidence in my abilities and my capacity to give back to my community. Through working with the City Manager’s Team, I feel more a part of the community and understand that a great city doesn’t just happen.

Living in a city, we can take for granted its every day functions, events, services, and festivities. I can no longer take these things for granted because I work with the dedicated team whose sole purpose is to enhance, enrich, and empower the lives of Holland residents.

Community Action House is one of many great non-profit agencies in this city. EPIC’s Empowerment Skills Program changed the direction of my life and I recommend it to anyone in transition and ready for a change.

Felicia is also a trained chef. Felicia shared with us photos of the meals she creates using CAH’s Food Pantry ingredients, along with her peanut butter cookie recipe for you to try! On one of Felicia’s first days at City Hall, Ryan asked, “If you had a million dollars what would you do with it?” Without hesitation, Felicia shared her dream of opening a Training Kitchen to provide vocational training for underserved young people and to inspire families to incorporate healthy foods into their daily lives.

Felicia’s journey to City Hall twisted and turned through the Holland Rescue Mission, the Community Housing Partnership, Circles, and the EPIC Empowerment Program. Throughout the journey, Felicia’s own resilience has led the way out of the violence of childhood and sabotage of young adulthood into a present filled with abundant opportunity, sustainable self-sufficiency, community support, and dreams coming true.

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**Visit the CAH Gift Registry at MYREGISTRY.COM**

and help us help others by donating items on our wish list!

We recently celebrated our 45th birthday, and created a registry! Just like a wedding or baby registry, we compiled a list of items that we’d be thrilled to receive, and hope that this makes it easy for you to shop. When you donate items from our wish list, it allows us to focus our funds on programming and basic services. Thank you for your continued support—we are grateful for you!

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**Principle #1: Have a Clear & Appropriate Purpose**

By Mark Tucker, Executive Director

Community Action House is using the seven principles of The Nonprofit: For-Profit Thinking for Nonprofit Success by Steven Rothschild as the filter through which it is evaluating its partnerships, programs, and services. We will focus on one principle in each newsletter. In the last newsletter we explored Principle 2: Be Learning Driven as central to all that we do as an agency. This month we will look at Principle 1: Have a Clear and Appropriate Purpose.

Having a clear and appropriate purpose describes why an organization exists and what it is trying to achieve. It also defines why staff and volunteers come to work, donors make gifts to support the organization, and clients come to stabilize their households and better their lives. Embedded within CAH’s purpose are two significant goals: to end poverty in our community and to help families prosper.

To end poverty in our community is a lofty goal and may seem unattainable, yet it is acceptable for anyone in our community to be living in poverty? Community Action House has decided that poverty is unacceptable and therefore our purpose must always be its eradication.

The second goal is based on this definition of prosperity found in every CAH newsletter: “The ability of all community members to have access to basic needs, community abundance, opportunity, positive development and hope.”

Inspired by Principle 1, Community Action House clarified its mission: “To provide area families and individuals with food, clothing, shelter and the opportunity to build the necessary skills to achieve a stable and prosperous life.” Based on the new mission, CAH is constantly exploring how to effectively measure programming success.

This past spring, CAH’s Board of Directors participated in a strategic planning session and established five goals to guide the agency for the next three years. The goals are aligned with CAH’s purpose and mission. One of the goals and its two objectives are pertinent to Principle 1. Other goals will be discussed at a later date.

**Goal: To develop effective programming with an emphasis on ending situational and chronic poverty, using specific metrics to determine program success.**

Evaluate all internal programming to develop meaningful metrics to determine household income at entry to program and again upon exit from program to determine program success.

Explore and participate in the planning and implementation of initiatives focused on collaborative approaches among private, public and nonprofit sectors aimed at ending situational and chronic poverty in Ottawa County.

Community Action House is well aware that eliminating local poverty is a monumental task. To be effective, CAH will design and implement strong measurable programs and work collaboratively. Ongoing evaluation and alteration of CAH’s programs, along with the periodic refinement of the agency’s mission, will be necessary to effectively carry out the purpose of the agency, which remains constant.

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Are you a CAH volunteer? We want to hear your story! Share it at www.facebook.com/CommunityActionHouse or contact Gwen directly at grobles@communityactionhouse.org.