



Hope Inside



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No place like home for the holidays

Your gift to Maranda this holiday season cannot be wrapped into a pretty box, but it will last a lifetime.

Three bedrooms, one bath...a fenced-in back yard...a front porch perfect for a swing...and garden beds for flower planting in the spring.

This describes just a taste of Maranda's new home – a home she was able to purchase with the support of donors like you.

For the past three years, Maranda has been working hard to achieve her goal of home ownership. A participant of our Opportunity Passport™ program, Maranda has received support to save, reduce debt, and otherwise prepare to make this big purchase. The savings match offered through this program also helped Maranda reach her goal sooner than she thought possible.

"This is a big step in the right direction for my family's future," said Maranda. "Owning my own home means everything to me."



Maranda and her youngest son after purchasing their new home.

Life is good for Maranda right now. But that wasn't always the case. At 14, Maranda entered the foster care system after she was removed from an abusive living situation. Behavioral issues followed, and at her darkest point, Maranda had to be sent away.

"It was a hard time – a lot of tears," said Maranda. "I have tears right now even talking about it."

But things got better. Maranda moved in with a family member – an aunt – who became an important role model and mentor. "She taught me a lot of things," Maranda recalled, "she helped me get caught up on the areas I was behind."

At 18, Maranda received her Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) credential, which lead her into a career she knew right away was meant for her. "I love being able to help people," she said. "[My patients] are like family to me."

Thanks to the support of donors like you, Maranda is looking forward to the future. And in the very near future, she and her two boys will enjoy their first holiday in their beautiful new home – a gift that will be remembered and cherished for a lifetime.

"I knew right away this was my forever home," said Maranda when she walked in for the first time.



Thank you for being part of another great year at Community Action

Let's keep moving forward together in 2019!

Dear Friend –

You might be familiar with the saying “it just keeps getting better.” As I reflect upon my 10th year at Community Action, I have found this to be true. 2018 was a truly remarkable year, and it's all because of the partnership and friendship of people like you... people who know that our community is special and make important investments to make it even better far into the future.

In September, I shared our news about receiving one of Community Health Endowments 20th anniversary legacy grants to increase access to healthy foods in Lincoln. Since then, we

have made tremendous progress on construction of our community kitchen. Our contractors are moving at rapid pace to get the kitchen completed and fully operational by April 1, 2019. We look forward to sharing in the excitement of its opening with you in the new year.

I also wanted to let you know that Community Action recently received a \$750,000 grant from the Federal Home Loan Bank of Topeka to do housing rehabilitation for 100 owner-occupied homes in our service area, particularly in Saunders County. These funds will not only improve housing stock in the area, they will allow us to get homes ready to receive our Weatherization services. Horizon Bank will partner with us in this new venture!

Just last week we learned that Community Action will receive a three-year \$525,541 grant to expand our matched savings program. The grant will allow us to provide financial education and 4:1 savings match for homes, safe, reliable vehicles, post-secondary education, and small business start-up or expansion. 90 low- to moderate-income individuals will be impacted by this grant. We are beyond grateful, and look forward to sharing their success stories with you in the new year and years to come.

I want to end this note by thanking you. None of these innovative, life-changing initiatives would be possible without your advocacy, your financial support, your volunteer service, and most of all, your genuine caring

and giving heart. We have and will continue to accomplish great things together.

With gratitude,



Vi See
Executive Director



All gifts received for The Gathering Place through December 31st, will be matched \$1 for \$1!

This is the best time to give – will you help us raise \$9,642.25 more so we can receive our maximum match of \$60,775?

If you're a Gathering Place donor, you likely know that now is the best time to give. **From now until December 31st, all donations directed toward The Gathering Place will be matched \$1 for \$1.** This means that your gift to provide hot evening meals to those facing hunger in Lincoln will go even farther!

Your support of The Gathering Place gives us the ability to serve hot, nutritious, and delicious meals – like this beautiful roasted turkey, which was enjoyed by guests this past fall.



The Gathering Place serves over 29,000 meals to the men, women, and children who don't know where their next meal is coming from in Lincoln. Support from kind people like you is needed to make this important work possible.

As of December 17th, donors like you have contributed \$51,132.75 to our year-end campaign – truly outstanding! This means that we only have \$9,642.25 left to raise before the end of the year to leverage our maximum match of \$60,775! Will you help us get there?

Donations can be made online on our website at www.communityactionatwork.org, or by mail using the reply device on the back of this letter with the enclosed envelope. **We thank you so much for your loyal support.**

Thank you to our 2018 Gathering Place match sponsors!

Hugo & Thelma Aspegren Charitable Trust

Rogers Foundation

Inspro Insurance

Lincoln Rotary Club #14 Foundation

Bukaty Companies

Union Bank & Trust

Walmart

Rotarian Friends of The Gathering Place

First State Bank Nebraska

TEK Services

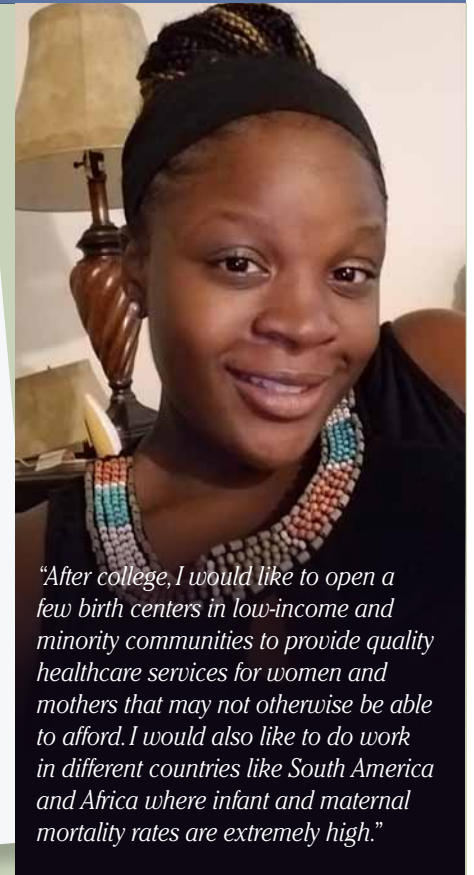
“It is with the deepest gratitude that I write you this letter...”

How your support has forever impacted Jessica's life...in her words!

Jessica Johnson is the proud mother of four young children, a Head Start parent, and a student pursuing a degree in the medical field. In her free time – which you can probably imagine is few and far between – Jessica participates in our financial coaching classes to work toward greater economic stability.

Jessica recently applied for and received one of our health degree scholarships – made possible with the support of a generous donor like you– to support her education. We wanted to share with you what she wrote:

It is with the deepest gratitude that I write this letter, thanking you for selecting me to be a scholarship recipient. Your contribution to my academic success encourages me to continue striving and fulfilling my academic goals. Through your financial contribution, I am no longer burdened with the worry of paying for my text books and other required material, allowing me to focus my complete attention on my school work. Thank you SO MUCH!



“After college, I would like to open a few birth centers in low-income and minority communities to provide quality healthcare services for women and mothers that may not otherwise be able to afford. I would also like to do work in different countries like South America and Africa where infant and maternal mortality rates are extremely high.”

Amer and his family are happy in their very first home

Your support has made this dream of home ownership a reality.

When Amer first came to Lincoln after emigrating from Iraq, he had a dream many of us share – the dream of home ownership. Amer envisioned a home in which he and his wife and children could make memories...a home that would give them the space to grow...a home they could – for the very first time – call their own.

Getting there would be difficult, but Amer and his wife were up for the challenge. After hearing about our Individual Development Accounts (IDA) program, which provides 4:1 savings match for asset-specific purchases like homes, the couple saw it as a perfect opportunity to start saving toward their goal. They began participating in our financial education classes on a regular basis and always managed to put away money every month for savings.

Their hard work paid off. Ahead of schedule, Amer and his wife exceeded their savings goal and found the perfect home: a 4-bedroom, 2 bath home in a great neighborhood. Achieving their goal of home ownership has shown Amer and his family that anything is possible, and they look forward to continuing to build better lives for themselves and their children. Without you, this opportunity wouldn't have been possible. Thank you.

Amer on the day he and his family closed on their home. A perfect photo to convey the feeling of triumph.... the feeling of your dream becoming a reality.



Community Action thanks First National Bank for its continued support!

First National Bank recently delivered a \$10,000 grant to support our Financial Well-Being programming. Pictured (from left): Jack Weeks, First National Bank; Heather Loughman, Community Action; Vi See, Community Action; Jennifer Lamprecht, First National Bank; and Michelle St. Clair, First National Bank.



15 Early Head Start/Head Start classrooms sponsored for the 2018-2019 school year.

DeLynn and Esther Hay – sponsors of the Kind Kiwis baby/toddler classroom

James C. and Rhonda S. Seacrest Foundation – sponsor of the Cuddly Cows baby/toddler classroom

Lincoln Pediatric Group, LLC – sponsor of the Brave Brown Bears baby/toddler classroom

Lincoln Sunrise Kiwanis – sponsor of the Energetic Eagles baby/toddler classroom

Nelnet + Allo – sponsors of the Playful Pandas baby/toddler classroom

Vi See, in memory of Ruby Percell – sponsor of the Peaceful Puffins baby/toddler classroom

Alexander Wealth Management / UBS – sponsors of the Happy Hedgehogs preschool classroom

Bob and Lisa Rauner – sponsors of the Loveable Leopards preschool classroom



Thank you to our generous donors!

The Clark Enersen Partners – sponsor of the Marvelous Manatees preschool classroom

Heather Loughman – sponsor of the Zippy Zebras blended learning classroom

Mick, Lisa, Jordan, Katie, and Elizabeth Hale – sponsors of the Dazzling Dolphins preschool classroom

Office Interiors and Design – sponsor of the Diligent Deer preschool classroom

Sampson Construction – sponsor of the Optimistic Owls preschool classroom

Steve and Kathy Langdon – sponsors of the Talented Tigers preschool classroom

Sue Quambusch and Len Sloup and John and Nancy Wiederspan – sponsors of the Keen Koalas blended learning classroom

The following classrooms are still available for sponsorship (will you be their hero?):

Brilliant Bulldogs – baby/toddler classroom

Brilliant Butterflies – baby/toddler classroom

Epic Elephants – baby/toddler classroom

Fantastic Foxes – baby/toddler classroom

Gifted Giraffes – baby/toddler classroom

Kind Kangaroos – baby/toddler classroom

Loyal Lemurs – baby/toddler classroom

Sponsorship of a baby/toddler classroom is \$2,500 for the year.

If you're interested in becoming a sponsor, or want to learn more, contact Heather at (402) 875-9339 or hloughman@communityactionatwork.org.

So many toys!!



The Star City Stocking Stuffers dropped off their massive toy donation on December 7th. This photo doesn't quite show just how many toys were collected – multiple trips to and from our agency had to be made to unload them all!

Thanks to the Star City Stocking Stuffers – customers and employees of several local credit unions including LincOne Federal Credit Union, University of Nebraska Federal Credit Union, MembersOwn Credit Union, Nebraska State Employees Credit Union, and Liberty First Credit Union – and many Kampout for Kids contributors, Community Action has been able to stock our store with toys for participants to choose from for their kids for the holidays. Instead of using money, Community Action participants use points they have earned in our programs for achieving self-sufficiency goals. Many participants wait all year to use their points to get holiday gifts for their children. This would not be possible without the generous support of our community! Thank you!

YES, I want to help empower people living in poverty to reach economic stability.

Please accept my gift of \$ _____

Your donation will go toward supporting:

- Feeding those who are hungry at The Gathering Place
- Preparing children for success in school
- Preventing and eliminating homelessness
- Helping families learn financial skills/save for a home, post-secondary education, or small business start-up

I would like to designate my gift to the following program (e.g. The Gathering Place, Head Start)

I have included (or intend to include) Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties in my will or estate.

My name _____
 Company _____
 Address _____
 City/State/Zip _____
 Phone _____
 Email _____

May we publish your name? Yes No

If so, how would you like your name(s) to appear?

Payment Options:

- Check payable to *Community Action*
- Credit Card: Visa MasterCard Discover

Account # _____

Exp. Date (mo/yr) _____ Security Code _____

Signature _____ Date _____

For more information contact:

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 (402) 875-9339 | hloughman@communityactionatwork.org



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