

House of Help/City of Hope

CNE Helps Create An Oasis of Transformation in Washington, DC

case history

Pastor Shirley Holloway Johnson was a rising young telecom executive when she left the corporate world to pursue a calling to help others in need. She founded House of Help, a faith-based substance abuse and homeless program that provides assistance to families, single men and women, single parents and children who seek help to make their lives whole.

In the more than 10 years of its existence, House of Help has assisted more than 2,000 individuals in the District of Columbia. Her faith-based program reunites families, promotes marriage, and helps individuals to self-sufficiency and independence.

Goals of the program are to enlighten participants about the nature and problem of addiction; provide them with the skills of daily living; assist parents in learning to develop their children into whole spiritual beings; provide vocational training and job placement; and enlighten couples about the spiritual principles of marriage and family living.

Open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, House of Help has been a beacon of hope to

House of Help and CNE

In April, 2005, thanks to extensive technical assistance from the Center for Neighborhood Enterprise and a CNE introduction to a major funder, House of Help/City of Hope was able to officially dedicate a beautiful four building complex it uses to house residents who have



Above: Pastor Shirley with House of Help graduates; Below: the transformation from abandoned building to \$2 million dollar asset.

those who have lost their way for any reason. Pastor Holloway and her staff – most of whom are program graduates – carried out the program for years in run-down rented facilities in one of the highest crime areas of Washington, DC. That changed when House of Help met CNE.



graduated from its substance abuse and homelessness programs. The formerly dilapidated apartment complex has been renovated and now contains 42 upgraded residential units. In addition to housing the addicts and homeless who were flooding her

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Center for Neighborhood Enterprise

TRANSFORMING LIVES, SCHOOLS,
AND TROUBLED NEIGHBORHOODS FROM THE INSIDE OUT.

doorstep and asking for help, Pastor Johnson foresaw the need to have a place for those who had overcome their problems and wanted to maintain their positive lives. She created the City of Hope project to provide a place where individuals who have transformed their lives can live singly or with their families in comfortable and secure residential facilities, around others who share their goals of clean, sober, and responsible independent living.

The property, in a supreme act of "venture philanthropy," was purchased in 2002 by real estate mogul George Kettle for \$500,000. Working with construction crews drawn in part from the residents of Pastor Johnson's program, he renovated the complex for another \$500,000. The buildings are now appraised at more than two million dollars. Kettle has assisted Pastor Johnson in acquiring a million dollar loan at one percent to repay his investment, so he can use those funds to be a blessing to another program. The money for the repayment comes from the income stream generated by apartment rentals. House of Help/City of Hope retains the equity in the property.

Today, the faith-based program reunites families, promotes marriages and helps individuals to move toward an independent life of self-sufficiency. House of Help is one of a group of grassroots organizations that are participants in the Center's Hands-Across DC Program. Hands-Across is an effort to identify effective faith-based and community programs in a given geographic area and build their capacity to work together to change their community.

House of Help joined the DC Hands-Across program in 1999. Since that time, program leaders have received extensive training and technical assistance from CNE, with a strong focus on financial management skills and record keeping. CNE's finance department includes staff members who go into the field to give hands-on help to grassroots organizations – helping them set up their bookkeeping systems and procedures to ensure financial accountability. Other CNE staff members have provided assistance in setting up record keeping systems and in



Above: celebrating the opening of the new House of Help facility; Right: community programs at House of Help; Below: President George W. Bush meets with individuals and couples assisted by House of Help and East Capitol Center for Change.

helping the organization present its information to funders and to the media.



In April of 2002, President George W. Bush spoke at an event hosted by the Center in Washington DC's inner city. Woodson invited Pastor Holloway to be one of nine people



who met privately with the President, along with two couples who were graduates of her program. Not only did the four individuals overcome their addictions, they met their future spouses at House of Help and received marriage counseling through the program. Now they are helping others transform their lives.

A female City of Hope resident who had been a crack addict for 14 years and is now clean because of the House of Help program says ...

"I was homeless and living in my car with a crack cocaine addiction. It was a large accomplishment to graduate from the House of Help into the City of Hope. The property is an outward sign of what God can do for you. It should help the community too, seeing that this is how a neighborhood should conduct itself."