



HOMELESSNESS

Housing the Work of Housing the People

Addressing homelessness has long been a team effort in Stark County. The work is complex. It requires input and participation from many social service sectors and a great deal of oversight and buy-in from elected officials and community leaders.

Stark County receives almost \$3 million in funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for efforts related to homelessness. To qualify for funding, the community must have a local Continuum of Care group consisting of representatives from a wide array of relevant organizations. Stark County's

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— County Commissioner Janet Weir Creighton

Together

WE TRANSFORM

Continuum has more than 75 members, an 18-member board, and various committees that fulfill a multitude of responsibilities as assigned by HUD.

Our local Continuum has long relied on the sustained efforts of multiple organizations and community leaders volunteering their time and talents to meet HUD requirements. The structure as it stood was unsustainable.

After several months of planning and multiple meetings with mayors, commissioners, foundations, and business leaders, the decision was made to develop a permanent organizational structure. The result? A new nonprofit organization: Stark Housing Network, Inc.

Kurt Williams is Stark Housing Network's newly hired Executive Director; he will answer to the Network's board of elected officials and community leaders. His experience as a licensed social worker and in senior-level operational roles for a large Pennsylvania behavioral health organization will be instrumental

to the Network's success. Kurt assures us that he looks forward to "furthering the mission of the Homeless Continuum of Care of Stark County by committing our service to the individuals and families experiencing homelessness."

County Commissioner Janet Weir Creighton is serving as the first board chair. She says, "It's been a long and winding road; it's taken a lot of meetings and cooperation.... We are fortunate the Sisters of Charity Foundation has guided the work and secured the necessary dollars. Our goal is to maintain and to allow our new director to take charge. I would consider this work the 'poster child' for collaboration: we have shown that counties and cities can work together."

