

A two-story house with a light-colored stucco finish and dark brown trim. The house features a prominent front porch with a railing, a central chimney, and several arched windows. The house is surrounded by trees and a clear sky.

CREATING HOMES,
BUILDING LEGACIES

SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2018



CREATING HOMES, BUILDING LEGACIES

There is something amazing happening in Grand Rapids. Large corporations, small businesses, housing developers, social entrepreneurs, and change agents are redefining what it means to be a positive force in the life of a city. This is the philosophical vision that propelled Marian Clements, founder of Well House. It is what moved Tami VandenBerg to push boldly towards rescuing, renovating, and preserving—not just a house and a lot—but an entire neighborhood.

Whatever one might feel about it—there is no denying that the story of community preservation represented by Well House accomplishments under Tami’s leadership is a remarkable one.

This living history shines a beacon of hope and illustrates common-sense problem solving that should inspire and inform all communities across the country. It has certainly inspired me. It is a history I am proud to promote.

The still unwritten good that Well House will do for its neighbors, community and city is a story I’m honored to help write. For now, what I can say with absolute conviction is that YOU—Well House supporters—have been and continue to be the source of goodwill and generosity that makes the work we do possible. On behalf of Marian Clements, Tami VandenBerg, Well House staff, and Board of Directors—THANK YOU.

— **John Glover**
Executive Director





ABOUT WELL HOUSE

Well House utilizes the Housing First model with a client-centered philosophy to provide permanent, shared, low-cost, sustainable housing for individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

Since 2013, Well House has provided over 200 individuals with a place to call home in one of the 12 rental houses. We meet residents where they are in their circumstances, focusing on their strengths and abilities without creating additional barriers to securing housing.

Along with staff, volunteers, and community members, we model the kinds of constructive and uplifting values found in building a home, tending a garden, working a farm, and sharing with neighbors the pride of improving and maintaining a community.

Investing in Well House is an investment in our community.



"Everyone deserves a home... I am so impressed with Well House and the work that is done by the people and community who support it."

—Derek DeVries
Board Chair

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VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: - KELLER WILLIAMS -

Renew. Energize. Donate. That is the motto of Keller Williams' annual Red Day volunteer project. Over 60 Keller Williams employees rolled up their sleeves and joined us for a day full of hard work. Together with Well House staff, the KW Team constructed a new fence, painted one of our residents' homes, laid mulch, and landscaped at four of our houses.

We're grateful for this partnership because, not only do they accomplish necessary work, but they also help continue to foster a sense of community and connectedness among Well House resident's volunteers, and our community.



Thank you to the groups we've welcomed in 2018:

Brewery Vivant • Creative Nature Academy • First United Methodist Church
Home Depot • Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge • SpartanNash
Triangle Associates • Warner Norcross & Judd • WOOD TV8

SUPPORTERS



None of our homes are possible without the generous support of our Well House community. Financial support, as well as in-kind donations, fuel our mission to end homelessness in Grand Rapids.

A special thank you to some of our key partners in West Michigan:*

- Atomic Object
- Bazzani Building Company
- Frey Foundation
- Grand Rapids Community Foundation
- Heart of West Michigan United Way
- Lake Michigan Credit Union
- Michigan Mortgage Lenders Association
- Peter C. and Emajean Cook Foundation
- Procter & Gamble
- SpartanNash Foundation
- Spectrum Health Healthier Communities
- Standale Interiors
- Standale Lumber
- Trinity Health
- Wege Foundation
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation

*For a complete list of our financial supporters, please visit our website at www.wellhousegr.org.


UPCOMING EVENTS

September 22 | Block Party

Join Well House tenants and staff as we celebrate the end of summer with our annual block party.

October 18 | Harvest Luncheon

A fundraising luncheon in celebration of the Well House mission to end homelessness in Grand Rapids.



TENANT SPOTLIGHT:

- SHAY -

Shay looks across the street as she remembers her first night at Well House, almost 25 years ago.

“There were four of us kids and my mom in one room. Well House gave us everything we needed: clothes, food—anything we needed. It’s something you’ll never forget, someone loving you like you were part of a family when you had nothing else.”

Shay, her mother Debra, and her three other siblings lived in one of the first Well House homes. Now, Shay’s sister owns her own home on the same street that brought structure to their lives over two decades ago.



"Well House gives you a chance when nobody else will. It saved my life."

—Debra

Former Well House tenant





"Well House helps you to help yourself. I'd still be homeless if I wasn't here. It gave me a fresh start when nowhere else would."

—Bruce
Well House tenant

TENANT SPOTLIGHT: - BRUCE -

"Down & out", that's how Bruce would describe his time prior to coming to Well House. Before Well House, he was living in a temporary shelter and was unable to get back on his feet.

That's when a friend told him about Well House. It was a cold winter when he moved in but the relationships he has built during his time here have nurtured his soul and helped him regain his confidence.

IMPACT



Well House leverages the power of community. Every home purchased is strategically located to strengthen a sense of community. Homes are located in Madison Area, Roosevelt Park, South Hills, and the Southeast Community Association (SECA) neighborhoods.

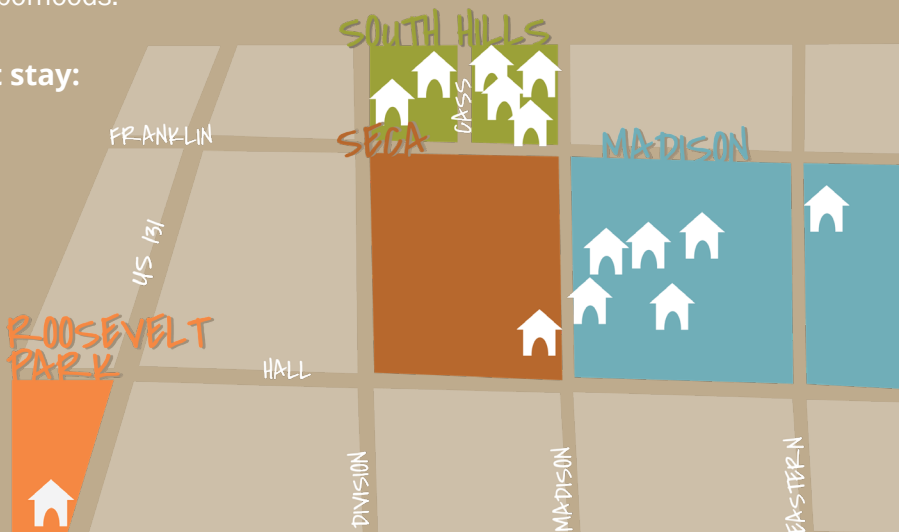
210

people housed
2013 - 2018

14

total
properties

2017 length of tenant stay:





Well House

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

Depressed and unable to hold a job, Well House founder Marian Clements found refuge within a Quaker community. Inspired by their constant positive attitudes, Marian lifted herself out of her negative situation. In 1977, determined to stand on her own feet and help others in similar situations, she purchased a home near the intersection of Cass and Pleasant in Grand Rapids.

The cost? \$350. She called it Well House.

Committed to living light on the earth, she ran her home with no electricity and opened it up to anyone who needed comfort or protection.

Today, we continue that mission at the same house where Marian did nearly 40 years ago. Although we've added electricity and updated the paint, we remain loyal to the original mission: **the solution to homelessness is housing.**

Join the legacy of Well House founder Marian Clements, former and current Well House residents, and leave your mark at the original home by purchasing a legacy brick in our "No Place Like Home" initiative.

Well House has always been, and will always be, a place for community



LEAVE YOUR MARK, PURCHASE A LEGACY BRICK

For hundreds of people, Well House is home. By supporting our “No Place Like Home” initiative with a custom-engraved brick at the entrance of the original home, you help continue to turn vacant houses into homes for hundreds of people in Grand Rapids.

We can end homelessness in Grand Rapids.

Each brick is \$250 and can be customized in one of the following formats:

- In Celebration of...
- In Honor of...
- In Memory of...

For questions about a legacy brick, please email mario@wellhousegr.org

Order your brick now at:

wellhousegr.org/legacybrick