



Summer 2015

# Open Doors

building relationships to overcome homelessness



## Hardworking Resident Earns Degree

When Nathan was 2 years old, Open Doors had helped his family when they first moved to Michigan in 1989. His family was homeless until his father could find a means to support them. "Open Doors had really helped my family through that difficult time," Nathan said.



Fast forward to present day, Nathan and his two sons and wife have found solace in Open Doors again. With little education and working long hours at a retail store to make ends meet, Nathan knew it was time to make a change.

Eager to provide financial support for his young family, Nathan decided to work towards earning a degree in Information

Technology at Kalamazoo Valley Community College. Computers have always been a hobby of Nathan's so the choice came naturally to him, turning his passion into a career prospect.

Through the support of Open Doors and multiple scholarships from the Open Doors scholarship fund along with a strong will to provide for his family, Nathan is now a college graduate. He completed his degree with high honors, 3 certificates of achievement, and 5 industry certifications in computing.

***"Open Doors has been a real blessing in my life, I don't think I could be where I am today if it weren't for them. They have helped myself and my family through a difficult time," Nathan explained.***

Nathan was just recently hired by Duncan Aviation as an Information Technology Support Specialist and also works part-time for Open Doors assisting with any technology issues that arise. "It is an honor working for an organization that helps so many people and I can only imagine the countless lives that Open Doors has changed over the years."

## Make a Family's Dream Come True Through Your Estate Plan

A planned gift to Open Doors will help provide a home and a new life for a local family.

Contact Rick Stravers at 269-343-6064 to include Open Doors in your estate plan.

**Because a home is the foundation.**

## Donors Give in Honor of Family and Friends:

**Andy Van Lente**

William and Elizabeth Fitzgerald

**Kenneth Schlaack**

Suzanne Schlaack

**Evan Ebling**

Moyra Ebling

**Steve Heeringa**

Ruth Heeringa

**Sam and Mary Oberlee**

Susan Maas

**Sue Weiser**

Chuck and Tucky Elliott

**Evelyn D. Hoffman**

Stephanie Hoffman

**Tania Andrade & Steven Bury**

Judith St. John



## Join Us for Bountiful Breakfast!

**Saturday, September 19**

9:00-11:00am

Chenery Auditorium Reception Room  
714 S. Westnedge Ave., Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Admission: \$25.00 for adults, children 10 and under are free

Please join us and enjoy a delicious Rykse's breakfast, tour our Vine Neighborhood Homes, and support affordable housing for low-income workers and families in Kalamazoo.

Please RSVP to Stacy Little by September 10th  
269.343.6064

SLittle@OpenDoorsKalamazoo.org



## Volunteers Dedicated to Making a House a Home

### Third Christian Reformed Church Shares Their Passion

Third Christian Reformed Church began their relationship with Open Doors 8 years ago, starting with a women's shelter renovation project and mentoring program.

In 2010, a group of 20 volunteers from the church participated in a "Mission Stay" where they worked on exterior and remodeling work of 530 W. North St. These renovations spiraled into the eventual adoption of this property. Since then, 2 units have been completely gutted and re-modeled. With every new tenant that moves in, Third CRC fully furnishes the apartment in an effort to make the new resident feel at home.

With a core group of 10 volunteers, including 1 contractor, their work is tireless. Their goal is to provide for the new tenants, meeting their needs and adding a personal touch to their home. In addition to fully furnishing these homes, Third CRC also ensures tenants have sufficient household supplies along with gift cards for groceries which adds their own personal touch. Thank you Third Christian Reformed Church!

## New Donor? Double Your Gift!

Thanks to a generous challenge grant from the Irving S. Gilmore Foundation, new and increased gifts will be matched, dollar for dollar! That means...

- If last year you donated \$100, and increase your gift this year to \$150, \$50 will be matched
- If you have not yet made your first gift to Open Doors, now is the time as the entire gift will be matched!

As we continue to grow, so do our operating costs. Please help us continue to meet the needs of the homeless and working poor in our community with a new or increased gift.

Please contact Stacy Little at 269-343-6064 or [SLittle@OpenDoorsKalamazoo.org](mailto:SLittle@OpenDoorsKalamazoo.org) for details or visit our website to make your donation.

## Summer Fun with our Resident Kids

Throughout the summer the children of our Residence Community have had the opportunity to enjoy weekly activities hosted by Open Doors. Every Thursday the children are provided with lunch and a movie. The children also went on a field trip to Craig's Cruisers in Grand Rapids!



1141 S. Rose St., Kalamazoo, MI 49001, PO Box 50102, Kalamazoo, MI 49005  
269.343.6064 [opendoorskalamazoo.org](http://opendoorskalamazoo.org)



### Open Doors Staff

Larry Bohn, Maintenance  
Kory Carlson, Maintenance  
Stephanie Hoffman, Deputy Director  
Erika Lee, Support Coordinator  
Isaac King, Open Door Manager  
Willa Walters, Next Door Manager  
Erin Roll, Donor Communications  
Jari Pulford, Administrative PM

Rick Stravers, Executive Director  
Andy Van Lente, Facility Manager  
Jo Morton, Support Coordinator  
Sharee Niblack, Volunteer Coordinator  
Stacy Little, Development Director  
Nathan Rodriguez, IT Specialist  
Elvis Pllumbaj, Maintenance  
Al Logan, Open Doors Staff

### Open Doors Board

Angela Anderson, President  
Andrew Vorbrich, Vice President  
Stacy Salters, Treasurer  
Laura Eiler, Secretary  
  
Courtney Davis, Adam Jackson, Valerie Messer, Barbara Miller, Sarah Miller, Antoinette Stubbs