

# TRANSFORM

TRANSFORMING FUTURES TODAY

## MOMS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

SHAE JOHNSON:  
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## ANNUAL REPORT

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## ON THE COVER

Kensley holding her one-month-old daughter, Khari, at Almost Home's annual Baby Shower on June 13, 2021. Khari was born on Mother's Day, only 5 weeks before Kensley shared her inspiring story with guests of the fundraising event.





## MESSAGE FROM *Mrs. Wise*

### At **ALMOST HOME** we operate based on this philosophy:

- We believe that given the proper amount of love, support, skills, and information every teen/young mom can create a better life for herself.
- We believe teen/young moms are not problems to be fixed but potential to be developed and nurtured.
- We believe that every teen/young mom already has strengths and positive behaviors that can be reinforced.
- We believe that when we invest in teen/young moms they will share their gifts and talents to help us build a stronger community.
- We believe that education and positive relationships are the keys to breaking the cycle of poverty for teen/young moms and their children.
- We believe that our staff can model the excellence and self-discipline that we want our teen/young moms to demonstrate.

**“UNTAPPED POTENTIAL IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WHERE A PERSON IS NOW AND WHERE HE OR SHE CAN BE.” - BO BENNETT**

Almost Home is a place that is filled with joy. This is often hard to understand because the true definition of joy goes beyond the limited explanation presented in a dictionary – “a feeling; a great pleasure and happiness.” True joy is a limitless, life-defining, transformative reservoir waiting to be tapped into. Joy is not simply a feeling that happens, it is a choice purposefully made.

In spending time talking with the moms at Almost Home, loving them, and observing their growth, I continue to see young moms filled with joy that even they cannot explain sometimes. You see, it is possible to experience joy in difficult times. It is possible to feel joy despite grief or uncertainty. Joy is the very thing that transforms difficult times into blessings and turns heartache into gratitude.

Almost Home has mission-driven staff and volunteers that believe the families we serve are full of untapped potential waiting to be discovered. Over this past year we have worked to refine the delivery of services, improving the quality of programs, and ensuring we can continue to invest in the two-generational model that leads us to outcomes that help break the cycle of poverty.

I want to say thank you for being a part of the Almost Home joy. Your support over the year shows that you too believe in untapped potential. You too believe that given the proper amount of love, support, skills, and information, every teen/young mom can create a better life for herself.

You are always welcome to come by for a visit, bake cupcakes with moms, read books to our babies and take part in the JOY!

Reona Wise, BS, MPA  
Almost Home Executive Director



Mrs. Wise shared her journey and how she has harnessed the power of Growth, Resilience, Intention, and Tenacity during Lindenwood University's Entrepreneurship Week in October 2021 along with three of the other 39 women who co-authored *Owning Your G.R.I.T.* Panelists (from left) Cate Redfern, Kate Morrison, Reona Wise, and Jennifer Bardot.

**MORE FROM *Mrs. Wise*** Get updates from Mrs. Wise and the Almost Home team throughout the year by subscribing to our newsletter at: [almosthomestl.org/newsletter](https://almosthomestl.org/newsletter) or scan the QR code with your phone.







# SHAE JOHNSON

## MOVING ON UP

One young mom residing at **ALMOST HOME** bravely shares her journey to a brighter future.

### ALMOST HOME:

**What was your life like before you came to Almost Home?**

### SHAE JOHNSON:

My life before Almost Home was hard. I was struggling mentally, physically, emotionally, and financially. I was staying with a person who I thought was my family until she kicked me and my son Cason out when he was just 2 weeks old. I had to live with Cason's Nana on his dad's side. It was good living there because she took care of me and Cason and made sure we had a roof over our heads when I felt like I was about to give up on motherhood. Cason's dad and his family helped me a lot from his dad's aunts to cousins to siblings. They are my real family, in addition to my own siblings, and they all love me and Cason and check on us all of the time.

*Almost Home provides therapy, life skills classes and 1:1 staff support to help moms create and maintain healthy boundaries in their relationships.*

**AH: How did you feel about becoming a mother?**

**SJ:** Becoming a mother is the best thing that has happened to me. A year before I had Cason, I lost my brother to gun violence.

When I found out I was pregnant, it was the best day of my life. Raising him is very fun and easy. He's such a happy baby and is always smiling at everyone. He's the light of the party. Cason enjoys being around people, and he knows when someone is good for him. Cason is my blessing after my brother died, and I love the joy he has brought into my life. It's not always easy being a single mother, but every day he shows me things are going to be okay. As long as he's happy, that's all that matters to me.

*Almost Home staff has provided Shae with education and support throughout Cason's development, from teething to crawling, to his move to solid foods.*

**AH: How did you hear about Almost Home?**

**SJ:** I heard about Almost Home from Cason's Nana. She had lived there in the past, and she told me all about the program and what they had to offer me and Cason. She told me, "Don't ever look back. Do what's best for you and my grandson. This will help you become a better person and mother to my grandson." She told me it was a good place to start, and I trusted her. Now I'm doing much better than before.

*Almost Home staff offers individualized support that helped Shae*

*feel validated, accepted, and welcomed which put her in the position to achieve success in all areas of her life.*

**AH: What was your first day like at Almost Home? How well have you adjusted to living at Almost Home?**

**SJ:** My first day at Almost Home was pretty good. I really didn't have to adjust to it much. I have been in foster care before, so I looked at it as a group home for women with children. I got used to Almost Home as soon as I walked through the door.

helped me get things for myself and Cason that I never thought I'd be able to get.

*The moms at Almost Home enjoy outings together as a community. Staff provide consistent encouragement to the young women in the transitional living program.*

**AH: What program activities do you enjoy most at Almost Home?**

**SJ:** I enjoy when we have different parenting groups. I'm always

## WE ARE ALWAYS TALKING ABOUT HOW TO BE BETTER MOMS TO OUR CHILDREN.

**AH: What has surprised you about being a new mom?**

**SJ:** Nothing has really surprised me, only that babies grow so fast. I got so used to him sleeping all day, and then all of a sudden he's sitting up and trying to talk. It surprises me every day that he's learning something new and also that I'm learning new things about being a parent to him.

*Almost Home uses ASQ Screening tools to help moms identify and recognize milestones that their children reach. Shae participates in child development life-skills classes with Cason where she can see him demonstrate milestone attainment during play time.*

**AH: Can you tell me about the relationships you formed with the other moms or staff? What do those connections mean to you?**

**SJ:** The relationships with the moms are interesting. I'm always meeting somebody new. I try to be cool with everyone because I am really big on friends and family. The bonds that I've grown with 3 of the moms here are amazing, and they are truly my real mommy friends. We are always talking about how to be better moms to our children, and we also treat ourselves and just enjoy life as young mothers. These bonds with them mean the world to me. It is amazing that I've met 3 people who are just like me and don't judge.

learning something new about being a mother and also about different food ideas to try for Cason and myself.

*Almost Home partners with community organizations to provide positive parenting and early childhood education classes. We have a longstanding partnership with Operation Food Search in which they provide food as well as education to ensure the nourishment and health of our moms and babies.*

**AH: What have you learned at Almost Home that has helped you to be a good mother?**

**SJ:** I have learned that it's okay to need a mental break away from your child. I say this because there have been times where I needed a break and I've said "No it's okay, I'll just keep Cason," but the staff will come and take him from me because they know what it is like to need a break because they have kids of their own and have been in my shoes before. So that makes me feel like I'm a good mom to my child. I've also learned that it's always good to treat myself even if it's just a pair of socks. Almost Home has taught me that self-love is very important, especially when raising a child. You don't want to just give, give, give. It's okay to treat yourself every once in a while.

*Almost Home has a whole person approach to self-sufficiency. Our therapy offerings, parenting support and weekly affirmations sup-*



The staff are also my best friends. It feels like they've known me my whole life, and they motivate me every day. They tell me how much of a great mom I am to Cason and tell me to keep going because I'm doing a good job. From day one, they have

*port our mothers in self-care to be the best mothers they can be.*

**AH: Can you share something you have accomplished since coming to Almost Home?**

**SJ:** My biggest accomplishment was moving. I came to Almost

# I WILL ACCOMPLISH EVERY GOAL AND DREAM I SET IN MY LIFE.

Home in June of 2021, and I always said that I was going to move before I turned 21. My birthday came, and I did what I said I was going to do. Another accomplishment is going to school to be a medical assistant. I'll be starting in February 2022, thanks to Almost Home. I don't know where I would be without them. Honestly, I would probably be homeless and struggling somewhere.

*Upon entering Almost Home, young moms create Individual Service Plans that guide them in planning for and attaining success. Our College and Career Readiness path offers support with secondary education research, resume building and career exploration. Our partner, Family and Workforce Centers of America, also delivers focused, comprehensive, and accessible job training, placement, assessment, career development services and transportation services.*

**AH:** What are your plans for the future?

**SJ:** My plans for the future are to continue to be a good mom, friend, and sister to everyone who has supported my dreams from day one. I am going to finish school so Cason and I can move out of the state before he's 3 years old, and I also want to start my business back up. There are many things I want to accomplish before 2022 is over, and I can tell my future is going to be good thanks to Almost Home, my family, and my friends. I will accomplish every goal and dream I set in my life.

*Almost Home's continuum of care offers continued support to young mothers even after they leave our facility. We will continue to provide Shae with monthly case management, mental health support, goal setting and, of course, celebrating her achievements!*

## YOU CAN TRANSFORM THE FUTURE.

# \$365

**PROVIDES 2 MONTHS OF LIFE SKILLS CLASSES FOR 15 MOMS**

There are several ways to give and we would love to begin a conversation about how we can work together to impact the lives of moms and children. Visit [almosthomestl.org/give](https://almosthomestl.org/give) to make a donation today and find information on tax incentives.





# ALEXIS MOORE

## BETTER DAYS ARE COMING.

When I was 16 and pregnant with my son, I had nowhere to go. I didn't have no family, nothing. I didn't really know what to do, so I just prayed and held my head up high. I told myself every day "Better days are coming."

Then I found Almost Home, and after being there for a year, I learned to never give up and always strive for better. I've learned that, yes, it'll get hard before it gets better, but I have faith in GOD and faith in myself. I want better for my kids, and Almost

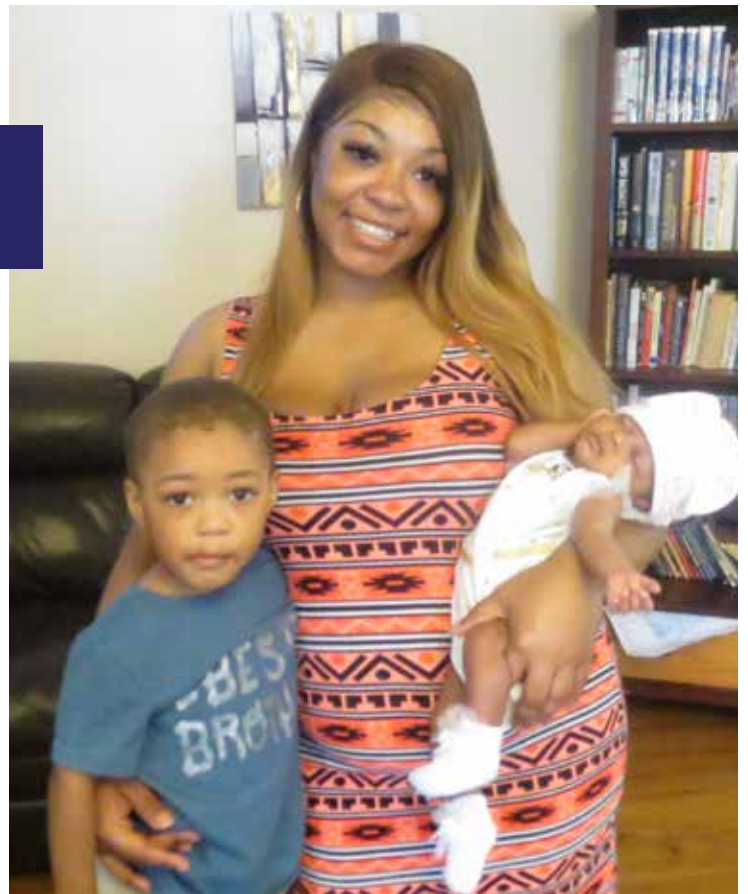
Home helped me be that. They gave me a safe home where I could transition from a young adult to a mother. They helped me open my eyes about life. There are some things people just don't know because their parents never taught them. But Almost Home helped me get myself together before I even became a mother. They pushed me to my highest potential every day and never let me let up on myself.

I've faced so many big challenges by myself as a young mom that I don't even know where to start. Those challenges that I faced made me the woman that I am today. I am stronger than ever now. I don't let anything get in my way. Nothing can stop me, and nothing can break me. I've built the woman that I am today, and no one can take this from me.

I've met a lot of women during my time at Almost Home, and I would tell the new mothers here to give it a chance. It's a big change from where you come from, but this is for you. This is

**"THIS IS WHERE YOU START TO BE A BETTER MOTHER AND BETTER WOMAN FOR YOURSELF AND FOR YOUR KIDS."**

where you start to be a better mother and better woman for yourself and for your kids. Always remember you can do it. You can do whatever you put your mind to and be proud of yourself. So far, the proudest moment of my life has been when I became a mother and started my own family. They love me for me and



just fill my life with joy. I have a beautiful daughter named Ava. She's 9 months old and smart as ever. I have a handsome son

named Noah, and he's 3 years old and just our love bug. I'm about to be 21 in May, and I'm just living life to the fullest. I've had so many favorite moments as a mother that I can't pick just one. There's never a dull moment with my kids. Every day we make the sweetest memories that I'll cherish forever.

# ANNUAL REPORT 2021



**ALMOST HOME**

BREAKING THE CYCLE OF POVERTY TWO GENERATIONS AT A TIME



# THE **ALMOST HOME** CONTINUUM OF CARE

Unstable housing, lack of guidance, abuse and inadequate education are compounding factors for teen moms living in poverty. Almost Home's Foundations to Success Program provides the resources for young moms to overcome difficult circumstances and change the trajectory of their lives. During recent challenging years, Almost Home found new ways to show love and compassion to more families in need. We listened to our young moms, community partners, and volunteers. We kept abreast of trends and best practices in human services in our region and beyond. That knowledge and understanding led to the implementation of programs that provide the right level of support to young families at the right time. This is Almost Home's Continuum of Care.

## FOUNDATIONS TO SUCCESS PROGRAM

51

### TRANSITIONAL LIVING

16-21 year-old pregnant or parenting young mothers with less than 3 children receive a safe and stable home, food, clothing, baby supplies, case management and therapy, college and career readiness, and life skills courses.

# of moms served in 2021

### INDEPENDENT LIVING

16-25 year-old pregnant or parenting young mothers with less than 3 children living in Almost Home apartments receive case management, parenting education, and life skills courses.

12

17

### COMMUNITY LIVING

16-25 year-old pregnant or parenting young mothers living in the St. Louis area receive case management, therapy, and parent education and maintain contact with the program staff.

### ALUMNI

Moms who completed Almost Home's FTS program receive on-going support, coaching or therapy, daycare assistance, access to meals, low-rent housing, life skills courses, and access to the exclusive alumni events and online community.

25

## EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Throughout the pandemic, Almost Home continued to be an important resource for young moms and their babies who had nowhere else to turn. This was made possible by the continued support of our generous community and the Almost Home staff, who were flexible with their personal time and worked hard to adapt Almost Home's services to best serve our young families as they faced new and mounting challenges brought on by the pandemic.

### YOUNG MOMS AND THEIR BABIES

The pandemic caused delays and interruptions to services that our young mothers need – healthcare, childcare, and access to important documents such as school records. Our young moms looking for employment had to pass on job opportunities due to a lack of childcare. These interruptions became a barrier to the moms' ability to work toward their educational and career goals.

The pandemic significantly affected the mental health of Almost Home's young mothers. As single women who are either pregnant or caring for a young child without any support, they experienced increased isolation. The strain of the first years of motherhood created additional stress and threatened their sense of identity and purpose.



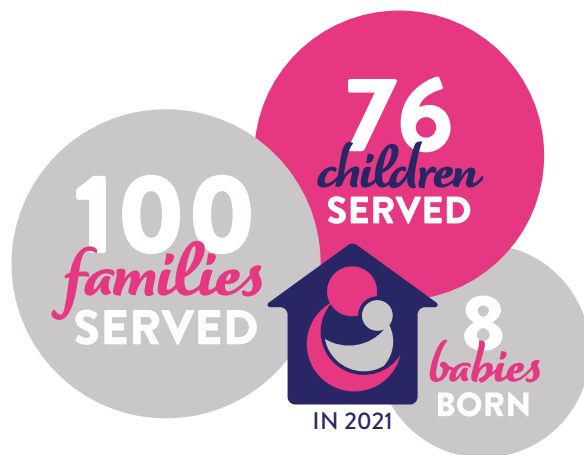
Almost Home invested in staff training in trauma-informed practices, mental health first aid, and crisis intervention to address the mental health needs of our families. Some women came to Almost Home after being in isolation with an abusive partner during the lockdown. All our moms have access to individual therapy sessions with a licensed therapist, as well as group therapy with other young moms at Almost Home. As part of our current strategic plan, Almost Home has made it a priority to become a trauma-informed agency to better support the needs of young women who have experienced trauma and toxic stress.

IN 2021, ALMOST HOME PROVIDED **6,098** *meals* AND **6,755** *shelter nights*.

## PROGRAM AND SERVICE DELIVERY

Almost Home altered its program structure and service delivery in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Beginning in March 2020, and as deemed necessary based on infection trends, staff were placed on a rotating schedule to abide by social distancing guidelines and reduce the likelihood of contagion within the organization. Many services became primarily virtual, including moms' meetings with a therapist and their case managers, although on-site meetings take place when possible and safe. While delivering such personal services through a screen is not ideal, Almost Home adjusted to continue its high standards for the support it gives young mothers.

Formerly outsourced education and employment preparation programs were brought in-house. Almost Home also launched a new program model that allows clients to attend school virtually, and staff were trained to administer TABE testing, which assesses high school equivalency competencies.



**86** *different* LIFE SKILLS COURSES

Almost Home gives teen moms a foundation on which to achieve success through education, employment, and ultimately, financial security. Life skills courses include parenting, financial literacy, independent living skills and other critical habits needed on their road to self-sufficiency.

As we continue to fluctuate between in-person and virtual service delivery, technology now plays a larger part in the Foundations to Success Program. With grant funding, Almost Home purchased new equipment to create a computer learning lab. Almost Home moms are now able to progress in their educational and employment goals without having to leave the transitional living home. Together with our partners, Almost Home provided crucial support and quality services like housing, food, therapy, and case management to vulnerable young families throughout the pandemic.

**FOUNDATIONS TO SUCCESS** couldn't succeed without the time and resources our partners provide for the young mothers working with the Almost Home program. Our staff, volunteers, donors and partnerships in the St. Louis community are critical to Almost Home's strategic planning and the continued success of our young families.



TRANSFORMING THE FUTURE TODAY



# 2021 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

<b>Assets</b>	
<b>Current Assets</b>	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 950,644
Investments	381,497
Accounts receivable	303,154
Property, plant, and equipment, net	792,656
Prepaid expenses	14,158
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>2,442,109</b>
<b>Noncurrent Assets</b>	
Due from Almost Home Permanent Housing, L.P.	351,899
Note receivable—Almost Home Permanent Housing, L.P.	82,859
<b>Total Noncurrent Assets</b>	<b>434,758</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 2,876,867</b>
<b>Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	
<b>Liabilities</b>	
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 11,605
Accrued expenses	25,480
Lease payable	-
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>37,085</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	
Without donor restrictions	2,640,491
Board designated	106,660
With donor restrictions	92,631
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>	<b>2,839,782</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 2,876,867</b>

## STATEMENT OF ACTIVITY

<b>Support and Revenue</b>	
Grant income	\$ 344,679
Fees for services	334,998
Other development revenue	144,060
Donations	169,655
Special event revenue, net of expenses	143,629
Interest	61
Donations in-kind	91,667
Other income	10,255
Net assets released from restrictions	-0-
<b>TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE</b>	<b>1,239,004</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Program services	804,781
Management and general	102,239
Fundraising	65,728
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>972,748</b>
<b>CHANGES IN NET ASSETS BEFORE OTHER CHANGES</b>	<b>266,256</b>
<b>Other Changes</b>	
Almost Home Permanent Housing investment activity	(63,889)
Unrealized (loss) gain on investment	(138)
<b>TOTAL OTHER CHANGES</b>	<b>(64,027)</b>
<b>CHANGES IN NET ASSETS</b>	<b>202,229</b>
<b>Net Assets, Beginning of Year</b>	<b>2,637,553</b>
<b>NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$ 2,839,782</b>

**82%** of expenses in 2021 were directly related to programming.

# THANK YOU

Our donors make it possible for Almost Home to do far more than provide basic needs for vulnerable families. Your generosity gives young families a fighting chance. Because of you, Jessica realized her dream of becoming an EMT. Because of you, Alexis is a better mom to her two children. Because of you, Shae and her son have moved into a place of their own. Your commitment to our mission provides critical wrap-around services to young moms, empowering them to build stable futures for their children. Thank you for helping us transform lives!

## INDIVIDUAL DONORS

### \$10,000 OR MORE

Alexis & Kenneth  
Catalanotto  
Jennifer & Kent Cerneka  
Louise & Gerald  
McNeive  
Gretchen & Daniel  
Moorman  
Amanda & Dan Mueller  
Shelly & Pat Roach  
Matthew Rossiter  
Kimberly & Brian Sneed  
Jim Tabor

### \$5,000 - \$9,999

Debra & Kevin Bastien  
Miriam de Jonge  
Jeanie & Colin McCance  
Dr. John Rice

### \$1,000 - \$4,999

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Jerome Billing  
Claudia Trautmann  
& Ted Christner  
Maryann Copenhaver  
Danae & Tom Domian  
Regina Fowler  
Andrew Greenberg  
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Mike Fidler  
Elizabeth Powitzky  
Dr. Joseph Prusaczyk  
Matthew Rossiter  
Ryan Strong  
Dawn & Mark Tamboli  
Lisa VonderHaar

### \$500 - \$999

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Zachary Bluestone  
Briggett Cunningham  
Nancy Durante  
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Kim Grbac  
Faith Sandler &  
Michael Holohan  
Tina Hrevus  
Beth Jantz  
Charles Kim  
Beth Krumm  
Sharon Krumm  
Brenda & Marlon Lee  
Kathy Maupin  
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Mitchell-Fitzgerald  
Anita & John O'Connell  
Judith Pautler

Wanda J. Pelloquin  
Kathy Petersen  
Stacy & John Schicker  
Tricia Schicker  
Jennifer Schott  
Craig Schriewer  
Connie Smith  
Michael Thieme  
Abigail Twenter  
Norma Vogelweid  
Peter Werner  
Reona & Gold Wise  
Barbara Zielinski

### \$100 - \$499

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Thesina Adams  
Wanda Allen  
Ben Anderson  
Kathy AuBuchon  
Jasmine Ball  
Ruth Banks  
Carla Baum  
Etiwanda Y. Beard  
Christian Beauchamp  
Barbara Bluestone  
Darrell Boone  
Pamela Brooks  
Sara Carey  
Diane Chatman  
Kristin Claggett  
Sherry & Thomas  
Claggett  
Eileen Clarke &  
William Dodd

Ali Cohen  
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Betty Conley  
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Kenneth Dowden  
Tyronica Dowdy  
David Dunlop  
Herschylle Durham  
Barbara Earthal  
Kristen Easter  
Paula Ellis  
Elton W. Fay  
Keith Fischer  
Steve Gold  
Maurice Graham  
Rhonda Gray  
Cassidy Griffith  
Amy Halbrook  
Lisa Herder & Ed Hejlek  
Lelia Horton  
Timothy Hudson  
Courtney Hunter  
Jacqueline Jacobi  
Kathryn Jacobsmeyer  
Beverly Janney  
Althea Johns  
Barbara Jones

Shonnette & Norman  
King  
Cyan Kelley  
Dennis Klosterman  
Matthew Lafata  
Annette Lenox  
Rose Lenox  
Lamont Lenox  
Kareeta  
Lenox-Hickerson  
Barb Ludwig  
Elder Edgar Madison  
Theresa Martin  
Melinda McEndarfer  
Dawn Medina  
Linda Metzler  
Katie Meyer  
Dawn Miller  
Darleen Moore  
Robert Moore  
Jerome Morgan  
Kate Morrison  
Kathleen Navin  
Mary Newbre  
Jonna Noonan  
Donna Olson  
Darrin C. Pelloquin  
Dorothy Person  
Shelia Plemons  
Catherine Redfern  
Courtney Rhodes  
LeAndra  
Richardson-Haynes  
Clarinda Schlatter



Donald Scott	Nicole Brown	Kimberly Hamilton	Cheryl Litzsinger	Julie Rhodes
Kelly Sendlebeck	Gary Bruer	Cheryl Hamlet-Collins	Coletta Lloyd Stewart	Sandra Richardson
Molly Martin & Stephen Sexauer	Erikka Bryant	Eleanor Hampton	Jamila S. Luaders	Donna J. Roder
Ericka Simpson-Conner	Lauren Bryant	Cheryl Harmon	Greg Lumsden	Shega Rodgers
Sybil Smith	Lisa Burns	Rachel Harmon	Kathleen Martin	Sandra Salzman
Calea Stovall-Reid	Michael Burns	Elsa Harris	Paul Martin	Eliza Sanders
Rachel Sullivan	Ora Cannady	Ornisha Harris	Theresa Martin	Marjorie Santhuff
Celia Sutura	Jennifer Carr	Alexia Harsley	Kimberly Massey	Catherine Satchell
Diane Swanson	Caitlin Carrow	Leah Haskett	Paula Matousek	Susan Scalise
Faith Thompson	Georgeen Carthan	Linette Hermanns	Cezarine McCall-McCoo	Colleen Schoeberle
Mary Tina Kehm	Henry Chaney	Ronita Herron	Emily McCarter	Katie Schwent
Paige & Daniel Tobik	Mary Chaudet	Alexis Hershey	Kimberly McDonald	Markeyta Sconiers
Donna Troy	Vernida Coleman	Beverly Hickerson	Melinda McEndarfer	Chamaine Shotwell
Nila Tuckson	Olivia College	Kristina Hill	Heather McIntyre	Deborah Smith
Christie Tutschulte	Cortaiga Collins	Kristina Hill	Kermet McLauchlin	Florene Smith
Sharon Uti	Viola David	Joy Hood	Kathleen McNeal	Karen Smith
Joyce Walker	Alicia Davis	Ronee Horton	David Mehling	Yolanda Stratton
Marneen Wells	Leslie Davis	Stephanie Horton	Jeff Middaugh	Gabriela Szeinberg
Marlon Whitfield	Renae Enyard Davis	Vera Hosley	Scott Moellenhoff	Michael Taylor
Alesha Williams	Gyvyone Dawkins	Kimberly M. Howard	Sharie Moen	Tracy Thames
Amber Wilson	Naomi Denton	Casey Hulbert	Princess C. Moll	Lisa Tharp Edison
Delores Wilson	Sonjia Dickerson	Stacey Humes	Traci L. Moore	Deinene Thomas
Kathie Wilson	Valaur Dickerson	Melissa Humphrey	Brenda Morgan	Yvonne Tisdell
Seth Wilson	Keith Dodel	Tricia Hutchison	Mariah Morgan	Madelyn Tossey
Lisa Winters Smith	Warren Doherty	Carol Iglauer	Blaire Moyer	Annette Van Swaay
Marie Woodruff	Rana Dotson	Heather Jacobs	Sheroo Mukhtiar	Jeanne VanRhein
Katherine & Tony Wright	Vanessa Dukes	Rodney Jennings	Anna Natoli	Norma Vogelweid
Susan M. Young	Lauren Edison	Angela Johnson	Kendra Neely-Martin	Geraldine Vogt
<b>UNDER \$100</b>	Kimberly Edwards	Patricia Johnson	Andre Nelson	Marilyn Wall
Lynn Abernathy	Janet Eichhorn	Teresa Johnson	Rhonda Nicholes	Sheena Ware
Della Akres	Tim Elwell	Dajane Jones	Fern Nichols	Alana Washington
Ena Allen	Larissa Even	Darcella R. Jones	Julia and Ben Noble	Nikki Washington
Sherry L Allen	Weslie Everett	Cheryl Jordan	Ashley Opel	Karie Watson
Devona Anderson	Delissa Fair	Rupal Joshi	Becca Orf	Kimberly Wellington
Martha & David Aronson	Mimi Fargo	Mary Kaiser	Megan Ottomeyer	Julie Whitehead
Cathy Arshadi	Marillyn Fausz	Butler Kathy	Krystle Perryman	Maria D. Wilkerson
Melissa Bacon	Robia Fields	Mary Ann Kehm	Chastity Perry-Smith	Olivia Wilkes
Jennifer Bailey	Sybil Finney	Jennifer Kelley	Reginald Phillips	Tera Wilkes
Joseph Banton	Meredith Friedman			
Joy Barbre	Sabrina Frison			
Janay Barner	Nicole Fulton			
Faith Barnes	Connie Gallagher			
Robert Barringer	Rhythm Gandhi			
Judith Bell	Delesha George			
Barb Black	Rhonda Gholston			
Delcina Bland	Carmen Gill			
Michelle Bolton	Lindsey Gowen			
Diana Brady	Juaquin Grace Sr.			
Patricia Brandt	Michelle Griffin			
Jamie Brown	Jill Gross			
Linda Brown	Sandra Haines			
	Amy Halbrook			
	Alandria Hall			
		Chris Kirkendall	Maya Pierce	Alesha Williams
		Robert Klang	Nyisha Porter	Chasity Williams
		Gloria Koehler	Rebecca M. Portis	Navinka Williams
		Debra Kreienkamp	Travis Pryor	Tiffaney Williams
		Felicia Lacey	Mary Lou Pudlowski	Kimberly Wise
		Peter & Jane Lawrence	Diana M. Pupillo	Lauren Wuertz
		Kisha Lee	Maryam Rashid	Jamie Wynd
		Cindy Lieber	Mary L. Redshaw	Michael Wyssession
		LaKeisha Lindsey	Leslie Reid	



Create your own **ALMOST HOME** fundraiser on Facebook!

Unite your community to end the cycle of poverty! Begin by clicking "Fundraiser" in the left menu of your Facebook News Feed.

# ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

American Family Insurance Dreams Foundation	Great Southern Bank	South Central Correctional Center - Gavel Club
Big Blue Spark	Haberberger Inc.	SSM Health
Black Communities Investment Initiative	Hagen Properties	St. Clare of Assisi Parish
Blues for Kids Foundation	Henkel Corporation	St. Joseph Parish - Cottleville
Boeing Employees Community Fund	Insperty	St. Louis Children's Hospital
BSI Constructors, Inc.	Jim and Norma Leslie Family Foundation	St. Mark's United Methodist Church
Burns and McDonnell	JTC Group	Sumner One
Cardinal Glennon Children's Hospital	Jubilee World	Thermo Fisher Scientific
Cardinals Care	Laborers International Union of North America (LIUNA 110)	Thomas J. Lynch Family Foundation
Davis Creative LLC	Lifetime Roofing	TierPoint LLC
Deaconess Foundation	The Maggie Welby Foundation	Together Credit Union
Edward Jones	Marian Foundation	Trio Foundation of St. Louis
Edward Jones Trust Company	Missouri Employers Mutual	Vatterott Foundation
Emerson Charitable Trust	Pershing Charitable Trust	Victor and Selene DeLinieri Charitable Foundation
Engelhardt Family Foundation	Pott Foundation	Webb Foundation
Enterprise Holdings Foundation	R. Scott Supply Chain Strategies LLC	Wells Fargo Advisors LLC
Episcopal Presbyterian Health Trust	R.E. Browning Family Foundation	Wells Fargo Community Support Campaign
Express Scripts	Regional Business Council	Women's Foundation of Greater St. Louis
Fischer-Bauer-Knirps Foundation	Rent One	Zonta Club of St. Louis
Franciscan Sisters of Mary	Robert J. Trulaske, Jr. Family Foundation	
Gene-Del Printing	Roeslein & Associates, Inc.	
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church	Saint Louis University	
Graybar Foundation	Simply Chic Jewelry	

# IN-KIND DONORS

27 Hangers	Chef D Lawn Chair Club	Gwendolyn & Kehlani Grays
Dana Ankney	Colleen Conway & Family	Greater Pentecostal Church of God
Kathy AuBuchon	COVID-19 Regional Response Team	Bob Hagen
Jeanice Baker	Rachael Cross	ChloeHanson
Ruth Banks	LeRita Crowell	Alexia Harsley
Baptist Ministries South Center	Briggett Cunningham	Catherine Hentges
Eva Barringhaus	Ramona Curtis	Herbaria
Karen Bergman	Delivering Good	Heritage 1933
Teaira Berrg-Joiner	Delta Sigma Theta-St. Louis Alumnae Chapter	Charletta Hill
Shanese Bolden	Delta Sigma Theta-St. Louis Metropolitan Alumnae Chapter	Kristina Hill
Books for Newborns	Weslie Everett	Megan Holly
Dalya Bordman	Chelsea Fayne	Deborah Howard
Emily & David Bosch	Alanna Ferrell	It's Your Birthday, Inc.
Cindy Bridick	Lisa Firestine	Jordan Jackson
Kim Brown	Jerrica Franks	Rashma James
Laurie Bruffey	Meredith Friedman	Cindy Jenkins
Burlington	Darby Gill	John Burroughs Gender Equity Organization
Kanitha Byars	Bradford Gillen	Tink Johnson
Mariah Byrne	Isis Gines	Shannon Jones
Harmony Camden	Krista Glickert	Kendra Scott
Jordan Carr		Karen Kenton-Taylor
Kenneth & Alexis Catalanotto		





# \$177

**Your contribution of \$177 for 12 months allows one young mother and her baby to receive 6 months of support** from the Almost Home team, our community of educators, therapists, and case workers, along with all the resources needed to provide a safe home for the mother and her baby as she works to transform their futures.

Set up monthly payments or make a one time donation at [almosthomestl.org/give](https://almosthomestl.org/give) or call (314) 771-4663 to discuss how we can work together to support young mothers and their babies in the St. Louis community.



Scan the QR code with your phone to be directed straight to our payment page.

## IN-KIND DONORS

Dot Kersting  
Kimberly Kline  
Beth Krumm  
Lafayette High School  
Jonice Langford  
Linus Blankets of Southwestern Illinois  
Felecia Long  
Payton Lowrey  
Manasseh Ministry  
Ronya McCool  
William McGilberry  
Memory Lane LLC  
Claudine Miller  
Lawrence Minth  
MiTek Inc.  
Jennifer Moore  
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Mariah Morgan  
Abbie Mueller  
Amanda & Dan Mueller  
National Council of Negro Women,  
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Shelby Nicholl  
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Tia Rey Pearson  
Laura Pfeiffer  
Meghan Pietoso  
Katie Rasmussen  
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Steven Rosenblum  
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Serving Our Community Kids  
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Kevin Smith  
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Sweet Celebrations

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Daniel & Paige Tobik  
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Christie Tutschulte  
University of Missouri St. Louis  
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Lauren Webber  
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Alesha Williams  
Michelle Williams  
Rochelle Williams  
Women In Business Network  
Women's Safe House  
Marcus Young  
Azahre' Zimbalis

# SPECIAL EVENTS 2021



JUNE

Almost Home's 11th annual Baby Shower fundraising event was held at the Piper Palm House in Tower Grove Park. It was a fun Sunday afternoon with food, a wine pull, whiskey tasting, and Golden Ticket Raffle. Most importantly, guests heard from a young mom who shared how Almost Home helped her create a stable life for her new baby. With the generous support of our donors and presenting sponsor Edward Jones, Almost Home raised over \$88,000 to support young families!



## 2022 ALMOST HOME EVENTS

Get updates on all our events and news by following us on social media or signup for our email list at [almosthometl.org/newsletter](https://almosthometl.org/newsletter).





Almost Home's 2nd annual virtual fundraising event was an exciting 24-hours with 289 of our friends and family from 20 different states whose strong support helped us raise \$137,450! It was a wonderful opportunity to connect with our community online and share our mission with a nationwide audience. Throughout the event we enjoyed inspiring live stream updates from our staff with guest appearances from the delightful children at Almost Home.

Fundraising teams played a crucial role in the success of last year's campaign. Ten teams raised over \$100,000!

The Love Family  
Manifesting Futures  
Roots R Us  
We Transcend

Crusaders for Change  
The Power Squad  
Rise Up  
Moms4Moms

Home Is Where The Start Is  
Thee Wise 1: Mission Driven,  
Leaders United



*I am. I can. I will.*

View the results of our emPOWER campaign at [charidy.com/empower](https://charidy.com/empower) and visit our YouTube channel to watch clips from the 24-hour event (you don't want to miss Joe'siah's cameo!). Find our channel using the QR code.





# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

## CECELIA DOOLEY



**ALMOST HOME IS A PROGRAM THAT I REALLY BELIEVE IN AND A PROGRAM THAT DOES WHAT IT SAYS IT DOES. IT JUST KIND OF CAPTURED MY HEART.**

On December 23, 2021, Almost Home lost one of our founding partners, a lifelong advocate, and a dear friend and mentor, Mrs. Cecelia Dooley.

Cecelia worked tirelessly as a social worker for Catholic Charities, passionately advocating for children, young adults, and families. After retiring, Cecelia worked with Sister Irene & Sister Jacinta of the Franciscan Sisters of Mary to start Almost Home in 1993. Her interest in serving people led to her fifteen-year tenure as president of Almost Home's Board of Directors. Though she retired in 2008, Cecelia remained closely connected.

**"WHAT'S UNIQUE ABOUT CEIL IS THE PERSONAL CARE SHE SHOWS TOWARD THE CLIENTS. CEIL REMEMBERS THE CASES. SHE KNEW ALL OF OUR STAFF BY THEIR FIRST NAMES AND IS INVOLVED WITH THEIR LIVES." - SHEROO MUKHTIAR**

Cecelia remembered your birthday. She cooked Mexican dinners for you. She called to check on your family and delivered care packages to your house. She and her husband, John, opened their home and hearts to you. Cecelia helped you, trusted you, and believed in you.

Cecelia never used the staff door at Almost Home, but came in the main entrance so she could check-in with the young

mothers, hold their babies in her arms, play with the children who eagerly awaited her visits, and encourage the staff in the front office. She found every opportunity to show kindness. Resolute in her commitment to helping people in need, Cecelia generously gave her time, talent, and energy to carrying out the work Almost Home was specifically designed to do: teaching young mothers how to be mothers.

Cecelia empowered the people around her to accomplish great things with dignity despite challenging circumstances and lack of resources. "No matter what the reason, mediocre wasn't something to settle for," said Sherroo Mukhtiar, former

Executive Director of Almost Home. "Even if you don't have the resources, it still needs to be flawless." She encouraged you to see the "nos" as opportunities to get better and stronger, and she stood by your side as you gave 150% to pursue excellence in every opportunity.

Cecelia set this standard of making a difference with the resources you have (no excuses!) for her staff, mentees, and the





young mothers at Almost Home. Mukhtiar said that Cecelia was basically an unpaid executive director, working side-by-side with her team to deliver the life-changing programs of Almost Home. Cecelia pursued funding, spoke at conferences, and educated the community on Almost Home's vision to break the cycle of poverty. She went beyond her role as board president. To her, it was not a matter of position but of deep compassion

for young families and focus on the work required to ensure a better future for those in need. Her concern was for others, and she celebrated each success achieved by those she served and loved. She demonstrated the importance of humility. Cecelia served our community, not for her own importance, but to transform the future.

Along with Sister Irene and Sister Jacinta, Cecelia was adamant that Almost Home was not a shelter but a path out of poverty. After their many years as social workers, they instinctively knew how to design the program at Almost Home.

After retiring in 2008, Cecelia faced health challenges and the progression of Parkinson's with the same strength and grace as she faced every other challenge. When she moved to Chicago to live with her daughter, Annette, she took a piece of Almost Home with her: a nail from the construction site of Almost Home's facility. We will remember Cecelia's kindness and dedication to the young families at Almost Home and we are proud to be in community with volunteers who are following Cecelia's example of advocacy for the young families at Almost Home.



## CELEBRATION OF SERVICE

Everyone has a different story about how they came to connect with Almost Home. But love for the mission is always the result. This was the case for former board president, Melissa Taylor. As Melissa approached retirement at Graybar, she knew that she wanted to use her newly found free time to give back to the community. One day a friend invited Melissa to an open house at Almost Home. Although Melissa had not been a teen mom herself, the stories resonated with her. She understood their struggle because she had family and friends with similar stories. The mission of Almost Home appealed to Melissa so much that she joined the board in 2018. Melissa brought passion and commitment to the board. Soon after Melissa joined the board, Almost Home had a transition in staff leadership. Always willing to step up when needed, Melissa became the board president to help guide the organization through the transition.

Melissa served tirelessly, giving of her time and expertise, through the period of staff transition and the COVID-19 pandemic. Melissa stepped down as board president in December 2021. During her tenure, Almost Home and our community experienced some challenging times. Melissa never wavered in her commitment.

As Melissa reflected on her time on the board of directors at Almost Home, she stated:



**"I LEARNED MORE FROM ALMOST HOME THAN THEY DID FROM ME. I HOPE THAT WHAT I'VE CONTRIBUTED HAS HELPED SOMEONE CHANGE THEIR LIFE."**

Thank you, Melissa, for everything you have done and continue to do to mobilize the mission of Almost Home!



**Sign up to be an <sup>ALMOST</sup> HOME volunteer!** Almost Home will work with you to craft an experience that helps our moms gain momentum as it adds meaning to you. Start the process now at [almosthomestl.org/volunteer](https://almosthomestl.org/volunteer).





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### ALMOST HOME *community garden*

Last spring Almost Home staff, moms (and children) toiled in our new vegetable garden to grow and harvest a bounty of fresh produce. Our young families learned about sustainable, healthy foods as they tended the garden; and enjoyed the “fruits” of their labor while eating the nutritious meals they prepared together. A generous grant from Cigna Foundation, and the guidance and assistance of Heru Urban Farming, made the garden possible.



## 2022 ALMOST HOME BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Wanda Pelloquin, Secretary  
Maryann Copenhaver, Fund Development Committee Chair  
Marlon Lee, Board Development and Nominating Chair

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Rozetta Irons  
Daniel Moorman  
Libby Noonan

R. Pat Roach  
Matthew Rossiter  
Michael Stewart

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Sue Engelhardt

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Tyronica Dowdy, Director of Development  
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Mariah Morgan, Program Service Coordinator  
Chasity Williams, Program Support Aid

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Leslie Reid, Transitional Living Coach  
Azahre Zimbali, Transitional Living Coach

