



America's 1st Rural NHS Founded in 1983

Neighborhood Housing Services of Southwest Wisconsin

350+
Households Assisted
with Education,
Counseling or Loans

55 Households Attended
Leadership Training
47 Households Attended
Neighborhood Association Meetings
1281 Households Served through
Community Building and Organizing

86 New Homebuyers
10 Foreclosure Saves
42 Total Household Loans
2 New Homes Built & Sold
7 Rehab Projects Completed
169 Homebuyer Workshop Participants
62 Reverse Mortgage Counseling Sessions
61 Underserved & Minority Households Served

*All This
Under One Roof!*

The
Park Hotel
Senior Citizen
Apartments

Big Top Chautauqua
Ocochpalooza

5 Habitat for Humanity-Self Help Homes
constructed through NHSSW partnering with
Homebuyer workshops, DownPayment
Assistance Loans and Program Consulting.

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125 E. Seminary St., Richland Center, WI 53581 608-647-4949

Founded in 1983 - America's 1st Rural NHS!

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Fighting Poverty with Passion!

By Terry Testolin - Executive Director - NHS of Southwest Wisconsin

The AmeriCorps Mission of *Fighting Poverty with Passion* tells our story here at NHS of Southwest Wisconsin (NHSSW) and all the partners we have been working with over the years. I began as an AmeriCorps VISTA Community Organizer in the early 1980's working in Madison, Wisconsin, with the Center for Community Technology which advocated for grassroots energy conservation and alternative energy options.



Today as a 27 year Executive Director and AmeriCorp VISTA Alumnus at NHS of Southwest Wisconsin, I couldn't be more honored to be working with, learning from, supervising and coaching two AmeriCorp VISTA Volunteer Community Organizers. Bob Johnson and Amber Burch represent the best of our next generation of leaders! Working together as a team and with hundreds of neighbors in this community in a few short years as dedicated AmeriCorps VISTA Community Organizers, they have fearlessly engaged with the community and have built new networks of hope by encouraging leaders who are building grassroots institutions working in the interest of the people we serve and the greater good of all!



VISTAS and Community Leaders; LtoR Bob Johnson, Kristine Lockwood, Justin Lockwood, Cathryn Scott, Russ Wenham, Brett Iverson, Sarah Iverson, and Amber Burch

During 2014, a second group of neighbors and business owners decided to organize a neighborhood association in the downtown area named DNA (Downtown Neighborhood Association). This group is organizing on a path forward.

The Ocoochapalooza event held in downtown Richland Center mentored by our dynamic duo VISTA team and a tight knit resident volunteer group that attended NeighborWorks America Community Leadership Institutes was a huge success! Ocoochapalooza 2015 is now moving full steam ahead, buoyed by a major Richland Tourism Grant and the dynamic enthusiasm and energy of the citizen organizing group.

If you have worked with NHSSW, you know, not only does our staff and board and many allies in the community fight "poverty with passion", we have also joined together to become a partnership of collaborative homebuilders, community servants and music makers committed one person and one event at a time to building hope and a better world right here where we are. In a sense we are all community organizers and I thank Bob and Amber for reminding us of this core value and this seasoned VISTA Alumnus just what this good fight is all about! The Ocoochapalooza "has legs" and I urge everyone to join in on the fun in 2015 again and build this great downtown event into a "community happening institution" for the future of Richland Center! We are talking business and economic development, tourism, fun and much, much more!

Not only am I and our team experienced and grateful Community Organizers, we are also by nature and training professional public servants rated "Exemplary" for the last 7 years by NeighborWorks America. Working together in 2014, we accomplished strong production that is empowering people, creating economic development and building community in Richland County and Southwest Wisconsin.



Rehab for the Teapot Room!

A local spry 88 year old homeowner in Richland Center applied to NHS of Southwest Wisconsin for a home improvement loan to repair her roofing and replace a bathtub with a shower due to accessibility issues. The small bungalow's roof was leaking and ruining the ceiling in her front room. This front room was no ordinary porch-turned-living space, it was the home for her colorful teapot collection!

After an inspection it was determined that the scope of the work would include extensive electrical repairs, besides the roof replacement and bathroom shower retrofit. During the project's progress, the homeowner sat in her living room chair crocheting afghan blankets and hand towels for friends and relatives - all without the need for eyeglasses! She enjoyed chatting with the contractors about her 13 grown children, her faith and her teapots. When the NHS Development Coordinator, Susan Hallett, visited her from time to time, the homeowner would show her any new teapots and tell her stories about where a particular teapot came from, or who gave it to her. She has hundreds.

The homeowner always mentioned how thankful she was for the help she received from NHS. The new roof and updated electrical would keep her safe and dry, besides adding to the value of her home when it comes time to sell - which she doesn't expect to be anytime soon! The new shower will help her stay in her home for as long as she is able. She told Susan that once her first mortgage was paid off, she would start paying back the NHS mortgage, so there would be money to help other people like her.

By Susan Hallett - Development Coordinator - NHS of Southwest Wisconsin



Empowering People

The Park Hotel Senior Citizen Apartments (The Park) is owned and managed by NHS of Southwest Wisconsin (NHSSW). These apartments are home to just under 25 individuals as well as the NHSSW offices and John F. Kennedy Community Building and Organizing Center. NHSSW takes great pride in The Park, and the wonderful residents, no matter their past, greet NHSSW staff and clients with a friendly smile as they go about their days in downtown Richland Center.

There are many programs and activities organized for the residents, including a current series of presentations from local experts on topics like healthy eating, how to best utilize the ADRC (Aging and Disability Resource Center) Bus, how to avoid being the victim of scams, and how to become and stay financially healthy. These events are sponsored through an Enterprise Foundations grant and have included presentations by University of Wisconsin-Richland County Extension Staff, the local Police Chief, the ADRC staff, NHSSW staff, and others!



One example of an event for Park residents was January 9th, when Park residents, NHSSW staff and past resident managers gathered to celebrate the 90th birthday of one of The Park's longtime residents. The resident was surprised and was very happy to have so many gathered to celebrate her milestone with her. Cake, ice cream, cookies and coffee were served. The resident and guests shared many memories from the past and good discussions and ribbing were had. The resident received cards, flowers and gifts. It was a great celebration for a respected longtime resident.



By Amber Burch - AmeriCorps VISTA Volunteer - NHS of Southwest Wisconsin

"The staff at NHS is there to help you however they can. They want things to work out for you."—Homeownership Client

2014 WAS A SUCCESS THANKS TO YOU!



210+
Community Leaders



2000+
Event Attendees



Photos by The Richland Observer

Organized Events Aimed At Building Stronger Communities

Educational Forums	Community Garden	Park Hotel Apts. Open House
HomeBuyer Education Workshops	Neighborhood Association Meetings	Community Leadership Workshops
Community Beautifications	Partnership Appreciation	Block Party

2014 Staff Members



LtoR: Back row: Patrick Manning, Marilyn Perez, Susan Hallett, Linda Smith, Katie McGinnis, Terry Testolin. Front row: Deb Adams, Chelsea Wunnicke, Corrina Mott. Not pictured: Becky Gomez and Dave Robel

Board of Directors



LtoR: Back row: Paul Tysee, Ray Schmitz, Wayne Crapser, Gary Hardy, Barry Zieghan, Linda Gentes. Front row: Dr. Patrick Hagen, Gary Peters, Sherry Klatt, Dawn Elliot. Not pictured: Debra Bristol and Kristine Lockwood

Mission Statement

We are Neighbors Helping Neighbors committed to educating residents in affordable housing services, and revitalizing our area communities.

Thank You to Our Contributors and Their Continued Support!



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