



April 2022

A Message from the President & CEO

Winter has slowly changed into spring; masks are slowly coming off; and hope for renewal and growth is holding steady. At Pathway Homes, our commitment to creating and sustaining a culture of excellence continues to hold steady even as uncertainty swirls around us with inflation on the rise and war in Ukraine. Our belief and hope in our collective ability to be resilient in the face of these realities and a pandemic that is not quite over, continues to keep us motivated in striving for excellence in our services daily. It also pushes us to strive towards being an employer that attracts and retains the best possible staff.



This April, our staff validated this hope and those efforts, and Pathway Homes was named for the 7th time, to [*The NonProfit Times*](#)’ (NPT) national list of 50 Best Places to Work. This year, the 50 Best Nonprofits stood out in the areas of culture and communication, compensation and benefits, and leadership, according to NPT.

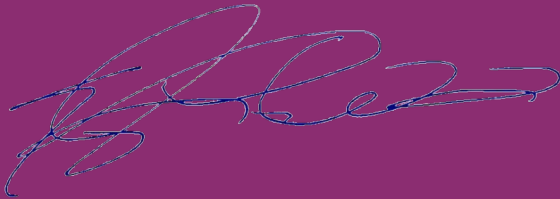
“Offering clients outstanding services that lift them up starts with taking care of our own employees. By providing a work environment with a culture of excellence, we know we can support our employees so they can focus on doing their best work, which ultimately prevents homelessness in our region,” said Sylisa Lambert-Woodard, CEO, Pathway Homes. “Being included on *The NonProfit Times*’ list affirms that our focus on building a great workplace is working—for our employees and community.”

Pathway Homes was ranked 33rd among all nonprofits surveyed and 14th among medium sized employers. Pathways has employees that work throughout Northern Virginia, Central Florida, and Washington D.C. and provides a supportive, growth-oriented work environment. [Pathways offers](#) outstanding benefits and competitive pay, and this year, further enhanced its benefits package. Among those benefits are health insurance with **no copays or deductibles** for in-network services and providers; dental, vision, life, short and long-term disability, critical illness, and long-term care insurances; tuition

reimbursement; public service loan forgiveness program; a 403(b)-retirement plan; Employee Assistance Program; and flexible spending accounts.

For more than 40 years, Pathway Homes has enabled tens of thousands of people in Northern Virginia and Central Florida with serious mental illnesses and other co-occurring disabilities to get housing and supportive services to help them recover their lives. Following the housing first model, Pathway Homes is a partner in preventing and ending homelessness, ensuring 1,553 people in 2021 had access to services, and providing 505 affordable permanent supportive housing units towards addressing the problem of homelessness in the Northern Virginia region.

Many thanks to our public and private funders, community partners, staff, and other stakeholders for your contributions towards helping us meet our mission daily. Even greater thanks to the individuals who allow us the privilege and honor to serve them every day – without you there would not be a Pathway Homes!



Sylisa Lambert-Woodard, EdD, LCSW, LSATP, MAC

“Pathway Homes embodies the spirit of recovery: embracing an attitude of hope, self-determination and partnering with each individual on their personal journey toward achieving self-fulfillment and realizing their dreams.

We fulfill our mission by making available to individuals with mental illness and co-occurring disabilities a variety of non-time-limited, affordable housing, and services to enable them to realize their individual potential.”

- Pathway Homes Mission

Make a Gift Here!

**Dr. Sylisa Lambert-Woodard’s Column
in the Washington Business Journal**

Check out the Washington Business Journal, March 4-10, 2022 edition of

President and CEO Dr. Sylisa Lambert-Woodard's column that explores redlining, the pandemic, and housing affordability.

[Click Here to Read](#)

VIEWPOINT

The Business Journal welcomes letters to the editor and guest columns

GUEST COMMENT

This new great migration could hurt housing affordability

Buying a home has been hard lately and not just for families. Nonprofits like ours buy homes too, ensuring vulnerable people have a place to call home. The



In Their Own Words: Pathways Consumer Advisory Council Advocates for Affordable Housing and Mental Health Services in the Community

During the last week of February, Pathway Homes' Consumer Advisory Council (CAC) attended Virginia Housing Alliance's annual advocacy week. The CAC members attended separate virtual meetings with Delegate Ken Plum, Delegate David Bulova, and Senator David Marsden to discuss affordable housing and mental health supports.

CAC member John lauded the opportunity to speak directly with legislators, stating that the opening of channels for communication helps alleviate a lot of problems including the stigma that often follows those in need of affordable housing and mental health services. He further explained that these discussions result in, "not a paranoia, but an understanding."

While speaking with the legislators, CAC member Marti asked an important question, "What is affordable housing?" Affordable housing can look and feel



different to someone who has experienced or is experiencing homelessness, compared to someone who has never been homeless. While discussing this question, the CAC provided examples of how affordable housing can mean something different based on perspective. They highlighted that when finding solutions to the issues related to affordable housing, those making the decisions must ensure that the solutions translate to all levels, especially to those in the lower-income levels of 30% and below, and low to extremely low poverty levels.

CAC members, Marti and M.K., also addressed the issue of community response to individuals experiencing a mental health crisis, specifically the use of force by the police in those circumstances. Marti explained that more professionals trained in crisis control should be essential when responding to calls related to mental health crises. She described a personal positive experience she had with the police when she was experiencing a mental health crisis. Along with a representative from the provider she was working with at the time, four policemen responded to her home. She described her surprise when the police responded to her heightened emotions with calmness and respect thereby helping her to achieve calmness and successfully de-escalate the situation. She wrapped up her testimonial by saying that when she speaks about the need for educating emergency response personnel on crisis control, she references this situation and hopes all police officers will have access to the same training that those officers had.

M.K. brought up a similar situation that he experienced in the past and suggested that police officers also provide the community with more information on what to expect from them during mental health crisis situations so that individuals in a mental health crisis will not be caught off guard. “The police are not trying to harm you, even though it’s a forceful situation,” M.K. stated, adding that the use of force can be avoided if an individual knows what to expect from the officers who respond.

CAC member, Cheryl, concurred and explained that there is always a fear of how police officers might react to those experiencing mental health crises. She shared a personal experience while visiting Virginia Beach. She felt lost and approached a police officer on a horse because the horse made her feel safer. The police officer patiently answered her questions and gave her directions to where she needed to be. She explained the even such a short but positive interaction like receiving directions in a kind manner from a police officer can help decrease paranoia about the police and the fear of the use of force.

At the end of the meeting with Senator Marsden, the Senator thanked members of the CAC for their informative words and stated that he missed the opportunity to meet with Pathways as he did during pre-COVID times. He praised them for their work and shared how moved he was by the presentation, pulling his checkbook out to donate to Pathway Homes, Inc. on the spot.

When asked what legislators and the broader community could do to promote affordable housing, CAC member Tina mentioned an example of creative

sustainable affordable housing options, such as motels being renovated and turned into affordable housing units. “Think outside the box,” CAC member, Sue, added, with a reminder that solutions should not only be discussed but implemented in the community.

The voices of those we serve should be the loudest among us. Thank you to Pathway Homes’ Consumer Advisory Council for their excellent and informative work in the community.

Kaiser Grant UPDATE: DC Office

Pathway Homes was awarded \$65,000 in January 2022 from Kaiser Permanente for Pathways’ first VA and DC shared grant. This new program will be called “Housing is Health - Pathway Homes Homeless Outreach Program.”



The main goal of this program is to successfully house individuals who are homeless/chronically homeless in Fairfax County and the District of Columbia. It is our hope that this will in turn decrease the number of vacant bed days in the Continuum of Care Permanent Supportive Housing units across Fairfax County and the District of Columbia. Pathway Homes has now secured a new location and business license to operate in DC. The new office is located at 1100 New Jersey Ave, SE, Suite 710, Washington, DC 20003. We have also hired our first Housing outreach staff in DC and Fairfax! It is our goal to serve 75 unhoused individuals in the first year.

Pathway Homes Awarded One of the 50 Best Non-Profit to Work For

WE MADE THE LIST!!! Pathway Homes was named one of 50 Best Nonprofits to Work For in 2022 in the United States! This is the seventh time that we have received this exceptional award, and this year we ranked 33 out of 50 nonprofits that made the list!



“To receive such an award during one of the most challenging times to operate a nonprofit is exceptional,” said Pathways President and CEO, Dr. Sylisa Lambert-Woodard. Staff participation was strong, with a 65% response rate and the feedback they provided in the survey showed “a significant endorsement of the Culture of Excellence we strive to create,” added Dr. Lambert-Woodard.

According to the Best Companies Group, which administers the survey each year, the organizations that made the list are assessed as those that show their employees their strategy instead of just telling them. Additionally, “over 50% of these organizations had publicly committed time and resources to building a more diverse and inclusive workplace such as creating a Diversity Taskforce, or having programs targeted at creating a more diverse pipeline for talent.”

As an agency that continually strives to improve its programs, services, and work experience of its employees, we are extremely proud to have received this recognition. Major kudos to our staff who make it possible to do the work we do every day, and who also made this nation-wide recognition possible.

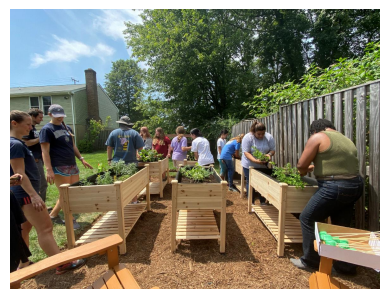
For the full list, please go to <https://www.thenonproffitimes.com/hr/leaders-find-ways-to-make-jobs-easier-while-building-relationships/>

[Click here for our official press release.](#)

Fannie Mae's Month of Service With Pathways



Fannie Mae is celebrating the month of May and “spring cleaning” by dedicating it as their month of service. Once a weeklong event, this month of service involves Fannie Mae volunteers partnering with charities on specific projects that support each organization’s mission.



During the first two weeks of May, Fannie Mae has generously committed to making improvements to four of our properties. These are not only “beautification” projects because the volunteers will add community gardens to two of these properties.

Last year, Fannie Mae teamed up with us to add the first of our community gardens at one of our properties in Herndon. The success of this inaugural garden has led to this year’s plans to continue adding similar gardens to our other properties. One of the properties receiving a communal garden is our 37-bed Assisted Living Facility, which provides 24/7 residential care. Residents and staff alike are looking forward to the garden and are excited to get their hands dirty while learning gardening tips from our very own Pathway Homes volunteers.

This service project will also provide these properties with picnic tables and garden beds, as well as power-washing of decks, and general landscaping. The volunteers will also include other upgrades that create a more welcoming outdoor space for the residents in these four properties.

Thank you to Fannie Mae for their continued service and their contribution towards planting seeds of hope.

UPCOMING: Summer of the Arts



Submissions are currently being accepted from artists served by Pathway Homes for this year's Summer of the Arts exhibition. This is a wonderful opportunity for new and experienced artists to submit their original artwork!

As Spring ends, we will begin to set up for this annual event which highlights the creativity and passion of those we serve at Pathway Homes.

The art exhibit is scheduled to open on July 1, 2022, at the Vienna Arts Society, open throughout the month of July. The art can also be viewed virtually. All purchases go directly to the artist.

Please watch our website and social media for more information to come!

SAVE THE DATE: Pathway Homes' Steps to Pathways Breakfast



STEPS TO PATHWAYS BREAKFAST



Mark your calendars for

**October 27, 2022
8:30 am
at Chantilly National Golf Club,
14901 Braddock Rd, Centreville, VA 20120.**

A virtual option will also be available.

Join us and enjoy a delicious breakfast while listening to our mission of providing mental health services—starting with safe, stable housing—to individuals who are often marginalized by poverty and inequity. This is a great opportunity to directly hear the personal stories of those we serve!

For over 42 years, Pathways has been committed to our mission of embodying the spirit of recovery: embracing an attitude of hope, and self-determination, and partnering with each individual on their personal journey toward achieving self-fulfillment and realizing their dream. We fulfill our mission by making available to individuals with mental illnesses and co-occurring disabilities a variety of non-time limited housing and services to enable them to realize their individual potential.

Thank you to our sponsors!



Interested in sponsoring? [CLICK HERE](#)

**Check out What's Happening at
Pathway Homes of Florida!**

DUCK RACE 2022

Join us for the second annual Duck Race to benefit Pathway Homes of Florida at Island H2O Waterpark!

Your rubber ducks will race around the river to educate, advocate, and raise funds to end homelessness as well as provide mental health services to those in need in Central Florida.

FRIDAY, JUNE 10TH AT 8:30 AM

HOSTED BY



If you sponsor a duck, you will receive 50% off a waterpark admission ticket to use in the 2022 season.

Marta Negron, Chairwoman of the 2nd Annual Duck Race and SVP/Regional Manager

of **MIDFLORIDA**
Florida's community credit union

Tom Sorrells, News 6's Emmy award winning Chief Meteorologist, will return to Emcee!
Special thank you to event videographer Escape Visuals!

More than 6,000 individuals are homeless in our region.

Our goal is to have 6,000 ducks sponsored to honor these individuals.

All proceeds support Pathway Homes of Florida's mission to provide residential case management and mental health services for homeless families and individuals in Central Florida.



PLUCK YOUR DUCK TODAY AT
<http://pathwayhomes.info/DuckRace>



JUMBO DUCK
\$100



DUCKLING
\$20 OR 6 FOR \$100



NEON DUCK
\$5 OR 5 FOR \$20



MO BAMBA DUCK
\$10

OPPORTUNITY TO WIN SIGNED
MO BAMBA JERSEY!

PRIZES INCLUDE

- AMAZON GIFT CARDS
- ORLANDO MAGIC TICKETS
- ORLANDO MAGIC SWAG BAG
- ISLAND H2O WATERPARK DAY & SEASON PASSES

Duck sponsorships with the opportunity to win prizes are open to ALL! This event will also be shown virtually on [Pathway Homes of Florida Facebook Page](#) for out-of-state supporters and general duck sponsors unable to attend.

Support our Florida office and sponsor a duck at
<https://pathwayhomes.info/duckrace>

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