



February 2023

## A Message from the President & CEO

Perseverance. This is the word I think of when reflecting back on the past year. Our clients, organization, region, and nation faced the pandemic, natural disasters, and uncertain economic and political times but pushed ahead.

As a nonprofit, we continued to provide meaningful services while keeping clients, volunteers, and employees safe. We found ways to secure new homes for those we serve in a challenging market where inventory was low and prices exceptionally high, including the cost of maintaining the more than 500 properties we own and/or manage.

With volunteers, we built gardens. With donated services by contractors like Signature Renovations and DryHome Roofing, we helped keep clients safe and warm. With grants from organizations like Amazon and CareFirst and the generosity of donors, we filled these homes with supportive services from caring professionals. With local governments, we partnered to help those we serve forge new paths.

The clients we serve took advantage of these services as they focused on living their best lives. Yeru is an example. She is one of the residents who lives in supportive housing in Alexandria. She is a poet and library aide with a master's degree and is rising beyond her mental health struggles to achieve her dreams and serve others. She credits our programs as "a major part of the reason for my success." She stresses that "every soul is of infinite worth...and I pray mental health advocacy will lead to more supportive housing units for people diagnosed with a mental health condition."

Yeru is one of nearly 1,600 lives we touched this past year. Those we serve are people who are impoverished and have accompanying chronic psychiatric and/or co-occurring substance use disorders and physical disabilities that make long-term self-sufficiency challenging. A majority were homeless prior to Pathways; living in shelters, on the streets or other places not meant for human habitation. They have struggles, but they also have dreams.

As a community, it is far better for us to support their dreams so they can be proud and contributing citizens. For each Pathway resident, it costs \$35 a day to help them reclaim their lives—significantly less than the cost of a bed in a psychiatric hospital, which is upwards of \$4,000 a day. The math is simple. Investing in Pathways' services is a smart and effective use of resources. Even



more importantly, investing in human potential propels people and communities forward.

As we celebrate Black History Month, I am reminded of a quote by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who embodied the concept of perseverance: "If you can't fly then run, if you can't run then walk, if you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward."

With our collective love and support, we empowered the people we serve to envision and reach for a dream. Born from perseverance, their success represents hope...for all of us. I am inspired by what they will achieve in 2023 and thank you for believing in their potential.



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 illnesses 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**

## In His Own Words: Determination

*by Gregory King*



My name is Gregory King. I have been a Pathway Homes client since 2018. They gave me a call and asked if I was interested in renting a room. At that time, I was with the Brain Foundation. By the time I hung up the phone I was halfway packed! I needed to get out of where I was, because it was not conducive to what I wanted to do in life. Then, I decided to go to school. I am currently enrolled in Northern Virginia Community College. I made the Dean's list. Now, I only have three credits left and I will receive my Certification in Substance Abuse Rehabilitation Counseling this Spring!

Through this journey, I have had several major surgeries. I could not use my hands or feed myself, but I was in school full time online. Determination was what got me through the last several years. I would encourage all clients of Pathway Homes to stay with it. Pathways offers a lot of opportunities, just ask. They will point you in the right direction. I have been diagnosed with bipolar disorder. To anyone who has been diagnosed with bipolar disorder or any mental disorder, I want you to know that we do recover! We can slow the progress of a mental illness with the proper help. Pathway Homes has been right there with me, helping me up in the morning, going about my business, doing the things I need to do to stay healthy. Walking with a walker, but walking... slow motion is better than no motion. Thank you all!

*Thank you, Gregory, for speaking at our Annual Steps to Pathways' Breakfast in October. Your story of determination is an inspiration to us all!*

**Pathway Homes' Consumer Advisory Council Attends  
Housing Advocacy Day**





On February 1st, **Virginia Housing Alliance** hosted their annual Housing Advocacy Day in Richmond, Virginia. Pathways' Consumer Advisory Council contributed the voice of lived experience to this important advocacy event that highlighted access to safe and affordable housing as a basic human right. Members of the CAC spent time interacting with other housing advocates and visiting with individual legislators throughout the day.

*Thank you, Pathways Consumer Advisory Council, for your tireless efforts in uplifting the consumer voice.*

## 2022 Holiday Card Contest Winners



Each year, we celebrate the creativity of those we serve with our Pathway Homes Annual Holiday Card Contest! Anyone receiving housing and/or services from Pathway Homes is eligible to participate. You may have seen the holiday card from our first-place winner in your mailbox!

The first-place winner's art is featured on our annual Holiday Card, which is sent out to approximately 1000 recipients. This includes our staff, those we serve, and our donors. All top 3 winners of the contest win cash prizes.

We judge the submitted artwork based on the following criteria:

- Designs must...
  - capture the spirit of the winter holidays.
  - interpret the essence of Pathway Homes.
  - represent individuals served by Pathway Homes in a positive manner.
  - be original work and not infringe upon copyrighted material.
  - convey an image of the winter season and must be a non-religious theme.

After the due date, the Pathway Homes' Leadership Team enjoys judging the submissions each year, using an established process & criteria.

## **We are proud to announce our 2022 winners:**

**1st Place**  
**Annette O'Tey**

**2nd Place**  
**Raymond Walsh**

**3rd Place**  
**Sherril Crawford**

## **Kaiser Permanente Serves Pathway Homes for MLK Day**



On January 16th, Kaiser Permanente employees volunteered to provide services to local organizations in commemoration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. We were honored to be one of the five community organizations selected to receive their

support. Kaiser packed two hundred care bags stocked with a variety of essentials for Pathway's residents! The distribution of these care bags has been a tremendous treat, allowing residents to take care of their daily personal care practices more easily. During their volunteer service, the Kaiser Permanente volunteers prepared food, sorted clothes and donations, and made valentines for seniors. Thank you for your contributions, Kaiser Permanente!

## **Pathway Homes Receives \$412K CareFirst Grant to Expand Behavioral Health Team**



Pathway Homes received a three-year, \$412,225 grant from CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield (CareFirst) to help expand its mental health staff amid post-Covid staffing shortages to better serve its clients.

"We are grateful to CareFirst for its investment in our community. COVID has exacerbated the mental health needs of some of our clients, while making it more difficult to hire experienced mental health professionals. This grant will help us recruit and train more mental health counselors, and reach more individuals needing our services," explained Pathway Homes CEO Sylisa Lambert-Woodard. "Like CareFirst, we are committed to health equity and ensuring more people who are struggling can reclaim and rebuild their lives."

With CareFirst's grant, Pathway Homes will ensure that 16 credentialed behavioral health professionals will enter the field over the next three years. By deferring the cost of required license supervision, two license-eligible social work or counseling candidates, 12 qualified mental health professional (QMHP), and two certified substance abuse counselor (CSAC) trainees will be able to obtain the required credentials and provide much needed behavioral health services while receiving payment for this training. This will also broaden the pool of individuals they can serve as these credentials will enable them to work with more individuals whose health insurance coverage requires these credentials.

"CareFirst recognizes that behavioral health is an essential part of overall health, which includes a continuum of conditions ranging from severe mental health disorders to the emotional, psychological, and social factors that affect a person's overall wellbeing," said Dr. Destiny-Simone Ramjohn, Vice President of Community Health and Social Impact, CareFirst. "We are proud to invest in 19 dynamic organizations that will dramatically increase the number of trained health professionals that provide culturally responsive and trauma-informed behavioral health care."



Prior to the COVID pandemic, the behavioral health field consistently lacked the number of professionals needed. Post-Covid that number has grown exponentially, and “this demand is expected to continue to outpace the capacity of Virginia’s licensed workforce,” according to Virginia Health Foundation’s 2022 Assessment. Cost is a major contributor. Those graduating with a master’s degree must complete thousands of hours of supervised clinical hours before they are eligible to take a licensure exam—a process that can cost up to \$20,000 for counselors and \$10,000 for social workers. Through this grant, Pathway Homes will provide the hours of clinical supervision for Virginia pre-license, QMHP and CSAC trainee staff, so they do not incur the expense. This will increase Pathways’ ability to serve its clients while growing the pool of trained professionals.

Pathway Homes works to remove barriers for the underprivileged individuals it serves related to housing, community-based healthcare access, and vocational and job-readiness training so they can become active members of the communities in which they live and work. Access to qualified behavioral health professionals is key to achieving these goals. By increasing its pool of qualified professionals, Pathway Homes will help more clients live better lives by ultimately keeping them out of hospitals, emergency rooms, psychiatric hospitals, and jail.

## Pathway Homes Recognizes Its Employees



Pathway Homes is committed to celebrating the outstanding accomplishments and contributions of employees throughout the year. The Recognition Committee is charged with overseeing the agency’s recognition program. Members come from various departments across the agency and typically serve for a term of one year. Recognition activities throughout the year include:

1. **Kudos:** Kudos cards are available at all times for employees to write compliments, congratulatory comments and/or to thank other employees for acts that support the mission of the agency, to contribute to positive team morale, or provide support to a colleague and/or enhance the work environment. The electronic cards are located in Share Point and are emailed to [kudos@pathwayhomes.org](mailto:kudos@pathwayhomes.org) upon completion. The Recognition

Committee forwards the card to the recipient's supervisor who adds a congratulatory note to the card and presents it to the employee in a manner that allows the employee's actions to be celebrated.

2. **Employee of the Quarter:** Each quarter the Recognition Committee solicits nominations from staff for an employee or team. The Employee of the Quarter receives \$100, a Pathway's travel mug, and a framed certificate. The employee's name is also added to the Employee of the Quarter plaque maintained in the main office lobby and the individual is recognized at the quarterly agency staff meeting.
3. **Annual Achievement Awards:** Once a year, the Recognition Committee solicits nominations from staff for employees who have demonstrated outstanding service in one of the following areas: Mission in Action; Support and Teambuilding; and Visionary Service. The Recognition Committee uses an established process to make the final selections from all nominated candidates. Honorees are publicly recognized at the annual staff recognition event and receive a framed certificate, \$250 and an award. Honorees' names are added to the Annual Achievement Award plaque maintained in the main office lobby.
4. **Service Recognition:** Employees are recognized for cumulative length of service in five-year increments (five, ten, fifteen, etc.). Employees achieving a milestone service anniversary are publicly recognized at the quarterly agency staff meeting following their anniversary date and receive \$100 for each year of service. Employees are also recognized at the annual recognition event and receive a framed certificate and an award.

## DryHome Roofing Selects Pathway Homes for Free Roof, Ensuring Nonprofit's Clients will Have a Safe, New Roof for the Holidays

*Gift will Help Individuals Dealing with Mental Health Challenges*

**DryHome Roofing and Siding** awarded **Pathway Homes** a free roof from this holiday season through its 20th annual **Free Roof for the Holidays** program. Pathways received a new roof for one of its houses in Fairfax, that is home to adults with mental health challenges.

"Pathway Homes is an outstanding nonprofit that provides homes and mental health services to many people in our Northern Virginia community," explained Steve Gotschi, CEO, DryHome. "We are happy to help Pathways and their clients by providing a new roof on one of its homes. We are excited that Pathways can use the savings to support their residents in other ways."





Throughout November, Sterling-based **DryHome** accepted nominations from customers and the community to identify a Northern Virginia individual, family, or nonprofit in need. DryHome selected Pathway Homes as the recipient based on its needs, the condition of the roof, and the important work it does to help others.

"We are grateful for DryHome's generosity and leadership. For our clients who have historically struggled to keep a roof over their heads, the meaning of having a new one is not lost on them or us. DryHome's donation frees up resources so we are able to invest more into services that can help those we serve to continue rebuilding their lives," explained Pathway Homes CEO Sylisa Lambert-Woodard.

DryHome Roofing and Siding has been serving Northern Virginia for over 30 years and is committed to making a difference in the community. Every day, DryHome's work ensures that families and organizations have safe, high-quality roofs. The "Free Roof for the Holidays" program enables DryHome to thank its customers and the community by helping those who are struggling to have a safe roof over their heads too. Since the program's inception, the company has donated 21 roofs, valued at more than \$200,000, to the community.

### **About DryHome**

DryHome Roofing & Siding, Inc. has been serving Northern Virginia since 1988. Locally owned and operated, DryHome is fully licensed, bonded and insured. DryHome is committed to providing customers with quality work while promoting an honest and reliable service. For more information about their services and community partnerships, visit [www.DryHome.com](http://www.DryHome.com).

## **Pathway Homes Honored at Virginia Governor's Housing Conference for Urban Garden Program**

*Pilot Started During COVID Spreading to More Houses*



**Pathway Homes** received the Best Housing Program award during the **Virginia Governor's Housing Conference** (VAGHC) for its work in establishing an urban

garden program. Pathway Homes, a nonprofit providing mental health services—starting with safe, stable housing—to individuals marginalized by poverty and inequity, started the program to address a variety of behavioral and health needs of its clients.

“We are delighted to be recognized by VAGHC for our community garden program. Community gardening is a pathway to provide socialization, future employment opportunities, and education about the importance of, and connection between, good nutrition and mental health. This effort has been embraced by our clients and is a source of inspiration and pride,” explained Pathway Homes CEO Sylisa Lambert-Woodard.

Every year, the conference honors innovative, effective efforts that address housing needs during the Virginia Housing Awards Luncheon. This year, it recognized Pathway Homes for its community garden program which was launched last year during the height of COVID. It was started as a way to help clients eat better, enjoy the outdoors, and find outlets for mental health during a time when the pandemic isolation exacerbated mental health issues for the population that Pathway Homes serves.

Pathways owns, leases, and manages over 500 properties in Northern Virginia. Pathways started its first garden at a Herndon, Virginia property that houses 12 clients. Clients have been engaged and excited. The new garden program is part of Pathways’ focus on the intersection of mental and physical health. With the success of the initial garden, Pathways has started adding gardens to more of its properties. Each house has several raised garden beds constructed by volunteer teams. These raised garden beds address mobility challenges and provide added flexibility in crop decisions, including moving or removing certain herbs and plants depending on weather or environmental factors. In the next phase, the nonprofit plans to help clients participate in farmer’s markets to earn extra income from their harvest.

Healthy eating is expensive and disadvantaged populations tend to not eat healthy because they cannot afford it. A community garden is another way to level that playing field. By growing produce themselves, it provides access to nutritious foods that they may not be able to afford on a fixed income that can be as low as \$774 per month. Pathways’ clients have an income that falls below 300% of Federal Poverty Level with most below 200%.

## Our Impact in 2022

# OUR IMPACT: FISCAL YEAR 2022

**1578**  
Lives Touched



**487**

Permanent Supportive  
Housing Units



**127**

Units owned



**360**

Units leased



**663**

Tenants



**21%**

of working age  
individuals employed at  
least part-time

**95%**

of individuals served  
remained in  
permanent housing



**92%**

of individuals remained  
out of psychiatric  
hospital beds



**97%**

of individuals  
remained out of jail

“I'm thankful for my housing. My apartment is in a great location. I have the support that I need to succeed.”

”

Individual served by Pathway Homes  
(2022 Satisfaction Survey Comment)

Pathway Homes FY 2022 Management Report

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