



May 2024

A Message from the President & CEO

Springing to Action

Helping people transition back to healthy, productive lives requires action. This spring, I encourage you to renew your resolve to make a difference for those with mental illnesses.

We know that helping people get into housing is a critical step in helping people get connected to the services they need to reclaim their lives. But I am concerned by the number of homeless in our city centers and suburbs—propelled by a lack of affordable housing and a strained behavioral health system. I am also disturbed by misguided efforts to reign in homelessness by outlawing it. Criminalizing homelessness is not a solution. This will lead to overcrowded jails filled with people that still don't have the services they need to succeed.



Instead, we need to invest in providing mental health services—starting with safe, stable housing—to individuals marginalized by poverty and inequity. It's cheaper, more effective, and more humane to help someone find a home so they can get the hand up they need to recover.

This past quarter, we were pleased that Sentara joined Pathways in being part of the solution to end homelessness. Sentara, one of the nation's top 20 largest not-for-profit integrated health systems, gave us a \$30,000 grant for our "Good Neighbor" fund which is used for home maintenance. In addition to the more than 390 units that we lease utilizing HUD and state rental subsidies, Pathways also owns 135 scattered-site condos, townhomes, and single-family homes. These residences provide safe and affordable homes in the community and promote individual recovery.

Housing and services are a critical lifeline with 93 percent of those served remaining in stable housing and 95 percent staying out of psychiatric hospitals. Most importantly, these individuals re-establish their lives, reconnect with family, participate in community activities, and lead safe and productive lives. With grants from organizations like Sentara, Pathways' maintenance team, vetted vendors, and at times, corporate volunteers, provide ongoing upkeep to these houses. Caring for these houses is a

responsibility that requires continuous work to ensure they remain safe, welcoming places where residents can live independent lives.

As one of our residents who has struggled with schizophrenia explained: "When I wake up in the morning, I am excited about my life and have a sense of hope and optimism. Having housing makes me feel like somebody. It makes me feel that I now have what most people have. I wish everybody with a mental illness could have housing. I walk around with my head held high and my shoulders back. Housing gave me a life."

Join us in making it an action filled spring. Commit to making a difference with your time, talent, or treasure to help neighbors help themselves. Together, we can transform lives. Thank you.



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

[Make a Gift Here!](#)

In His Own Words: Attitude of Gratitude



Pathway Homes Arlington Assisted Living Facility

by Levelle Crawford

I currently reside at a Pathways group home, a haven for sobriety and recovery. I have been living here for almost two months. My new home is extremely spacious, and I love the immense support I have received on my quest to recovery.

Before I came to Pathways, I was at Arlington Recovery Center (ARC). I was there for four months, which led me to learn about the severity of my issues with substance abuse. I was an active alcoholic and drug addict. Prior to going there, I had a real awakening after two grand mal seizures. I went to Virginia Hospital Center and there wasn't much they could do for me. After my release, I spent a month at my sister's house. Thankfully, my sister was the person to guide me to ARC. It was there that I began to see the true nature of my addiction. My active mission towards recovery started there. The detox and structured environment made it easier for me to make decisions in the best interest of my new lifestyle. I could have walked away at any point, but this lifestyle is the one that I want.

The disease of addiction is powerful, and it could lead to my demise. There is jail, institutions, and death. I have so much more to contribute to the world. In my spare time, I draw, read literature on recovery, I go for walks, and I smile! I enjoy the little things more. Like the birds chirping first thing in the morning. Looking in the mirror to see the person I'm becoming. These activities help me replenish my daily gratitude.

Recovery is my ultimate goal. This year, I plan on attending conventions held by Narcotics Anonymous. There is so much fulfillment in healing when it's a group effort and practice. I want to continue to stay on track for my family. They have been very supportive of me through my journey.

Today, I am educated, I'm wiser, and stronger. I want to choose sobriety every day and plan to stay committed to that.

Pathway Homes Recognized as One of Nation's 50 Best Places to Work by NonProfit Times



Regional Nonprofit Moved Up Two Spots

In April 2024, **Pathway Homes** was named for the 9th time to **The NonProfit Times' (NPT)** national list of 50 Best Places to Work. Pathway Homes, a regional nonprofit providing mental health services—starting with safe, stable housing—to individuals marginalized by poverty and inequity, was ranked 47th in the nation—up from 49th last year. The NonProfit Times noted culture/communication and leadership as workplace traits that stood out among the 50 nonprofits that made the list this year. Employees specifically noted feeling valued, having confidence in leadership, and liking what they do as their top drivers.

"Pathway Homes is committed to helping vulnerable people get into homes with the support they need to improve their lives. Doing so means we must attract great talent that shares our vision. That's why we have built an outstanding workplace that nurtures excellence, and are honored that The NonProfit Times again recognized our organization as a best place to work," said Sylisa Lambert-Woodard, CEO, Pathway Homes.

Pathway Homes ranked 47th among all nonprofits and 23rd among medium-sized nonprofits, with between 50 and 249 employees. Providing a supportive, growth-oriented work environment, Pathways has 142 employees that work throughout DC, Northern Virginia, and Central Florida. **Pathways also offers** outstanding benefits and competitive pay. Among its 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.

Created in 2010 by *The NonProfit Times*—the leading national publication for nonprofit managers—and **Best Companies Group, Inc.**, this nationwide survey and awards program honors the best employers in the nonprofit sector. The program was open to all nonprofits with a 501 (c)(3) status that have a minimum of 15 employees. The evaluation included a survey of each nominated organization's workplace policies, practices, philosophy, systems, and demographics. In addition, the evaluation included a much more heavily weighted anonymous to measure employee experience and

engagement.

Results were analyzed and categorized according to eight core focus areas: leadership and planning; corporate culture and communications; role satisfaction; work environment; relationship with supervisor; training, development, and resources; pay and benefits; and overall engagement. Organizations that made the list scored near 90% or more across all categories.

Celebration of Excellence at Pathways Recognition Event



Celebrating the milestones of Pathways employees has always been an integral part of our culture of excellence. In February, Pathway Homes hosted an Employee Recognition event, to highlight the tremendous achievements and contributions of the agency. The event was Oscars themed, to underscore the significance of each of the individuals that were honored throughout the ceremony.

It was a star-studded afternoon, where employees took center stage to be recognized for their exemplary years of service. Recipients of the service awards included Anita Robinson, Eleanor Vincent, Nameer Sinnugrot, Jonni Farthing, Scott Smith, and Mariah Ward. Anita is the longest standing Pathways employee, with 35 years of dedicated service to the agency and an impressive reserve of knowledge and experience!



Pictured left to right: *Dara Aldridge* (Board Member), *Anita Robinson* (Vice President for HR and Administration), *Sylisa Lambert-Woodard* (President & CEO), *Eric Riddell* (Board Member)



Pictured left to right: *Eric Riddell* (Board Member), *Dara Aldridge* (Board Member), *Michelle Halcombe* (Senior Project Director), *Sherry Meyers* (Chief Clinical Officer), *Sylisa Lambert-Woodard* (President & CEO)



Eleanor Vincent (Executive Vice President & COO)



Pictured left to right: *Eric Riddell* (Board Member), *Sylisa Lambert-Woodard* (President & CEO), *Nameer Sinnugrot* (Housekeeping), *Sherry Meyers* (Chief Clinical Officer), *Dara Aldridge* (Board Member)



Pictured left to right: *Dara Aldridge* (Board Member), *Sylisa Lambert-Woodard* (President & CEO), *Mariah Ward* (Florida Housing Specialist Team Lead), *Anita Robinson* (Vice President for HR and Administration), *Eric Riddell* (Board Member)

In addition to honoring long-serving employees with service awards, there were three distinct categories for outstanding achievements: Mission in Action, Support and Teambuilding, and Visionary Service.

The Mission in Action award is reserved for individuals who enable the agency to better meet its mission, performs in a way that enhances the integrity of the organization, and provides an exceptional direct or indirect support and service to an individual resident or group of residents. Housing Stabilization Case Manager, Kay Cole, was the deserving recipient of this award. Although unable to attend, colleagues enthusiastically concurred with the decision to honor her for her dedication and commitment.



Pictured left to right: *Sylisa Lambert-Woodard* (President & CEO), *Julie Hayes* (Human Resources Manager), *Leah Moxley* (Residential Support Specialist), *Nell Clemons* (Accounts Payable Clerk), *Abigail Idisi-Lambert* (Supportive Housing Team Lead), *Paul Antich* (Maintenance Team Lead), *Kayla Daley* (Marketing and Event Associate), *Liz Susla* (VP of Philanthropy and Communications)

The Support and Teambuilding award is reserved for individuals who go above and beyond the call of duty or job description in helping fellow employees, or in meeting the needs of the agency, contributes significantly to creating cohesiveness and team unity within a group, and raising spirit, pride, and morale within the agency. This award was given to the Staff Teambuilding Committee for their collective effort in creating a memorable retreat for the agency!



Pictured left to right: *Eric Riddell* (Board Member), *Sylisa Lambert-Woodard* (President & CEO), *Abigail Idisi-Lambert* (Supportive Housing Team Lead), *Dara Aldridge* (Board Member)

The Visionary Service award is reserved for individuals who significantly expand the agency's recognition or reputation within the community, successfully brings a creative idea, improvement, or innovation to enhance service, and demonstrates initiative, proactively addressing problems or realizing opportunities. Supportive Housing Team Lead, Abigail Idisi-Lambert, was the esteemed recipient of this award. When receiving this honor, Abigail was overcome with gratitude and appreciation due to the acknowledgment from her peers.

The annual Employee Recognition event is a great reminder to Pathways staff that each component of the organization plays a vital role in its overall success. Providing housing and supportive services to individuals in need has kept this comprised team passionate throughout their day-to-day. Employees left this event with a renewed sense of appreciation for all the individuals that helped make this possible.

The Pathway Homes Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Team Moves into Our New Reston Office



Pictured left to right: *Roger Jackson* (ACT Team Generalist), *Zellene Black* (Housing Specialist), *Ariel Zapata* (Peer Support Specialist), *Jesse Mulbah* (Vocational Specialist), *Constance Brown* (Substance Use Disorder Specialist), *Dr. Sonya Johnson* (ACT Director), *Sherry Meyers* (Chief Clinical Officer)

The Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) recently awarded Pathway Homes a grant to develop and manage an Assertive Community Treatment-Permanent Supportive Housing (ACT-PSH) Program. The ACT is an evidence-based treatment approach that uses an interdisciplinary team of professionals with specialized skills to provide wraparound services to individuals in their homes and in the community seven days a week. The goal of the program is to decrease the utilization of emergency rooms, in-patient hospitalizations, and involvement with the legal system, by supporting individuals in developing effective healthy living skills while integrating into communities of their choice.

This high-fidelity innovative ACT-PSH program offers a combination of subsidized housing, in partnership with the Fairfax County Department of Housing and Community Development, and intensive community-based services. This partnership also includes Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board, which will provide one access point for referrals into the program. As individuals leave hospitals and homeless situations, the

PSH-ACT team will assist them with getting into subsidized housing in Fairfax County—since stable housing is an important first step in helping people restore their lives—and will provide access to intensive individualized 24/7 support as individuals need, and choose to receive these services.

The ACT Team composition is highly prescriptive and includes a Team Lead, Health & Human Service Assistant, Psychiatrist, Registered Nurse, Peer Support Specialist, Vocational Specialist, Housing Specialist, ACT Generalist, and Substance Use Disorder Specialist.

We extend a warm welcome to our newly formed ACT Team operating out of our new Reston office!

Fannie Mae Makes Improvements at Stevenson Place



On February 15th, fourteen Fannie Mae volunteers dedicated their time to transforming the recreational room at Stevenson Place. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, this room was a community hub where residents engaged in a variety of recreational activities. Pathways partnered with Fannie Mae with a goal to rekindle the spirit of levity and the bonds created among residents during these interactions.

One of the most notable contributions of the project was the furniture assembly. Volunteers collectively assembled a media cart, projector stand, a bookcase for games, a fitness supply rack, and a kitchen island! Every piece was extremely functional and brought efficiency to the space.

The volunteers' dedication extended beyond furniture assembly. They took it upon themselves to ensure that the area was thoroughly cleaned and reorganized, creating a welcoming and attractive environment for residents. This played a big role in revitalizing the space and drawing residents in.

Their efforts did not stop indoors. A few volunteers stained the picnic benches on the patio. The fresh coat of paint truly made a difference to the entire outdoor deck. Residents now have picnic benches with durability and longevity for years to come!

On behalf of the agency and residents, we are immensely grateful for these volunteers' generosity and commitment to making a positive difference in our community. We look forward to more volunteer opportunities this year!



Pathway Homes Receives \$30K Grant to Support Upkeep on 500+ Homes for Those Transitioning to Independent Living

Homes and Services Key to Recovery and Resident Success

In January 2024, Pathway Homes received a \$30,000 grant from Sentara, one of the nation's top 20 largest not-for-profit integrated health systems, to help support ongoing maintenance for the over **500 properties** that Pathway owns, leases and/or manages in Northern Virginia.

"We appreciate Sentara's leadership and investment. Having a home is the best first step for people facing homelessness and mental health struggles who are transitioning back to healthy, productive lives. Caring for these houses is a responsibility that requires continuous work to ensure they remain safe, welcoming places where residents

can recover and live independent lives,” said Dr. Sylisa Lambert-Woodard, CEO, Pathway Homes.

This grant will support Pathway Homes’ “Good Neighbor” fund which is used for home maintenance. In addition to the more than 390 units Pathway Homes leases utilizing HUD and state rental subsidies, Pathways also owns 135 scattered-site condos, townhomes, and single-family homes. These residences provide safe and affordable homes in the community and promote individual recovery. Housing and services are a critical lifeline with 95 percent of those served remaining in stable housing and 92 percent staying out of psychiatric hospitals. Most importantly, these individuals reclaim their lives, reconnect with family, participate in community activities, and lead safe and productive lives. With grants from organizations like Sentara, Pathways’ maintenance team, vetted vendors, and at times, corporate volunteers, provide ongoing upkeep to these houses.

Underscoring the importance of having a home, one of Pathway Homes’ residents who has struggled with schizophrenia explained: “When I wake up in the morning, I am excited about my life and have a sense of hope and optimism. Having housing makes me feel like somebody. It makes me feel that I now have what most people have. I wish everybody with a mental illness could have housing. I walk around with my head held high and my shoulders back. Housing gave me a life.”

Board Member Sue Zywokarte Shares Her Journey with InsideNOVA



Board Member and former resident, Sue Zywokarte, was featured by InsideNOVA to share her inspiring journey navigating a mental illness.

Sue's story showcases her personal story about how she prevailed over challenges relating to a mental illness and homelessness, and her recovery strategy. She shares her story because she believes that being transparent about her struggles with mental illness and homelessness creates a pathway to recovery for many.

Thank you, Sue, for your courage and unfailing advocacy!

[Click here to read more about her journey.](#)

2024 Duck Race: Join the Flock Today



The poster for the 2024 Duck Race features a bright yellow background with a sun in the top left and a blue wavy line representing water at the bottom. At the top center is the logo for Pathway Homes of Florida, Inc., which includes a stylized figure and the text "PATHWAY HOMES OF FLORIDA, INC. Supportive Residential Case Management Services". To the right of the logo is the name "Marta Negron, Duck Day 2024 Chairwoman, SVP/Regional Manager of" followed by the "MIDFLORIDA Florida's community credit union" logo. The central text reads "DUCK RACE 2024" in large, colorful, bubbly letters. Below this, it says "Bring your flock to the 4th Annual Duck Day! Saturday, June 1st at 9AM". The event is "HOSTED BY ISLAND H2O WATER PARK", with the logo featuring a blue wave. The poster is divided into three sections: "WHO?", "WHAT?", and "WHY?". The "WHO?" section describes Pathway Homes of Florida as a nonprofit providing housing and mental health services to homeless individuals and families, accompanied by a simple stick figure icon. The "WHAT?" section describes the duck race as a fundraising event where rubber ducks flood a lazy river, with prizes for sponsors, and mentions that 92% of the homeless individuals served by Pathway Homes remain in stable, permanent housing. The "WHY?" section states that today there are over 2,000 homeless individuals and families in Central Florida, and the event ensures they have a place to call home. The bottom of the poster has a decorative border of small duck faces.

WHO?

Pathway Homes of Florida is a nonprofit organization that provides housing and mental health services to individuals and families dealing with homelessness.

WHAT?

The Duck Race is a fundraising event where rubber ducks flood the lazy river in honor of the community we serve. Sponsor a duck to win fun prizes, while supporting our mission and connecting with the Central Florida community.

WHY?

Today there are over 2,000 individuals and families homeless in Central Florida. This event is held to ensure that individuals dealing with homelessness have a place to call home. **92%** of the individuals and families served by Pathway Homes of Florida remain in stable, permanent housing.

Mark your calendars!

Pathway Homes of Florida is having its 4th Annual Duck Race on June 1st, 2024, at Island H2O Water Park in Orlando Florida!

The duck race involves releasing sponsored rubber ducks into Island H2O's lazy river, in honor of individuals and families dealing with homelessness, mental illnesses, and/or co-occurring disabilities. Winning ducks are awarded special prizes!

Join this fun event by sponsoring a duck:

<https://pathwayhomes.info/DuckRace2024>

Each year, Pathway Homes' Virginia staff members have the opportunity to enter their names in a lottery for a free trip to Florida to join in the fun! The winner of the contest receives a round trip ticket, a 2-night hotel stay, and a 2-day rental car. The winner of this year's contest is... **Julie Hayes!**

2024 Steps to Pathways Breakfast

**PATHWAY HOMES, INC.**
Supportive Residential Mental Health Services

SAVE THE DATE



ANNUAL STEPS TO PATHWAY'S BREAKFAST

NOVEMBER 1, 2024
8:30 AM - 10:30 AM
FAIRFAX MARRIOTT AT FAIR OAKS
11787 ROUTE 50, FAIRFAX, VA 22033

Enjoy a delicious breakfast while supporting our mission of providing mental health services—starting with safe, stable housing—to individuals marginalized by poverty and inequity. In addition, hear the personal stories of those we serve!

For over 44 years, Pathways has been committed to our mission of embodying 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 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.

100% of the contributions raised will provide housing and supportive services to the individuals we serve! This includes contributions from our upcoming silent auction.



Join us and enjoy a delicious breakfast while supporting our mission of providing mental health services—starting with safe, stable housing—to individuals who are often marginalized by poverty and inequity.

Please save the date for Wednesday, November 1st as we gather to support individuals in need. The Steps to Pathways breakfast will be held at the Fairfax Marriott, with a delicious spread of food and drinks for all to enjoy. Not only will you be able to enjoy a lovely breakfast with friends and colleagues, you will also hear directly from the individuals we serve as they share their personal stories!

For over 44 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.

Save the Date: Friday, November 1, 2024, starting at 8.30 am.

Consumer Advisory Council Newsletter



About the Council

The Consumer Advisory Council (CAC) is a group of individuals served, your peers, that act as a liaison between Pathway Homes residents and management team. We actively reach out to individuals served to obtain input and feedback regarding Pathway Homes services and programs.

As a member of the CAC, you will help us connect with Pathway Homes residents and also take part in advocacy, conferences, and personal enrichment.



In this newsletter
you can expect:

Join the Consumer
Advisory Council!

Mental Health
Observances

Housing Advocacy
Day

Resident Life

Poetry

Check out the quarterly newsletter created by our Consumer Advisory Council (CAC):
CAC Newsletter

Second Quarter Mental Health Observances

2024 Mental Health Observances:



April

All Month: BIPOC Health Month
All Month: Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month
All Month: Alcohol Awareness Month

May

All Month: National Mental Health Awareness
All Month: Women's Health Month
All Month: Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

June

All Month: National PTSD Awareness
All Month: Men's Health Month
All Month: Pride Month
7-14: Musical Heritage Week

July

All Month: BIPOC Health Month
All Month: Disability Pride
24: International Self-Care Day

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