

GUIDING LIGHT

GuidingLightWorks.org

February 11, 2021

The Board of Directors
The Robert Nelson Foundation
Los Angeles, CA

Dear Friends,

Our Emergency Shelter for homeless men, women and youth has been up and running for two months now. Due to COVID-19 distancing guidelines (50% occupancy), we realized that our current shelters were not going to be able to provide for all the men and women who would need shelter during Michigan's frigid cold months. We settled on a building in late fall.

Preparations began as we joined in a partnership with the City of Grand Rapids and another nonprofit that assists the homeless. Thank you for your generous gift and equally important for the encouragement it provided. Your gift enabled us to prepare the building to receive our guests and meet their needs during this challenging time.

- Average nightly occupancy for men and women in Dec/Jan was 65-70% of occupancy
- High occupancy in Feb. is 95% due to extreme cold temperatures (8 degree low). We expect the cold and the high percentage of guests to continue through March.
- Facility also serves as a Day Center for warmth during the day
- Corporate donations provide coffee and rolls. Non-profit organizations in the community are providing boxed meals
- COVID-19 testing has resulted in 895 tests taken, 31 positives were taken to an isolation facility set up by the City of Grand Rapids Health Department
- The Emergency Shelter is staffed 24-hours a day. A nurse works an 8 hour shift each day
- Caseworkers are working (day and night shifts) to help men, women and youth connect with agencies that can help them. Last week, three teens entered a residential program and one returned to his parents in Detroit
- Our shelters have been at capacity so our guests would have been without shelter
- Reports come from Kalamazoo of two fires caused by homeless people using propane tanks to keep warm. We are so pleased to offer safety through the Emergency Shelter

Thank you, again, for sharing and providing this Emergency Shelter for the homeless men, women and youth in our community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sincerely,
Stuart Ray
Stuart Ray
Executive Director