HIGHLIGHTS



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- Family finds Hope at Hesed House
-Remembering Sister Rose Marie Lorentzen
- and more!

Spring 2025
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Cover photo: Earlier this year, our friends from Mission BBQ - Naperville stopped by and served a delicious lunch in our adult shelter!

Every day I see new articles stating funding we rely on to enact our Mission is being targeted for cuts.

The rapid changes, court challenges, and frequent announcements have made it nearly impossible to know what to believe and/or for what to plan.

I know two things…

1. Funding (at various levels of government) for services provided here at Hesed House will go down or be eliminated.

2. Homelessness (especially family homelessness) will continue to rise until there's a solution for the affordable housing crisis.

The extent of these impacts, I do not know (sorry for sounding like Yoda there) …

And, it turns out, I lied (sorry!) …I actually know THREE things…

3. **The extremely vulnerable men, women, and kiddos we serve need you now more than ever.**

Every day, we see more people struggling with high rent, job loss, and unexpected hardships.
We receive more calls for shelter and services than ever before in our 42-year existence.

The need for safe, stable, affordable housing has never been greater.
That's why we need you.

No matter what happens with government funding, our vision remains the same:
to end homelessness, one person, one family at a time.

Your support—donations, volunteering, and advocacy—provides shelter, meals, clothing, and hope to those who need it most.

Together, we can make sure that **uncertainty in Federal and State budgets never means uncertainty for those who rely on us.**

So…take action…join us in this fight that began with passionate hearts of many long again…continue standing up for the most vulnerable.

Because everyone deserves a place to call home – and we won't (& can't) stop our work until we can make that vision a reality.



JOE JACKSON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

FROM STRUGGLE TO STRENGTH - AMBER'S JOURNEY OF HOPE



Nine years ago, Amber and her family made a courageous decision to leave California for Illinois, hoping for a fresh start. But from the moment they stepped off the train, challenges met them at every turn. Life in Illinois was tough, and in March 2024, an unexpected series of hardships—her husband losing his job and their family car breaking down—led them to Hesed House in search of support.

"We are not ashamed of being at Hesed House or going there and asking for help. We are better people because of it."
-Amber, Former Family Shelter Guest

Amber, a devoted mother of six, has battled anxiety and depression, and there were moments in the shelter when panic attacks overwhelmed her. But she never faced those struggles alone. The compassionate staff at Hesed House were there to comfort and support her through the toughest times. Amber shared, "I am grateful for them because the stress of trying to figure out how we are going to come up with money from this week to next week, it was really straining on us."

"Our community needs Hesed House because it helps keep families together and off the streets."
-Amber, Former Family Shelter Guest



Above: Amber's daughters participating in the "trunk or treat" event in October.

Below: Amber hits the "Gone Gong" in celebration of her family moving out of Hesed House and into their own home.



As she settled into the Family Shelter, Amber found more than just a safe place—she found a community. She made friends, embraced opportunities to help others, and even became known for her famous sweet tea, which she loved serving at lunchtime. During their time at Hesed House, her children experienced joyful milestones—an 8th-grade graduation, a 10th birthday, and even a homecoming dance.

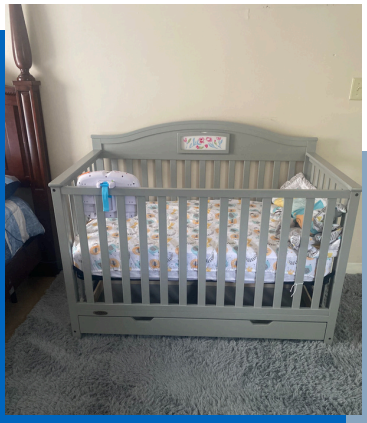
This past November, Amber and her family moved into a home of their own, stepping into a new chapter filled with hope and stability.

Because of your generosity, stories like Amber's are possible. Your support provides not just shelter but dignity, encouragement, and a path forward for families in need. Thank you for making a difference!



Above: Bruce, Max, and Gerardo at Hesed House in our move-out area.

Below: A room is set up with donations for a family as they move back into independent living!



Big Hearts at All Ages!

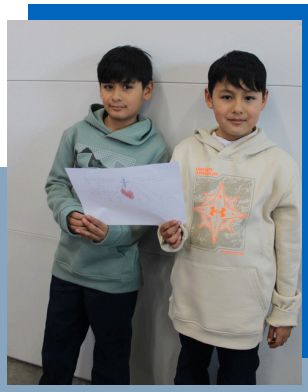
At Hesed House, long-time staff member Bruce leads our Move-Out Ministry, ensuring that individuals and families have everything they need as they step into a new chapter of their lives. When he shared this mission with his godsons, Max and Gerardo, they knew they wanted to help! These two kind-hearted boys didn't hesitate—they emptied their piggy banks and sent a special donation to help with supplies.

Max and Gerardo, your generosity is truly inspiring! Because of you, families moving out of Hesed House can turn their new space into a warm and welcoming home.

Thank you for showing that kindness has no age limit!

If you would like to partner with our Move-Out Ministry, please email donate@hesedhouse.org for more information!

"We Love Hesed House because they care for people in need."



Above: Max and Gerardo at holding a drawing they did for Hesed House.



ROLLER SKATING PARTY!

Laughter, music, and the sound of skates gliding across the floor filled the air as some of our guests and staff enjoyed a fantastic night out at a local roller-skating rink! From first-time skaters to seasoned pros, guests of all ages had a blast, making joyful memories together. And to top it all off, they got to enjoy delicious pizza, generously donated by some amazing members of our Hesed Family!

A huge thank you to the kindhearted donor and friends who made this unforgettable night possible! Your generosity brings joy, hope, and dignity to our neighbors in need—one amazing experience at a time!

IN MEMORIAM:
SISTER ROSE MARIE LORENTZEN

June 3rd, 1935 - December 20th, 2024







Sister Rose Marie Lorentzen, BVM, dedicated her life to service, education, and social justice.

In 1981, she founded Hesed House in Aurora, Illinois, transforming it into one of the state's largest homeless shelters. Her mission wasn't just about providing shelter but about creating a compassionate community based on dignity and love.

Under her leadership, Hesed House has grown to serve over 1,000 people annually, supported by thousands of volunteers. Despite numerous awards, she never sought recognition — her focus was always on those in need.



Sister Rose Marie passed away in December 2024 at age 89, but her legacy lives on. Hesed House continues to expand, including a new affordable housing project, Las Rosas, named in her honor. She proved that one person's kindness and determination could change countless lives, leaving behind an enduring spirit of love and service.

As Hesed House continues to care for those around us, each volunteer, donor, and partner continues to live out her legacy of loving our neighbors with dignity and compassion.

"Hesed is God's unconditional and everlasting love that seeks justice on behalf of all God's people."

-Sister Rose Marie Lorentzen, Founder of Hesed House



Your Friends at Hesed House
659 S. River St
Aurora, IL 60506

HERE ARE SOME WAYS YOU CAN GET INVOLVED WITH HESED HOUSE:

- Organize a Donation Drive
- Help provide a meal in one of our shelters
- Shop our online wish lists
- Help share the mission of Hesed House with your friends and family!
- Attend the Derby Party on May 3rd!
- Ride for Hesed in the Solstice Century Ride on June 20th!

For more information, email donate@hesedhouse.org

Hesed House is a national model for ending homelessness – one person, one family at a time.

It is the culmination of over four decades of strategic evolution from a formerly acceptable model of "eats and sheets" to the area's largest comprehensive resource center for the homeless – a campus of centralized, highly skilled professionals collaborating daily to provide the tools necessary to help individuals and families when they are experiencing homelessness, and once they have returned to independent living.

Serving Aurora and Naperville, along with portions of Kane, Kendall, and DuPage Counties, Hesed House's mission is to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, and give people the chance to hope again.








HESED HOUSE
BECAUSE EVERYONE DESERVES DIGNITY

Public Action to Deliver Shelter, Inc., dba Hesed House is a 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit organization.
Our EIN# is 36-3285644. Please contact Lauren Jernigan, Division Director of Development if you would like a tour, or with questions about how you can get involved at donate@hesedhouse.org or (630)914-6428.
Learn more at http://hesedhouse.org.

www.hesedhouse.org | 659 S. River St, Aurora, IL 60506 | (630) 897-2156

Charity Navigator
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