



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, January 22, 2016

Public Action to Deliver Shelter, Inc., dba Hesed House
659 S River St
Aurora, IL 60506

Contacts:

Neil McMenamin, Interim Executive Director | 630-897-2156 or nmcmenamin@hesedhouse.org

John Ball, Board of Trustees Chairman | 630-897-2156 or jrcaball@aol.com

NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ANNOUNCED FOR HESED HOUSE

Well-known, Former Executive Director Ryan Dowd Returns to Top Post

Aurora, IL – Amidst much speculation and anticipation, the Hesed House Board of Trustees is thrilled to announce today that the next leader for Illinois's 2nd largest comprehensive homeless shelter and resource center will be Ryan Dowd.

After reaffirming their sincere thanks to Michael Cobb, who recently resigned, for his service to the staff and guests of Hesed House, Board Chair John Ball announced that effective February 8, 2016, Ryan will return to Hesed House as the next executive director. Ball states, "We believe he is the right leader who possesses the vision and experience to guide us as we move forward with the goal of becoming one of the premier anti-poverty organizations fighting to end homelessness in the Fox River Valley!"

Dowd served as Hesed House's Executive Director for nine years, first serving as a volunteer at age 13 and continuing in various staff roles throughout college and law school. Dowd reluctantly left Hesed House in 2013 when he followed his dreams to found the Center for Faith and Human Rights based in Washington, DC where he focused on assisting human rights activists in repressive countries. Most recently, he served as executive director at Ayuda, serving vulnerable immigrants in Washington D.C., Virginia and Maryland with legal, social and language services. Ryan received his J.D. and MPA degrees from Northern Illinois University. He earned his undergraduate degree from North Central College.

Ryan returns to Hesed House at a time when the State of Illinois's budget uncertainty is putting considerable pressure on many not-for-profits throughout the State. Currently, Hesed House is still anxiously awaiting more than \$250,000 of state funds that may never come. Ryan responds, "This is a really difficult time for nonprofits serving vulnerable families in our state, but I feel blessed beyond measure to be rejoining a community that cares so much about every member."

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At the time Dowd left, Hesed House founder Sister Rose Marie Lorentzen wrote to him, “You’ve softened hearts and you’ve softened institutions. You’ve helped overcome rigid boundaries between agencies, between the well-to-do and those who are homeless... and you’ve strived to guide your staff along those same paths. I’m so grateful for all you’ve been and done.” Today Sister Rose Marie shares, “Now I’m so grateful that you are returning to help us build a world less rigid, more just...indeed, a hesed kind of place.”

Until Dowd returns next month, 18-year veteran staff member and current associate director Neil McMenamin will continue to serve as the Interim executive director.

For more information about Hesed House, please visit www.hesedhouse.org.

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Public Action to Deliver Shelter, Inc. dba Hesed House is 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to alleviating the plight of poor and homeless families and individuals. More than 6,000 volunteers including 90+ churches and service organizations assist Hesed House in providing a spectrum of care for homeless men, women and children. Hesed House serves the very poorest residents of Aurora, Southern Kane County, all of Kendall County and surrounding areas. Each year they serve over 1,000 unduplicated homeless persons.