

December 2009



Home is everything.

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There is a time for everything . . . a time for every event under heaven

Dear Friend,

With the help of many good people, I have devoted the last 22 years to serving the housing needs of low-income families in central Iowa through Anawim Housing. But now, for me, the time has come for change. In consultation with the Sisters of Mercy and the Board of Directors of Anawim Housing, I have decided to enter a new chapter in my life. As I do so, I reflect on the wonderful years and accomplishments we have shared together.

We have created a growing legacy of safe, affordable housing for hard-working families in need.

- Beginning with our first office on the top floor of Trinity Methodist Church on 8th and College – and the first homes we created out of vacant land and abandoned buildings on 12th Street
- I remember the first partnership which created the duplexes on 8th and 9th streets, the units scattered throughout the King Irving neighborhood and the renovation of the historic apartment buildings on 6th Avenue.
- More recently, we moved to the South side, with the first syndicated project in Pioneer Woods.
- And just this fall, we completed the exciting adventure of building “9 Homes in 9 days” with Hubbell Homes.
- All told, we have grown from zero to 220 housing units.

We have provided deserving families with the privacy, dignity and security of their own homes – and helped them achieve independence and success.

- Many Anawim residents move on to real home ownership!
- Bonnie and her two sons recently purchased their own home through Habitat.

- Shavonda's son who was four years old when they moved into an Anawim Housing home is now going to college.
- Monica, mother of three children, is now a property manager with Anawim Housing.
- Jose and Maria with their three children now own their home.
- This year, nearly 1,000 children and adults call Anawim Housing home.

We have appreciated the support and generosity of friends and partners who have made our vision a reality. And I continue to thank you for your support.

- Your annual gifts
- Your financial and real estate guidance
- Your construction knowledge
- The state, county and city dollars
- Your investments in our homes
- Your gifts to our first capital campaign

We have valued the people who have worked along side of me in the daily operations of Anawim. They have made the journey meaningful. Together, we share a passion and commitment to make a difference within the Des Moines Community. It has been a privilege to work with such caring and dedicated people.

Yes, together all of us have enabled Anawim Housing to make a difference in the lives of many people, as well as the neighborhoods we've revitalized in Des Moines. As we continue to work together, we will enable Anawim Housing to make an even greater difference in the future. The need for safe, affordable housing continues to grow here in central Iowa. While I am retiring as Executive Director, I will continue to support Anawim Housing as it works to provide the housing so badly needed in our community.

I am planning to take some time to transition to a new ministry. I do not know what that ministry will be, but I trust that God will show me a path as He has always done in the past. And I know I will continue to serve "the poor people of God" in this new time in my life, as I have in all my years as a Sister of Mercy.

Again, thank you for everything you have done and will continue to do, in support of Anawim.

Peace and joy be with you in this Holiday Season. You remain in my thoughts and prayers.

Sincerely,



Sister Stella Neill, RSM
Executive Director