

# Direct Connection



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Missouri Housing p. 1

DD Housing Initiative p. 2

Self-Determination and Housing p. 3

MO Inclusive Housing Development Corp. p. 4

Family Realizes Dream Home p. 5

MO UD pp. 6 and 7

Best Practices p. 7

**SEPTEMBER, 2014**  
**VOLUME 5, ISSUE 4**

CONNECTING WITH THE  
DIVISION OF  
DEVELOPMENTAL  
DISABILITIES

Missouri Department of  
Mental Health

Division of Developmental  
Disabilities

1706 E. Elm Street  
Jefferson City, MO 65102

[www.dmh.mo.gov/dd](http://www.dmh.mo.gov/dd)

## Missouri Housing

“I don’t think of myself as being disabled or as having a disability. I feel I am perfectly fine the way I am. But I am disabled by my environment – my environment disables me. The buildings I have to live in cripple me when they impose unnecessary obstacles.” This was spoken by an individual who receives services from the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DD) but expresses the sentiment of many homeowners and renters with physical challenges.

Living in your own home is a dream of many Americans. For citizens with disabilities, purchasing or renting a home allows you to live independently in a neighborhood of your choice and build a secure future. Buying or renting a home is a challenging process for everyone.

A safe, stable place to call home is more than a matter of comfort and convenience. It’s the basis for physical and emotional well-being and the foundation for a healthy family and a successful life. In this country, it should be possible for hard working people to afford a decent place to live and still have enough left over for food, transportation, and other basic needs – but it is not always the case.

The development of quality, affordable homes that meet the needs of all citizens with developmental disabilities is a serious challenge. Through the Division of DD Housing Initiative, the development of quality, affordable, universally designed homes is becoming a reality.

According to Wayne Crawford, Executive Director of the Missouri Inclusive Housing Development Corporation, “Citizens who face the challenges of income and disabilities can live in a quality, affordable, universally designed home based on their desires and needs. We know how, we just have to make it happen.”

**“A generation ago, roughly two out of every 10 families spent more than 30 percent of their income on rent; today this proportion has doubled to almost four out of every 10 families. And while only 6 percent of families devoted more than half of their income to rent a generation ago, today that number tripled to almost 18 percent. We have now reached the point where individuals living on subsidized income cannot afford to pay the market-rate rent for a two-bedroom apartment anywhere in this country.”**

*Nunez, R. (2012, November 6). The Story of Low-Income Housing Shortage in America. The Huffington Post. Retrieved from <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ralph-da-costa-nunez/>*

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH



From left to right—Freddie, Greg, John, and Joe enjoy a meal together in their new home.

## “I’ve got a new home!”

One individual’s excitement says it all. Moving into a new home can be an exciting adventure, but moving to a newly built home is twice as exciting! Four gentlemen recently packed up their belongings and moved into a newly built home complete with an open layout and back patio deck that they can all enjoy. The house was built with efficiency in mind as every inch of the home is usable resulting in no wasted space. Hardwood floors throughout the home as well as pocket doors, magnetic pull closet doors, a carport, and a reinforced safe room are a few of the amenities that the home offers. One of the best features of the home is that it is affordable for its newest tenants! Some of the men had lived in their previous home for 15+ years, navigating steps, hallways, and bathtubs. With these obstacles a thing of the past, the men can look forward to a future of enjoying their new house, making it a home of their own.

# Division of Developmental Disabilities Housing Initiative

## MISSION:

To develop quality, affordable, accessible housing for people with disabilities in safe locations where they can access support services, transportation, employment, and recreation throughout their lifespan.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Housing is separate from services.
- New homes are built using universal design principles.
- Individuals live in homes designed to meet their needs throughout the aging process.
- Individuals/families receive services they need where they live.
- Density of homes designed specifically for individuals with disabilities will be considered in the planning of new development.
- Individuals/families are integrated into their communities.
- Individuals/families participate in designing their own homes.
- Individuals/families live in communities that are safe.
- Individuals/families live in homes they can afford.
- Individuals/families make informed choices about purchasing or renting their homes.
- Individuals/families are in control of their home environments.





# Self-Determination and Housing

## THE CENTER FOR SELF-DETERMINATION HAS DEFINED FIVE PRINCIPLES OF SELF-DETERMINATION. THESE PRINCIPLES RELATE TO HOUSING IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

- **Freedom.** Individuals will live in the community of their choice and make choices about the homes that they live in. Individuals live in homes that are accessible to them and their friends and family, allowing them the freedom to fully enjoy all aspects of their home.
- **Authority.** Individuals will make decisions about who visits their home, what activities are done in their home, and their daily schedules. Individuals sign their own leases or mortgage agreements.
- **Support.** Individuals choose their support systems independent of their choice of housing. Individuals are supported to make informed choices about housing options available to them.
- **Responsibility.** Individuals take good care of their homes and work to make their neighborhoods better.
- **Confirmation.** Individuals are recognized within their communities as good neighbors and leaders.

To learn more about the Center for Self-Determination, visit its website: [www.self-determination.com](http://www.self-determination.com)

**“Being part of the community and living as independently as possible are among the most important values and goals shared by people with disabilities, their families, and advocates. A home of one’s own – either rented or owned – is the cornerstone of independence for people with disabilities.”**

*Cooper, E., O’Hara, A., Singer, N., Zovisotski, A. (May 2013). Priced Out 2012: The Housing Crisis for People with Disabilities. Technical Assistance Collaborative, Inc. Retrieved from <http://www.tacinc.org/media/33368/PricedOut2012.pdf>*



Christy says that she “loves the space and privacy” in the new home she recently moved to. Her dad also says that she is taking initiative to make choices in what she wants her home to feel and look like. He says “the advantages are 10-fold over the duplex” where Christy used to live.



Andrea says the best thing about being a new homeowner is that this home “is mine! No one is going to ask me to move. It’s pretty awesome to own a home like this and know it is mine!”



# Missouri Inclusive Housing Development Corporation

Many individuals with developmental disabilities struggle to afford a decent, safe place to live in today's housing market. Over the past five years, rents have risen while the number of renters who need moderately priced housing has increased. These two pressures make finding affordable housing even tougher for individuals living on SSI or other limited financial resources. For every 100 extremely low-income renters in the country, there are only 29 affordable and available rental units.

According to Wayne Crawford, Executive Director of Missouri Inclusive Housing Development Corporation (MoHousing), "Every citizen, no matter what their income or abilities, has the right to live in a quality, affordable home within their chosen community. We have a moral responsibility to provide homes for all individuals with disabilities that are safe and accessible to necessary support services, transportation, employment, and recreation and support their life goals. The ability to build quality, affordable, universally designed homes is no longer a dream. Substandard housing that fails the consumer over time is no longer an option. Through collaboration with all aspects of the development and support communities, we are changing the face of housing for individuals with developmental disabilities in Missouri."

MoHousing is a not-for-profit entity whose mission is to increase the development of housing opportunities for individuals with disabilities to own or otherwise control the housing in which they have chosen to live. Accomplishment of this mission is made through information dissemination, training, individual and agency consultation, and coordination of universally designed housing development throughout Missouri.

MoHousing:

- Assists agencies in the development of affordable, universally designed, quality housing for individuals with developmental disabilities.
- Assists developers and builders to design and construct high quality, universally designed, affordable housing.
- Assists individuals to find housing that meets their specific needs.
- Provides technical assistance, training, and consultation to agencies, support providers, consumers, and housing providers in the development of successful housing options.

MoHousing works in collaboration with the DMHDD Community Living Coordinators (CLCs) to provide a statewide network of housing development to meet consumer needs. The CLCs provide a vital role in the development of housing at the local level and provide a focal point for housing development throughout their communities.

To learn more about the MoHousing Missouri Inclusive Housing Development Corporation, visit its website: [www.mohousing.com](http://www.mohousing.com)





# Family Realizes Dream Home

Living in a three-story duplex can be challenging for any family with three children. When one of your children has special needs along with mobility issues, trying to make the best of this situation can put tremendous physical and emotional stress on the family. Cassy, Robert, and their family were living this story.

"The importance of meeting people face-to-face and learning about their needs and desires could not have been more important to the success of this wonderful family. When you meet individuals who work hard, are loving parents, and simply want the best for their family, you have to figure out some way to support them in their goals," stated Wayne Crawford, Executive Director of Missouri Inclusive Housing Development Corporation (MoHousing).

It became apparent that providing modifications to this housing arrangement was not the answer. Their daughter's physical needs and the cramped conditions with multiple levels of stairs made for a difficult situation at best. A housing plan was put into place and the conversation moved from renting to buying.

There were items on their list that were nonnegotiable. The family needed to stay in the same school district because of the outstanding supports provided to their daughter. The first question was, is this possible? Crawford explained, "We brought in developers to see if we could build a home specifically for this family in the suburban area where they currently live. After many hours of research and discussion, we found the cost of land put new home construction out of reach. Next, we started the search for an existing home that met the family's needs. Through discussions to develop a housing plan, we learned Robert was a veteran. We then introduced them to individuals who are experts in VA home loans so they could help guide them through the process."



Today the family is living in the home they chose. Their three children no longer share one bedroom. According to Cassy, "Our family is a lot happier now that we have our own space." The openness of the living area makes it much easier to accommodate their daughter's wheelchair, as well. Easy access to the backyard makes outside family time much more manageable.

Cassy and Robert are hard working, wonderful parents that face the day-to-day challenges of raising a family. They are examples of the families the DMHDD Community Living Coordinators (CLCs) and MoHousing work with every day. They simply want help in realizing their dreams and giving their children the tools to live their lives to their fullest potentials.

As Crawford summarized, "The key to success is the personal investment and involvement you provide to an individual and families. Someone who can be there to answer their questions and remove the obstacles that make life difficult can make all the difference in the world. While our website provides important information about housing for those we serve, life doesn't change because of a website. It changes because of people working with people. That is what the Division of Developmental Disabilities has accomplished with the implementation of the CLCs, and we are glad to play a role in that success."

Through the efforts of the Kansas City Regional Office (KCRO) and MoHousing, the next chapter of this family's story begins with the realization of a new home that meets their needs now and into the future.



# Missouri UD

## HELPING TO STANDARDIZE BEST PRACTICES FOR UNIVERSAL DESIGN IN MISSOURI

In 2013, stakeholders involved in housing design, disability advocacy, social services, government policy, and real estate development came together to solidify the best practices for Universal Design (UD) in Missouri so that our marketplace could identify it and better enjoy its benefits.

**Missouri UD** is about providing an affordable, attractive, livable space for everyone, including those with a need for space without barriers to use and access. A universal design home may look like any other, but can discreetly serve all occupants living independently, even as people's needs and abilities change. As builders incorporate UD, housing becomes a more sustainable, independent, and long-term option for millions as their needs change.

James Trout, a former builder and current acting chair for the Governor's Council on Disability says, "Adopting a **Missouri UD** standard supports the marketplace as it changes. If realtors can identify UD, then appraisers can track it, bankers can value it, builders will build it, and consumers can find it. Missouri UD standardizes the basics and brands the best practices."

The vision of **Missouri UD** is:

- Housing should permit everyone to live independently, to the fullest extent possible. This is a win-win proposition for the consumer, the market-place, and the builder.
- UD reduces the social and personal cost of aging and disability, adds to the diversity of a community, and builds value in our housing stock.

**Missouri UD** has the following goals:

- Qualify and brand Missouri UD as a common, statewide universal design criterion that can help meet the housing needs of all Missourians, including those persons, families, and friends affected by disabilities and aging – particularly in publicly-funded, low income, multiple-family developments.
- Build acceptance and establish market proof that in new housing development, when 100% of the housing is UD, the added cost is negligible. Any cost for UD is more than offset by increased value, sustainable tenancy, and fewer days on the market.
- Provide a model with **Missouri UD** for universal design best practices, for funding sources, real estate professionals, appraisers, builders, and consumers that is branded (identifiable), reliable, and consistent across the state.
- Create public awareness that **Missouri UD** homes are available, more desirable, and more flexible to meet the long-term housing needs of all Missourians.

Visit [Missouri UD](http://www.dmh.mo.gov/dd) to learn more information including the seven principles of Missouri Universal Design.





# Three Ladies Make Universally Designed House their Home

## HOME OFFERS ATTRACTIVE, BARRIER-FREE ENVIRONMENT



This universally-designed house is home to three ladies. The ladies had previously lived in the Habilitation Center in Marshall (MHC). They wanted to move to the community and needed a home to live in.

The team at MHC worked with a local builder to design a home which the ladies could fully access. The home features a zero-entry way, hardwood floors, turning space in the bathroom, and a zero-entry shower. The home is energy efficient and affordable for the ladies who live there. The open floor plan is pleasing and easy to navigate.

This home is both attractive and barrier-free. Good planning and collaboration between the ladies who live there, their support teams, and the builder made this beautiful home a reality.

# Missouri DD: Systematically Implementing Best Practices Statewide and Demonstrating National Leadership



# Community Calendar

**October 6-7, 2014** – MU Thompson Center for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Autism Conference, Capitol Plaza Hotel, Jefferson City, MO

To learn more about this event, visit: <http://muconf.missouri.edu/AutismConf/>

**October 23-24, 2014** – MACDDS Conference, Missouri Association of County Developmental Disabilities Services Tan-Tar-A Resort, 494 Tan Tar A Drive, State Road KK, Osage Beach, MO 65065

To view the Pre-Conference Brochure, visit: [http://macdds.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/2014\\_MACDDS\\_Conference\\_Brochure\\_Final.pdf](http://macdds.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/2014_MACDDS_Conference_Brochure_Final.pdf)

**November 14, 2014** – Autism Commission Meeting, Department of Mental Health, 1706 E. Elm Street, Jefferson City, MO

For more information about this meeting, visit: <http://www.mo.gov/meetings/>

MISSOURI DIVISION OF  
DEVELOPMENTAL  
DISABILITIES



Improving lives THROUGH  
supports and services  
THAT FOSTER self-determination.

Division of  
Developmental  
Disabilities

1706 E. Elm Street  
Jefferson City, MO 65102

573-751-4054 (Phone)  
573-751-9207 (Fax)



Fostering Self-determination



Supporting Families



Facilitating Individualized  
Services and Supports



Developing Accessible Housing



Promoting Employment First

[www.dmh.mo.gov/dd](http://www.dmh.mo.gov/dd)

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH