

Supporting the Community: Hope and a Home

By Jackie McMakin



Seekers supports many organizations with our domestic giving. Hope and a Home is one of these organizations. When Seekers' founders Sonya Dyer and Fred Taylor were beginning our community, they also were creating Hope and a Home whose dream always has been to help low income families get established in DC.

How To Break the Cycle of Poverty

By Jackie McMakin

Wrap around support and marketable skills help disadvantaged folks move up in today's society. This is the finding of the organization [Hope and a Home](#) from twenty years working with homeless people. When Seekers' founders Sonya Dyer and Fred Taylor were beginning our community, they also were creating Hope and a Home whose dream always has been to help low income families get established in DC.



Executive Director Mike Young, supported by a Mission Group which included several Seekers, guided families in pursuing the vision that all families have affordable housing, excellent education, rewarding employment and vibrant community connections.

Over the years, eighteen apartments in Columbia Heights have been renovated and are rented by Hope and a Home at below market rent. When a parent of a family wants to live in one of these apartments, they also begin participation in a three year personal development program called "Keys for Change". See the Keys for Change Chart for a summary of the keys.

Affordable Housing	Higher Education for All	Rewarding Work	Family & Community Connections
<p>A safe, affordable home for all.</p> <p>Keys for change:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Quality home environment 2) Financial stability 3) Family budget 4) Rent and bills paid on time 5) Good credit 6) Housing goal for the future 7) Action plan 8) Savings 9) Move to permanent housing 	<p>All students graduate from high school and complete college or vocational school.</p> <p>Keys for change:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Schools that fit children's abilities and needs 2) Mentor or tutor 3) Enriching summer and extra-curricular experiences 4) Prepare for higher education and graduate from high school 5) Enroll in and complete college or vocational school 	<p>Rewarding work for good pay</p> <p>Keys for change:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Career goal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Action plan - Research and career letter 2) Prepare for rewarding work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keep current job - Improve education and training - Network and increase 3) Find rewarding work with increased income 4) Succeed on the job 	<p>Strong families contributing to and benefiting from their community.</p> <p>Keys for change:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Set goals to strengthen family and review progress regularly 2) Use community resources 3) Manage family life effectively 4) Improve physical, emotional and mental health 5) Participate in and contribute to the life of the community

At a glance, parents see a variety of keys to achieving their overall goal of becoming independent home dwellers at the end

of their three year involvement in the program. Also they are handed a notebook with the cover shown below.



This introduces them quickly to the Higher Ed for All Program which enables all of the Hope and a Home children to prepare for rewarding work by completing college or vocational school.

Through regular support from our family workers and education workers, as well as workshops planned and led by parents, Hope and a Home families find the kind of success they are looking for. This year eleven Hope and a Home students are in college. Twenty three adults and fifty eight children are residing in our transitional housing.

After twenty years of service as Executive Director, Mike Young has stepped down. He thanks Seekers for all of the financial and volunteer support we have offered through the years. Mike has been succeeded by Dan Hall, long involved with Jubilee Housing. Dan is excited about continuing the relationship with Seekers and about leading Hope and a Home in expanding the number of families served. Jackie and Dave McMakin are the current Seekers involved in this beautiful work.

Dave designed the space for the new office next to 15th Street Presbyterian Church on R Street. Jackie has been working with

Mike Young on overall leadership direction, on conceptualizing the program, and on special projects. In addition, she is on the Work and Thrive team which links Hope and a Home teens with summer jobs. The team has designed and then offers ten work preparation workshops to prepare the teens not only to get the job but to succeed in it. Jackie also works with staff members on special projects such as training the Hope and Home staff and families.