

CANI

Fighting Poverty. Building Hope.

Chronicles

A Slice of Heaven



Kevin Moran has a place to call home thanks to CANI's HPRP program.

"It was like dying and going to heaven."

This is how Kevin Moran, 52, feels about his newfound security from one of CANI's programs. As a client in CANI's HPRP program, he has come a long way in a matter of months, from squatting in an abandoned house to finding stable housing.

The Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP) involves case management and housing assistance to help people learn how to break the cycle of homelessness.

The causes of homelessness are varied and personal. In Kevin's case, a series of misfortunes escalated into a dire situation. The Fort Wayne native was a construction worker until 2006, following a series of layoffs. It was then he started to experience bad muscle cramps and allergies. Rapid weight loss prompted him to research his health issues. Still, he found no answers and his symptoms only worsened.

Later, after additional research, Kevin came to believe he suffered from Celiac Disease, a lifelong digestive disorder

affecting children and adults. When people with CD eat foods that contain gluten, it creates an immune-mediated toxic reaction that causes damage to the small intestine and does not allow food to be properly absorbed. Even small amounts of gluten in foods can affect those with CD and cause health problems.

To make matters worse, in 2007 his unemployment benefits ran out. He became overwhelmed with his health issues and mounting debt. Anxiety plagued him daily.

"I was afraid of becoming poverty stricken," he said.

He had no choice but to move out of his apartment and head south to Bloomington with only the clothes on his back. Down there he was at the mercy of friends, who allowed him to live in a van on their property. Occasional odd jobs brought some money in, but he was still struggling to make ends meet.

The food at soup kitchens only made him sicker, since the typical fare is high in carbohydrates, which often contain gluten. Still, he would eat the food because it was better than going hungry.

The more he tried to ignore his health problems the worse they got. He sought treatment at a medical clinic for the poor, but was unable to get the help he needed. He had requested a biopsy in hopes of becoming diagnosed with CD, but was denied. This only made him more depressed. In fact at one point, he considered himself "suicidal."

He decided it was best to return to Fort Wayne in the winter of 2008. Sadly, he was still not able to escape the cycle of poverty. He has no choice but to live in an abandoned house and rely on the kindness of friends once again.

"I was at the mercy of friends to bring me water," he said about the harsh reality.

Somehow he managed to scrape enough money to buy propane to fuel a heater. As he sat in the cold house, he thought spring couldn't come any sooner. Warmer temperatures arrived, but his problems did not leave with the change of seasons. Kevin fell in a dark pit of depression.

"I really lost my inertia," he said. "I didn't know where to turn."

Then one day his fate changed completely. He was walking downtown and saw the CANI building. At the office he was able to connect with Susan Archer who provided him with vouchers for the food bank. He completed an intake form, and it was later determined he qualified for further assistance, including our HPRP program.

"They gave me a plan to get back on my feet," he said about CANI's help. "These people are life savers."

Case worker Gwen Brown has worked with Kevin for a few months now. Since they first met, he has made a great deal of progress. Most notably, he has found an affordable and safe apartment and a job that pays the bills. CANI pays a portion of his rent so he can get back on his feet.

He was also impressed by the special attention he received. The staff at CANI cared enough to research his symptoms to better understand his situation. Unfortunately he had never received an official diagnosis due to lack of consistent health insurance.

With CANI's help, Kevin has a much brighter outlook on the future:

"I'm holding out to succeed," he said.

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CANI Mission

CANI helps communities, families, and individuals remove the causes and conditions of poverty.

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CANI Offices

Allen

227 E Washington Blvd
Fort Wayne, IN 46802

**423-3546 or
800-589-2264**

DeKalb

209 N Jackson St.
Auburn, IN 46706

927-0162

LaGrange

109 E Central Ave, Ste 4
LaGrange, IN 46761

463-5276

Noble

119 W Mitchell St.
Kendallville, IN 46755

349-0713

200 S Cavin St.

Ligonier, IN 46767

894-3048

Steuben

1208 S Wayne St.
Angola, IN 46703

665-1160

Whitley

Lehmberg Medical Bldg
333 N Oak St, Ste K
Columbia City, IN 46725

248-2848

The following offices only provide
childcare assistance...

Elkhart

421 S 2nd St, Ste 420
Elkhart, IN 46516

574-293-3460

Kosciusko

1515 Provident Drive
Warsaw, IN 46580

574-267-2817

CANI Hours of Operation

7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Monday - Thursday

7:30 a.m. - 11:30 p.m. Friday

**CANI WILL BE CLOSED ON SEPTEMBER
6TH IN OBSERVANCE OF LABOR DAY.**



FAMILY EDUCATION: THE MISSING PIECE



Employment workshops help people learn important interview skills.

So much of what we learn about the “real world” is acquired outside of school. Unfortunately, not every one is lucky enough to learn these vital skills. Sometimes individuals need extra attention to succeed in the work place, social situations, parenting and other settings.

CANI's Family Education program, through its various

workshops, attempts to fill in those gaps. Although the program has been long established, CANI is expanding its offerings through the addition of Family Education Coordinator Sarah Arnold. Sarah is working with organizations and individuals in the community to develop relevant workshops.

Sarah said the program is important in the fight against poverty because “we provide individuals who wouldn't get education elsewhere with workshops on 12 life areas.”

The Family Education program provides workshops pertaining to

the 12 life areas used in the CANI Family Development Matrix that help families become self-sufficient:

- Energy
- Housing
- Income
- Adult Education
- Child Development & Education
- Family Relations & Domestic Violence
- Employment
- Transportation
- Support Services
- Health
- Nutrition
- Addictions

Workshops are designed to increase knowledge so that families may better utilize the resources available in the community. Sessions are offered in Allen, DeKalb, Elkhart, Kosciusko, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, and Whitley counties.

For a listing of upcoming workshops, visit www.canihelp.org/Workshops.htm.

CANI is interested in working with knowledgeable community members to develop workshops. Contact Sarah Arnold, (260) 423-3546, ext. 296, with suggestions.



Sherry Early-Aden, RasAmen Oladuwa, and Clydia Early pose before the parade.



CANI employee John Martin passes out fans to parade watchers, while Jennie Renner greets the crowd.

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you heard?
CANI has a blog.
Check it out here:
www.insidecani.blogspot.com

CANI GOLF 2010: TAKING A SWING AT POVERTY



CANI Board Member Jean Hershberger and Lori Stinson pose for a pre-game shot.

Maybe it was the great weather. Or the fellowship. Or the feeling of helping a worthy cause. Regardless of the reason, CANI Golf 2010, held on June 10, was no doubt a success. More than \$17,500 was raised to support the mission of CANI.

Although CANI has traditionally held a golf outing as its annual fundraiser, there were a few twists on the event this year. The planning committee chose a new venue: Noble Hawk Golf Links in Kendallville.

Another change from past years was the date. For the past seven years CANI Golf has been held in May and rain has more often than not been an unwelcome visitor. The committee chose June 10 for a change and this year luck was on their side. It was perfect golfing weather all day!

19 teams and 72 golfers (which included several returning from last year) from a variety of professional backgrounds came out for an afternoon of healthy competition. Christopher Sosebee, Kevin Kreilach, Kyle Baltes, and Josh Neal took home the top prize this year. The runner-up team from NIPSCO included Larry Graham, Dennis Blankenbeker, John Nigro, and Hal Smith. The “closest to the line” winner was Leigh Smith and Rich Bienz won the “closest to the pin” contest.

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Win or lose, the golfers united at the end of the day for a delicious steak dinner (steaks provided by Performance Food Group), silent auction, and awards ceremony.

CANI would like to extend a warm thank you to all our sponsors:

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Special thanks go out to Jean Hershberger, CANI board member for her service on the CANI Golf Committee.

We look forward to seeing you next year at CANI Golf – stay tuned for further information.

A PEEK INTO EARLY HEAD START

Like any mother, Amanda Fechner wants to be the best she can be for her two children. Sometimes that means getting some extra help from an agency like CANI.

It was through a chance meeting that Amanda became connected with Chantelle Davis, a home visitor in CANI's new Early Head Start program. Early Head Start caters to the busy mother who might find it hard to get away for appointments. Home visitors come into the home weekly at the family's convenience and work with parent and child on activities designed to address their child's individual needs. The emphasis is on child development, education, family self-sufficiency, and parenting skills. Dads and male role models in the home are also highly encouraged to participate in home visits. For pregnant women, the focus is on maintaining a healthy pregnancy.

A few months ago, Amanda was taking the trash out at her apartment when Chantelle noticed that Amanda was pregnant. (Chantelle was meeting with another client who lived in the same complex.) After meeting with the other client, Chantelle knocked on Amanda's door, with the hopes of recruiting her for Early Head Start. Amanda welcomed her in, and soon they had arranged for her first home visit. In the meantime Amanda gave birth to a baby boy named Spencer who is now six weeks old (at the time of press). Amanda is also raising a seven-year old boy.

Chantelle has met with Amanda a few times, and she has already made progress. With seven years between both children, it's easy to forget about the challenging aspects of caring for an infant. Chantelle has been there to provide guidance and encouragement. For example, when Amanda was concerned about Spencer's limited leg movements, the home visitor proposed an activity to promote more motor control. Amanda's "homework" was to massage his legs. Within a week he was extending his legs completely.

I had the opportunity to shadow a home visit. Chantelle began by asking if Amanda had done her "homework" for the week (which she had) and asked that she complete an activity during the visit. (Home visits are designed to engage the parent and the child, so activities are important.)

In this case, the mother was instructed to make a baby accordion out of construction paper. The accordion had cutouts of animals superimposed on a black, white and colored background. It is designed to be an exercise for the baby to help him develop vision. Later Chantelle asked Amanda to construct a similar visual



Chantelle works with Amanda on goal setting.

stimulant, which had a black and white design.

Following the activities Chantelle asked if Amanda had any questions or concerns and provided her with some educational handouts. Then it was time to discuss goals. The program suggests a mother set one for herself and one for the baby. Chantelle asked her if she had considered going back to school in the fall. Amanda said she might consider it and agreed to inquire about classes at the East Wayne Street Center as her "homework" for next week.

Chantelle will meet with Amanda on a weekly basis until she opts out or is no longer eligible. In the meantime Amanda said she is enjoying learning about her child's development and appreciates the tips.

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CANI INVESTS IN WAYNEDEALE

CANI is working with Waynedale residents to help make the community an even better place to live, work and play through a new initiative.

The agency is currently engaged in developing a Quality-of-Life Plan for the southwest Fort Wayne neighborhood. A Quality-of-Life plan is like a road map; it's how to make a goal become a reality. The plan is designed to capture the vision of residents and turn goals into achievable projects and programs.

The project comes to fruition when neighbors work together across traditional boundaries to: organize and get involved in their neighborhood, decide collectively on the priorities and act on these priorities to affect change. Ultimately the hope is that the plan will address civic, social, physical and economic growth.

As for CANI's role, the agency will work with the neighborhood to reinforce its strengths and assets. Responsibilities will include providing support for projects, events and activities designed to increase resident engagement, promote neighborhood action centered on 11 principles, and establish new and stronger relationships among grassroots organizations and businesses.

The project's coordinator, Janel Cain, wants to ensure CANI remains in the background:

"We're there to get (the neighbors) talking, moving forward," she said about the agency's role. "We want to help people find and use the tools to make Waynedale an even better place to live."



As the Housing Project Coordinator, Janel Cain will work with Waynedale residents to design a plan that fits their needs and goals.

To that end, CANI will follow the 11 principles as a framework for working together to affect sustainable change through a comprehensive community development system that integrates civic, social, physical and economic development.

Civic

1. Leadership
2. Vision
3. Collaboration

Social

4. Services
5. Education
6. Culture

Physical

7. Safety
8. Environment
9. Housing

Economic

10. Business Diversity
11. Economy

CANI is planning a leadership training meeting for neighbors interested in becoming engaged in the process. In the meantime, the agency is meeting with community leaders and business owners in Waynedale to determine how to move forward.

For more information about the Quality-of-Life Planning process, contact Janel Cain, (260) 423-3545, ext. 250 or janelcain@canihelp.org.



Photo taken by Janel Cain, Housing Project Coordinator

CANI will work with Waynedale businesses to help strengthen the local economy.

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CANI Thanks Our Donors

We'd like to thank the individuals, businesses, foundations, and organizations that have recently supported CANI. Your financial gifts and in-kind contributions help us fight poverty and build hope - thank you for all you do!

June 2010

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Guardian (\$250-\$499)

Ms. Dawn Oetting

Advocate (\$100-\$249)

Mrs. Amy Caggiano

Friend (\$1-\$99)

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CANI HEAD START NOW ENROLLING

**Do you know someone who has a child
between ages 3-5?**

**We may have a FREE PRESCHOOL
PROGRAM for him or her!!**

CANI Head Start is a free, comprehensive development program. It meets educational, health, nutritional, and social service needs of low-income preschool children, ages 3 to 5, and their families in Allen, Noble, and Whitley counties.

For more information, contact

CANI Head Start

227 E. Washington Blvd., Fort Wayne, IN 46802

(260) 420-2833



The CANI tattoo station was a popular stop at Children's Fest.



Photo taken by Jennie Renner, Development Supervisor

The CANI booth entertained children with a ring toss at Children's Fest on the IPFW campus, July 17, 2010.

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“CANI helped me very much. I was out of options and I appreciate what CANI has done for me. Esther was very polite and helpful.”

-CANI EAP Client

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