Mission: Providing Pathways to End Youth Homelessness
Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

I think you will all agree that 2016 was quite a year for HOPE 4 Youth. We would not have been able to accomplish all that we did without each and every one of you – our volunteers, donors, partners and stakeholders!

We achieved many new milestones together, and took important steps that are needed to reach and help more young people experiencing homelessness in our community. These steps included:

- Hired a new Executive Director to move HOPE 4 Youth strategically forward
- Created and hired a Director of Programs and Properties, to oversee all of HOPE 4 Youth’s programs and properties and implementing new case management methods
- Rebranded HOPE 4 Youth to better reflect the population we serve
- Met health & wellness needs through the opening of HOPE Clinic at the Drop-In Center
- Raised awareness about what youth face on the streets at The Darkest Night of Your Life 4K, now an annual event
- Built and opened HOPE Place, our new transitional housing facility in Coon Rapids

We also worked hard creating and strengthening relationships in the community, from elected officials to civic groups, to committed congregations and businesses, to landlords providing housing to several of our youth, as well as other nonprofit organizations such as the YMCA, YouthLink, CommonBond and the Anoka County Workforce Center.

Even with all of these milestones, we know that there is so much more that we have yet to do. We created a new Strategic Planning Committee to end youth homelessness in our community by 2020, and their work is gaining momentum. With all this in front of us, we know that we can’t do it alone and need your continued support so that together we can end youth homelessness in the north metro suburbs.

Lisa Jacobson, Executive Director
“I can honestly say that I would not have been able to make changes to my life without HOPE 4 Youth!”
- Miranda
HOPE 4 Youth is a 501(c)3 nonprofit headquartered in Anoka, Minnesota. We started out as a community effort in response to a series of news articles that raised awareness of young people in the area who were in need of basic resources. The stories were published during the coldest days of winter and sparked an immediate reaction from the public.

After several months of building relationships, soliciting donations and reconstruction of space in the Old Milk Factory Building in Anoka, the doors of the Drop-In Center opened in March 2013. Young people experiencing homelessness, between the ages of 16-23, visit the Drop-In Center to access resources to meet their basic needs - food from our food pantry, clothing from our clothing closet, a hot meal, a hot shower, and laundry facilities - as well as the tools - case management, housing referrals, education resources, on-site health care and more - they need to thrive; ensuring they feel safe, valued and supported while reaching their full potential.

When the doors of the Drop-In Center close at 7 p.m. every night, many of the youth found, and continue to find, themselves couch-hopping or back on the streets. We knew that we had to do something to begin to address this and in response, HOPE 4 Youth became a 24/7 operation when we opened the doors to HOPE Place, the first and only transitional housing program for youth in the north metro suburbs, in December of 2016. Twelve young people live at HOPE Place while they develop the skills they need to become independent, self-sustained and housed adults.

In 2016, more than 400 homeless youth walked through our Drop-In Center doors in need of resources and services:

- 4,272 Visits to the Drop-In Center
- 5,509 Times Youth Accessed the Food Pantry, Clothing Closet or Ate a Hot Meal
- 76 Referrals to Housing (Permanent, Transitional, Shelters)
- 134 Referrals to Employment and Education Services
- 20 Visits to HOPE Clinic (Opened October 2016)
- 12 Youth Living at HOPE Place
“I have to thank HOPE 4 Youth for teaching me the skills I need to be self-sufficient, helping me save the money I needed to buy my first stethoscope, because they help provide me with my everyday items and that helped me save my income for it.” - Jenaa
HOPE 4 Youth: How We Help

There’s no one-size-fits-all definition of young people experiencing homelessness. We know that the majority of homeless youth have a history of trauma, and often times long-term physical, emotional and mental health issues. Others have been radically affected by a sudden change in family circumstances and must fend for themselves. When young people arrive at HOPE 4 Youth’s doors, they are in need of a supportive community who understand what the struggles that they face each day and can guide them through rebuilding their lives. HOPE 4 Youth is that place! We focus on providing HOPE through:

**Housing**
We provide resources that link the youth to all housing options (shelter, transitional including HOPE Place, affordable, etc.).

**Outreach**
We meet the youth where they are at in the community and provide them with basic items and referrals to resources.

**Prevention**
We provide prevention resources and partner with service providers to connect youth to other resources and services that address and prevent homelessness.

**Education**
We provide educational opportunities to the youth, the volunteers who support them and the community.
“The support from the staff and mentors at HOPE 4 Youth is like my favorite part.” - Monica
HOPE 4 Youth: Drop-In Center

The doors of the Drop-In Center first opened in March of 2013 and continue to open every Monday-Friday from 2-7 p.m., and by appointment. In 2016, over 400 youth visited the Drop-In Center on more than 4,270 occasions. We helped meet the basic needs of these young people experiencing homelessness by providing them access to:

- Food from our food pantry
- Clothing from our clothing closet
- Personal hygiene items
- A hot meal
- A private shower
- Laundry facilities

Moving young people from homeless to self-sustaining, independent and housed adults requires more than just meeting basic needs, we then guided them towards a future where they are no longer homeless by helping them:

- Secure housing (short-term shelter and long-term options)
- Find jobs
- Finish their education
- Access health and wellness services at our on-site clinic, HOPE Clinic
- Learn Independent Living Skills
- Obtain photo IDs, birth certificates and other documents
- Access computers with internet, phones and mail
- Provide Case Management Services
- Store personal items in storage lockers
- Access government resources and services
The day I walked in the door the first time, I was so excited that this was where I was going to change, grow up and be responsible and do what I have to do to succeed in life. - Beau
HOPE 4 Youth: HOPE Place

When the doors of the Drop-In Center close, many youth find themselves couch-hopping or back on the streets. Most of these youth want to stay in the north metro suburbs as it is their home.

In 2016, more than 400 young people walked through our Drop-In Center doors. We also see at least 20 youth a quarter “living” in places not meant for habitation. Reports from Anoka County Coordinated Entry show that there are more than 40 youth “singles” on the housing waiting list, 28 in need of transitional housing. This also shows that there is a dire need for housing options for homeless youth in our community and we knew that we had to do something about it.

After more than a year of research, planning, fundraising and construction, the doors to HOPE Place, our new transitional living facility, finally opened on December 5th. The first youth moved in about a week later, just in time for the holidays, and started their journey to becoming independent, self-sustained and housed adults. The excitement on their faces when they walked into their new homes said it all - "I am home."

Before the first youth moved in, members of the community were able to get a glimpse of the only transitional housing for homeless youth in the north metro area. It was a day filled with tears of happiness. Many people who attended the Community Open House found that these emotions were the only way that they were able to express what HOPE Place mean: no more sleeping on couches, in cars or on the streets. HOPE Place will allow them to break through the barriers that have kept them homeless.

The 12 young people, ages 18-25, live in their own studio apartment for 12-24 months while they work to become independent adults. Besides the apartments, there is laundry facilities, community room, snack kitchen, computer lab, offices and fitness room.

To make HOPE Place a reality, we kicked-off a capital campaign in June that needed to raise $800,000. Our community came together - civic groups, congregations, foundations, businesses and individuals - to help us exceed our goal and help not only the first 12 young people, but also the many more that will call HOPE Place home in the future.
The day I walked in the door the first time, I was so excited that this was where I was going to change, grow up and be responsible and do what I have to do to succeed in life. - Beau

"Their finger prints never fade from the lives they touch."
- A Youth Speaking About HOPE 4 Youth Supporters
Volunteer
Without our dedicated volunteers, we would not be able to continue helping the youth leave their status of homelessness in their past. This year, approximately 372 volunteers donated 17,755 hours of their time to our organization.

Many of these volunteers spent their time mentoring the youth at the Drop-In Center while others worked in the Donations Center accepting, sorting and stocking donated items. Several of them were part of the Meals Team, making sure that the youth who visited the Drop-In Center had a hot meal, and others shared their talents in a variety of ways to support HOPE 4 Youth.

HOPE 4 Youth appreciates every one of our volunteers and we thank you for your dedication to our youth!

Donate Items
We are able to meet the basic needs of the young people who walk through our doors because of the items that are donated by members of our community.

This year, we received more than 51,019 pounds of donated items, including the following:

- 33,844 pounds of food & water
- 10,833 pounds of clothing
- 6,292 pounds of hygiene products

The total value of all the items donated was $42,128 which provides operational budget-relief to the HOPE 4 Youth.

We want to recognize the Donations Team for all their hard-work in the Donations Center, as well as, the generosity of all the donors of the items.

Donate Funds
Without the support of donors, the doors of both the Drop-In Center and HOPE Place could not stay open. In 2016, we needed to not only raise the operating budget for the Drop-In Center, but also capital funds for HOPE Place Construction.

Donors met this challenge by giving funds that helped us bring in an income total of nearly $1.2 million, which ensured that we would be able to continue meeting homeless youth peoples' basic needs, as well as provide a new housing opportunity.

On behalf of our youth, HOPE 4 Youth staff and Board of Directors, we want to thank all of our donors for their support this year, and every other year.
HOPE 4 Youth’s 2016 IRS 990 and a list of donors can be viewed online at HOPE4YouthMN.org.

*Total Income for 2016 includes capital campaign funds for HOPE Place of $323,654, which is 39.19% of the income.*
HOPE 4 Youth: 2016 Staff and Board of Directors

Staff
Lisa Jacobson
Executive Director
Joyce Finch
Development Associate
Cheri Halek
Community Engagement Manager
Sara Kemp
Director of Programs & Properties
Jane Schipper
Finance Manager
Kristin VanHeel
Marketing & Communications Director
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Vice President of Operations, Medtronic Neuromodulation, PLC
Susan Van Voorhis
Assoc. Vice President & Univ. Reg., University of Minnesota
Katherine Wagoner
Director of Membership Engagement, Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless
Sue Woodard
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HOPE 4 Youth: Donors Who Gave $500 or More in 2016

4 The Kids
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Mueller, Donna
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Owens, Gregory and Barbara
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Pate, Malia
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Petersen, Christopher
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Plum, Cindy
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Proto Labs Foundation
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Schneider, Jennifer
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Scott, Robert and Linda
Senden, Brenda
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Sherek, Susan
Sitarz, John
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Sons of Norway
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Springer-Hewitt, Suzanne
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Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
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We greatly appreciate each gift given to support of HOPE 4 Youth, and we have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of this listing. Please notify Lisa Jacobson, Executive Director, of any inaccuracies or omissions by contacting her at 763.323.2066 or ljacobson@hope4youthmn.org. We regret and apologize for any errors.