



Ruth moved to Virginia three years ago with her four children because of her husband's work. When he lost his job, there was escalating tension in the house; life began to spiral downwards.

The family was on the verge of being homeless when they were referred to Good Shepherd Housing and Family Services.

Last year Ruth and her husband separated, and now she feels she is starting a new life. She lives in a three-bedroom apartment in a quiet community. She's working as a receptionist for a neighborhood nonprofit that helps those in need.

Perhaps the most meaningful change for her is to have a home for her children. "I see their faces now, they come home happy," she says, her face brightening. "They are not wondering, 'Are we moving? Are we staying? They are doing very well now.'"

She's been taking budgeting classes offered through GSH and is gaining a sense of empowerment and responsibility. Mr. Tate, her teacher, has opened her eyes to taking care of finances today and saving for tomorrow. She says she is becoming "very money savvy."

Ruth's goal is to go back to school and become an interpreter — perhaps a legal interpreter — to help members of the local Hispanic community. She loves her work with a local nonprofit and feels connected to her co-workers and the mission she is helping fulfill.

"It feels good to give back to people after what Good Shepherd Housing and Family Services has done for me," she says. Now she's focused on her future, which looks bright. She knows that one day, when the time is right, she will be able to have total independence from assistance. "It's important to let someone else take your place when you're ready to move on."

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In a community where need is so great,
Good Shepherd Housing and Family Services'
work is never done.



www.goodhousing.org

GOOD SHEPHERD HOUSING AND FAMILY SERVICES

Northern Virginia has lost thousands of affordable housing units in the last decade while the average monthly rent has increased forty percent. These statistics are cause for justifiable alarm. Thousands of housing units lost means hundreds of families on the verge of homelessness. How do our neighbors live with that kind of uncertainty?

When housing is unstable, lives unravel. Children lose their footing in school; domestic violence increases; families splinter. With a roof over their heads, people can begin the process of pulling their lives back together. First a roof, then a plan.

Good Shepherd Housing and Family Services (GSH) works closely with families like these. In the last year we have worked with 727 families who have been struggling to find a rental within the existing stock of affordable housing. Who are these households? They are low-income people — working, disabled, or elderly — who have tried to rent on their own but are perceived as high-risk by landlords and apartment complex managers in the community.

Our housing units are a stable first stop in creating new futures for those we serve. Once settled, we connect our residents to the tools for gaining independence: financial skill building, budget setting, job counseling, and childcare.

By working closely with our clients and providing the support they need, GSH comes in at or above industry standards in rent collection and low vacancy rates. In 2011, *The Catalogue for Philanthropy* recognized GSH for being one of the most effective community-based nonprofits in our region.

On the following pages we'll offer you a close-up look at three of GSH's clients — Shane, Monica, and Ruth — whose lives have been impacted by challenging life circumstances and lack of affordable housing. With our help and stable, affordable housing, they are changing the trajectory of their lives. They are our partners in their own success.

Whether you are looking at the biggest picture of Northern Virginia's affordable housing dilemma or a close up on GSH and the individual lives that we are positively affecting, we couldn't have impact without you. *You are an essential element. And your contribution matters.*

After reading about Shane, Monica, and Ruth and seeing how committed they are to paying acts of compassion forward, please support our work at Good Shepherd Housing and Family Services.

Thank you.



Shannon Steene
Executive Director
Good Shepherd Housing and Family Services

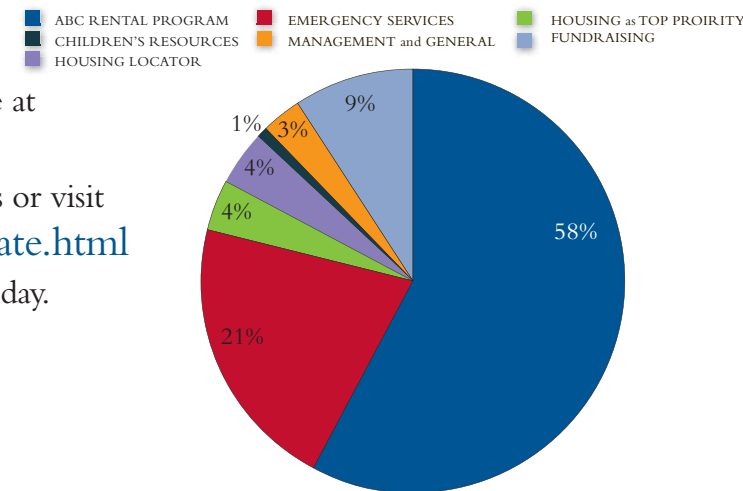
In a community where need is so great,
Good Shepherd Housing and Family Services'
work is never done.

A roof...then a chance for success.

Here's how you can help:

Donate now to help the Shanes, Monicas, and Ruths of our community get a fresh start
toward stable housing and the tools to create their own successful futures.

2011 GSH Expenses by Category
Total Expenses \$2,728,701



Call our development office at
703-768-9404
to learn about our giving options or visit
www.goodhousing.org/donate.html
to make a secure donation today.



The National Alliance to End Homelessness has identified
six key strategies critical to ending family homelessness:

Prevention assistance . Rapid rehousing . Helping families pay for housing . Strategic use of services
Coordinated intake assessment and services . Data for planning and program management

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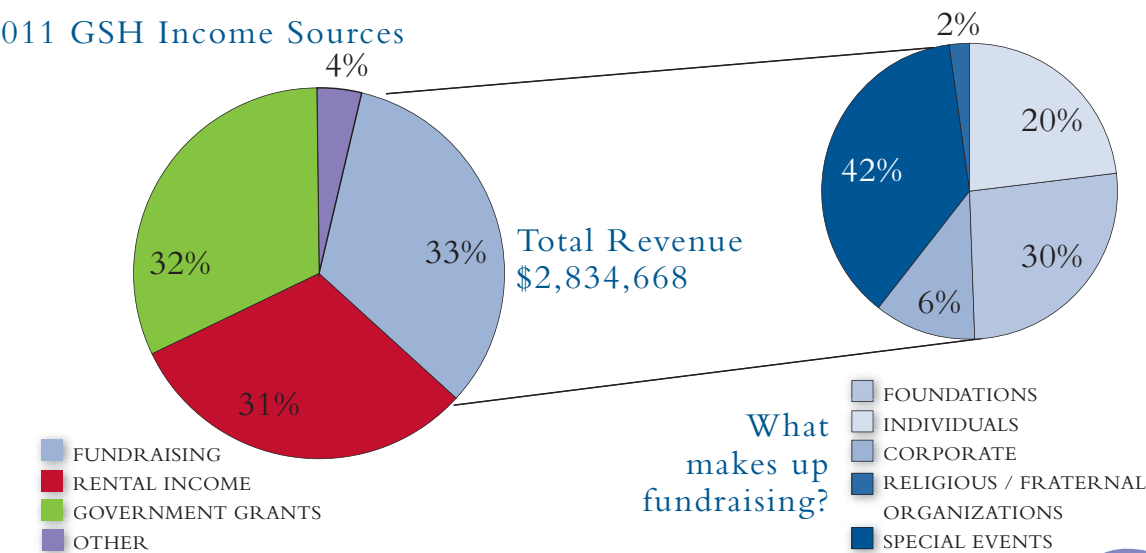
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Shane's Story



When you walk into Shane's Beacon Hill Apartment you can tell that he's still in the process of unpacking and creating a home. Boxes are full and stacked against the walls; clothes spill onto chairs nearby. But on the walls are the neatly organized framed details of his life. He calls them his

"medals"—the cherished mementos that document the life of a complex and fascinating man.



It appears that Shane has lived several lifetimes in one, with careers as a journalist, a classroom teacher, and a stockbroker. He's self-published, as well: a "bang bang, shoot 'em up Western" entitled, *Bounties: The Pretty Little Killers*, which he published in 2001. "Writing is my life," he says.

Making ends meet has been a struggle and Shane has had periods of homelessness — the last ended on Christmas Eve of 2011 when he was referred to Good Shepherd Housing and Family Services. Now, it's all of the little things that make a difference in his life. The small moments that most of us take for granted.

"I feel a sense of safety now," Shane says. "Living out of a car there is a quarter inch of glass between you and someone who wants to do something to you. I would wake up in the middle of the night and have to drive on."

The little things. "I sleep a lot now," he says with a smile. "I love getting to sleep and not having a light on. At the shelter they have a light on all night."

He's looking forward to this evening, when his twelve-year-old daughter Emily will stay with him. They will cook rice and beans together from a family recipe book he inherited from his grandmother. This is the first time he will have an opportunity to cook with Emily.



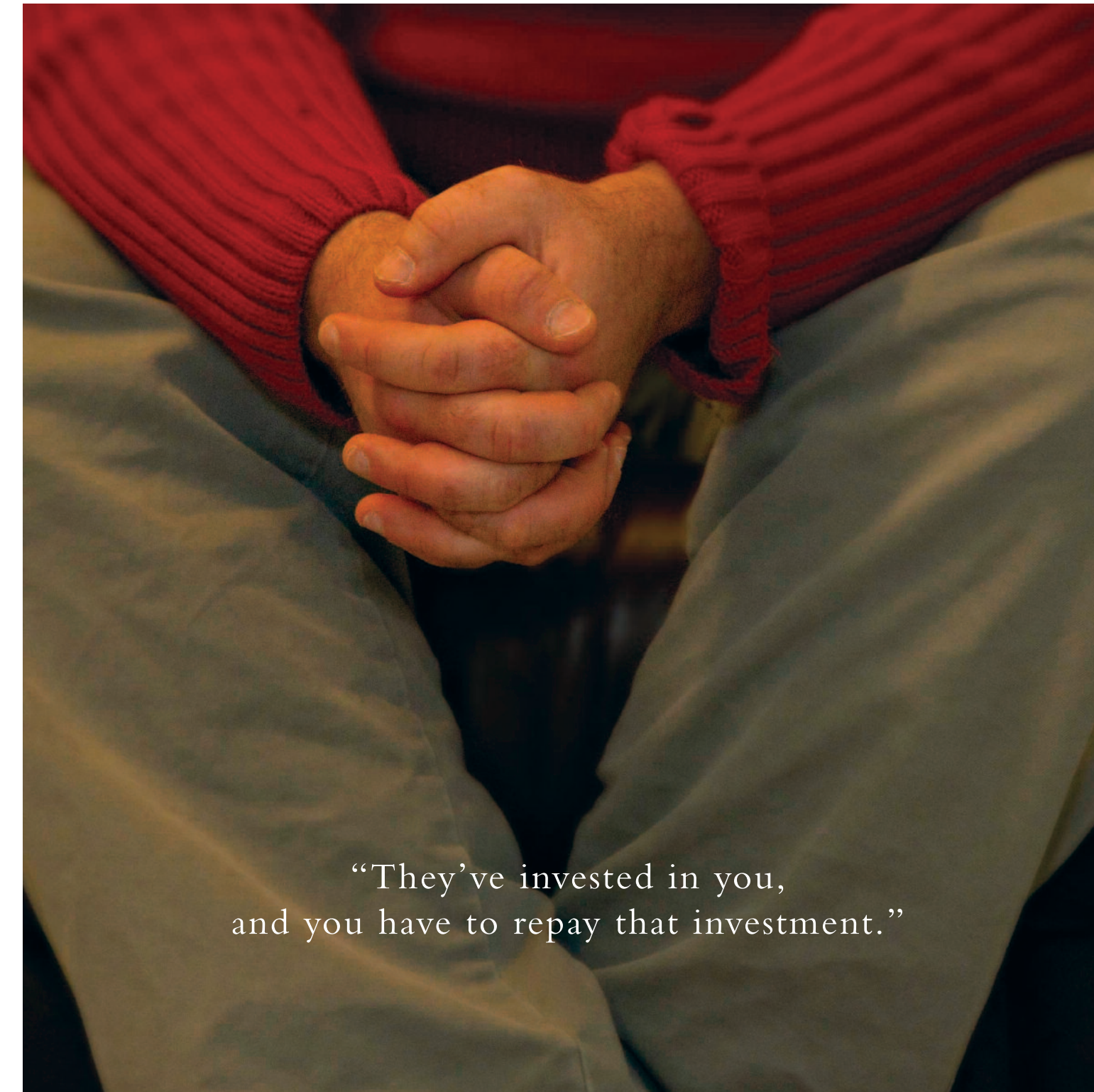


He saw his daughter weekly, even while he was staying in the homeless shelter. But their visits were limited to McDonald's and the public library. Now he can work with her on school projects. She just completed her Egyptian poster project for school; they will work together on a pagoda for her next project on Japan.

Shane glances at the shiny white bike that takes up a corner of his apartment. He kept it in his car when he was homeless. "It's hard to exercise when you're homeless. And I had to eat out a lot, which was expensive." The shelter only served meals at certain times and, while he wasn't complaining, the food was not always the healthiest choices. He gained a lot of weight in the six months he spent on the streets.

His boss wants to support his getting back into shape and plans to get him a blender so he can make health shakes. Shane is a traffic manager for a computer company, providing customer service on computer problems.

GSH reaches more than 700 low-income households annually with housing placement, financial counseling, wraparound support services, and one-time, small cash grants.



"They've invested in you,
and you have to repay that investment."



And soon he'll begin taking classes through Good Shepherd and Family Services on finances and budgeting and working with Cherita, his caseworker, on his customized action and spending plan.

His goal is to make money and be able to move on so that he can contribute to places like GSH and help other people in need. "They've invested in you, and you have to repay that investment," Shane says.

"I think about all the people out there who are in the same boat I was. It's up to people who have been helped to try to help out more and more people in turn. It's an investment in society."

High rental housing costs + low vacancy rates
+ 14,000 jobs relocated to Fort Belvoir =
uncertain housing futures for low-income working families



Monica is a spitfire with a high wattage smile and energy that encircles her guests the minute she opens the door to her tidy apartment. It's hard to know from her warm welcome that her life has been full of enormous challenges: her son's father died of a massive heart attack; her mom died at 42; and her youngest, Reggie, was born six months early, and spent his first days as a three-pound preemie on a ventilator.

As Reggie grew it was clear he would always need special education, but Florida — the state they lived in—didn't have a high school program to fit his complex needs. Monica's long-term goal for her son was for Reggie to be able to take care of himself and have a vocation. "When you have a child with a disability, you got to help your kid by all means necessary," she says.

Monica's day job was cleaning homes for the Jacksonville Jaguars pro football players, but she spent any free time searching for the best special education high schools on the east coast for Reggie. The state of Virginia had the highest-rated program in the country, so the two of them moved north in 2010.

Reggie is always Monica's greatest motivation. Even as she held several jobs to make ends meet, she kept laser-like focus on securing Reggie's future. She was selected for a housekeeper position at Walter Reed, but was transferred to the new community hospital at Fort Belvoir when Walter Reed closed. Monica worked paycheck to paycheck, and had exhausted her leave caring for Reggie. There was only one bed in the apartment, and the two of them alternated sleeping on the floor.

To Monica, Good Shepherd Services brings to mind
"encouragement, empowerment, opportunity."





“I threw it back up to God, and low and behold, God had a plan,” she says quietly. “God sent David.”

She’s referring to David Levine, deputy director of Good Shepherd Housing and Family Services.

With David’s help she was able to move into Farrington Place — a new unit that GSH just purchased in the Huntington area of Alexandria.

GSH was able to get Monica and Reggie into a two-bedroom apartment unit right before his 17th birthday.

“The best thing was seeing my son in his own room on a bed — that was a moment,” she says. “He had said for his birthday he wanted a place to call his own. Seeing him stretched out on his bed was very tearful for me.”

Now Reggie can have his friends sleep over, and Monica can play the role she loves, nurturing the neighborhood kids. Reggie attends Accokeek Academy and is on track for his high school diploma and a trade job program, thanks to the constant advocacy and direction of his devoted mother.

GSH also helped Monica get back into school. She hadn’t been able to pay back a debt to a school she had attended in Florida. She would not be able to attend community college in Northern Virginia until that debt was paid. The debt amount: \$150.

“That money might not have been a lot for other people, but for me it was a huge obstacle.” She remembers when David called and said, “Monica, I think we have a supporter who can handle your debt.” Shortly after, she received a call telling her to send in her paperwork for school. “I’m vibrant, alert, and ready to go!” she cheered.





Monica pays forward the help she's received. In September of 2011, she volunteered at the Red Cross Center when nearly 200 people were displaced by flooding when nearby Cameron Run overflowed. After graduation, she plans to assist other children like Reggie gain the readiness they need for the world.

When asked which words come to mind when she thinks of Good Shepherd Housing and Family Services, the effervescent woman takes a minute to quietly collect her thoughts. "Hope, hope, hope. Faith. Encouragement, empowerment, opportunity. The greatest blessing for me and my family."

GSH serves the Route 1 corridor in Alexandria, Virginia near Mt. Vernon and Ft. Belvoir. In our service area, 5,979 households, or 13,996 individuals, are estimated to live below the poverty level.

** US Census 2009 American Community Survey*