

NOVEMBER 2020

THE CROSSWALK: BENILDE HALL'S NEWSLETTER

Benilde Hall—Safe Haven—Matt Talbot



NOVEMBER'S ISSUE:

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Safe Haven helps veterans at Benilde Hall

A look inside the Safe Haven program

Veteran homelessness is a significant problem in the United States. The National Alliance to End Homelessness reported that 37,805 American veterans experienced homelessness in January 2019. One of the ways the Veterans Affairs (VA) program is working to end veteran homelessness in America is through the implementation of Safe Haven programs throughout the country. The Safe Haven Model is a harm reduction program that focuses on providing immediate housing to homeless veterans in need. The VA reports that there are 22 active Safe Haven locations in America for homeless veterans. Benilde Hall hosts one of these programs for Kansas City veterans needing emergency housing.

"The main thing we gear towards down here is getting the veterans housed," says Safe Haven case manager Travis Conner. The staff members who work at Benilde Hall's downstairs Safe Haven program consist of several monitors, a case manager, a nurse, and a clinical director. Each staff member helps veterans in a variety of ways. These tasks include monitoring their health, obtaining primary documents (such as birth state ID's, social security cards, and birth certificates), taking clients to appointments, and working with veterans to develop a plan to obtain permanent housing. Safe Haven works with a VA liaison to help connect veterans with housing opportunities through different veteran programs.

These programs include Selective Services for Veterans and Families (SSVF) and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development- VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH). The Veterans Community Project (VCP) works with Safe Haven clients to help them with any fees they may acquire such as apartment application fees or deposit fees. VCP also helps veterans secure copies of their birth certificate and their DD Form 214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty.

Safe Haven can serve a maximum of 25 veterans at a time. Unlike the upstairs treatment program at Benilde Hall, Safe Haven accepts women clients. As of October 2020, two women are staying at Safe Haven. If you would like to learn more about Safe Haven, you can visit https://www.benildehall.org/our-services/safe_haven.html.

Benilde Hall Success Story: Nilan Wright

Nilan Wright grew up in the Kansas City area. He attended high school in the city, and after graduating, he went to barber school and worked as a barber for two years. Nilan also enrolled in an automotive training program at Metro High School. Nilan stopped practicing as a barber due to the cost to maintain his practice. He was making enough to pay his bills but was living on a tight budget. "It was hard to get the food that I wanted, buy clothes, do something nice for myself, go to the movies. I couldn't do none of that," Nilan says.

During this time, he was also struggling with substance use disorder. "I started messing around with illegal activities about 13 or 14." Due to his substance use, his health was starting to decline, and he was getting worried. "The headaches were so strong I couldn't sit up straight. But I could still use, you know what I mean? And I was like, that can't be right. It's going somewhere. So, if I don't want to be handicapped for the rest of my life, I better stop."

Nilan originally went to City Union Mission and then came to Benilde Hall. "My story is that I stopped using drugs on my own, cold turkey." He started working at Benilde Hall as soon as he was able to. "I did the dishes for about six months, and then they asked me if I wanted to do a little maintenance work around here, like stocking the restrooms and kitchen." After he finished his time as a client, he went on to work in facility maintenance for Benilde Hall, where he has been for three years.

For Nilan, he found the groups at Benilde Hall to be great for his recovery process. He says that the group classes "got [him] into talking again" without the use of substances. Nilan also credits former Executive Director Kent Jewell and Judge Fry as significant people in his recovery journey. "Those are the ones who got me this program." When he made the transition from client to staff, he felt that he got "a taste of the real world again." For those in recovery, Nilan says "You gotta keep fighting. There's a fight in this." He also says, "The same way you got started, is the same way you can end. You got to want to." Nilan celebrated 10 years sober on his birthday, August 27th.



To read more Benilde Hall Success Stories, go to facebook.com/BenildeHall.

Past Benilde Hall Success Stories can be found on benildehall.blogspot.com.

THANKSGIVING AT BENILDE HALL

A Message From Executive Director, Ken Vick.



Benilde Hall is proud to have the ability to serve our community. We plan to make sure the thankful feelings we have are shared with all the people we serve. The holiday season can be very hard for those fresh in recovery. We strive to provide a safe environment that promotes a healthy wellbeing. Staff pull together with the gentlemen served to build a welcoming environment.

Benilde Hall is a family that supports each other and we are thankful for each person here. We take pride in the meal served to all that come in on Thanksgiving. We will be providing turkey and all the sides that make a traditional Thanksgiving meal. There will be pies, cookies and other treats. Thanksgiving, food, football and peace are the aim for our holiday season.

Kenneth Vick
CRADC, CRPR, MARS, CTTS, LAC
Executive Director



HOW TO HELP



Want to help? There are many ways you can assist us with our mission!

Monetary donations are always appreciated, and we will provide a tax donation receipt.

You can go to <https://www.benildehall.org/how-to-help/donate.html> to make a monetary donation.

Are you hiring? You may employ one of our residents. Feel free to post your available positions on our job board, or email info@mail.benildehall.org with job info!

Is your employer or community looking to adopt a family for the holidays? Consider donating to Benilde! We always need socks, undergarments, basic toiletries, food, & clothing for 100 men.

Is your organization looking for volunteer opportunities? Call 816-842-5836 x 100 to register your volunteers to assist with needs around our campus.

BENILDE HALL'S WINTER NEEDS:

- MENS WINTER COATS
- GLOVES
- SCARVES
- WINTER BOOTS

Benilde Hall is looking for new or gently used winter items for our clients.

You can call (816) 842-5836 to set up a time to donate. You can also order items from our Amazon Wishlist: <https://a.co/aEnPvXI>.

Thank you for helping our clients at Benilde Hall.



3220 East 23rd Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64127
(816) 842-5836