



WHAT WE DO

Our Place Nashville is the only private pay provider of affordable housing in middle Tennessee for adults with developmental disabilities. We place younger and older companion housemates -- most with physical challenges who also are in need of affordable housing – alongside our resident friends, providing the social and emotional support they require to live independently. Over half of our current 70 residents qualify at 30% of the Area Median Income, most of the rest at 50% AMI, meaning their annual incomes range from \$20,000-\$30,000. In partnership with Woodbine Community Organization, and with the assistance of a \$2M Barnes Housing Trust Fund grant, we will more than triple in size to 220 residents in the next two years; over 90% will be disabled. We provide the “software” that makes it possible for harder-to-place populations to access the “hardware” provided by our housing partners, individuals they otherwise could not serve.

WHO WE SERVE

Our residents with developmental disabilities come from working- and middle-class families with enough income to spend up to \$600/month to supplement their loved ones’ incomes. Most of our friends work part-time for \$12-\$15/hour. Without us, their living independently would not be an option. Our student residents are on scholarship at Vanderbilt and TSU. Our residents with physical disabilities come from the street, shelters, a domestic violence center, and word of mouth. The older ones live almost exclusively on Medicaid/Social Security. The younger ones, who work primarily in the music and hospitality industries, were especially hard hit by pandemic-related job loss. Our Place Nashville’s Friendship Houses provide supportive communities in which to live. Our residents no longer live in social isolation. The cost, depending on their income, ranges from \$395/month to \$465/month (including rent, utilities, WiFi and a residential fee).

WHAT MAKES US STAND OUT

Since our inception in 2015 as a 501(c)3, we have been the only local private pay provider of affordable housing for adults with special needs. Other private pay providers in the region that serve this population cost more for one month than Our Place costs in a year. Our Place Nashville annually provides over 4,000 meals a year to our residents and nearly 300 regular programs and activities, including life skills classes, movies, and book club. Nationally, nearly 18% of individuals with developmental disabilities work; 100% of Our Place Nashville residents with developmental disabilities work, volunteer and/or take classes.

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON OUR WORK

Two-thirds of our residents temporarily moved out at the beginning of the pandemic because of family concerns for their safety. Many of our resident friends were laid off. More than half of our graduate student residents moved out because they could attend virtual classes while living for free at their parents’ homes. Obviously, this disrupted community life at our houses, but in 2021, residents began moving back in and our sense of family is being restored. Our recruitment of seniors was still new when the pandemic started and we are working hard to catch up.

THE DIFFERENCE ONE-TIME FUNDING WOULD MAKE

We currently operate four multi-unit Friendship Houses and will open 15 new Friendship Houses in the next two years – on Elysian Fields, Dickerson Pike and in Bellevue. In addition, Our Place Nashville is in early discussions to expand to Antioch and Madison. We are asking for \$250,000 in funding to ensure stability through this expansion, recruit adults with physical disabilities who have trouble accessing affordable housing, sustain critical social/recreational activities and vocational support, and hire social workers to address the complex challenges of the vulnerable populations we serve. We do not replicate any services currently offered by Metro Nashville Government and make a point of partnering with dozens of other non-profits to stretch our dollars further. We meet the critical need for affordable housing by those with developmental disabilities who do not qualify for the limited federally subsidized housing other agencies offer.