

SERVICE	DIGNITY	INTEGRITY	COMMUNITY	HOPE
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**VISION**

We envision the whole community working hand in hand to meet human needs, protect human dignity and restore hope.

**CUSTOMER SUCCESSES**

A customer was approved for the HPRP (Rapid Re-house) Program in June, 2010. She was unemployed when she entered the program and after only a few months of case management she landed a job at a local women's department store. Not long after she became employed, the customer was promoted to interim store manager. On January 31, 2011 she was notified that she had been selected as the store manager. The customer phoned late the same day as her promotion to give the great news to her case manager and asked if Project NOW had other customers that were looking for a job. This newly promoted Manager was hiring an assistant manager and would like to give someone a chance in becoming employed and would be willing to train them if they had no experience. The Project NOW Case Manager called two other customers and gave them the contact information. This customer exemplifies Project NOW's mission of "We strengthen communities by helping people help themselves and one another". In 7 short months, she helped herself and is reaching out to help others.

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Near the end of January one of our Weatherization heating contractors accepted a "no-heat" request from Project NOW to inspect the furnace in a Kewanee home. It was at the very end of the work day, it had been snowing heavily (again), and the contractor found the home in the dark and snow after a long drive. The owner, a gracious elderly woman living alone, met the contractor and warned him to be careful in the dark of the basement. The contractor discovered 8" of water on the basement floor covered in a layer of ice. The furnace had been out long enough that water pipes had frozen, burst, flooded the basement and frozen. Even the water heater was frozen. The woman told the contractor she had been getting by without heat by staying in bed with all her blankets, and that she had no family that could help.

After contacting Project NOW personnel for advice, the contractor went to the Kewanee Police Department and reported the situation and his concern for the welfare of the resident. They immediately followed up with an investigation, located and advised family, and within hours the woman was safe and warm. Her family acknowledged that communications with her had recently been strained; if not for the intervention, they would not have known. They expressed sincere gratitude that someone had taken the trouble to go the extra step and see that their relative hadn't been alone in an unheated home in sub-zero temperatures for another night.

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A Home Modification project being completed had a very special result with the newly accessible bathroom with shower allowing the elderly husband to return home. He had been living in a care facility for over 6 months. Final inspections are usually gratifying, but at this home, more than a few tears of joy and relief were shed at the prospect of a long-awaited homecoming.

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A senior couple, married for 72 years, had tried moving from the family home they shared as a couple, the home they reared their children in, and the home that was the joyful site of so many fond memories. They had made a joint decision to move from their beloved home into a nursing home. And why not -- both in their 90's, neither one could stand or walk without the help of others or the use of a walker, and buying groceries, preparing a meal, or performing simple household chores were beyond either one of their capabilities. Living out their years at a nursing home seemed like a reasonable solution to the problems associated with old age.

But, only after three months in the "home," they yearned for their independence. They also realized living in the "home" had created more severe problems, than the problems it was suppose to solve. They didn't care for the meals they were being served, and both were losing weight. The husband had lost over 30 pounds in less than three months. It was time to move back home.

In order to regain their independence and to gain back the weight they had lost -- changes had to be made. Those changes included the installation of a chair lift between the first and second story of their home, two sets of walkers (one set each for the first and second story of the home), hiring someone to grocery shop, prepare breakfast, and to perform light household chores, and utilizing the Home Delivered Meal Service of Project NOW's Rock Island County Senior Center.

They said they spent \$5,000 per month for the nursing home, but it wasn't until they moved back home, employed the services of a homemaker, and obtained Home Delivered Meals at a suggested donation of \$3 per meal that they regained their independence, received a nutritious noon time meal, and were able to regain the lost weight.

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A 52 year old male who was sleeping in his truck applied for the HPRP (Rapid Re-house) program. He had been helping his mother until her death and was staying in her home until it sold a few months later. With a decrease in his hours prior to his injury and having to move he did not have the money for a deposit or 1<sup>st</sup> month rent. He was accepted into the HPRP program and signed his lease. About 5 months later, the customer had rotator cuff surgery and after five days he returned to work on light duty and continued with his physical therapy. At his six month review with Project NOW staff, the customer's income had increased and he was stable with all aspects of his living and he was confident in his progress. He agreed he was ready to be successfully exited from the HPRP program.

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A mother of three children has one child enrolled in Head Start. She has completed her phlebotomist training at Black Hawk College and is working in this field. Currently, she is enrolled in the Accounting degree program at Black Hawk and is striving to balance good grades, employment and parenthood. In addition to Head Start, she is thankful for utility assistance from Project NOW's LIHEAP program.

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A Single Family Owner Occupied Rehab (SFOOR) customer has a chronic condition that made it difficult for them get to their 2<sup>nd</sup> floor bedroom. The SFOOR funding allowed us to install a chair lift to provide independent access to their bedroom and to re-fit their bathroom for chair accessibility, including a roll-up shower unit. We were also able to tighten up the home's exterior making the house sufficiently warmer and allowing the customer to eliminate the multiple plug-in space heaters they'd been using during the winter months. It will reduce her utility bill next winter and increase safety.

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In May a young couple living in their car became eligible for the HPRP Rapid Re-house program short term assistance. With the help of Project NOW staff, the very next day the couple was able to check into a hotel and received a clothing voucher for free clothing at Project NOW's Good Things NOW Clothing Store. Within a week the couple found an apartment, signed their lease, received a furniture voucher and moved into their new

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apartment. In a little over a month the couple increased their income and both are currently working and are able to maintain their housing. Both are so thankful they were able to receive a hand up and quickly move to self-sufficiency.

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Susan (name changed) came into Project NOW seeking help with housing due to eviction. She was working at a local Convenience Store when the management decided to cut the hours of all non-management staff. Her landlord at the time was willing to work with her but after a while when she still could not find full time work, she moved in with a friend. The stay lasted a short time because he became abusive with her. She had had a history of abusive men and knew this was not where she should be so she came in to sign up for Project NOW's Sojourner Transitional Housing program. She had been actively looking for work since she lost hours and she had landed an interview at a local grocery store. She began working full-time and has been happy with that job. Once she entered the program, Susan's goal was to pay back rent owed to her previous landlord so that she could be put back on the low-income housing list. Project NOW staff worked with her to manage her money in order to pay off the housing debt in full. She successfully accomplished this. Susan also was in need of getting new glasses and was assisted to submit an application to the local Lions (noon) club and they called in an appt for her at Lens Crafters. Susan was so happy to get this assistance that she had made a handmade "Thank You" card for the Project NOW staff and the Lions Club.

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