

Local Board of Directors

Our governing board is made up of local volunteers that bring their passion, expertise and experience to the table. We desire to have ecumenical, racial, gender, occupational, and socio-economic diversity around our table so that we can best serve the needs of our entire local community.

If you are interested in serving on the board of directors, please contact us for an application.

Family Eligibility Criteria

- Family headed by one parent with dependent child/ren under 18
- Homeless or at-risk of homelessness
- Open and willing to relate to a group of Neighboring Volunteers
- No illegal substance use or substance dependence
- Open to working toward financial stability through employment

**We are a
Living Wage Certified Employer**



Connect with Us!

PO Box 535
Harrisonburg, VA 22801
Phone: (540) 478-2356
hr.bridgeofhopeinc.org

Deirdre – ED@hr.bridgeofhopeinc.org
Maria – nrs@hr.bridgeofhopeinc.org
Carolyn – carolyn@hr.bridgeofhopeinc.org
Jeana – office@hr.bridgeofhopeinc.org



@bridgeofhopehr @bohhrva @bohhrva



CHURCHES RESPOND. HOMELESSNESS ENDS. HOPE BEGINS.

“The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood.”

John 1:14 (MSG)



Our Mission

To engage Christian faith communities in ending family homelessness through neighboring relationships that demonstrate Christ's love.

Our Vision

Harrisonburg-Rockingham, a community where no family is homeless.



What We Do

Bridge of Hope serves families facing homelessness in our local community. We serve the most vulnerable families, households headed by one parent.

Bridge of Hope is a Housing First program, which helps find safe, fair-market housing and offers rental assistance on a decreasing basis over the time of the program, which can range from 12-24 months. Our trauma-informed program is a three-way partnership that includes the family which drives the program, the case manager who connects the family with resources to reach their holistic goals, and Neighboring Volunteers who serve as a social support system. This social support is what makes our program unique.

As a Christian faith-based organization, we call the church to care for the families through friendship, advocacy, and financial support. The overarching goal is that families will break the cycle of homelessness and live into stable, resilient futures.



The Top Three Causes of Homelessness

1. Lack of Affordable Housing

There is a less than 3% vacancy rate in fair-market housing in Harrisonburg. As a Housing First program, **we need Landlord Partners** to partner with us in breaking the cycle of homelessness.

2. Lack of a Living Wage

Our rental assistance program helps families take classes, find a new job, build credit and/or pay off debt. **We need financial support** to continue to offer this important program to local families.

3. Domestic Violence

Most of our program participants, including children, have experienced some form of trauma in their lives. **We need Neighboring Volunteers** from local churches to walk alongside our families with love and care during their time in the program.

We have a 96% success rate of families exiting the program with stability.

Our Staff

Deirdre Longacher Smeltzer, Executive Director, believes that by combining energy, resources, and care for our neighbors, we can achieve the vision of homes for all families. She is passionate about engaging agencies, churches, and individuals toward this goal.

Maria Rodriguez, Program Director, is driven by Bridge of Hope's holistic approach that affirms the strengths and personal goals of each program participant. She is passionate about implementing a trauma-informed program model that emphasizes neighborhoods of support to end family homelessness.

Carolyn Nutter, Neighborhood Resource Specialist, is committed to Bridge of Hope's housing first ethos and whole family approach to working with families. She is tenacious in finding housing solutions and programs that will empower families and working with communities to be aware and bold in supporting each other. Carolyn believes in the power of human kindness and respect to create strong resilient individuals who will work together.

Jeana Simmons, Administrative Assistant, is grateful to be in a supportive role for Bridge of Hope's growing program. She feels it's so rewarding to see positive outcomes to help end homelessness in the Harrisonburg-Rockingham community.