

Case Manager Guiding the Change

In a classic movie the refrain was “Who ya gonna call?” And the answer of course was "Ghost Busters!" At the Homeless Family Center, if the same refrain was used, the answer would be "Case Manager!" Our case managers, Doug Crouse and Lily Betancourt, take on the daily task of working with clients to help and empower them to turn their lives around. It is not an easy assignment, but one that is very rewarding.

At different times they have to be an advocate, a mediator, a trusted friend, and a wise sage. They are responsible for working with families who enter the Homeless Family Center to create a plan that will again make them self-sufficient. One formula does not work for everyone. The residents need a lot of things: a better education, childcare support, life skills training, parenting skills, and a dosage of esteem building. Doug and Lily tailor the in house and outside offerings to match the needs and capabilities of the residents. They have to get the sequence right. In some cases they point the residents in the right direction like showing them how to straighten out their credit scores. In other cases they need to be the spokesperson for the client by explaining their situation to a utility company when the client is set to move into independent living.

To hold this kind of job generally requires a four-year relevant degree and one year of experience in human services or a minimum of five years human services experience working in a capacity that would afford them the required skills and abilities to perform this job. Being “street smart” is a necessity as discernment of the facts being presented is a routine requirement of a case manager. Doug and Lily are knowledgeable about local resources that are available for their clients. Solving the problems of the homeless does take a community.

If you have an interest in helping the case managers at the Homeless Family Center make a real difference in a family's life, please contact Jodi Simon the Administrative Assistant at 772-567-5537 and she will walk you through the volunteer "sign up" process.

The Homeless Family Center provides opportunities for homeless families to end homelessness by achieving self-sufficiency through education, living wages and permanent housing. For more information or a tour of the Homeless Family Center call 772-567-5537 or check out the HFC website at www.homelessfamilycenter.com so you can see the faces and read the stories of the people you will be helping.

