



NIGHTLIGHTS

SPRING 2019

Physician Brings Decades of Hospital Experience to the Streets of Chicago

After 35 years as an interventional cardiologist in Michigan, Dr. Ralph Ryan is now practicing medicine on the streets of Chicago.

Ryan provides free health care to individuals who are experiencing homelessness as a volunteer physician with The Night Ministry, most often on the Street Medicine Team.

The Street Medicine Team brings supportive services directly to encampments, street corners, and other areas of the city. Being part of a team, with an Outreach Professional, Case Manager, and other volunteers, Ryan said, allows him to devote his attention to his patients' health.

"It frees me up to focus on providing medical care, knowing that the other needs of the clients are being met at the same time," he said.

Ryan and his wife, Denise, who volunteers on The Night Ministry's Health Outreach Bus, connected with the agency after they moved to the Chicago area in 2017. His parents were long-time supporters of The Night Ministry's mission.

Ryan, who is also a health care provider at PCC Austin Family Health Center, a free clinic on Chicago's West Side, said he approaches his patients as equals.

"They are me. These are truly my sisters and brothers, and their needs are my needs," he said.

"These are truly my sisters and brothers, and their needs are my needs."

- Dr. Ralph Ryan,
The Night Ministry
volunteer physician



Dr. Ralph Ryan consults with a patient on a chilly Saturday while making the rounds with the Street Medicine Team. Photo by Lloyd DeGrane.

Providing health care on the streets has its challenges. Patients often do not prioritize what could be serious health issues, Ryan said.

"That just requires different levels of meeting them where they are. What can I do to earn your trust and be in your space to do what I can to help you get served?"

Ryan said volunteering with The Night Ministry has given him insights into challenges within the public health system.

"We're running across people who have had their heart valves replaced because of infection due to heroin injection, and they are back on the street using heroin. These are critical cardiology questions I had to address as an attending cardiologist for years on the hospital side. And now I'm seeing the other side where there's this gap of care," he said.

"What do we do for these folks? We release them back to homelessness and drug addiction. It's a real ethical problem." ◇

HOUSING • HEALTH CARE • HUMAN CONNECTION

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Youth Aftercare Services Support Transitions

The relationship with The Night Ministry doesn't end when residents move on from the agency's Youth Housing Programs.

"The Night Ministry provides comprehensive case management for young people who have been discharged from our housing programs," said Bridget Thomas, Housing Stabilization Specialist. "We want to help them maintain their stability and independence."

Residents meet with Thomas before they leave so she can assess how she can assist them after they discharge. She then maintains regular contact and provides ongoing support.

Thomas said the type of assistance she offers varies from client to client. "Some young people might need referrals for employment, so I will pass along a job lead when I get it," she said. "Other times it's information about educational programs."

Helping clients make adjustments to independent living is also important. "When they are in our programs, they receive essentials like food. They have a place to wash their clothes," she said. "But when they leave they don't always have those things."

"We have ongoing conversations about what it takes to remain in their living situations. If you quit your job, you may not be able to stay in your apartment."



Bridget Thomas is responsible for supporting former residents of The Night Ministry's Youth Housing Programs.

William, a former resident of The Night Ministry's Interim Housing and STEPS Transitional Living Programs who now has his own apartment, enjoys staying connected with Thomas.

"She always lifts my spirits," he said, adding that Thomas has helped him secure employment, connect with supportive services in the community, and supplied him with transit cards and food to make ends meet when

times were tight.

Thomas said there are challenges to providing aftercare services. "When minors leave our programs, sometimes they don't leave correct contact information. Or their parents might not want to engage with aftercare because they are embarrassed about their housing situation," she said.

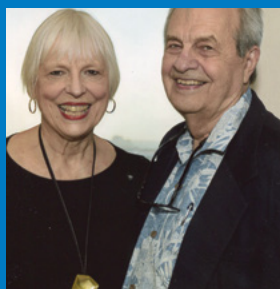
And while she might lose contact with some clients, Thomas said that doesn't necessarily mean they are struggling. "A lot of times it's because they are doing well. They just don't need as much help anymore." ♦

"We want to help them maintain their stability and independence."

- Bridget Thomas,
Housing Stabilization Specialist

How will you leave your legacy?

After securing economic stability and providing for the needs of your loved ones, you may choose to make a lasting charitable impact with a bequest to The Night Ministry. If you have already included The Night Ministry in your will, please let us know - we would like to acknowledge your generosity and welcome you as a member of The Legacy Society.



"We have actively supported The Night Ministry for 19 years. The decision to include The Night Ministry in our estate planning was an easy one. Our financial support will continue to help people to be self-reliant now and in the future."

*Paula & Gordon Addington
Legacy Society members*

Contact Christy Prassas

Vice President of
Development

& External Relations

christy@thenightministry.org
or (773) 506-6023.

THE NIGHT MINISTRY IN THE NEWS

The Night Ministry's work serving Chicago's homeless population during the dangerously cold weather of January 2019 was highlighted by several news stories. The Street Medicine Team was featured in a front-page article in the Chicago Sun-Times and in stories on WGN-TV, WBBM Newsradio, and other news media. Visit www.thenightministry.org/blog/the-night-ministry-in-the-news for links to a few of the stories.

No Clear Path to Housing for Many Who Experience Homelessness

The process of renting an apartment or buying a home can be difficult enough. But individuals experiencing homelessness face an array of challenges when trying to find stable housing.

“There are some very common situations among the homeless population such as little or no income, a low credit score, an arrest record, or a history of evictions that complicate the process of finding housing,” said Mirella Rodriguez, Case Manager at The Night Ministry.

Tanya Gassenheimer, Youth Health Attorney at the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless (CCH), said the conditions of homelessness bring many individuals into contact with law enforcement.

“Because a lot of youth and adults who are experiencing homelessness spend so much time outside, they tend to be more likely to have police give them citations for ordinance violations,” she said.

As part of her work on the Health Outreach Bus, Rodriguez often helps clients obtain court records and connects them with legal services that can assist with expunging them.

Gassenheimer, who worked in the housing practice group at LAF—a Chicago-based legal clinic that works with individuals experiencing poverty—before joining CCH, said evictions can have long-lasting effects, even if an eviction case is settled in a tenant’s favor.

“Once folks have evictions on their record, it’s really difficult to get any landlord to agree to rent to them,” she said. “Even if the eviction was dismissed, oftentimes for landlords, just seeing an eviction record can be a barrier.”

Rodriguez said part of her job is to assist clients with navigating the complex system of shelters, supportive housing, subsidized housing, and free market rentals.

An individual without a reliable income might stay in an emergency shelter while trying to secure an income through employment or government benefits, Rodriguez said. But living in a shelter can present its own set of complications.



Individuals experiencing homelessness often face multiple hurdles as they pursue permanent housing.

“If they are working, they might not be able to get to the shelter at check-in time,” she said. “Other clients don’t feel safe because of bad experiences at shelters. In other cases, they may have to separate from a partner, spouse, or family member.”

Rodriguez says an SRO (single-room occupancy) program that includes supportive services can be a good option for an individual who has a steady income but needs to build a credit score or balance out an eviction history.

“One of the biggest things that’s helpful for clients is that I do find out about waiting lists for SROs and for low-income housing,” she said, “but we need to move quickly because waiting lists often don’t stay open for very long.”

Rodriguez said she also does on-the-ground research for clients.

“If I’m in certain neighborhoods, and I see a listing for an apartment, I’ll take a picture and then contact the landlord to see what they require for an application,” she said. ◇

“Once folks have evictions on their record, it’s really difficult to get any landlord to agree to rent to them.”

*- Tanya Gassenheimer,
Chicago Coalition for the Homeless*

Kellogg Board Fellows Serve and Learn at The Night Ministry

Every year, a select group of students from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management join the boards of Chicago-area nonprofits as ex-officio members, tackling strategic projects while gaining valuable experience in board governance. The Night Ministry has been one of those organizations for more than a decade, one of the reasons Kellogg is being honored with the Lamplighter Award at this year's Lighting Up the Night Awards Dinner & Auction.

Bennett Applegate, a Board Fellow with The Night Ministry in fiscal year 2016, said Kellogg's commitment to social impact was a key factor in his decision to apply to the school.

"It was important to me to become involved in a substantive way with a community organization, especially one working in the area of housing," said Applegate.

Libby Angst, a Board Fellow during the 2017 fiscal year, believes her experience in the classroom enhanced her contributions to The Night Ministry.

"Because I was in the classroom with other students who were board fellows, I was able to collect best practices and insights from other organizations and bring them to the table," she said.

Current Kellogg Board Fellow, Dan Kish, said he believes his time on The Night Ministry's Board will help him serve in the future.



Dan Kish is currently serving as a fellow on The Night Ministry's Board of Directors through a program at Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management.

"I see this as an opportunity to learn how effective boards work," he said. "As I move on in my career, I will feel confident about my ability to give back to my community through board service."

"As I move on in my career, I will feel confident about my ability to give back to my community through board service."

- Dan Kish,
Kellogg Board Fellow

Projects have ranged from explorations of strategic options for the housing programs at the Open Door Shelter – West Town to assessing best practices for planned giving. But the relationship between The Night Ministry and Kellogg extends beyond the Board Fellows program.

Liz Livingston Howard, Executive Director of Kellogg's Center for Nonprofit Management, said The Night Ministry's President & CEO, Paul W. Hamann, often speaks to Kellogg students. The school has also developed educational programs for the agency's senior leadership.

"The relationship that we have with The Night Ministry encompasses a wide range of Kellogg's curriculum," Howard said. "The Lamplighter Award is a very positive recognition of that deep relationship." ♦

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The Night Ministry Eyes Big Move to Enhance Services

Plans are underway to relocate key portions of The Night Ministry's operations to a new facility in Chicago's Bucktown neighborhood. The location will house The Crib, The Night Ministry's overnight emergency shelter for young adults. It will also include overnight parking for the Health Outreach Bus and serve as the headquarters for the agency's central administration.

The move to 1735 North Ashland will more than double the size of The Crib's current operating space and allow for separate sleeping, dining, recreating, and programming areas. It will also unite the Health Outreach Bus and the Outreach and Health Ministry staff in one location, with a dedicated loading dock and strategic access to donation and supply storage, improving the program's efficiency.

"The move is about enhancing the services we provide as well as supporting efficiency and innovation in our programs, as called for in our strategic plan, *Serving in the Next Decade*," said Paul W. Hamann, The Night Ministry's President & CEO.



The Night Ministry plans to relocate The Crib, Outreach and Health Ministry staff, and central office to 1735 North Ashland.

Stay tuned for updates. For information about supporting the move, contact **Christy Prassas**, Vice President of Development & External Relations, at **(773) 506-6023** or **christy@thenightministry.org**. ♦

The Associate Board Wants You!

The Associate Board of The Night Ministry supports the overall mission and activities of the agency through volunteering, fundraising, networking, and advocacy opportunities targeted towards young professionals. We invite you to be a part of it!

For information, visit www.thenightministry.org/associate-board or email associateboard.tnm@gmail.com.



Save the Date
for The Night Ministry's Annual

Lighting Up the Night

Awards Dinner and Auction
June 11, 2019

Celebrating Human Connection

Join The Night Ministry at Sheraton Grand Chicago for this memorable event, emceed by WTTW host and producer Geoffrey Baer. We will be honoring Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management for cultivating business leaders with a passion for giving back to their communities and supporting the professional development of nonprofit executives. Tickets are available at www.thenightministry.org/lighting-up-the-night-2019. For information about sponsorship or auction support opportunities, contact **Sarah Sheek**, Special Events Coordinator, at sarahs@thenightministry.org or **(773) 506-6009**.



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The Night Ministry's community of
donors. By supporting our mission,
you provide a lifeline to forgotten
members of our community.*



The Crib Stays Open 24/7 to Serve Homeless Youth during Polar Vortex

While Chicago experienced record-breaking cold during the last week of January, The Crib, The Night Ministry's emergency shelter for young adults, was open around-the-clock.

The Crib normally operates on an overnight basis, but with support from the City of Chicago's Department of Family and Supportive Services, the program provided services from the evening of Sunday, January 24, through the morning of Friday, February 1.

Shuntrell was one of the young people who stayed at the shelter during the polar vortex.

"It was relaxing," said Shuntrell, who has been a regular guest of The Crib. "We stayed busy playing games, watching TV, and eating."

Dawnn Pirani Brumfield, Program Supervisor at The Crib, credits the staff with keeping operations going.

"They hung in there and made sure that the guests had what they needed," she said.

"We were able to connect with guests on a deeper level."

*- Marco Lucio-Chavez,
Youth Outreach Professional*



The Crib provided safe, warm shelter for 23 young adults experiencing homelessness while operating continuously during a dangerously cold stretch of days this past winter.

Youth Outreach Professional, Marco Lucio-Chavez, worked at The Crib during the extended hours. It gave him the opportunity to link guests to other services.

"We were able to connect with guests on a deeper level. We could approach them and talk to them about having housing assessments or find out what their other needs were," he said.

Pirani Brumfield said staff and guests were grateful for donations that came in during the week, especially blankets.

"Because of the cold weather, our regular laundry service provider was not operating," she said. "The staff were trying to do laundry

on-site, but we only have one washer and dryer, and they aren't commercial machines. So folks dropping off blankets was a huge blessing." ♦

Thank you to those who generously gave at the \$250 level or higher between October 16, 2018, and February 28, 2019.



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