

PRESS RELEASE

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Cross-Training DOORWAYS President, Opal M. Jones

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Opal M. Jones, President and CEO of DOORWAYS Interfaith AIDS Housing and Services, will trade the CEO title for a different role each day next week. She will work alongside employees in other departments for a **not so** “*Undercover Boss*” type of cross-training exercise. "I'm excited to spend time with the staff, learn about their roles and see how their work improves the health and quality of life for our residents," she stated. "It's an excellent opportunity to get my hands dirty and personally show just how much I care about them and the great work they do."

Undercover Boss is the popular CBS television show where CEOs dress in costume to take on jobs in secret within their company to learn how to make their company better based on the common Human Resources practice of “cross-training.” Cross-training is proven to assist businesses to create a more efficient and team-oriented environment. By learning about how individual staff members succeed each day, Jones will gain insight into the day-to-day services DOORWAYS provides to better assist with creation of overall goals for the organization.

Next week, through this open cross-training exercise, Jones will:

On Monday, August 18, 2014, don nursing scrubs and assist with medicine distribution and the work of the nursing staff at Cooper House.

On Tuesday, August 19, 2014, don an apron, hair net and serving gloves to assist the dietary staff at Cooper House with the breakfast and lunch duties.

On Wednesday, August 20, 2014, wear a DOORWAYS work shirt and tool belt to assist the Residential Property Maintenance team in the day to day operations of the 103 city apartments offered to low-income families affected by HIV/AIDS.

On Thursday, August 20, 2014, work with the Cooper House Custodial Team, and on Friday, August 21, 2014, work with Own Home subsidy staff to prevent emergency situations from making another Missouri family homeless.

Of the undertaking Nursing Supervisor, Jim Bayer, RN, said, “We are excited to show off the incredible work the nurses perform every day at Cooper House. This experience should really enrich our efforts.”

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Cooper House is a Cooper House, a Supportive Housing Facility, opened in 1997 to serve people who were unable to live independently as a result of HIV/AIDS. The fully accessible three-story building offers 36 private rooms with baths, 24-hour protective oversight and nursing care, a dining room, commercial kitchen, recreational areas, and administrative offices. Cooper House staffing includes Registered Nurses, Certified Nurses Aids and Licensed Practical Nurses who work with physicians to establish treatment plans and oversee complicated medical protocols. Social services for residents are provided by in-house Social Workers, while an Activities Coordinator organizes programs for clients, field trips, and emotional support. Cooper House also provides transportation to physicians and healthy meals prepared and served daily. Cooper House is the only program of its kind in the region and was one of the first in the United States to provide intensive residential services to people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWH/A).

The Residential program provides 103 apartment units at seven sites located throughout the City of St. Louis, which are home to more than 200 people, of which more than a third were children. The Residential program serves people affected by HIV/AIDS who are capable of independent living, but whose financial and health issues limit their ability to pay fair market rent. Many of the individuals and families in the DOORWAYS Residential Program have faced a history of poverty and trauma from violence or abuse. Many came from neighborhoods plagued by drugs and other illegal activity. Living in Residential Facilities provides our clients the ability to live in an affordable safe place where they can be healthy and safe.

The Own Home program provides over \$1 million annually in rent, mortgage, utility, and move-in subsidies on behalf of people who are homeless, or who would otherwise become homeless. The Own Home program serves clients throughout a broad geographic range that includes seven counties in Missouri and eight counties in Illinois. Own Home staff also provide housing counseling, referral to community resources and a clearinghouse list of landlords with safe and affordable units available to people living with HIV/AIDS. Through the clearinghouse, DOORWAYS' Own Home program inspects units to determine cleanliness and safety, assesses compliance with housing quality standards, maintains a list of approved units for clients in need, and advocates for clients with landlords and utility companies.

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Opal M. Jones earned a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration in 2000 with an emphasis in Management and Organizational Behavior. As President and CEO of DOORWAYS for two years, Jones works with a staff of 70 and a budget of \$7 million. She recently graduated the Coro Women in Leadership Program through Focus St. Louis and was offered a position on the board of directors of the National AIDS Housing Coalition. She continues to be a tireless advocate for neighborhood revitalization in the City of St. Louis. Board Chair, Diane Levine, observed, “Opal is a compelling leader and caring investor in our community. She works in some of the most dangerous neighborhoods in our community to ensure the safety of DOORWAYS clients.”

DOORWAYS actively seeks other organizations and individuals to continue transforming people’s lives year round. You and your organization can truly make a positive difference. Call today to volunteer!

About DOORWAYS:

DOORWAYS is an interfaith non-profit organization that provides housing and related supportive services to improve quality of life and health outcomes for people affected by HIV/AIDS. Through direct service delivery and the efforts of identified program partners, DOORWAYS’ programs and services annually benefit 1,000 households living with HIV/AIDS in the 15-county St. Louis metropolitan area, 62 under-served counties in outstate Missouri, and another 55 under-served counties in outstate Illinois. To volunteer or to donate, please visit www.doorwayshousing.org.

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