

A Safe Place to Heal

Human Services Spotlight Series #5

Community Partners & HS Staff Rally For K

K has been a chronically homeless woman in Pinellas County for many years. She lost her son to gun violence, she lost her mother, and she lost her home. While on the streets she suffered terrible abuse and degradation.

K started coming into the Human Services St. Petersburg Office to use the restroom, clean up and cool off from the oppressive heat. She told staff how she had been attacked and beaten while sleeping on the bus stop bench outside the building.

She is 62 years old and receives social security disability income. She used all of her income for motel rooms. After repeated returns to the HS office when the money ran out, HS staff worked together to find a safe place for K to go.

The St. Petersburg staff reached out to our partners at the *Homeless Leadership Board* (HLB), who in turn reached out to partners at *Boley Centers* and *Daystar Life Center*.



Photo Credit: Boley Centers

With over 50 housing and service center locations scattered throughout Pinellas County, *Boley Centers* provide a wide variety of treatment, recovery and vocational services; a network of living opportunities in community residences and apartments; and a large staff of people dedicated to improving the lives of individuals with disabilities. *Daystar Life Center* provides the necessities of life to our neighbors in need in order to alleviate hunger, homelessness, and hopelessness.

In a matter of three days, four agencies came together to make a change in K's life.

At 5:30 p.m. Friday night, K got into a taxi, paid for by Boley, to go to a motel, paid for by Daystar. She was loaded with hygiene supplies, laundry soap, and food items funded by the HS St. Petersburg staff donations program. On Monday morning she was picked up by Boley staff and is safely residing in a Boley apartment with support services to help K heal and stabilize, mentally and physically.

Pinellas County Human Services has been creating solutions for a stronger community by serving those most in need since 1955. With a network of over 105 partner agencies and managing 190 plus contracts and grants, Human Services helps Pinellas County residents obtain access to medical care, emergency financial assistance, help connect to county judicial resources, optimize benefits for Veterans and Dependents, investigate consumer complaints, and help those who are experiencing homelessness.

www.pinellascounty.org/humanservices.

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