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HIGHER GROUND: CHANGING LIVES ONE FLOOR AT A TIME

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The first of its kind in Minnesota, Catholic Charities' new Higher Ground facility gives residents an opportunity to move out of homelessness by combining permanent housing and emergency shelter in one building.

The building is designed to serve people at different stages of the housing continuum, whether they need overnight emergency shelter, a supportive housing environment or an efficiency apartment of their own. It is a symbol of hope for its residents.



For Joey, one of the 53 full time residents, Higher Ground offers stability and helps him access the tools he needs to be self-sufficient.

Joey first sought assistance at Catholic Charities Secure Waiting Space, the temporary shelter Higher Ground was built to replace. Although he held a part time job, school loans made it hard to pay for his basic needs. He would come into Secure Waiting Space at 5:00 p.m. after a long day at work and try to sleep in the crowded and loud room. Living in a single room occupancy apartment at Higher Ground, he has his own bed, wardrobe, dresser, refrigerator, microwave and sink.

"This is my step up to the next level," says Joey. "I went from a mat, to a bed and now my own room. It's my sanctuary to collect my thoughts and be confident in moving forward."

Catholic Charities' Higher Ground represents a comprehensive housing model, focused on upholding people's dignity and working with them to become as self-sufficient as possible. Clients at Higher Ground have access to resources including job skills training, mental health support services and on-site direct health support.

As Joey continues working towards his goals, he says his stay at Higher Ground will only be temporary. "The changes here make you feel more like a person, you don't feel homeless," says Joey. "Now, it's easier to wrap your head around something positive."

Higher Ground is featured as the project-of-the-month for Minnesota Housing Partnership's [***Impact Spotlight***](#). The ***Impact Spotlight*** celebrates the work of affordable housing partners in creating healthy, sustainable communities. Pace-setting projects are selected based on ingenuity in housing development and collaborative efforts linking housing for low-to-moderate income families to transportation, jobs, or services.

About Catholic Charities: Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis (www.cctwincities.org) serves those most in need. Catholic Charities helps individuals and families reach their full human potential as they call for justice in the community.

About MHP: The Minnesota Housing Partnership (www.mhponline.org) supports affordable housing development for low- and moderate-income people to strengthen Minnesota communities and families. MHP provides information, consulting, training, resources and advocacy for communities to bolster options for safe and affordable housing.

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