

LOTUS CAMPAIGN



Unexpected allies working together to solve homelessness

May 2024 Newsletter

Lotus Newsletter 2024 Edition

Lotus Campaign Reaches New Milestones!



Lotus Campaign Reaches 200th Sponsored Resident in Raleigh and 800th Sponsored Resident Overall

May has been a milestone month for Lotus Campaign. We passed our 200th sponsored resident in Raleigh and our 800th sponsored resident since Lotus began in 2018.

We are pleased to share their stories (with names have been changed for confidentiality):

Charlotte Family Housing and Garden Road Ventures Help Place Lotus Campaign's 800th Resident

Ms. D., a single mother, was working and homeless, like so many people. After a similar story she had trouble securing a place to live for herself and her daughter due to a previous broken lease. Working in daycare, she moved from month to month in family members' homes, an unsustainable situation that was not healthy for her young daughter.

She sought assistance through Charlotte Family Housing, a Lotus Campaign social service partner since 2018 that has placed 201 residents through Lotus' Landlord Participation Program. Now working for a local pediatrician's office, Ms. D. signed a lease for an apartment in less than a month. Her new home is a Garden Road Ventures residential property in Charlotte located in a neighborhood of opportunity near two bus stops, gas stations and multiple grocery stores.

"I love my new community," says Ms. D. "It's clean and safe, and I have friendly neighbors who look out for us. It's a lot better for my daughter. The best part is sitting on my balcony, people watching and seeing all of the children playing. I picture my daughter playing there when she gets older!"

According to a recent study conducted by Harvard University's Big Charity and the [Economic Justice](#) team, when children grow up in mixed-income communities, their long-term economic prospects – from education to earnings –

"My favorite day is lease signing day," says Britnie Grayson, housing resource coordinator at Charlotte Family Housing, which will continue providing support such as monthly lease management check-ins, budgeting assistance, food referrals, access to community resources, credit counseling, landlord-tenant advocacy and rental subsidies to Ms. D. "Despite her young age, Ms. D. is very motivated and is doing great. It's wonderful watching her become independent and create a thriving home environment for her daughter, particularly as a Lotus Campaign's 800th sponsored resident."

Both Britnie and Ms. D. acknowledge the support of Charlotte Program Director Geoffrey Brooks of Lotus Campaign, who was instrumental in facilitating the partnership between CFH and Garden Road Ventures, allowing Ms. D. and her daughter to finally have a home of their own.



Raleigh's 200th Sponsored Resident Thrives

Esther only recently became a Lotus Campaign partner in March 2024, and has already successfully housed two of their clients through our Landlord Participation Program, including Raleigh's 200th sponsored resident.

Ms. J. and her children had received services from Interim periodically over several years while experiencing physical, emotional, and behavioral issues. Earlier this year, after fleeing her abuser and living in a hotel, Ms. J. contacted Esther's on-site lease seeking housing assistance. She was referred to the organization's housing case management program, where a case manager helped her navigate the process of leasing and securing housing through Lotus Campaign and one of Lotus' real estate partners in Raleigh.

In seeking possible clients to sponsor for housing, Lotus looks for those who are "lease ready," meaning an individual is ready to take the next step into housing, with a network of support from Lotus and its partners to sign a lease and pay rent. Esther and Lotus named Ms. J. "lease ready" because she consistently demonstrated financial responsibility and housing stability. Since December 2023, she had been making regular payments to maintain temporary housing at an extended stay hotel. She also had prior rental experience, understood tenant rights and lease compliance requirements, and remained actively engaged in case management by meeting regularly with her case manager throughout the process.

Esther's Director of Housing Cheryl Grayson, CPC, PHA, shared her experience working with Lotus. "It has been a wonderful experience. The process is straightforward with the landlords that we have worked with so far have been great. Also, Raleigh Senior Program Director Julie Peil has been readily available to meet with us to answer our questions, and she quickly responds to our emails. We are looking forward to placing more of our clients in housing through Lotus!"

These partnerships and milestones highlight how Lotus Campaign continues to create pathways to safe, stable housing by working alongside community organizations and landlords that are dedicated to supporting our most vulnerable neighbors.

Lotus Campaign Named a Finalist for ULI Charlotte Momentum Maker Award

Lotus Campaign was thrilled to be named a finalist by ULI Charlotte for a Momentum Maker award for our Landlord Participation Program, along with below studies: The Pearl - Charlotte's Innovation District, and One Independent Center.

The award recognizes an individual or organization that is creating transformative impact in the Charlotte real estate and development community.



According to ULI Charlotte, "Momentum doesn't just happen. It's built by bold projects, visionary organizations, and the people who refuse to settle for what already exists." The Momentum Maker nomination for May 2024 was a celebration of those individuals and teams, the ones shaping not only Charlotte's skyline, but its future.

We aren't being here for the grand prize, but as they say in the city, it's an honor to have been nominated alongside other stellar Charlotte-based initiatives.

Your Support Can Go Even Further Now!



Spring Fundraising Campaign Making Opportunity!

Your support can go [even further](#) right now.

As we move through the final weeks of our spring campaign, new matching opportunities are helping every gift make an even greater impact:

- **Triangle gifts:** Individual gifts up to \$5,000 count toward a \$10,000 goal that will match a \$10,000 match from the JJ Pflieger Foundation.
- **Charlotte and other market gifts:** Mary Beth and Philip Payne are matching gifts (with a dollar up to \$25,000).

If you have been [unable to give](#), now is a powerful time to give. Your support helps unlock additional housing and opens more doors to stable housing.



Buy Party

Something BIG Is Unlocking This Fall

Join us as we come together to UNLOCK new solutions to housing in 2025:

Charlotte: September 18

Raleigh: September 17

The Buy Party brings partners, advocates, and community leaders together to UNLOCK housing, opportunity, and stability.

Early commitments from the individuals in the Raleigh market will help UNLOCK a \$10,000 match from the JJ Pflieger Foundation if received before the end of Buy Today goes on sale in June, but an opportunity can secure your tickets available now.

Get [2025 Sponsorships](#) is now available.

For sponsorship inquiries, contact Leslie James Hill, CFM at lejames@lotuscampaign.org.

We plan on UNLOCKING what is possible.

What We Are Listening To And Reading



Charlotte Business Journal Covers Source Study: A partnership between Garden Road Ventures, the City of Charlotte and Lotus Campaign

The Charlotte Business Journal covered Garden Road Ventures' (GRV) acquisition of Queen City, a 18-unit affordable housing community in the historic neighborhood. GRV will fully restore the preservation work already underway at the property in partnership with Lotus Campaign and with support from the City of Charlotte's Housing Trust Fund. This deal is helping preserve quality affordable housing in Charlotte. Read all about it [here](#).

Portrait History on Lotus Campaign in Charlotte Journal: A private sector path out of homelessness

The Charlotte Journal featured a wonderful and super thorough story on Lotus Campaign including our on-site office featuring social services partner Raleigh Rescue Mission and real estate partners Garden Road Ventures and First Properties, citing data from NCPIA and National Alliance to End Homelessness, and sharing the success and ease of our many Lotus partners, Dennis, who is living in his own home after support from Department, Garden Lake Apartments and Lotus. My favorite quote from the article is, "Unlike many Carolina towns a step at stepping that burden from overwhelming." because I really do believe we can do it. I hope you'll take a read for learn more about our work, particularly as we honor May as Affordable Housing Month and Mental Health Awareness Month, two issues which are inextricably linked, and both are necessary for solving homelessness. Read the story [here](#).

New York Times Editorial Board Wants from the New Yorker: America Needs to Build More Housing

This recent opinion piece by The New York Times editorial board is one of the best non-fictional statements of why we have a housing affordability crisis. When we don't build enough housing, and continue to not build enough housing, the mismatch between supply and demand drives costs and lack of affordability gets compounded.

Key to sustained rising costs, hard to navigate approval and regulatory processes, and neighborhood opposition (sometimes NIMBYism but mostly a fear of change and deep down a fear of poverty), and building housing gets even harder.

The authors make this brief history of how we got here, and how we can get out of being miserable for everyone. They share two compelling and relatively simple suggestions related to housing typology and the regulatory and approval processes, to move the needle on housing affordability. One that those are simple in execution, but are things we should assess all day!

First, they almost never bring issues to allow more multifamily homes. Second, cities and towns should make it easier to build where it is already legal."

We are grateful there are brilliant, thoughtful solutions out there such as Lotus Campaign, Community Solutions, Inc. and Pathlight, where people experiencing homelessness are finding stable housing even in existing units. But this solution alone is not enough to house everyone who needs housing, and certainly not enough to make it affordable for everyone.

Please read, share and talk about [this article](#). We need to step up the meaningful conversations about housing and how to make the needle on affordability.

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LOTUS CAMPAIGN

LOTUS CAMPAIGN
PO Box 20067
Charlotte, NC 28220
(704) 374-3776
www.lotuscampaign.org

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