



ACCESS

Celebrating 40 years of
service in Summit County

Inside ACCESS

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FROM HOMELESSNESS TO BECOMING AN 'EMPOWERED WOMAN'

Dealing with anxiety and mental health concerns can be difficult for many, but then at the age of 31, Latia lost her mother, who she was living with, and this caused her to begin down a path toward homelessness.

"My mom was my best friend, and when I lost her, I was at a loss," stated Latia.

Due to her anxiety and dealing with the grief of her mother's passing, Latia ended up losing the apartment they shared because her Social Security payment benefits were reduced because she forgot to follow up on the necessary paperwork.

Following losing her apartment, Latia ended up moving in with one of her sisters, but the relationship became strained and difficult to manage, which caused her sister to ask her to leave. Unfortunately for Latia, this occurred during the cold months of winter in Ohio.

In an effort to avoid the harsh winter cold, Latia was able to move in with a kind stranger that became a friend. Unfortunately, the only space available to sleep was an uninsulated porch. This led her to ACCESS.

Nearly immediately upon her becoming a resident, Latia was able to find a job as a housekeeper at Canal Pointe Rehabilitation & Nursing. Listening to the advice from her case manager, she was able to save \$5,000 during her stay at ACCESS, to assist her once she secured permanent housing. She was also very active while at ACCESS, where she attended an Akron RubberDucks game with the shelter, and she also attended classes, such as Chick Chat, financial literacy and classes offered by Open M.

After five months at the shelter, Latia qualified for a Shelter Plus Care voucher, and on her own she found a landlord who was willing to accept the voucher, and she moved in to her new home.

Latia continues to maintain the job she had while at ACCESS, and she was able to complete the necessary paperwork to resume receiving her Social Security. She also purchased a car on her own, a step which made her so excited that she immediately called her former case manager at ACCESS to let her know the good news.

"I love life," added Latia. "I took what I had learned at ACCESS to better myself, such as learning outlets to relieve my stress and anxiety, like panting in my room."

Latia's growth and determination led her to being named the winner of the prestigious Lynn M. Budnick Empowered Woman Award at the State of the Shelter in **2023**.

This year's State of the Shelter will be held on May 14. Visit access-shelter.org/stateoftheshelter to learn more about this year's event, and to purchase tickets to experience the touching and courageous story of this year's Lynn M. Budnick Empowered Woman Award winner.



Latia was the recipient of the 2023 Lynn M. Budnick Empowered Woman Award. Here she is pictured, with executive director Jackie Hemsworth and board president Nikki Viar receiving her award at last year's event.

**"I TOOK WHAT I
LEARNED AT ACCESS
TO BETTER MYSELF"
- LATIA, FORMER
RESIDENT**



The State of the Shelter

Tuesday, May 14, 2024

Quaker Station Banquet Hall

Doors open at 7:15 am

Program starts at 8:00 am

For more information and ticket purchase:

access-shelter.org/stateoftheshelter



Jackie's Corner



I know a lot of us have been enjoying the spring weather over the past few weeks. When I think about spending time outside, I also think of our neighbors that live outside due to being unhoused.

Currently, the Supreme Court is hearing an important case, to overturn *Grants Pass vs. Johnson*. The impending decision could have drastic consequences on the unhoused population, virtually making it illegal to exist while being homeless.

The original case, based in Grants Pass, Oregon, originated when the town developed ordinances that would make it uncomfortable and deliver steep, increasing fines and penalties to any unhoused person found sleeping in public places. The debate comes when a town or city has a lack of shelter and/or affordable housing options but still enforces this type of penalties on its unhoused population.

The outcome of this case has the potential to have far reaching impact on countless individuals without a permanent place to sleep. You can read more at www.endhomelessness.org

Don't Miss Out!

Limited 2024 Event Sponsorship Opportunities Still Available

access-shelter.org/eventsponsorship

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 Youtube.com/@ACCESS-shelter

National *Volunteer* Week
 April 21-27

Looking to make a difference? Check out our opportunities at:
<https://www.access-shelter.org/volunteer>

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ACCESS TO HOST STATE OF THE SHELTER EVENT ON MAY 14

ACCESS will be hosting its annual State of the Shelter fundraising event on Tuesday, May 14. The event will take place at Quaker Station Banquet Hall, which is located at 135 South Broadway, Akron, 44308. The doors will open at 7:15 a.m., with the program beginning at 8 a.m.

The State of the Shelter is a morning celebration filled with an uplifting peek at what occurred over the past year, and the powerful story of the winner of the prestigious Lynn M. Budnick Empowered Woman Award, who is a former resident that has successfully completed her journey toward permanent housing. The event also includes a robust discussion on ACCESS and the critical needs being faced by our communities, especially the direct needs of those experiencing homelessness.

The presenting sponsor for this year's event is SSP.

This year's keynote speaker is Beth Shinn. She is a Cornelius Vanderbilt professor at Vanderbilt University who studies how to prevent and end homelessness. Her 2020 book, titled *In the Midst of Plenty: Homelessness and What to Do About It*, which was co-authored with Jill Khadduri, highlights how we can end homelessness in the U.S., if we devote the necessary resources. Shinn serves on Nashville's Affordable Housing Task Force and Nashville's Homeless Planning Council. She also currently serves on the Research Advisory Board for the U.S. National Alliance to End Homelessness.



Amy M. Riegel, executive director of the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO), served as the keynote speaker at last year's State of the Shelter event

Henry Johnson, Jr., the senior program manager at Leadership Akron, will be the emcee for the morning event.

In honor of ACCESS' 40th anniversary this year, there will be an inaugural presentation of a new award recognizing an individual for their dedication to ACCESS and improving our community.

Tickets are required to attend the event. Breakfast is included and there are two ticketing options: \$60 for individuals and \$450 for a table, which includes availability for 8 individuals. For more information on the event and to purchase tickets, visit access-shelter.org/stateoftheshelter.

PLANNED GIVING: LEAVING A LEGACY OF EMPOWERMENT

Adding ACCESS to your will or trust is a simple way to help pave the future for ACCESS and our residents, and to leave a legacy of empowerment and support.

Planned giving allows you to continue to use your assets during your lifetime, while leaving either a specific dollar amount or percentage of your estate to support the mission of ACCESS.

When you donate to ACCESS through planned giving, you play a direct role in creating a foundation for woman and children experiencing homelessness. Some examples of the empowering necessities your support makes possible include stabilizing women and children experiencing homelessness by providing for their basic needs at no cost to them, identify the obstacles that caused their homeless situation, provide professional guidance, support and education to

overcome those obstacles, empower and assist them in attaining employment and independent housing and more.

There are many benefits for planned giving as well, which include providing organizational support for future operations and programs, and it may offer significant tax advantages, to name a few.

There are also many planned giving options, ensuring there is an option available to meet your needs and future desires. Some planned giving options available include outright gifts, bequests by will or trust, life insurance policies, IRAs, and required minimum distributions.

Be sure to speak with a financial advisor to see which option is best for you. You may also visit access-shelter.org/planned-giving for more information.