

This past year has been filled with humbling experiences time and again. It was not all easy or even enjoyable. Some days were so challenging that I seriously considered giving up. In the end, it feels like what was supposed to happen happened, and what was not meant to be, did not. But, in the moment, we could not understand why everything had to be so hard.

Some of the lows include searching hundreds of properties to either rent or buy and coming up short 99% of the time. The difficulty finding property that fits the criteria for people living on the sex offense registry is great. The property cannot be within 1000 feet of a school or daycare. It cannot be within 500 feet of a park. Add to that landlords who don't want to rent to folks on the registry and finding something within our limited budget that was also big enough to accommodate at least 5 men. That was very hard! But we found not one but two needles in the many haystacks, and we finally opened our doors in June 2021.

During this past year, we also wrote tens of grants hoping to receive funding to keep our program viable. In the summer, we finally received word that a grant proposal was approved. Thanks to Lutheran Foundation, we were finally able to hire a case manager to work with the residents in meeting their basic needs and assisting them with moving into independence. Grant writing is time consuming and arduous. Being a new organization with no track record, it is understandable that most grantors were reluctant to take a chance on Reset Missouri, and we are very grateful that Lutheran Foundation did just that.

On a positive note, Reset Missouri has developed significant relationships over the past year with volunteers and donors. We have been humbled and so grateful for the support we have received. The monetary donations and the contributions of time, clothing, household products and furniture has been inconceivable. We fully furnished two homes without buying a single piece of furniture! The outpouring of support has truly been an incredible blessing.

Because of the hard work of our Board of Directors and the tenacity of Debra and myself, we have successfully begun fulfilling our mission. As of December 31, 2021, we were providing transitional housing for 14 men plus a house monitor. The residents are living in two units. One is a rented apartment, and the other is a duplex about 3 blocks away from the apartment. The men from the apartment come to the house to do laundry, and the men from the duplex go to the apartment for programming: classes, meetings, and groups. We are one community in two locations.

Getting a new organization off the ground is an arduous task. Doing so in the middle of a pandemic was a Herculean feat. I am so grateful to the Board of Directors, the donors, the volunteers, and especially to Debra Grund who has volunteered thousands of hours to this organization. We have done a great deal in a short period of time, but there is still much to do. I am excited to see what the future holds.