

A Drum and a Prayer

Ramona became homeless in 2013 after she lost her job and was evicted from her apartment. She spent several years living with various family members, including some time taking care of her aging parents in North Carolina. Eventually, however, she ended up back in New London at the Homeless Hospitality Center.

As a guest at the hospitality center, Ramona's positivity and sense of humor was infectious among staff, volunteers, and other guests. As a natural care taker, Ramona always took it upon herself to reach out to others with a hug and a smile.

When asked how she was able to stay so positive during her bout with homelessness, Ramona said that faith, music, and community were the three essential ingredients in keeping her focused and optimistic. Ramona has long been a part of the local New London music scene, managing and playing as a percussionist in several local bands over the years. She has also been active as a musician in her church, which she says has been an important part of her journey.

While at the shelter, Ramona took advantage of the opportunity to work with employment specialists from We Work 2 and Maturity Works who helped her in her job search. She refers to HHC as a stepping stone—a place where one is given the tools needed to get back on their feet. With the help she received from HHC's staff and volunteers, Ramona was able to find permanent housing and moved into her new apartment in May of 2018.



Ramona continues to visit the shelter and spend time with the friends she made while she was a guest. When asked what she would want others to know about a place like HHC, she said, "people shouldn't judge a book by its cover... shelters are not as bad as people make them out to be." Her advice to others who might find themselves in similar situations is to stay focused and positive, and to never lose their sense of humor. With folks like Ramona around, that's always a little easier to do.

To learn more about how you can get involved at HHC, [visit our website](#) or contact us at info@nlhhc.org.

