

# HOPE LIVES HERE

A \$3.5 MILLION CAMPAIGN  
FOR INTERFAITH OUTREACH HOME





*Here, I feel like I can breathe again. We are not just surviving, but thriving.*

## The Monroe Family

After a very difficult year, Nicole and her two daughters were evicted from their home and spent the following two years in an extended-stay hotel. Although she had been employed full-time by a cardiology practice for ten years, she was paying \$1,100 every month for her hotel room, where she feared for her girls' safety and experienced crippling anxiety. The cost to keep her family housed meant that money was tight for food, childcare, medical appointments, and other necessities, and she sometimes turned to credit to make ends meet.

## WORKING FAMILIES LIVING ON THE ECONOMIC MARGINS

More than 40 percent of working families living in Atlanta are liquid asset poor, which means they do not have enough saved to cover three months of expenses at the poverty level. Even more alarming is that Black families are nearly three times more likely to live in liquid asset poverty than their white counterparts—many of whom are families with single, female heads of household who are also contending with gender pay disparities, inadequate workplace protections, and the high cost of childcare.

When coupled with a lack of affordable housing throughout metro Atlanta, hardworking families like the Monroes are one step away from financial crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic tipped the scales for many living on the economic margins, who unexpectedly lost income, experienced illness, or were confronted with medical bills that made paying off credit card debt, building savings, paying rent and utilities, or otherwise moving beyond day-to-day survival even more complicated—which can sometimes take generations to overcome.

These are the families to whom Interfaith Outreach Home opens its doors and says,

*Come in. Take a deep breath. Let me help you reclaim your path.*

Building upon a legacy thirty years in the making, Interfaith Outreach Home is ready to secure its own future just as it has helped hundreds of Atlanta families do.

Our **\$3.5 million HOPE LIVES HERE campaign**—the first in our history—will enable us to:

- Purchase our 3.6-acre property on Buford Highway;
- Increase our capacity for housing and services by 50 percent; and
- Lay the foundation for our strategic growth so that we can continue to make deep, lasting impact while broadening the number of families we serve.

Together, these projects will help ensure Interfaith Outreach Home's presence in northeast Atlanta for decades to come so that families like the Monroes achieve financial independence and never experience homelessness again.



## A HOME FOR HOPE, HAVEN, AND HEALING

Interfaith Outreach Home **EMPOWERS** hardworking, homeless families to strive for an independent future by offering safe, affordable interim housing and critical support services so they can achieve **FINANCIAL SOLVENCY** and **SUSTAINED SELF-SUFFICIENCY**.

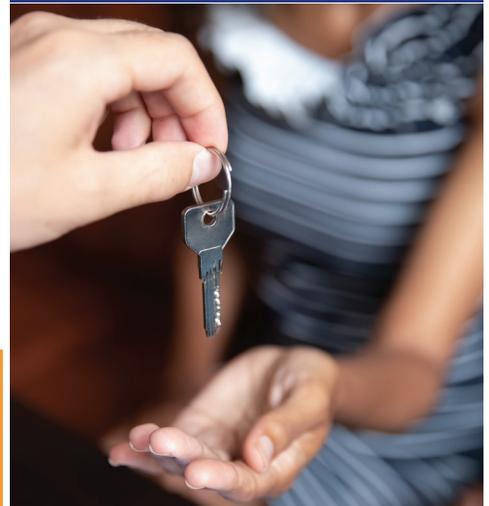
While Interfaith Outreach Home was founded through and continues to be supported by religious institutions, we have no affiliation with a specific church or church-based practice and serve working families in need **REGARDLESS OF FAITH, GENDER, OR FAMILY COMPOSITION.**



In the early 1980s, the Interfaith Association of North Atlanta—comprising nearly thirty churches and synagogues—recognized a need for safe, affordable housing and support services for working families experiencing financial hardship. Their collective vision enabled us to open our doors to welcome our first family in 1992. Since that time, nearly **600 FAMILIES** have found hope, haven, and healing at Interfaith Outreach Home (IOH).

Three decades later, our approach has evolved alongside the increasingly complex challenges of poverty and homelessness in metro Atlanta. Today, we serve many families led by single working parents and offer programming geared toward achieving long-term stability, including our mandatory savings program. Of the families who have graduated from our program as it is today, 90 percent are living with sustained independence.

Interfaith Outreach Home has a remarkable **90% SUCCESS RATE** for those who complete our program as it is today, which is measured by families that stay together, remain free of government assistance, and maintain private housing for five years post-graduation.

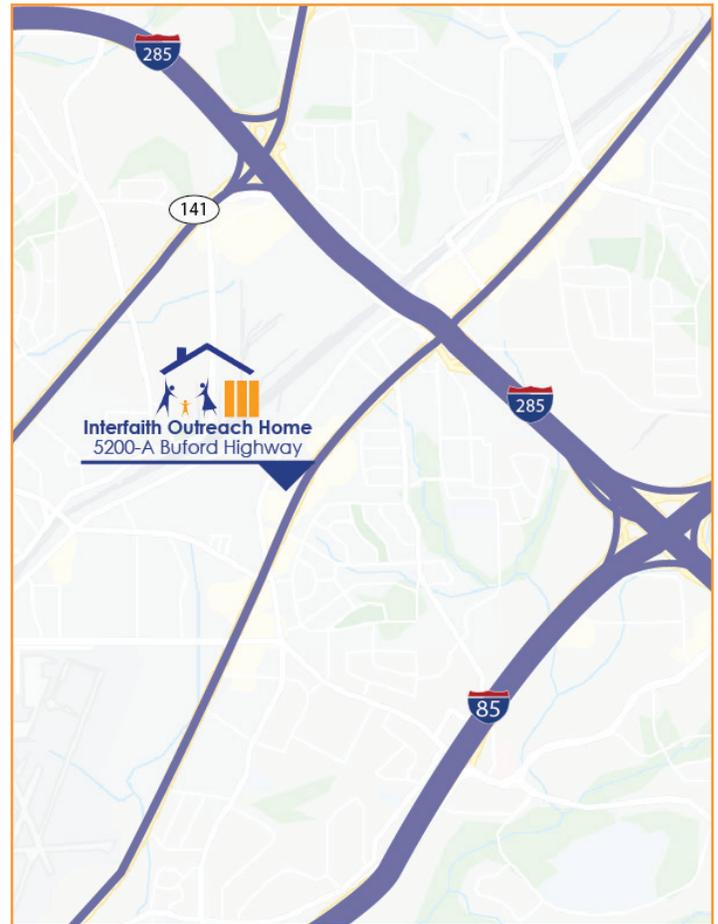


*A hand up, rather than a hand out.*

## AN OPPORTUNITY TO SECURE OUR FUTURE

Like many of the families we serve, Interfaith Outreach Home has been on its own journey to self-sufficiency. For more than thirty years, we have been offering our services at 5200-A Buford Highway through a favorable ground lease. It was always our dream to own this property, which would afford us enhanced stability and enable us to secure our presence in the community we love—and where our services are so urgently needed.

The trajectory of our organization was forever changed when land ownership became an attainable reality. In spring 2021, a community stakeholder made the remarkable decision to purchase the land we had been leasing and donate it back to Interfaith Outreach Home, which invested \$300,000 toward the purchase. This generous endorsement of our mission generated a renewed momentum for our work and the families we serve, bringing our future into much sharper focus and precipitating plans to expand our impact.



## IMPACT THAT SPANS GENERATIONS

The generational cycle of poverty that many families face is perpetuated by a system that makes it difficult to pursue wealth-building opportunities that come with owning assets, such as accruing savings or owning a home. Interfaith Outreach Home lends **A HAND UP RATHER THAN A HAND OUT** to tangibly disrupt this cycle, offering the time and space families need to rebuild their financial, mental, and emotional foundations for self-sufficiency that they can model for their children.

### SAFE, SECURE HOUSING

Our Buford Highway home currently offers ten apartments, which allow families of any composition to live together in privacy and dignity for up to two years. We conduct a thorough application and interview process to confirm that the families we serve have both a demonstrated need for and commitment to thrive in our program.

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*Being part of the IOH community has been healing. I am paying off debt and saving as much as possible, but never less than \$500 per month. I am cleaning up my credit so our options will be different when we leave. I was afraid we would end up in a shelter, and I am so grateful to be at IOH where we are safe, have our own space, and a plan to achieve our goals.*

The Monroe Family

### ACCOUNTABILITY

Our families identify goals for the duration of their stay and sign a contract stating their action plan to achieve them. Residents also contribute \$150 each month for rent and utilities and are responsible for securing food and childcare.

### MANDATORY SAVINGS PROGRAM

We require all families residing at IOH to save a minimum of \$500 each month that goes into a monitored savings account. Every dollar in this account is returned to the family upon graduation from the program, and funds are used to address barriers to permanent housing including outstanding debt, a low credit score, or a history of eviction.

Residents save approximately \$10,000 to \$15,000 during their time with us, and many go above this amount. These savings generate **REAL TRACTION TOWARD SELF SUFFICIENCY** and open the door to homeownership, which continues to be one of the most significant avenues to building wealth and financial stability in the United States.



### SUPPORT RESOURCES

Residents have access to a variety of support resources during their time with us, including counseling, personalized case management, and guidance in credit repair and debt reconciliation.



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*Increased bank balances and credit scores are just one piece of the puzzle. Equally important is convincing an exploited and discarded person that their life has value. Offering dignity and empowerment without judgment is crucial, and infinitely more complex than teaching someone how to budget. When the two things happen simultaneously—and they do at Interfaith Outreach Home every day—the cycle is broken and miracles occur.*

**Deborah Walker-Little, Executive Director**

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*I vividly remember one evening when I was in the kitchen making dinner for the girls. My older daughter was at basketball practice, while my younger daughter finished her homework at the table. It was all so normal; it reminded me of fictional families I'd seen on television, but never imagined could be a reality for us.*

**Terri**

Having a place to call home is transformative in and of itself, giving families the privacy to find respite and a sense of normalcy while they rebuild. Terri recalls life at IOH with her two daughters, ages 7 and 13, following a divorce and subsequent eviction from her home.

During her time at IOH, Terri worked relentlessly to pay off debt and repair her credit score. She graduated with \$18,000 in savings and the keys to her new townhome and continues to volunteer at IOH today.



## HOPE LIVES HERE

The transformation that families experience during their time at Interfaith Outreach Home begins with safe housing, building a savings account, and having access to a network of support. However, this transformation takes root and grows as families begin to see—and believe—that they can provide for their families and are capable, valued, and worthy of their dreams.

That forward momentum is amplified when children see their parents living with renewed confidence and hope, allowing them to dream a little bigger and believe in the infinite possibility in their own lives. These are the intangibles that must be nurtured to disrupt the cycle of poverty, and are the reasons that

*hope is alive and thriving at Interfaith Outreach Home.*

Land ownership has positioned us to pursue phase one of a planned expansion to **INCREASE FAMILY OCCUPANCY BY 50 PERCENT.**

We will retrofit and remodel approximately 2,400 square feet of space on our current campus to create five new apartments, each approximately 420 square feet with one bedroom, a bath, and a kitchen. These family units, along with ten existing apartments which will undergo a cosmetic refresh, will be designed to prioritize both efficiency and comfort.

In addition, we will conduct light cosmetic renovations to a portion of the existing chapel building, which will be home to four new offices and a multipurpose room that will be used for community gatherings, counseling sessions, workshops, and more.



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*This campaign is an opportunity to create a permanent home for IOH, which is something we help our clients strive for every day. We are taking a measured approach to growth, allowing IOH to broaden its reach while ensuring sustainability and continuing to change the lives of families on a profoundly deep level.*

Beth and Doug Belden, Campaign Vice Chairs

## A FOUNDATION FOR STRATEGIC GROWTH

Interfaith Outreach Home leadership has carefully laid plans that allow us to grow while remaining on strong financial footing. To support this goal, campaign funds will include maintenance reserves for building operations as well as capacity building for two new staff positions over a two-year period, which will allow annual fundraising efforts to increase over time.

In addition, IOH leadership is engaging in a master planning process so that we can continue to scale our model when the right time comes. Phase II of the expansion, which is beyond the scope of this campaign, is envisioned to increase occupancy by an additional 50 percent. Beyond phase II, there is significant potential to add transitional and affordable housing units on our footprint as well as replicate our approach in other communities in need.



### CAMPAIGN SUMMARY

#### SECURE OUR FUTURE

Purchase the 3.6-acre property at 5200-A Buford Highway that we have been leasing for nearly 30 years. \$1,600,000

#### EXPAND OUR IMPACT

Increase our capacity for housing and services by 50 percent by creating five new apartments, refreshing existing apartments, and retrofitting chapel to accommodate administrative offices and multi-purpose space. \$1,625,000

#### ENABLE OUR STRATEGIC GROWTH

Develop maintenance reserves for building operations, support two new staff positions. \$275,000

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#### CAMPAIGN GOAL

**\$3,500,000**

*For the first time in a long time, I am hopeful about our future.*  
The Monroe Family



**For nearly thirty years, Interfaith Outreach Home has welcomed families like the Monroes through its doors and offered them the time, tools, and space they need to achieve financial independence and never experience homelessness again.**

**Every family that calls IOH home exudes resiliency, hard work, and optimism, which creates a palpable feeling of hope that abounds throughout this community. We share that sense of hope and possibility with these families, with the committed team of IOH staff and volunteers, with senior and board leadership, and with our community champions who have all brought Interfaith Outreach Home to a pivotal moment in time.**

**This is an opportunity to carve a lasting place for Interfaith Outreach Home's mission in northeast Atlanta. Together, we can help ensure our community is a place where families see, feel, and believe that **HOPE LIVES HERE**. Please join us.**

**Sincerely yours,**



**Dave Gutmann, Campaign Chair**

**Interfaith Outreach Home  
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**[www.iohome.org](http://www.iohome.org)**

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**Interfaith  
Outreach  
Home**

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Hope • Haven • Healing