



PROGRAMS

Rejoining the Community through Housing First

2014-12-29

IHS was recently awarded a Housing First grant from the City & County of Honolulu, and this has given us the opportunity to serve a new and very challenging group. When we look at the chronically homeless from a broad perspective, we can expect to see severe and persistent mental illness, chronic health issues, and long term substance abuse. Yet when we look closer, one on one with our individual clients, we hear much more meaningful stories.

We meet a client who was once obsessed with fashion and spent hours at his sewing machine creating clothes for himself and others. He would love to be able to continue to sew for his friends, but you obviously can't have a sewing machine on the street.

We meet another client with a deep and abiding love of the ocean who feels most at peace on a surfboard and in the sea. He moved here at age 17 over 30 years ago just to surf, but after battling mental illness and addiction he hasn't surfed in years and longs to have his own board again.

Housing First provides these clients with a safe and stable place to live, but what makes Housing First truly transformative is all the support services that go along with that program. At IHS, we know how important it is to be a part of a community and to be able to occupy your time with positive activities that contribute to spiritual and emotional wellness. When you develop a sense of belonging to something larger than yourself, you also become accountable to it. It's our goal to help our Housing First clients feel like they are a positive presence in the community once again. We can do that by rekindling their passions for positive activities they may have lost touch with as a result of their homelessness.

You can be a part of that transformation. If you have a surfboard or a sewing machine that you're not using anymore, please donate it to IHS. You'll bring untold joy to people who have known years of hardship.

Be sure to follow IHS on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for updates on special donation requests. One simple gift can help change someone's life. Contact info@ihs-hawaii.org for more information.