

I No Longer Feel Alone

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Addison's Neighbor (formerly Home4 Every1), Montgomery, AL

2018 SENT Seminar Participant

*In September, the NBA Incubate Initiative welcomed its largest SENT Seminar cohort yet! The annual four-day training opportunity equips Disciples social entrepreneurs of faith for leadership and change as they nurture emerging health and social service ministries. This project, **Addison's Neighbor**, will provide permanent supportive housing and services to transitional aged youth who have aged out and are parenting minor children.*



Social entrepreneurship can be a lonely space. Exciting, fun, but very lonely. As your mind produces innovations that will help to solve the world's most challenging issues, you put pen to paper and begin to make plans- but then what? That was the mental space that I was in when I decided to attend SENT Seminar.

As an advocate for the homeless population and champion for foster youth, I envisioned an agency, Addison's Neighbor, where youth who are parenting minor children and have aged out of foster care would have a permanent home with intensive supports to prevent homelessness and provide foster youth with the permanency that everyone deserves. Permanent supportive housing has worked with chronically homeless adults, but it has not been used as a tool to eliminate homelessness for former foster youth with custody of their minor children. Addison's Neighbor will be the first agency in the United States to serve this population with permanent housing. In addition to the permanent housing, intensive supports (medical and mental health, parenting, employment, education, etc.) will be provided to all clients and their minor children who are lovingly referred to as Neighbors).

As we work together to fight homelessness in our states, cities, and towns, Addison's Neighbor is necessary to serve an underserved population that is in need of critical services to aid in their permanency; however, I needed some reassurance that I was going in the right direction. As a participant at the SENT Seminar, I received

reassurance and encouragement to move forward with my non-profit organization. Additionally, SENT Seminar provided participants with tools to succeed through small group work, knowledgeable speakers, and hands on activities that mentally pushed us out of our comfort zones as caring people and more into the mindset of entrepreneurs who are changing the world.

Gathering with other social entrepreneurs from around the United States and Canada was a priceless experience and for once during my personal journey to Addison's Neighbor, I did not feel alone. I was surrounded by innovative thinkers who were just like me! Being in fellowship with others who are working to use their talents, skills, and ideas to make the lives of those around them better through innovative ministries was one of the most important things that I could have taken away from SENT Seminar. Social justice, leadership, fundraising, and marketing strategies have all been added to my toolbox as a SENT Seminar participant.

I am moving forward with developing Addison's Neighbor and my head space is drastically different from when I arrived for the Seminar the first day. I no longer feel alone. I have the comradery of SENT Seminar participants and NBA staff. Homelessness for former foster youth who are parents of minor children will be eradicated one home at a time and I have National Benevolent Association's SENT Seminar to thank for helping bring life to a social enterprise such as Addison's Neighbor. I was created to care, and Addison's Neighbor is a manifestation of that very thought.

The NBA incubates new ministries, supporting social entrepreneurs of faith who are serving their communities in a variety of innovative ways and empowering these Disciples-led health and social service projects to focus on growth, impact, and sustainability. Learn more at nbacares.org/incubate