What's happening at COVENANT HOUSE MICHIGAN

covenanthousemi.org

VERONICA'S STORY

When Veronica met her now ex-boyfriend, she was young, still just in high school. He was older and cool.

He took three years of Veronica’s life away from her, trapping her into a cycle of abuse. Every time she left him to be with her mom in a different state, or with a friend, he crawled back into her life.

He sent her to the hospital after throwing an ashtray at her head. He choked her until she passed out. Friends saw the bruises, they spoke up, but her boyfriend was insidious and she was dependent on him. He threatened to kill her. He took her money from her paychecks.

“I remember seeing girls in those situations in high school and thinking ‘how could you stay with him?’ but you never think it’s going to be you until it is,” Veronica said...

To finish reading Veronica’s story, head to covenanthousemi.org, click on “About Us” and scroll down until you see “Stories from around the Cov”

Help us save a homeless young person’s life.
Thank you to our generous donors for making the 2018 Holiday season a very happy one for our residents!
The Holiday season started with a bang on Covenant House Michigan's Detroit campus. The Detroit Pistons treated our residents to a gourmet holiday dinner catered by Lady of the House and Savannah Blue, two of Detroit's most popular restaurants. Our residents enjoyed the special experience of being served by their staff. Best of all, the Pistons players and coaches showed up including superstar Blake Griffin.

The rest of November and December were packed with excitement. Next up was a dinner by Starter's Restaurant with help from celebrity chef Maxcel Hardy. This was a special time as both the owner of Starter's, Ali, and Maxcel gave our kids advice about working in the food industry and opportunity for jobs at their restaurants.

This Fall marked a new era in Covenant House Michigan with the opening of our new shelter on the west side of the state, in Grand Rapids. On Wednesday, November 13, we had our grand opening ribbon cutting ceremony! We were thrilled to be joined by Kevin Ryan, Covenant House International President, along with Grand Rapids mayor Rosalynn Bliss, and many of our enthusiastic west side supporters.

Our new 28 bed shelter sits next to the Covenant House Academy in Campau Park. The first floor includes a cafeteria, multi-purpose room, computer room for staff and residents, and intake area. The second and third floors are identical residence halls that are separated by gender. Each floor has washers and dryers, along with a common area.

We were also treated by Beirut Bakery to a delicious meal for our Covenant House Michigan Resident Holiday party. The residents' favorite experience at the holidays included our annual party at MGM Casino. They were encouraged to dress up and spent the evening playing games, dancing, and taking photos. It was a beautiful night for our residents to forget their worries, forgetting their title of "homeless" and feel young and alive.

We were incredibly moved by the generosity across the state of Michigan for our young people. Businesses, churches, and individuals opened their hearts and their pockets to our residents. We had an outpouring of support that meant our residents could pick out special gifts for their Christmas celebration. For some, it was the very first new gift they had ever received.

Board members, advisors and community leaders at the new shelter opening.

Several members of the Covenant House Michigan Board of Directors at the new shelter opening.
SLEEP OUT:
YOUNG PROFESSIONAL EDITION

Friday, March 22, 2019 • 6pm - 7am

COVENANT HOUSE MICHIGAN
DETROIT CAMPUS

Event Coordinator: Sara Daley
313-463-2005 • sleepoutchmi@covenanthouse.org

Participants in the Sleep Out: Young Professional Edition must be:
• Between the ages of 22-40
• Commit to raising awareness about the issue of youth homelessness
• Strive to raise at least $1,000 in support of homeless young people leading up to the event, using the online portal provided.

CAN’T MAKE SLEEP OUT YOUNG PROFESSIONAL EDITION?
Stay tuned for the newest Covenant House Michigan event Sleep Out: Women Unite. This event will ask women of all ages to join together, aim to raise $1,500 and sleep out on our campus on June 21, 2019, 7pm-7am.

For more information, please visit detroit.womenunitesleepout.org

Reflection

Where did you wake up this morning? Have you ever had to worry about your safety while you slept? Have you ever woken up because a gust of freezing cold air hit you and you had nothing to cover yourself with? What about waking up in discomfort because the ground you were sleeping on was so hard and so cold?

It’s understandable if this hasn’t ever been your experience. It wasn’t mine either until I participated in Covenant House Michigan’s Sleep Out: Young Professional Edition in 2017. I’m going to be honest; I thought I could relate to the above statements. I had been to places where it wasn’t always safe, but there was either extra security or I wasn’t alone. I thought I knew about sleeping in the cold from camping, but I had been in a camper with heat away from the wind.

It hit me as I was getting ready for “bed” the first time at Sleep Out. I was going to be in the elements; wind, rain, and uncomfortable temperatures. Though I knew I would be safe as we slept out at CHM’s gated campus, I still had to conquer the cold weather and other concerns. I got inside and tried to close my box around me to “stay warm.” Then claustrophobia set in and I started worrying if critters would come to visit me during the night. I could never truly sleep. I had to constantly move to stay warm, and to try and get comfortable as my hips and back ached from the cold, hard, cement. But, even in that moment, I still had it better than some of the homeless youth did before coming to CHM.

Sleeping out is the “easy” part. Hearing the residents speak about what lead them to come to Covenant House Michigan was gut-wrenching and inspiring. Their stories have redefined what homelessness and what success means to me. Many are victims of horrific choices their family made, not choices they made. The residents are warriors and real life heroes! It is an honor to support them. You don’t have to walk in their shoes to understand, but sleep out one night in a box. I will be there on March 22nd for my third year and I will leave a spot open for you right next to me.

Allison is the Co-Chair of our Young Professional Society and a residential Realtor.