

OUR MISSION

The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian church. Its message is based on the Bible. Its ministry is motivated by the love of God. Its mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in His name without discrimination.

HOW CAN WE HELP?



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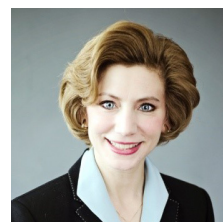
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Make a Gift to Support Programming in the Omaha Metro Today!

Scan this QR code to access our secure website, or make a gift at:
donate.salarmywestern.org/building-hope-summer-2023



DOING THE MOST GOOD

The Salvation Army Western Divisional Headquarters
10755 Burt St., Omaha, NE 68114 | 402-898-7700
salarmyomaha.org

BUILDING

THE OMAHA - COUNCIL BLUFFS SALVATION ARMY MAGAZINE

Hope



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Summer 2023



DOING THE MOST GOOD

BUILDING HOPE

Summer 2023

Published three times a year, Building Hope is a publication of The Omaha-Council Bluffs Salvation Army. Its focus is on building awareness of our ongoing mission to meet human needs in the metro.

OUR EIGHT CORE PROGRAMS & SERVICES:

Food
Housing
Material Assistance
Youth Development
Older Adult Services
Behavioral Health
Anti-human Trafficking
Emergency Disaster Services

DIVISIONAL COMMANDER
Maj. Scott Shelbourn

DIVISIONAL DIRECTOR OF WOMEN'S MINISTRIES
Maj. Jolinda Shelbourn

GENERAL SECRETARY & OMAHA AREA COMMANDER
Maj. Dan Sawka

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LETTER FROM THE DIVISIONAL LEADERS



Hello!

We're Majors Scott and Jolinda Shelbourn, and we're the newly appointed leaders of The Salvation Army Western Division — based here in Omaha and serving Nebraska, Iowa and South Dakota. This is a true homecoming for us: six years after our first appointment here in the metro (as divisional youth secretary and camp administrator, respectively), we're back. What's more, it's especially meaningful to us since we're both Omaha natives. It's unusual to be appointed to your hometown, but to have that happen twice is amazing.

We're assuming our divisional leadership roles after serving on the command staff at Northern Division in the Twin Cities. Before that, we served at Salvation Army units in Davenport, Iowa, and Bloomington, Illinois, in addition to our first tour of duty here in Husker Nation (Go Big Red!). Now, in addition to feeling the joy of being home again, we're thrilled to be closer to our family: we have four children, all of them married — two here in Omaha, one in Davenport, and one in Chicago — and come this fall, we will be welcoming our tenth grandchild.

Professionally, this move represents a huge opportunity for us. We love Omaha and the Western Division; we know that the Lord has placed us here for a reason, and He will reveal that reason over time as He guides us along the way. The Salvation Army is a great example of a New Testament church — it's really all about sharing the Gospel both in word and in deed as we serve people in need. Among the things we're looking forward to the most in our new jobs: being able to work alongside old friends at Western Divisional Headquarters and figuring out how we can help make all Salvation Army locations across our three-state region into places of welcome, grace, and hope for everyone seeking assistance.

So now, as we unpack the moving van and make our new home here in the metro, we're excited to meet you — our donors and community stakeholders. We are thankful to every one of you for your outstanding spirit of giving. We pride ourselves on working with integrity and trust. We are dedicated to making sure every donation is used in the best way possible to help individuals and families in need achieve sustainable futures. Thanks to your generosity and that of others just like you, The Salvation Army has been able to serve the Omaha metro area for 125 years and counting.

We look forward to helping write the next chapter in that storied history of service — right here in our hometown.

Thank you for your support.

Majs. Scott and Jolinda Shelbourn
Divisional Leaders

OMAHA ADVISORY BOARD RECOGNIZED *Nationally*



From left to right: Commissioners Brad and Heidi Bailey, Salvation Army Central Territorial leaders; Omaha Advisory Board member Fred Hunzeker; Western Division Executive Director of Development Jeff Beckman; and Commissioners Kenneth and Jolene Hodder, Salvation Army USA leaders.

Top Salvation Army national leaders recently saluted The Salvation Army Omaha Advisory Board for its outstanding efforts.

Commissioner Kenneth Hodder, National Commander of The Salvation Army USA, presented the board with a Certificate of Excellence at a national conference held in April in Dallas.

Commissioner Hodder is the top Salvation Army officer in the United States. The award he presented is based on 15 criteria, including financial standards, passion for the mission, diversity and 100% contribution from board members as donors.

Omaha Advisory Board member Fred Hunzeker (who is also a Salvation Army National Advisory Board member) accepted the award on behalf of his colleagues.

Salvation Army Western Division Executive Director of Development Jeff Beckman joined Hunzeker in receiving the award in Dallas. "The Omaha Advisory Board was one of a select group of boards to be recognized this year and had to meet all criteria for comprehensive excellence," Beckman said. "Our board has demonstrated that it is among the best in the nation."

Besides the Omaha board, only four other local Salvation Army advisory boards received the Certificate of Excellence for the 2023 calendar year.

The primary responsibilities of the Omaha Advisory Board are to promote the mission, advocate for the services of, and help to raise private philanthropic support for The Salvation Army. The board comprises 26 members representing the Omaha metro community.

OMAHA SALVATION ARMY ADVISORY BOARD

Executive Committee

Dr. Viv Ewing, *Chair*
Mike Cassling
Jim Huerter
Fred Hunzeker
Daniel Kennelly
Kari Kirchhoefer
Wende Kotouc
Ana Lopez Shalla
Shawn Oswald
Dr. Joann Schaefer
Jim Smith
Dr. Maria Vazquez
Brad von Gillern

Advisory Board Members

Catherine French McGill
Marc Hock
Rev. Dr. E. Scott Jones
Dr. Rich Klein
Melissa Marvin
Megan McMurry
Scott Moore
Denise Natali
Mark Nelson
Kathy O'Connor
Aaron Schapper
Mayor Jean Stothert
Carrie Zoucha

Emeritus Board Members

Hal Daub
Joleen David
Tom Hillmer
Jeannette James
James Landen
Terry Moore
James Ryan
Charles Sederstrom
Dr. Lee Simmons
Nick Taylor

National Board Members

Mike Cassling, *Chair*
Fred Hunzeker
James Landen, *former National Board*
Charles Sederstrom, *former National Board*

Life Members

Carl Mammel
Sharon Marvin Igel
Gene Spence
L.B. "Red" Thomas

THE SALVATION ARMY WESTERN DIVISION WELCOMES
Barb Farho AS DIRECTOR OF PHILANTHROPY

Barb Farho joined the Omaha-based Salvation Army Western Division as Director of Philanthropy in March 2023. In her role, she is responsible for leading the metro-Omaha and Western Division major giving fundraising programs—as well as disaster-relief fundraising when needed.

Farho brings more than 30 years of management, fundraising, community service and public relations experience to her role at The Salvation Army.

She has worked in the corporate, nonprofit and government sectors, including serving three City of Omaha mayoral administrations as Director of Community Relations and Youth Development. In that position, she facilitated projects and fostered partnerships with government and community that focused on positive youth development and student success. Her responsibilities included writing and administering grants to support youth initiatives, family stability, violence prevention, and workforce development.



Farho earned her bachelor's degree in journalism/public relations from the University of Nebraska Omaha. She is a graduate of the Nonprofit Association of the Midlands' Nonprofit Executive Institute, Class 14.

"Barb is highly respected in Omaha and within the local nonprofit community," said Executive Director of Development Jeff Beckman. "She is an ideal fit for The Salvation Army, given her passion for serving the human needs of our most vulnerable neighbors."

Personally and professionally, one of Farho's highest priorities is helping ensure that youth and families are connected to basic needs resources and opportunities that help them to succeed. She is passionate about fundraising to support these vital services.

Farho succeeds Jenny Herstein in this key development role at the Western Division. Herstein retired in May after 5 years of distinguished service to the division during which several Omaha-area fundraising records were set.

Welcoming Our New Senior Director of Estate & Gift Planning

Kari Kratky's career experiences have prepared her well for her new role with The Salvation Army: working in newspaper and direct marketing, serving as an account executive for a public relations and advertising firm, managing marketing activities for a software company and directing marketing and communications for a nonprofit development consulting firm. She has also served as a licensed financial adviser. Most recently, she served the Western Division as a development adviser to the corps. In addition, Kratky has a strong connection to The Salvation Army through more than 25 years of volunteerism with the Omaha Women's Auxiliary. She feels her life has been enriched through this involvement.



As Senior Director of Estate & Gift Planning, Kratky assists donors who understand the impact The Salvation Army has in their community and want to ensure this work will continue for generations to come. She helps donors create an estate gift through a variety of planned giving vehicles, depending on their individual situation and goals.

Kratky looks forward to the opportunity to help donors make the gift of a lifetime. "While not everyone can make a major gift, we can all make a planned gift," she said.

NEW *North Corps* BUILDING PROJECT

A new future is on the horizon for The Salvation Army North Corps Community Center at 24th and Pratt streets — thanks to an approximately \$19.5 million addition and renovation project that's planned for the decades-old facility.

North 24th Street Community Center Vision

Community leaders overseeing this critical building campaign are Carl Mammel, Fred Hunzeker, Mike Cassling, Dr. Viv Ewing, and Wende Kotouc. City Commander Maj. Dan Sawka and Lts. Johnny Miller and Marsha Williams-Miller are representing the interests of North Corps.

This group concurs that our shared investment will provide a pathway to success for future generations of youth, families, and all persons in need as they participate in programs and services that lead to personal, educational, spiritual, and career fulfillment and success. This progress will occur through an enhanced Community Center that offers outcome-based and basic-needs programs and services in a modern facility along the North 24th Street corridor. The goal is to occupy the new facility by late 2025 or early 2026.

A Transformative Space

According to the project plan, overall building space will nearly triple: 28,841 square feet of new construction will be added to more than 13,464 existing square feet planned for renovation, creating a total square footage of 42,305.

Design highlights are classrooms, a technical center, new event space, a gymnasium capacity that will be doubled, plus a modern kitchen and multi-purpose dining room space.



Salvation Army officials say once the North Corps project is finished, staff and volunteers will be better able to meet the needs of an ever-greater number of people seeking assistance. Building plans address what is presently a severe lack of proper space for programs and activities. Private offices for caseworkers to use when meeting with clients will be among the project's most important features. All-new worship, performing arts, and community medical spaces will also be included.

The North Corps project is a highly anticipated and critically important development for the North Omaha community. The transformed site will be a safe and welcoming architectural presence. This future-driven investment extends the city-wide partnership between The Salvation Army and the greater Omaha community.



D.J.'S HERO AWARDS HONORS 17 LEADERS, *Sets fundraising record*

More than 1,000 guests celebrated 17 Nebraska high school seniors May 9 at a record-setting D.J.'s Hero Awards Luncheon in Omaha. The annual event honors

Strong Leadership, Great Results

Mike Cassling of CQuence Health Systems — the National Advisory Board Chair — joined his wife, Elizabeth, as 2023 event co-chairs. The pair spearheaded the record-setting effort, teaming up with Salvation Army Western Division Executive Director of Development Jeff Beckman.

“Elizabeth and Mike’s leadership was amazing,” Beckman said. “They recruited a record number of new sponsorships and introduced dozens of new community leaders to the event.”

Keynote Focuses on Mental Health Awareness

Michael and Achea Redd took the stage as keynote speakers for the event. Michael, a former NBA All Star who became a tech investor, joined his wife,

Achea, a noted author on the subject of mental health, in a round-table conversation with emcees Rob McCartney and Quanecia Fraser from KETV NewsWatch 7. The Redds emphasized the importance of mental health awareness, utilizing stories from their own family life as windows into the increasingly prominent topic.

Shining a Spotlight on the Student-Scholars

The student-scholars honored on May 9 represented more than a dozen Nebraska cities and towns — from Omaha and Lincoln to Schuyler and Juniata.

Since 2001, The Salvation Army has given D.J.'s Hero Awards scholarships to 206 Nebraska high schoolers.



The D.J.'s Hero Awards Class of 2023

students from around the state who have overcome adversity and serve as leaders in their communities, with each student receiving a \$12,000 scholarship to the college or university of their choice.

This year marked the 24th edition of this community-favorite event — which is The Salvation Army of Omaha’s largest single fundraiser of the year. For 2023, a record \$668,000 was raised in support of youth programs in the metro.

Scholarships were underwritten by David and Peggy Sokol along with Fred Hunzeker, Elizabeth and Mike Cassling, Marilyn and Jim Schroer, Tim and Traci Harrison, The Kim Foundation and The Salvation Army.

Success Begins Behind the Scenes

We extend our heartfelt thanks to these dedicated committee members who helped make the 2023 D.J.'s Hero Awards Luncheon a success.

Chairs

Mike and Elizabeth Cassling

Honorary Chair

Gov. Jim Pillen

Scholarship Selection Committee

Annie Bird

Esther Brabec

Elizabeth Cassling

Julie Fritz

Traci Harrison

Julia Hebenstreit

Julie Keen

Dr. Rich Klein

Mary Lopez

Ana Lopez Shalla

Lynn Marchese

Melissa Marvin

Teresa Oswald

Gary Sadlemyer

Dr. Jack Stark

Shirley Stark

Gail Werner-Robertson

Nancy Wolf

Development Committee

Mike Cassling

Dr. Ken Bird

Dave Bishop

Allen Fredrickson

Gary Gates

Tim Harrison

Fred Hunzeker

Dr. Jack Stark



Current North Corps gym.

As with all major building projects, the North Corps plans must go through official City of Omaha approval processes before any construction can begin. On Aug. 2, the Planning Board approved the plans unanimously. As of this writing, the project is set for City Council consideration in late summer.

Pending council approval, the goal would be to break ground within 6 to 12 months — with completion coming in late 2025 or early 2026.

The project has quickly sparked the enthusiastic support of newly appointed Salvation Army Western Divisional Commander Maj. Scott Shelbourn. “We’ve been committed to North Omaha for over 100 years,” he said. “This investment we are going to make is so significant, it’s going to guarantee that we’re there for another 50 years.”



Artist rendering of new North Corps gym.

That enthusiasm is shared by Lt. Williams-Miller. “North Corps is a beacon of hope for the community,” she said. “We want to see lives changed in our new home.”

Fundraising is fully underway for the \$19.5 million North Corps capital project. Beyond that, future fundraising efforts will be engaged to raise an additional \$5.75 million for endowment and capacity-building support. Those interested in investing in the project are invited to reach out to Salvation Army Western Division Executive Director of Development Jeff Beckman (see back cover for contact information).



Current North Corps facility.

TRANSFORMATIVE VISION MEETS *Human Needs*



Artist rendering of new North Corps facility. View is from corner of 24th and Manderson streets.

For decades, The Salvation Army North Corps (better known to staff and clients as “The SAL”) has faithfully served the community — but its facilities are no longer adequate. Not only is the building old and inefficient, but it is also too small for the level of need that staff there are facing nowadays.

Lt. Williams-Miller joined divisional officials as they took all the community input to a local architect and started making the vision for a new North Corps into a reality. Meantime, development staff began talking with key donors — and they received a very positive response.

Ultimately, plans coalesced around a hybrid project to both expand the existing facility onto additional lots to the north of the present property — and to extensively renovate the current facility. When finished, 42,305 total square feet of space will encompass the following features ... and more:

- A large, technologically advanced worship and community arts space that seats 200.
- Four well-appointed, technologically superior classrooms — that can be used for youth and adult education programming, as co-working space for entrepreneurs and as a place where seniors can get help becoming digitally savvy.
- A new office suite with dedicated, dignified space for caseworkers to meet privately with clients.
- A tech center roughly three times the size of the current part-time tech room.
- A large gymnasium that can support multiple activities simultaneously.
- A new, modern kitchen that will help to serve thousands of meals every month to clients — and allow North Corps to host more community meetings and special events.

“We’re bursting at the seams,” said North Corps officer Lt. Marsha Williams-Miller. “But we’ve been in this space for such a long time that thinking outside of it seems unreal. Everything needs to be updated.”

With that in mind, The Salvation Army of Omaha has been listening to stakeholders about the direction they want to see North Corps take in the future. One example of this was a survey that was done last summer. People in the community were asked to prioritize need and to guide how North Corps can be even more helpful. Respondents said they wanted more structured after-school programs, youth leadership development opportunities, music/arts programming, and expanded summer day camp. They also wanted to see better access to counseling; help with navigating the health care system; and more access to adult education, especially jobs training.



Left-hand column, top to bottom: Mike Cassling, Gov. Jim Pillen, and Elizabeth Cassling; Hero Mark Connor Voss with his guardian Jennifer Hussman and his nominator and IEP case manager, Michael Bruch; Maj. Greg and Lee Ann Thompson; Hero Haylee Miller and her nominator, Sally Harms. Middle column, top to bottom: Video screens showed pictures of D.J. Sokol as the event began; Michael and Achea Redd; Michael and Achea Redd have an on stage conversation. Right-hand column, top to bottom: Salvation Army Advisory Board Chair Dr. Viv Ewing, Michael Redd, and Achea Redd; Maj. Lee Ann and Greg Thompson with award winner Zander Baker; Mike Cassling presenting flowers to Maj. Greg and Lee Ann Thompson at their final Heroes event before moving to a new appointment in Chicago; Maj. Lee Ann and Greg Thompson with award winner Megan Lambert.

NEW FACES, NEW PLACES AT DIVISIONAL HQ

Maj. Dan Sawka Takes on New Roles



The Salvation Army Western Division is proud to announce that Maj. Dan Sawka has been promoted to Omaha City Commander and General Secretary.

He has served with The Salvation Army for more than 20 years alongside his wife, Maj. Stephanie Sawka, who serves as Divisional Secretary for Program. The Majors Sawka have spent the last four years of their careers in Omaha on the Western Division command staff.

Maj. Dan brings a wealth of experience to his new position. He previously served as a corps officer at postings in Indiana and Michigan—and as a Divisional Youth Secretary and Divisional Candidates Secretary for the Indiana Division in Indianapolis.

Among the many responsibilities of his new role in Omaha, Maj. Dan will oversee all Salvation Army operations in the metro area and will support newly appointed Divisional Commander Maj. Scott Shelbourn.

Western Division Welcomes Capts. Bryan and Teri Ellison

This summer saw the arrival of a new Divisional Secretary for Business and a new Assistant to the Omaha Area Commander at our west Omaha headquarters building.

Capt. Bryan and Teri Ellison started their new appointments in July — bringing with them a collective two-plus decades of experience as Salvation Army officers. For most of the last six years, the two served as leaders of Salvation Army units in northern Minnesota — with Capt. Teri in both International Falls and Duluth, and Capt. Bryan in Duluth. Additionally, Capt. Teri served part of her time in northern Minnesota as Iron Range Area Coordinator in the community of Hibbing. Prior to that, the captains were based in Alton, Illinois, where they ran the Salvation Army unit there for five years.

The Captains Ellison started their careers with the organization in 2010 — at the College for Officer Training in Chicago.

Now, in their new jobs at Western Divisional Headquarters, the captains have wide-ranging responsibilities. Capt. Teri serves as the division's top finance department leader, while Capt. Bryan backs up Maj. Dan Sawka in leading The Salvation Army's operations within the Omaha metro area.



SERVING LUNCHES WITH *Love and Kindness*

Kids Cruisin' Kitchen just finished serving up free, hot lunches to young people all around the metro this summer season.

Two canteens (food trucks) made three stops apiece, Monday through Friday, via a north route and a south route. Employees, community volunteers and representatives of the Women's Auxiliary staffed the canteens.

With food prices skyrocketing due to inflation and a large percentage of Omaha kids qualifying for free school lunch programs, the need is significant. The program served over 10,200 lunches last season.

“A meal is a baby step to begin with and may lead to referrals to other Salvation Army programs. This makes our community better. We're starting out with kids, with a small effort serving one meal, providing hope. You need to start somewhere to make a big change.

- Maria Moreno
Divisional Emergency Disaster Services Director

SOUTH ROUTE

- Baright Public Library
- Bellevue Public Library
- South Omaha Public Library

NORTH ROUTE

- Onyx at Aksarben
- Highland Apartments
- Aspen Grove

A New Partnership

Program administrators chose Midday Meals as official lunch supplier for the 2023 season. The company offers a wide variety of meal choices — for example, a lunch that includes turkey and gravy, a fresh apple, and a whole grain roll, along with white or chocolate milk. Other, more fast-casual-restaurant-type lunches include pepperoni pizza made with a whole grain crust, garden salad and bananas. All meals meet USDA standards.

Helping Both Kids and Parents

Kids Cruisin' Kitchen is a vital program for families, distributing meals to children and teens across food deserts throughout the metro. With hot, fresh, cost-free lunches on offer, parents have fewer worries about buying food, while kids can rest assured knowing that lunch will be ready to go for them each weekday at a place close to where they live.

