We Fortify

COMMUNITY BUILDERS

IMPACT REPORT FOR

We Fortify & Working Fusion

SEPTEMBER 7, 2023

MISSION

We Fortify exists to pivot young adults out of poverty into a state of economic and emotional stability and social connectedness. We do this through four interdependent pillars for shift.

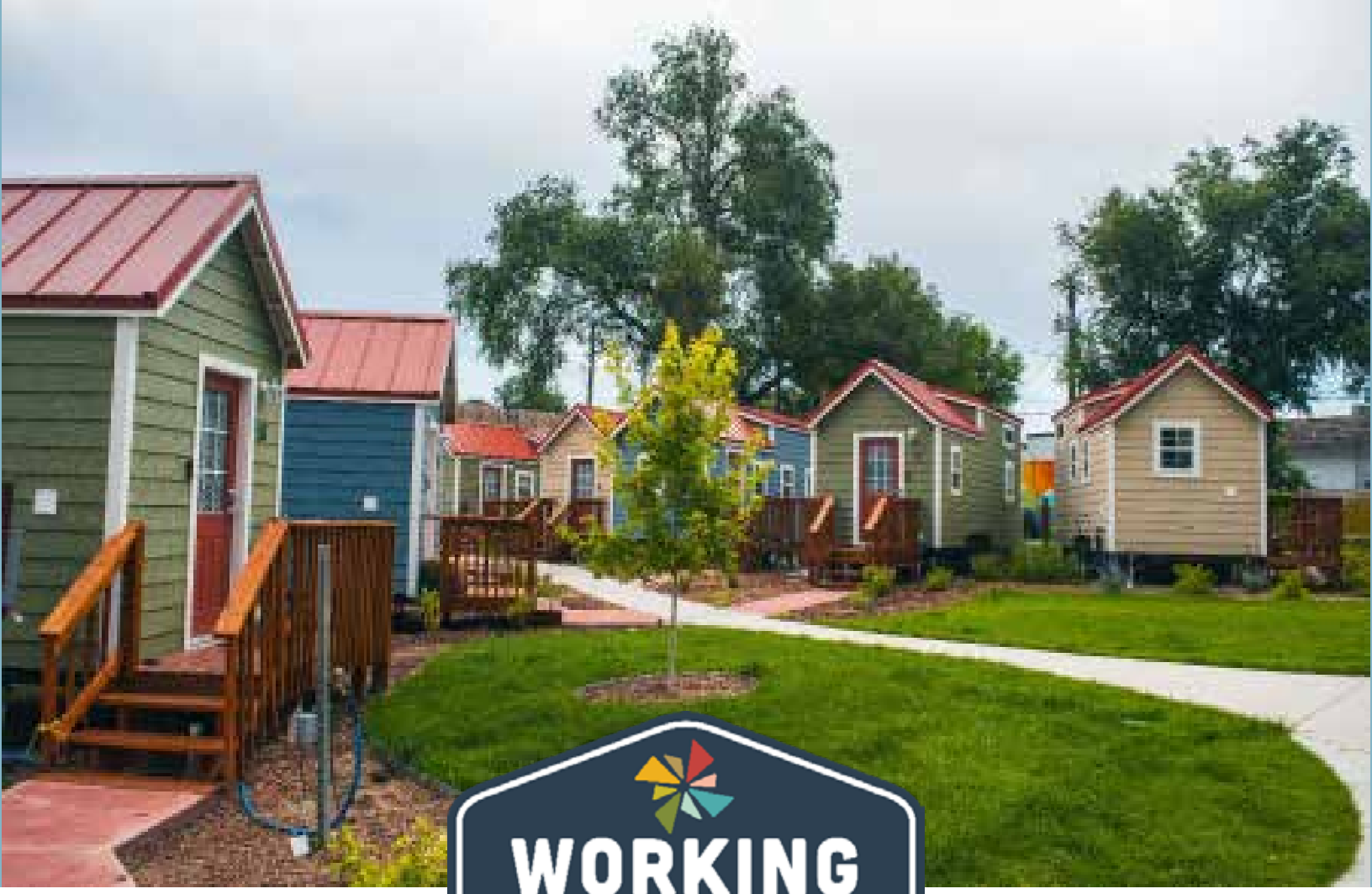
1. **Safe dignified housing within a small supportive community**
2. **Individualized trauma-responsive therapies**
3. **Life skills education**
4. **Living wage career placement**

VISION

We Fortify's "Working Fusion at Mill Street" development and program is a first-of-its-kind housing initiative in Colorado Springs dedicated to breaking the cycle of generational poverty and homelessness. This initiative provides dignified housing within a supportive village for young adults ages 18 to 25. Each tiny home is move-in ready, fully furnished, and affordable at a cost of $600/resident per month. Both the village and the programs are individually tailored to meet resident needs, with a sensitivity to the traumatic events they have previously endured.

WE BELIEVE

1. **People inherently want to live lives of independence and purpose.**
2. **An unshakable sense of hope creates a foundation for possibility.**
3. **Tenacious encouragement provides structure for growth.**
4. **Caring accountability fortifies people to face and overcome challenges.**



WORKING FUSION
AT MILL STREET

WORKING FUSION IMPACTS

As soon as a resident enters the village, they are given assessments. We continue to measure the progress of each resident by administering the same assessments quarterly, tracking their progress. In addition to the assessments, an Individualized Empowerment Plan is created identifying both short and long term goals and tracked using (SMART - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time Bound).
We develop goals in the following areas:

- **Stability & Safety**
- **Stress Management & Mental Health (primarily ongoing goals)**
- **Self-Care (primarily ongoing goals)**
- **Social Support (primarily ongoing goals)**
- **Self-Sufficiency/Sustainable Work**

WORKING FUSION
SUCCESSES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

RESIDENTS

- **2 residents graduated from the program last month. One is working in a living wage career position with 401k, paid time off and healthcare. The next is continuing her education at UCCS in Psychology and would like to come back to Working Fusion as a counselor.**
- **9 out of 14 residents in school (finishing high school diplomas/GED's/College)**
- **4 other residents have plans to attend school but are currently working to stabilize other areas of their lives to include mental health and/or legal issues.**
- **2 residents will be graduating with their Associate's Degrees this year.**

PROGRAMMING

- **We have coordinated and financially supported 168 hours of on-site resident therapy since April 2022.**
- **We have a 1-9 ratio of staff to program participant. The industry standard is 1-30 staff to program participant.**
- **The staff meets with each resident on a weekly basis. The industry standard is monthly.**
- **Developed and supported community events creating an environment that supports healthy relationships.**

  Movie nights
  Scavenger hunts
  Downtown coffee tours
  Building healthy hobbies

- **We have developed and implemented a Life Skills Curriculum that includes:**

  Financial Literacy
  Communication
  Nutrition
  Auto Education
  Healthy Relationships
  Professional Development
  Time Management
  Health/Safety
  Household Management
  Goal Setting
  Community Involvement
  Healthy Hobbies

WORKING FUSION
SUCCESSES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

VOLUNTEERS

- **The We Fortify volunteers supporting Working Fusion have volunteered over 3000 hours. Volunteer Activities include:**

  - Resident Mentor program; tutoring, cooking classes, driving to appointments
  - Village Support Program; Little Library, placement of solar lighting, group projects
  - Fusion Fridays; all things landscaping
  - Switchbacks/Levy Restaurants; 24 volunteers have donated 440 hours of their time and have raised over $13,000!
  - COS I Love You 4 days @ 50 hours per day
  - Management of Care & Share Mobile market for Mill Street Neighborhood – Since our partnership began in July of 2022, we've scheduled 19 markets and served

    1,415 total neighbors
    574 households
    681 adults
    376 children
    358 seniors

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VISION FOR THE FUTURE

- School District 2 Partnership: We have created a partnership with School District 2 to build affordable teacher housing within the district on school property. This village will have 40 units on site and a community center. Our corporate values of safe, dignified and creative housing will continue with this partnership. This un-programmed village will provide an additional social impact revenue stream to We Fortify which will allow us to create greater financial sustainability for our young adult programmed villages which is and will always be our primary mission.
- Plans are in place to build a second programmed young adult village. We are currently looking for the right property, size and location. From a staffing perspective, we will be able to leverage some current staff, expanding their scope, and will hire 2 additional Resident Specialists. We will continue to leverage current volunteer training and life skills curriculums.
- In early 2024, We Fortify, along with board and advisory board leadership, will develop a 7-year plan with a focus on sustainability and excellence. We will also be working on a progress tracking process for all graduates. Stay Tuned!

IN SUMMARY

The model is working.

We are grateful to all stakeholders; impact investors (donors), volunteers, community partners, board members, advisory board members and the families and friends of our staff who continue their incredible support.

It truly takes a village to create and support a village and we are very grateful to each and every one of you!