

## Sandy Hennem of Village of Hope to be Featured on CUTV News Radio

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[/EINPresswire.com/](http://EINPresswire.com/) -- While offering a homeless family some meals, snacks, a warm bed and the comforts of home may nurture their bodies, what Sandy Hennem believes sets Village of Hope in Bemidji Minnesota apart, is the way they nurture people's spirits. The non-profit organization at which she has been Executive Director for about six years nurtures people with connections—and a great dose of hope.

“When people come to us,” she says, “they are at their lowest point. They no longer trust authority figures. They think they’ll never get that job or that apartment. Give them a glimmer of hope, and it turns things around.” Hennem says the nurturing that sets Village of Hope apart, helps people to believe in themselves, discover their personal power, and know that they deserve a great life. “We help them realize they can have a powerful future.”

Everything that the organization does is focused on its mission: to stem the tide of homelessness, especially to prevent the child of a homeless family from becoming homeless himself one day. “We do everything possible to ensure we only see a child one time.”

A passion to do something about the homeless situation led to the establishment of the organization back in 1983. From then until 2011, Village of Hope served both individuals and families, but realized having everyone all mixed up wasn't the best model. “Families have unique needs” Hennem says, and adds that families are the fastest-growing segment of the homeless population. Village of Hope offers an intergenerational approach, focusing not on the child or the adult, but the family unit. They house about 55 families each year.

The non-profit organization offers the family on-site classes as well as three meals a day, snacks, and



an apartment in the stunning, special building that was built in 2011. They try to locate affordable housing for the families. They provide some classes that are found elsewhere, like budgeting or resume preparation. They also do something differently: here, a Parent-Child Educator works with each child, some as young as three. The goal is to build a relationship and get the family to find hope in their situation.

“If you ask a homeless child what they want to be when they grow up, they won’t have an answer,” Henum says. This is something they were never asked before, never thought about. Village of Hope gives them a future to think about.

And their efforts are working. The recidivism rate is improving. And Sandy Henum couldn’t have been prouder than when a one-time client became a peer! The young woman had discovered her passion while a resident, and established her own organization to support young mothers and babies. She recently came by to learn about different processes and protocols used at Village of Hope, so she could integrate them in her new program.



If any readers and listeners would like to help support the organization, Village of Hope could certainly use donations. “All non-profits like donations,” Henum says. “Financial resources are a huge benefit. We also need things that families use at home—like stamps, cleaning supplies, toilet paper, linens...the basics.” She adds that at Village of Hope, donors are viewed as partners and “We can’t do our work unless we have partners working alongside us.”

Village of Hope also forges partnerships with other non-profit organizations, and that element of connection is a big differentiator for the organization. Connecting with resources, and moreover, connecting with people, is what enables them to advance their mission and make the difference in a region where the poverty level is double that of the state average.

CUTV News Radio will spotlight Village of Hope in an interview with Doug Llewelyn on January 5th at 12pm EST.

Listen to the show on [BlogTalkRadio](#).

To learn more about Village of Hope, visit <http://www.villageofhopebemidji.org>

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