

Daily Bread & the Sharing Center are now



Providing food.  
Providing housing.  
Providing hope.

SPRING 2026

ProvidenceConnects.org

## From surviving to thriving: How Providence Connects is Building Mental Health Pathways for People Overcoming Homelessness

At Providence Connects, we believe that housing and meals are only the beginning. True stability, dignity, and long-term success come when people are supported as whole human beings. That means addressing not only physical needs, but also the deep emotional and psychological wounds that so often accompany homelessness.

We recognize a hard truth: many people who become homeless are already experiencing mental health challenges, and nearly 100 percent experience trauma because of living without stable housing. Trauma changes the way people think, feel, and respond to the world. It can keep someone trapped in survival mode, even when opportunities for stability begin to appear. That is why Providence Connects is intentionally building and strengthening mental health resources as a core part of our mission.

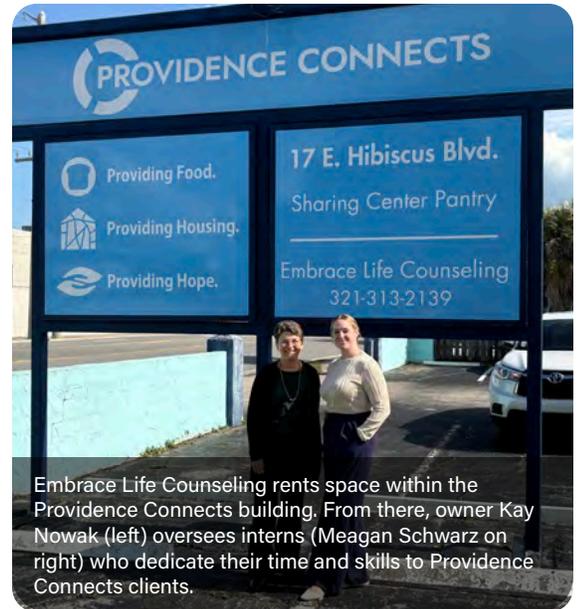
Our approach is rooted in trauma treatment and recovery, and it is powered by a collaborative, deeply committed team.

*“Many people who become homeless are already experiencing mental health challenges, and nearly 100 percent experience trauma because of living without stable housing.”*

Executive Director Jeffrey Njus is currently working toward becoming a licensed trauma recovery counselor, bringing clinical insight directly into organizational leadership. Senior Housing Case Manager, Vidya Bhagu, is pursuing her master’s degree in social work, strengthening our capacity to provide professional, evidence-based support. Kay Nowak, who owns and operates Embrace Life, has been a longtime partner in this work. Kay previously volunteered her time providing counseling at Daily Bread on Fee Avenue, and now that Providence Connects is located on Hibiscus, Embrace Life rents space within the building. From there, Kay oversees interns who dedicate their time and skills to Providence Connects clients.

One of those interns is Meagan Schwartz.

Meagan is currently earning her Master of Social Work at the University of Central Florida, with a personal goal of providing therapy for individuals experiencing mental health challenges, co-occurring substance use disorders, trauma, and other complex conditions. Her path to this work is deeply personal.



Embrace Life Counseling rents space within the Providence Connects building. From there, owner Kay Nowak (left) oversees interns (Meagan Schwarz on right) who dedicate their time and skills to Providence Connects clients.

*(story continued on pg. 2)*

## 2025 Impact report inside! Two Organizations with Twice the Impact!

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*(Mental Health continued)*

“I know the darkness life has brought me to,” Meagan says, “and that has encouraged me to walk with people through that darkness as well.”

Before pursuing social work, Meagan specialized in office management. But it became clear that she was meant for something more human-centered, something rooted in healing. Today, she is doing exactly that at Providence Connects, where she works with clients whose lives have been shaped by trauma, loss, and survival. One of those clients is Dave.

Dave is 43 years old, and his story is a powerful example of how Providence Connects’ integrated mental health approach works in real life.

Dave first associated with Providence Connects through Ray Lucas, our Peer Support Specialist. Ray has known Dave over the years through Daily Bread’s operations at Fee Ave and through regular connections at outreach sites. Shortly after Dave completed a medically supervised withdrawal at Circles of Care in October, he approached Ray. Dave was sober and committed to change. At the same time, Providence Connects was engaged in internal conversations about how to better support people who were newly sober and motivated but lacked stable housing. Ray made Dave an offer: Providence Connects would pay one month’s rent in a sober living house to give him a chance to get on his feet.

Dave was terrified.

Change, even positive change, can feel overwhelming when someone has lived in crisis for years. Recognizing this, Ray brought Dave to meet Meagan. Together, they talked through what this opportunity could mean and what a different life might look like. With reassurance and support, Dave took the leap and moved into sober living.

The transition was not easy. Dave struggled to find work due to a criminal record, and the uncertainty stirred deep fear and self-doubt. But he kept showing up. He attended weekly counseling sessions with Meagan, staying engaged even when progress felt slow. Seeing Dave’s commitment, Providence Connects continued subsidizing his rent. Over time, his persistence paid off, and Dave was offered a job.

While the job represented hope and stability, it also brought trepidation. Dave had not worked a traditional job in years and lacked confidence in his ability to succeed. Meagan continued working closely with him, helping him navigate both the excitement and the anxiety. She began to notice meaningful changes.

Dave’s confidence increased. He began to feel safe enough to find humor again. His hygiene and self-care improved. Meagan recalls that a stained shirt would not have mattered to Dave a

month earlier. Now, he is well kept. His priorities shifted away from constant fear toward more positive possibilities. Instead of being consumed by what could go wrong, Dave was able to

*“From the grips of addiction, I lost everything in life and ended up with nothing to my name except a dirty T-shirt and broken shoes,” Dave shares. “That’s when I met Ray and was connected with Providence Connects. With the help, guidance, and counseling services, I am moving forward with a life of possibilities.”*

imagine what could go right. His executive functioning improved, allowing him to plan, problem-solve, and regulate emotions more effectively.

The work Meagan does with Dave combines traditional psychotherapy with Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing, or EMDR. EMDR is a trauma-focused therapy that helps people reprocess distressing memories so they no longer hold the same emotional charge. In Meagan’s words, “What can take six months in psychotherapy can take forty minutes in EMDR when it comes to achieving an adaptive perspective change.”

Dave had much to overcome. A difficult upbringing, the loss of his father, and a lack of support from his mother all contributed to his turn toward substances as a way to cope. Trauma shaped his worldview, teaching him to survive rather than to hope. Through therapy, Dave has begun to rewrite that story.

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Meagan describes her role simply and powerfully. “At first, I held his hand. Now he’s growing his own wings.”

She also emphasizes the importance of teamwork. “Each one of us working with Dave is a pillar so that Dave can build his foundation on those supportive pillars.” Meagan challenges Dave’s old ways of thinking that were rooted in survival and helps him adapt to a more positive perspective. Ray provides peer support and helps meet daily life needs. Together, they create a network of safety and accountability.

Through her outreach work, Meagan has seen firsthand how deeply unsafe life feels for people experiencing homelessness. “People have no sense of safety,” she explains. “I started off trying to manage symptoms, but I can’t do that until I provide safety.” She wants people to know that setbacks do not mean failure. If someone relapses into their addiction, they can come back. Many of the people Providence Connects serves have never had an advocate encouraging their growth. Having someone who believes in them empowers them to imagine a future beyond survival.

As Providence Connects moves toward the future, including the development of housing on-site, our vision for mental health support continues to grow. We plan to offer a comprehensive combination of talk therapy, medication management, and trauma recovery tools like EMDR. Most importantly, we will bring something that cannot be replicated by referrals alone: rapport and trust. Rather than simply providing access to resources, our



# Stronger Together: Daily Bread and the Sharing Center have merged!

Providence Connects was born from a shared belief: that everyone deserves food, dignity, stability, and hope—especially individuals and families facing hardship. For over nine combined decades, Daily Bread (est. 1988) and the Sharing Center (est. 1971) worked side by side to meet urgent needs in our community. By merging, we are now able to do even more—together.

Working as one organization allows us to expand access and deepen impact. Food pantry hours have doubled, and our pantry has transitioned to a *fresh choice* model, empowering neighbors to select the foods that best meet their needs and preferences. Beyond our walls, a new food truck brings meals and groceries directly to outreach access points, helping us feed people experiencing homelessness where they are.

Providence Connects now coordinates a countywide food distribution system that supports more than 20 partner agencies, along with *Sharing in Motion*—a program where outreach staff and volunteers deliver groceries to people who are homebound and unable to access our food pantry. Our outreach teams are also on the ground daily, meeting people in the community, building trust, and helping individuals take the first steps toward stability, healthcare, benefits, and ultimately housing.

Looking ahead, we are building *Providence Place*, a supportive housing community that will provide long-term stability and a foundation for healing and independence.

This collaborative approach is exactly what community leaders hope to see. As Theresa Grimison, President & CEO of the Community Foundation, shared, *"We believe the strongest solutions come when organizations work together, align their strengths, and focus on shared outcomes. Providence Connects is a powerful example of collaboration that multiplies impact and creates lasting change."*

The name *Providence Connects* reflects the full scope of this work—connecting food to families, outreach to individuals, partners to purpose, and hope to action.

To see how this collaboration is making a measurable difference, we invite you to review the Impact Report on the following page, where the numbers tell the story of what's possible when we work together.



The Providence Connects Executive Committee of the Board of Directors is made up of three members from the Daily Bread board and one member from the Sharing Center board.



Sharing meals from the Daily Bread food truck at an access point.



The Outreach Team meets unhoused individuals at scheduled stops.



The Providence Place and Space Coast Health Foundation's (SCHF) teams. SCHF and Community Foundation provided guidance and financial support for the merger.



A team of personal shoppers ready to greet customers in the fresh market.

team will work together with each individual to create a holistic, personalized mental health plan.

Dave's journey is still unfolding. On the morning of his first day of work, he showed up wearing pants he had purchased at a thrift store and non-slip shoes he was relieved to find in the garage of his sober living house. When he arrived, he learned that the general manager who had hired him had been let go, and as a result,

Dave no longer had the job. The next day, Dave still came to his scheduled session with Meagan. Together, they went to work on the next steps.

That is progress.

At Providence Connects, we are not just helping people survive. We are helping them heal, grow, and build lives rooted in safety, possibility, and hope.



### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**President:**  
Nancy Tomassone

**Vice President:**  
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**Secretary:**  
Lesli Dooley

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### MEMBERS

LeRoy Darby  
Keith Donald  
Neal Driscoll  
Doug Holton  
Le Greta Hudson  
Robert Rowe

### LEADERSHIP

**Executive Director**  
Dr. Jeffrey Njus

### MISSION

Walking with our neighbors from surviving to thriving by providing food, housing, and trusted support.

### MAILING ADDRESS

Providence Connects  
17 E. Hibiscus Blvd.  
Melbourne, FL 32901  
[www.providenceconnects.org](http://www.providenceconnects.org)

*A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the division of consumer services by calling toll-free 1.800.435.7352 within the state. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval, or recommendation by the state registration #ch1772. 100% of the new proceeds benefit the mission of Providence Connects Inc.*

# 2025 IMPACT REPO



## 5,026

meals served at outreach.\*

\*The Fee Ave. campus closed on Friday, May 13, and our outreach access points began on Monday, May 16.



## 1,259

unique individuals served at outreach.\*

## 1,581

food deliveries to 186 unique households through Sharing in Motion, which delivers groceries to homebound individuals.



## 12

cold night shelters (where temperatures dropped under 45 degrees).



## 42%

increase in pantry visits since increasing hours.

## 561,012

pounds of food distributed through the Daily Bread warehouse, including the Sharing Center pantry and 25 other local agencies.



Pantry doubled hours of operation from 2.5 days per week to 5 days per week, including an evening and Saturday morning drive-thru.



## 601

households were assisted with SNAP benefits, and 413 SNAP applications were completed.



## 12

 individuals were relocated for housing.

## 73

 indi prescriptions.

# RT - Here's what you made possible...



**1,134**

case management hours among **281** unique individuals.

**60%**

increase in unique individuals receiving case management following the move from Fee Ave. to outreach sites.



**20,625**

total visits to the pantry.



**500**

visits to pantry per week on average.



**381**

gifts distributed to **188** children through Magic of Christmas.



**296**

volunteers gave **12,065** hours in the food pantry.



**980**

clients were advised, and **213** were enrolled in a healthcare plan.



Providence Place successfully obtained City permitting and financing to begin construction of Providence Place.

Individuals received on assistance.

Providence Connects overhead rate is 18.8%, meaning that more than 81 cents of every dollar you give directly supports programs.



## Give with Confidence!

Platinum Transparency 2025

Candid.

Candid's Platinum Seal recognizes philanthropic organizations that demonstrate a deep commitment to transparency, accountability, and inclusivity and operate from a position of strong financial health.

# Your Gifts Sustain Our Mission:

walking with our neighbors from surviving to thriving by providing food, housing, and trusted support.

Recognizing donations to Daily Bread and Sharing Center of \$1,000 or more in 2025:

Connie Adams	Greg & Julie Cole	Paul Grimes	Barbara Martin	Suzanne Short
Agile Lab Services LLC	Kathleen Cole	Grumman LM Teams Reunions	William Mason	Merrell Shye
Air Force Chaplain Corps	Collins Aerospace	William Gulledege	Dennis & Rhonda Lee Mayo	Donald Sibert
Albert E. and Birdie W. Einstein Fund, Inc.	Staci Collins	Aman Gupta	Betsy McCollough	Lawrence & Sheryl Sietsma
Antique Automobile Club of Cape Canaveral	Community Church of God	Erich Haeussler	Mary Courtois McIntyre	Larry Sills
Amanda Antonio	Community Credit Union	David & Kathleen Halpin	Rev. Christopher & Pat Meehan	Rita Smith
Aria Foundation	Community Foundation For Brevard, Inc.	Alexandra Harasym	John & Janet Michela	Space Coast Association of REALTORS®, Inc.
Ascension Catholic Church	Paul Corbley	Charles & Marcia Hardin	Sandra Michelson	Spirit of Brevard Inc
Ascension Lutheran Church	James & Karen Cox	William & Mary Haskell	Briant & Nydia Moyles	St. John The Evangelist Catholic Church
Donna Austin	Robert Cox	Kelly Haskins	Fred Mullins	St. John's Episcopal Church of Melbourne, Inc.
Mark & Michelle Baciak	Stephen & Robin Cremerius	Steve & Janey Haulman	Eva Nagymihaly	Tom & Kathryn Stauffacher
Roger & Karen Baker	Stephen & Robin Cremerius	HealthFirst	National Association of Letter Carriers	Craig & Sandra Steeneck
Mary Baldwin	Tempy Croft	Janice Hill	Della Neve	Mona Stevenson
Teresita Baltazar	Jerome Darby	Margaret Hoenigman	Rachel Neyhart	James & Jacie Stivers
Bank of America	Ernest & Patricia Dell	Jim & Linda Hollis	Richard & Gayle Njus	James & Mary Suggs
Richard & Mary Ann Bansemer	Drew & Kristin Denkhau	William & Andrea Holmes	Christine Noll-Rhan	Amy Sullivan
Jill Barlow	John & Chris DeStefon	Douglas & Kathleen Holton	David O'Brien	Suntree United Methodist Church
John Barreiros	Gene & Elizabeth Detwiler	Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Church	Richard O'Dell	Daniel Talbot
Joslyn Barroso	Nancy Dillen	Julie & Samuel Horne	Roger & Jennifer Ogburn	John Talone, Jr
Gary & Susie Baxter	James Dishaw	Gary & Sharon Houchens	Michael Oliva	Dr. Sumeet Thareja
Benton-Robinson Family Fund	Keith & Keri Donald	Immaculate Conception Church	Mike & Sandra O'Reilly	Raymond Tiberio
Virginia Berlinrut	Lesli Dooley	Debbie Irizarry	Our Lady of Lourdes Church	Nancy and Mark Tomassone
James & Virginia Biedron	Rita Dubois	Bruce & Alden Jacobus	Outdoors Resorts Chapel, Inc.	David Toney
George & Lynne Blackwood	Eastminster Presbyterian Church	Isaac Jacques	Arleen Pagliaro	Jim Toy
Jim & Linda Booth	Eau Gallie Womans Club Inc.	Heather Elko	Holly Howe Parker	Erin Trauger
Booz Allen Hamilton	Heather Elko	Saatiah Jaffry	York & Tiffany Pasanen	Richard Traut
James & Cathy Bouck	Enid Adicks Charitable Trust	Parivash Jamnia	Joy & Gordon Patterson	Troisi Imports
Joyce Boudrie	Enterprise Mobility Foundation	Jan Pridmore Foundation	James & Geraldine Peek	Yvonne Trudell
Penny Bragg	Christopher & Kathy Erway	Lawrence & Debbie Jermyn	Dr. Steven Picerne, MD	Michael Ullian
Fayette Brown	Debra Espinosa	John & Nancy Dornbos Charitable Fund	Nathan & Suzanne Pieri	United Methodist Church of Satellite Beach
Shelley Brown	Arthur & Michelle Espinosa	Johnson Outreach Ministries	Michael Pirolo	Unity Church of Melbourne
Donna Brown	Linda & Hugh Evans	Brenda Johnson	Eric Ponce State Farm	William Van Dusen Jr.
Bernard & Thelma Bryan	Evernorth Health Services	Gerald & Christy Jones	Tina Poulsen	Alfred & Sharon Vieira
Deborah Bryant	Faith Viera Lutheran Church	KCF Site Development, LLC	Falecia Randolph	Volk Law Offices P A
Juan Burgos	Neil & Geraldine Fernandes	Susan Kniepmann	Rollin Raymond	Christopher & Debra Walden
Byrd-Borland Foundation	First Baptist Church	Knights of Columbus - Martin B Power Council	Raytheon Technologies	Barbara Wall-Scanlon
Dr. Hoyt & Diane Byrum	First Presbyterian Church of Palm Bay Inc	Alan & Margaret Koechlein	Richard & Judy Red Revocable Trust	Marilyn Walton
Glenda Cagle	First United Methodist Church	Kol Mashlach Inc.	Ann & Robert Reinhart	M. Janet Warga
Calvary Chapel Fellowship of Melbourne, Inc	Brian & Hope Fisher	Lt. Col. Jeffrey & Dr. Tamara Koss	Lenin Rodriguez	Wawa Foundation
Ron & Rose Marie Capasso	Jeff & Christine Fisher	Donald & Denise Kremer, Jr	Lynn & Carol Rohrbaugh	Susan Weeks
Ron & Kathie Caprilla	Christopher Flattes	Steven Kreuzkamp	Daniel & Teresa Romano	Bob & Mary Wells
Robert Carr	Florida Power & Light	Robert & Lynn Kush	Rotary Club of Melbourne Beach	Elizabeth White
Matthew & Meredith Carroll	Kim & Martha Fortier	L3Harris Foundation	Patrick Roth	Arthur & Lynn Wilson
Dr. Greg & Debbie Carter	Four C's Nursery	Douglas & Pamela Lab	Robert & Jacqui Rowe	Stephanie Wolf
CCW of Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Church	Robert & Beverly Galloway	Drs. Timothy & Rosemary Laird	Jorge & Jacqueline Salazar	Womens Club of Hollywood Estates
Certified General Contractors Chapel Foundation of IRCC, Inc.	John & Cathleen Geist	Leslie L. Alexander Foundation	Thomas & Rhonda Sammon	Steven & Debra Yannotti
William & Sallie Childers	Gemini Family Charitable Fund	Karen Lloyd	Janice & Donald Sannes	Eddie & Rebecca Young
Kathleen Churchill	Patti Gibbons	Juliana Love	Carl Sapp	John & Monia Yust
Bill & Jan Churchill	Peter & Linda Gilbert	Mary Gail Lubrani	James & Kathleen Sartori	Michael Zarkowlsy
Cocoa Beach Community Church	Matt Giuliano	Cheryl Mall	Daniel & Diane Scheuerer	Gayle Zimmerman
	Gerry and Shayna Gleckel	Peter & Jenna Mannino	Mark Schrop	
	Charles Glisson	Margaret R. Binz Foundation	Robert & Suzanne Scolamiero	
	Nathaniel & Elisha Gould		SeaCoast Bank	
	Grace Roberti Foundation		Shein & Wente LLC	
	Connie Grassie			

*November 20* marked a meaningful milestone in our journey—the Providence Place land dedication. This ceremony was more than a blessing of 850 S. Apollo Blvd.; it represented a shared commitment by community leaders, partners, supporters, and neighbors to create a place of stability, dignity, and hope. Providence Place will provide supportive housing for individuals who have experienced homelessness, offering not just a roof, but a foundation for healing and independence. The dedication reflects the collaboration, faith, and vision that made this step possible, and the promise of lives that will be changed as Providence Place moves from hope to reality.





Providing food. Providing housing. Providing hope.

**PROVIDENCE  
CONNECTS**

17 E. Hibiscus Blvd., Melbourne, FL 32901



**PROVIDENCE CONNECTS**

**TAKE ON OUR 2025 WINNERS OR JUST COME ENJOY THE FOOD & FUN!**



ALL PROCEEDS SUPPORT OUR MISSION TO WALK WITH OUR NEIGHBORS FROM SURVIVING TO THRIVING BY PROVIDING:



FOOD



HOUSING



TRUSTED SUPPORT

# 2026 CHILI COOKOFF

Sunday  
March 29  
3-6pm



**FRONT ST. PARK**

**REGISTER AT: [PROVIDENCECONNECTS.ORG/CHILI](https://providenceconnects.org/chili)**

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