

THE Upside

Your Giving Matters



How YOU
brought
Alejandro
home





A Letter From Our CEO

Dear MiSide Friends and Family,

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2025! As we step into the new year, I'm filled with gratitude for the generous individuals who sustain our mission.

Whether you've been with us since our days as Development Centers and Southwest Solutions or joined us after our merger when we became MiSide, we appreciate you.

This year, we've welcomed new board members, expanded our team, and strengthened community partnerships to better serve the Detroit Metro Area. While we face challenges—including shifts in funding and a new political landscape—our commitment remains steadfast: ensuring access to quality behavioral healthcare, early childhood education, stable housing, and essential financial resources so folks can build a life they desire.

For over 50 years, MiSide has adapted and

innovated to meet the evolving needs of our community. Today is no different. This year we are focused on making all our services more accessible and interconnected, allowing individuals and families to receive comprehensive support seamlessly, while also bringing our programs closer to the neighborhoods in which our consumers live.

Change is inevitable, but our purpose remains clear. Together, we will continue to uplift communities and create lasting impact.

Thank you for being part of this journey. We couldn't do any of this without you by our side!

With gratitude,

Sean J. de Four
President & CEO

Why was MiSide formed?

To provide more ways for people to achieve lasting self-sufficiency, good health, and stability.

To strengthen our organization, so we can serve more people each year, deepen our impact in their lives and be a reliable resource for decades to come.

To be a more powerful voice for those who need it most in Metro Detroit, ensuring their needs are heard by decision-makers at all levels.



An Oasis in the Desert

Earl spent nine years bravely serving his country as an Army medic. After he was released from his service, Earl wasn't sure what he wanted to do with his life going forward.

Earl spent many years bouncing from job to job, looking to find that spark that he had in the Army. He worked day in and day out to support himself but never found that passion. After a terrifying health scare, Earl lost his livelihood, his childhood home, and his mother. **His life had changed in an instant and he found himself homeless.**

While couch surfing with friends, he heard about a new facility opening called Piquette Square.

"It is one of the oases in the middle of the desert"

In 2010, Earl became one of the first tenants at Piquette Square for Veterans. "When I moved here, I was so happy."

While living at Piquette Square, Earl became a father at 45 years old and had to find a way to support not only himself, but also his new family. Finally, after many years and three

college degrees, Earl found his passion at the Veterans Affairs hospital. It was a perfect fit, what he had been searching for since he left the military all those years ago.

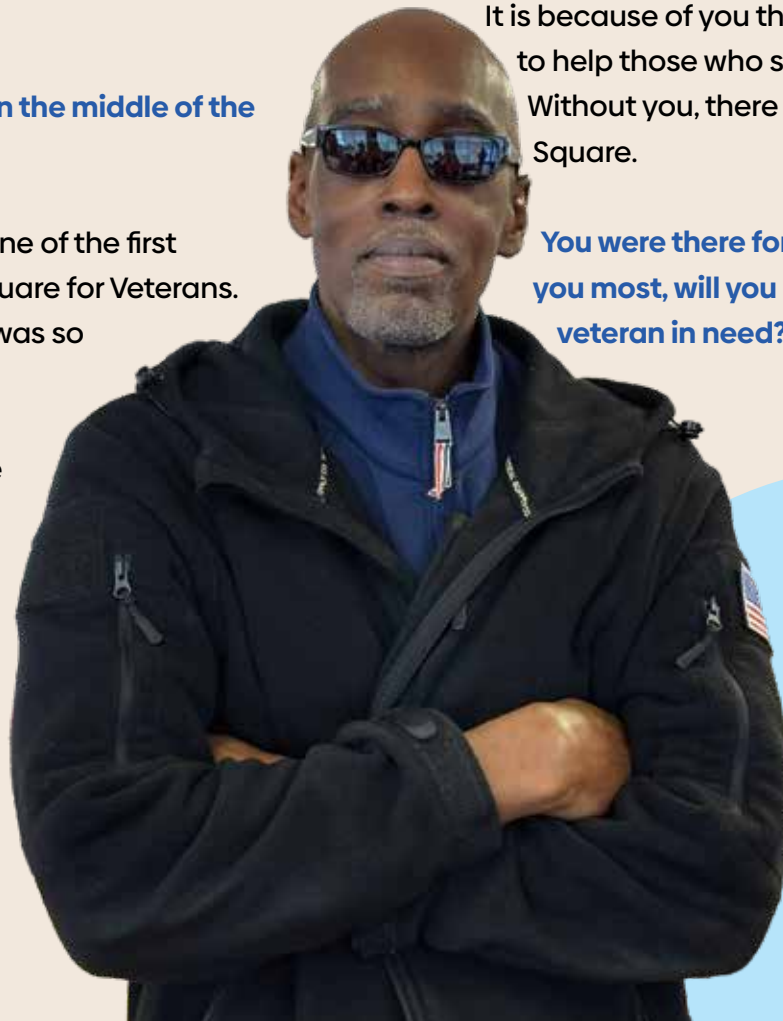
"I've been advocating for veterans for 14 years, starting with myself."

Now, his son, Vance, is 13 years old. He comes and visits Earl every other Friday and they get to spend time with the family that Earl has built for himself at Piquette Square.

"It brought me back to the comradery of being in the military."

It is because of you that these services exist to help those who so bravely served us. Without you, there would be no Piquette Square.

You were there for Earl when he needed you most, will you be there for the next veteran in need?



**YOU are
the hero
that our
heroes
need.**



A Fresh Start, 16 Years Later

At just 19 years old, Alejandro was a realtor to the stars out in California. Working every single day and closing about 45 deals every month, Alejandro was determined to build a future for himself.

“You have to be persistent and not give up.”

For years, he spent time working as a realtor, then moved into banking. Giving back to the community that he believed in so much, the English as a Second Language learners in his local school districts.

Moving to America at just 14 years old, he knew that he would have to work hard to build the American Dream he had heard so much about. For many years, Alejandro was living that dream, working hard and enjoying the benefits of his hard work. That is until 2008.

When the economy crashed, Alejandro lost everything. He was the proud owner of several properties, all of which he had to sell. With nothing left to his name, he moved to Detroit to work in his friend’s auto shop.

Alejandro had gone from living a lavish lifestyle in sunny California, to living in his car during

Michigan’s brutal winters. **In just a year, everything he had worked for came crashing down around him, but Alejandro never gave up hope.**

While watching TV one day, he saw a commercial for MiSide’s Adult Learning Lab and decided to enroll. He took a special interest in the HVAC program and set his mind to it.

In February of 2023, Alejandro graduated from the program and began working in the field.

“The teachers emphasize on you succeeding, not only in the classroom, but also in life.”

For a while he struggled to find a steady job because of the racism and discrimination he was experiencing. Finally, he landed a job working in the warehouses of O’Reilly Auto Parts and he found his community.

Once he found steady employment, Alejandro reached back out to MiSide because he knew they could help him purchase a home. He had to wait until he was at his current job for six months before he would be eligible for more assistance, so he went back to work and stayed focused.



As soon as he hit his six-month anniversary at his company, he called MiSide and set up an appointment to begin the process of purchasing a home. With all his prior knowledge in realty, Alejandro knew what he was getting himself into.

He attended all the classes and spoke to everyone on the team, gathering as much information as he possibly could.

“I’m very thankful that everybody pitched in, and everyone helped.”

During this time, he was also given the opportunity to move positions at his company and become a driver. He had to attend classes out of state, but in the end, he passed and is now CDL certified.

Finally, in September of 2024, Alejandro became the proud owner of his first home in decades.

“This is my house, and I am happy.”

Alejandro’s life has been nothing short of a

rollercoaster, but now he is finally on solid ground. He has followed his heart in every situation he has been in and it has never steered him wrong.

“I think I’ve done what I was supposed to and even more.”

It is because of your support that MiSide was there for Alejandro when he needed a fresh start. And it is because of you that MiSide could be there for him again when he was ready to become a homeowner again.

“The only thing you can do is succeed... so why not do it?”

Alejandro’s story is one of resilience in the face of adversity. Because of YOU, he had the tools and the support he needed to never give up. There are so many other stories like Alejandro’s waiting to be written.

Can they count on you?

YES! I want to write more stories of hope in Detroit today!

 Enclosed is my tax deductible gift of:

\$250 \$100 \$50 \$25 \$ _____

Visit us at misode.org
or scan the QR code
with your smartphone.



Call (313) 481-3113

I would like to make this a Monthly Gift One-Time Gift

Check Enclosed Mastercard Visa Discover Amex

Name on Card _____

Card No. _____ Exp. _____ CVV _____

Billing Address _____

Signature _____



From Struggle to Strength

At just 14 years old, Saul found himself struggling with depression. His family found MiSide and enrolled Saul into Children, Youth, and Family services.

Although he was getting the help he needed, things got worse before they got better. At the age of 15, Saul began abusing his prescription ADHD medication. It didn't take long for him to be hooked, and he started taking whatever pills he could get his hands on.

"I really felt like I was just going to do drugs until I die."

When he turned 18, Saul was transferred to the Adult Outpatient services through MiSide. There, he found support for his substance use disorder. Once he had the support he needed, it took Saul one year to get sober.

"That year of trying to get sober... it was hard."

Saul spent that year sitting in class while going through withdrawals. Trying to better himself and build toward his future that he now felt he deserved.

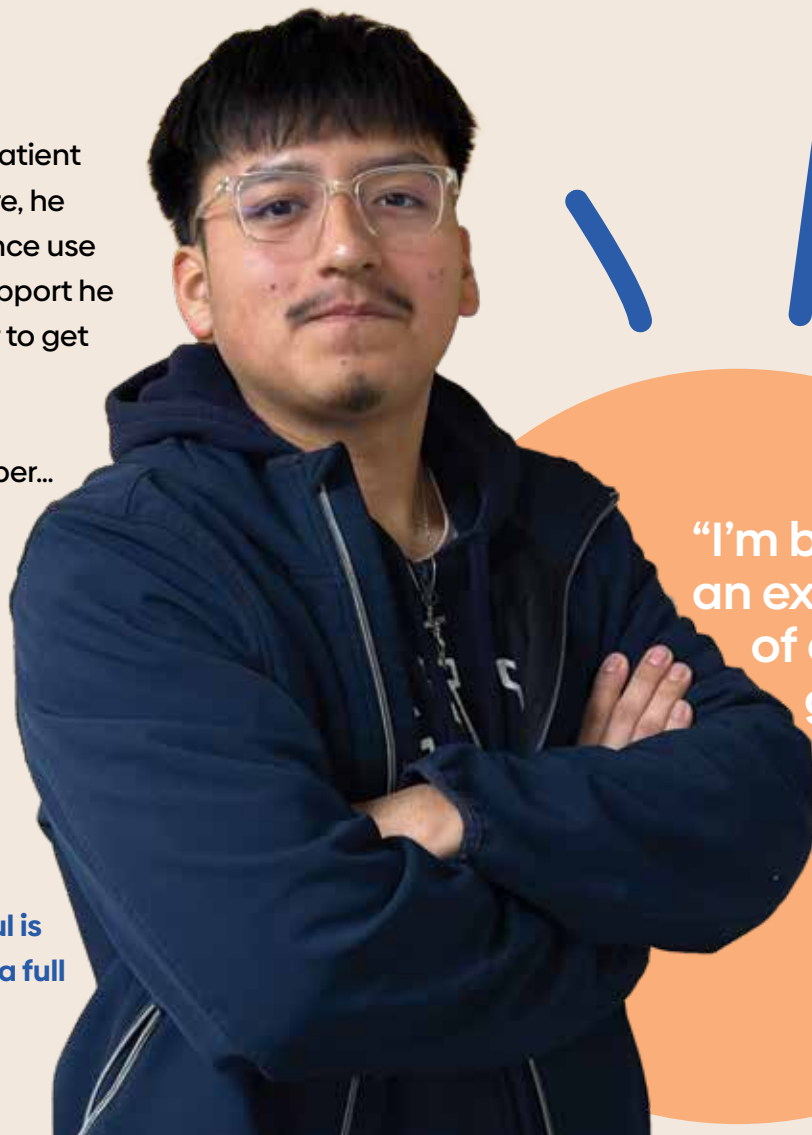
He didn't give in and now Saul is 19 years old and celebrating a full year of sobriety.

Thanks to your support he found what he needed to change his life at MiSide.

"[MiSide] gave me more hope."

It is because of support like yours that he was able to access these services. Without you, Saul and so many others like him, would never get their chance to change the trajectory of their life.

"Thank you for not giving up on me and always giving me hope."



"I'm basically an example of don't give up."



Believing in Kindness Again

After spending her life working in education and raising children of her own, Rhoda was ready to enjoy her well-deserved retirement. But when she heard about a family in need of a safe home, she knew she had to help.

After sending all of her children off to college, Rhoda became a foster parent to four young children who desperately needed a loving home.

“The children were so abused and neglected when they came into my care.”

For almost three years now, the youngest two children have received services through MiSide. The Early On and Infant Mental Health programs have been a tremendous help to their family.

Currently, only one of the children is enrolled in services, but that does not mean the whole family does not benefit. Their therapist, Madeline, is a huge support, not only to Riley, but to all of the children and even Rhoda herself.

“Madeline is family. We love her.”

Around the holidays, the kids miss their mom and their five other siblings more than ever. Rhoda was so worried about giving them the Christmas they deserved, but that is when YOU stepped in.

Because of support like yours, Rhoda’s family was adopted for the holidays and the



kids got to experience the magic of the season.

At just seven years old, one of her children walked downstairs on Christmas morning to see the living room full of gifts and said, “there really are people out there who care about us.”

YOU were able to restore a child’s hope in humanity. After everything he had been through, he found it hard to believe that there were people out in the world who cared, and thanks to you he knows he is loved.

“It takes a special caliber of people that reaches out to families like mine to make dreams come true.”

YOU were the hope their family needed. Thank you.



SAVE THE DATE

Celebration of
IMPACT
Gala



September 13, 2025 | 6:00 PM
The Roostertail, Detroit, MI
Be on the lookout for more information to come!