



Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Services

Johanna Anderson

Describe your business:

INHS is a private nonprofit affordable housing organization headquartered in Ithaca, NY. Founded in 1976 to revitalize a local neighborhood with home rehabilitation projects, INHS quickly took off to become a multi-faceted mission-driven organization that provides safe, high quality housing to those with low- to moderate-incomes. Serving seven counties in the Finger Lakes region, including Schuyler, Cayuga, Cortland, Chemung, Seneca, Tioga and Tompkins Counties, INHS provides down payment assistance, rental housing, home repairs to seniors and disabled individuals, and builds affordable housing developments from the ground up. The organizational success is centered around our dedicated and hardworking 48-person staff. Their innovation, drive and passion has guided INHS through challenges and successes.

Tell us your story:

I have dedicated my career to helping low-income people find quality, safe housing that fits their needs. For 15 years, I have devoted much of my time to affordable housing, building livable communities, and leading economic development efforts to reach diverse populations. My career has taken me across the States. I have worked in Maine serving low-income and tribal communities, created pilot programs in Washington DC and rural Minnesota, and assisted in the transformation of an urban airport zone in Denver, into a sustainable mixed-use community. When the opportunity presented itself to work as the executive director at INHS, I jumped at the chance. To live in the Finger Lakes and serve such a diverse area and population in such a beautiful landscape has been a life-changing experience for me.

What has helped you succeed and gain experience?

When I was very young, it was instilled in me that “when you’re green, you’re growing, when you’re ripe, you’re rotten.” I am constantly listening and learning from: the people we serve, our peers in the housing industry, my coworkers. The world is constantly changing and we must be able to adapt creatively.

What inspires you?

Having a home that is safe and secure, allows people a foundation to build upon; it allows people to fight for their beliefs, advocate for another, find inner peace, and above all, grow love. Being able to help people find, obtain, and maintain their home - their sense of place - is a privilege that constantly pushes me to do more and be better. My resolve for this work grows deeper each day.

What keeps you up at night? What are your challenges?

Flexible funding. The need in our communities is vast and varied. As funding becomes more restrictive, there are fewer people we are able to help obtain and maintain their homes.

What is your favorite local activity?

My family and I love to explore the outdoors; we paddle, hike, garden, and ski. Currently, we are taking the time to enjoy our new home in Montour Falls and getting to know our beautiful new community.

Contact Information:

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