

Fair Housing in Action: Angels Share, Inc.

Omaha native Ed Shada is on a mission to end homelessness. Along the way, he wants to help people find steady jobs in the Nebraska workforce, where their talents are needed and sought after.

Shada founded his not-for-profit, Angels Share Inc., with a vision. He imagined a campus where those struggling with homelessness or individuals aging out of the foster system could achieve stability, find a decent place to live and access basic needs like food, health care and mentoring services. But more than that, he wanted to offer something that could end up lasting a lifetime: opportunity.

“At the same time that there are people out there without a job, our state faces a growing workforce shortage,” Shada said. “I wanted to connect the dots and help people find a way to overcome barriers and enter into those career roles where their talents are so desperately needed.”

Now, with the help of others who support his cause, Shada is turning that vision into reality. His dream came into sharp focus when an associate, Frank Krejci, donated the 151-acre former Dana College Campus in Blair, which he had purchased for redevelopment, for Angel Share’s use.

“That really opened the door for us to keep dreaming big and prove the concept,” Shada said.

Today, after raising nearly \$20 million in grants and community donations — including more than \$1.4 million through Nebraska’s Affordable Housing Trust Fund and HOME Investment Partnerships programs — Angels Share Inc. has transformed much of what was once a group of vacant buildings complete with lost caps and gowns into a multi-use facility featuring more than 60 living units, a library, a church, classrooms and more.

“There’s a lot still to be done, but we’ve already been able to house several individuals and help a number find full-time jobs,” Shada said, noting that everyone enrolled in the program is assigned a community ambassador to guide their entry into the workforce. “I’m incredibly excited to see this continue to grow and not only impact homelessness throughout the region, but also create a lot of personal fulfillment among the people we serve.”

To learn more about Angels Share and the Dana Campus transformation project, visit angelsshareinc.org.

For more about Nebraska’s programs designed to promote fair, affordable housing, visit <https://opportunity.nebraska.gov/grow-your-community/housing-resources/>.