



From Shelter to Home:  
The Bonds That Last  
Beyond Our Doors



## **Dear PADS of Elgin Family,**

Something remarkable happened during Nick's time with us. During a major shelter renovation this year, Nick and other guests rolled up their sleeves and worked alongside contractors, moving lockers, handling tools, and tackling projects together.

"Those of us living through this construction chaos weren't complaining," Nick reflected. "We were connecting. We were building something together, literally and figuratively."

What emerged wasn't just updated facilities—it was a tight-knit community where guests supported each other and discovered renewed purpose. "That's the power of being part of something bigger than yourself," Nick said.

### **Relationships That Extend Beyond Our Doors**

Today, Nick is settling into his own apartment. But the connections forged at PADS continue to flourish. Just last week, he met a friend from his PADS days for their regular Friday morning chess game at the Gail Borden Public Library. Their laughter echoes the games they played together at the shelter.

When Nick needed furniture for his new home, staff members Christina, Calenne, and Humberto showed up—helping move belongings from storage, picking up a donated bed, making the apartment feel like home. Another friend from PADS stopped by after work to check on him, and they made an impromptu run to Aldi together.

"My heart remained at PADS for a few days though I'd already moved into my apartment," Nick wrote to us recently. "I've been changed and also charged up in an indescribable way."



## **The Gift of Community**

As our Executive Director Katie Shaw Thompson often reminds us: "It's always been relationships that make the difference."

Your support doesn't just fund beds and meals—though those are vital. Your generosity creates space for the connections and mutual respect that help people rediscover their own strength.

Nick put it best: "Temporary shelter isn't just about having a roof over your head. It's about being part of a community that believes in your renovation—your personal reconstruction—even when you've forgotten how to believe in it yourself."

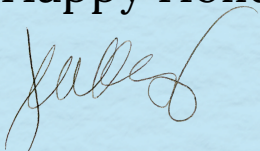
This holiday season, 25 guests have found permanent housing since July 1st. But with demand for our outreach services up 372% over the last two years, more neighbors need the community and support that PADS can provide.

As Nick reminds us: "It doesn't just house bodies, it rebuilds lives, restores dignity, and creates connections that extend far beyond these walls."

This is why I love the work I do at PADS of Elgin. I witness true transformation—lives genuinely changed for the better. Will you join me in making more stories like Nick's possible? Your year-end gift ensures that individuals and families find not just shelter, but belonging, respect, and lasting relationships that extend far beyond our doors.

[www.padsofelgin.org/donate](http://www.padsofelgin.org/donate)

Happy Holidays,



**Jen Keller**

**Development Manager, PADS of Elgin**

