



Celebrating 40 Years of Outstanding Human Service in CNY

The History of Unity House

Unity House is observing its 40th anniversary in 2017! The fledgling agency got its start in 1972 when it began offering housing services to emotionally disabled veterans. The agency leased space in the [historic Case mansion](#) on South Street in Auburn from First Presbyterian Church. Twenty-one beds were made available to this population, and a community need was met.

Five years later, it became clear that this need was growing and Unity House decided to expand to meet it. The agency hired its first executive director, Reverend Frederick Harrison, and on March 28, 1977, Unity House's articles of incorporation were filed. In April, the agency obtained not-for-profit status, and the following year, the program was certified as a community residence by the state Department of Mental Hygiene.

While Unity House concentrated on mental health services early on, the agency now also serves adults with developmental disabilities and those recovering from drug and alcohol addiction. We began offering employment services in 1988, and housing, day habilitation, and case management for the PWDD population in the early 1990s. Unity House received state funding in 1995 to open Cayuga County's only halfway house for individuals in recovery from addiction. To date, Grace House has served nearly 2,000 people.

In 1997, Unity House was named by the state as the successor agency for HOMES, Inc. in Ithaca, NY. This introduced the agency to Tompkins County. Today, we operate nine group homes (IRAs), a day habilitation center, employment services, two respite beds, and a number of independent apartments in the Ithaca area.



Fast forward to 2017. Now in our 40th year, Unity House serves 700 individuals a day in six central New York counties. We employ more than 400 staff, and oversee a \$20 million budget. At the root of this success are of course the people – the wonderful people Unity House serves and employs. Over the course of four decades, the agency has empowered and enriched the lives of so many, and we look forward to doing so for another forty years.



Our 40th Celebration

We invite the community to help us celebrate our 40th throughout 2017. Please go to www.unityhouse.com/40thanniversary often to see what fun activities we're planning!