

newsletter

Because of you, Riverview II is moving forward!

To Our Incredible Community,

We are deeply grateful to everyone who attended the Sanibel City Council meeting to support Community Housing & Resources' Riverview II initiative. It was a powerful example of our community and leadership coming together to make made a tremendous difference!

Together you stood up not just for housing, but for the essential workforce who keep Sanibel running every day. Because of you, we can now take the next step toward creating homes that allow these individuals to live where they work and remain part of this community. This is proof of what's possible when a community comes together with purpose.

We are excited for what's ahead and proud to have you with us. *Thank you to the Sanibel City Council and to everyone who spoke up to help realize this vision!*



Bonnie, Nicole, Commissioner Kevin Ruane, Rachel, and Blake



Michelle's story

After decades as a stay-at-home mom caring for a disabled child, Michelle Gonzalez faced a difficult choice: stay stuck in hardship or take a step toward change. With Community Housing & Resources (CHR), she chose a new path.

"I thought, 'There's no way—I won't qualify,'" Michelle said. "But I applied, called Bonnie, and said, 'I need help.' And she made it happen. She's had my back. My life's been bumpy, but this has been a complete 180."

Born in Tampa and later living in Ohio, Michelle moved to Sanibel with her daughter and disabled son after her marriage ended. Determined to rebuild, she arranged in-home nursing care, earned her massage therapy certification, and secured steady work with a local physical therapy group. Still, affordable housing remained out of reach—until she connected with CHR.

Today, Michelle and her children live in a safe, affordable three-bedroom apartment.

"CHR gives you confidence—you're worth this kind of help. It's empowering."

Thank you!

It's all about our partnerships on our island!

Thank you to The Sanibel School for your support!

Thank you to the Sanibel Music Festival or sharing the gift of music!

We'd like to thank the Sanibel Music Festival for their generosity in donating tickets so that residents of CHR can enjoy one of their wonderful performances.

We love being part of an island where neighbors look out for each other.



Thank you to everyone at Jerry's Foods for your support!

CHR had the opportunity to connect with the hardworking team at Jerry's Foods on Sanibel, and we want to give a special thank you to their General Manager, Rick, for being such a strong supporter of CHR and our affordable housing mission.

At CHR, we believe deeply in working for those who work hard for our island, and the team at Jerry's embodies that spirit. Community connections like this are what make real progress possible. We're grateful to be working together to strengthen our community.



27 SANIBEL BUSINESSES WERE SURVEYED:



85%

have had extremely or very difficult time hiring staff



63%

have had to limit services, reduce operating hours, and/or capacity due to staffing challenges



93%

said workforce is either critical or very important

Ambassador Spotlight: Ellen Israel

This April, we are proud to celebrate CHR Ambassador Ellen Israel for her outstanding commitment to our mission and community. Ellen brings both passion and purpose to her role, consistently showing up as a strong advocate for workforce housing on Sanibel.

Through her involvement, Ellen helps amplify the voice of our residents, strengthens community connections, and ensures others understand the vital importance of housing for the people who keep this island running. Her willingness to engage, support, and lead by example embodies the very spirit of the CHR Ambassador Program.

We are grateful for Ellen's dedication and proud to highlight her as this month's Ambassador.



Fire Chief Kevin Barbot, CHR Ambassador Ellen Israel, CHR Executive Director Nicole Decker-McHale

CHR community highlights



Anna Johnson (CHR Executive Administrative Assistant, pictured right) joined Zonta President, Erika Steiner and George Cretu at Zonta's Peek at the Unique

What a blast!
Our CHR community came together for a super fun St. Patrick's Day bingo bash!



CHR happy to attend the recent BIG ARTS Annual Benefit

It was a beautiful event filled with music, energy, and so many familiar faces from our island community. Being part of a community that values the arts, connection, and supporting one another means so much to all of us at CHR.



Community Housing & Resources (CHR) was honored to participate in the American red Cross Community Adaptation Program (CAP) Workshop for Lee County. The workshop brought together nonprofit leaders to share strategies for disaster preparedness, diversified funding, and stronger community partnerships.



Chief Kevin Barbot generously shared insights about the department's operations, equipment, and thoughtful design of the new station. Ambassadors enjoyed learning more about the dedicated team behind the Sanibel Fire District and the vital services they provide every day.

Community events

Friendly Faces – Speakers Becky Boyd & Anna Johnson

April 14th from 11 am to 1 pm

RSVPs are required – to register click here: friendlyfacesapril26.rsvpify.com

For additional information, contact Erika Arnowitz, Senior Services Director at 239-472-4775 or erika@fishofsancap.org.

Building Your Financial Plan: Free Budgeting Workshop

April 30th from 6 pm to 8 pm

RSVPs are required by April 28th. Please visit budget26.rsvpify.com to reserve a spot.

For more information, contact Simon Robson at FISH at 239-472-4775 or simon@fishofsancap.org.

Zonta Sanibel-Captiva Self Defense Class

April 16th from 6 pm to 8 pm | \$20 Suggested Donation

RSVP tinyurl.com/ZontaSanibelCaptiva