

“The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now.”
 -unattributed

Dear Friend,

We’re writing today to humbly ask you to invest in local leaders like Ana to create change in vulnerable neighborhoods with a gift by Dec 31...

When we first met Ana she was 9-years old. At that time, she was living across the street from a couple of inCOMMON’s staff members in a turn-of-the-century 6-plex. That decorative brick building didn’t just house Ana’s family - it served as the hub of her family. In one of the units lived Ana, her mom, dad, and 5 siblings. 2 of the other 6 units were occupied by Ana’s cousins, aunts, and uncles.

Not only was the building the hub of Ana’s family - it was the center point of the neighborhood.

Ana, her siblings, and cousins endlessly filled the neighborhood with activity, joy, and laughter. The empty lot next door served as both playground and sports arena. Soccer was typically the game of choice, but lightsaber battles and three-flies-up were also crowd favorites



Ana, age 14 (black shirt)

Ana’s home was only 2-blocks from inCOMMON’s Park Ave resource center, so she and her siblings had easy access to the programs and activities hosted there. **Ana has particularly fond memories of inCOMMON’s youth gardening club and neighborhood-wide block parties.** Her dad, Alejandro, would also help lead neighborhood clean-ups; her mom, Orquiea, would frequently serve the neighborhood by cooking at block parties.

Unfortunately, in 2018 a real-estate developer bought Ana’s 6-plex and evicted everyone in the building. Some neighbors still have vivid memories of Ana’s uncle and cousin lowering down moving boxes over a ledge where the front exterior stairs were prematurely demolished. As Ana’s family settled elsewhere, we lost touch for a couple years.

Will you help strengthen vulnerable neighborhoods by investing in local leaders like Ana with a year-end donation by December 31st?

I want to help leaders like Ana with a gift of...

- ☐ \$2500 to help create a unit of affordable housing
- ☐ \$800 to cover the cost of US citizenship
- ☐ \$80 to provide a month of ESL classes
- ☐ \$25 to offer one-on-one job training
- ☐ Other _____

☐ I will make an online donation at www.inCOMMONcd.org

☐ I want inCOMMON to contact me to discuss workplace matching, legacy giving, or other special arrangement

☐ I want inCOMMON to contact me to set up automatic withdrawal from my credit card or checking account

Then, in 2021, an inCOMMON staff member shared a job opening with Ana for an ESL coordinator position at inCOMMON, and she took it! We were so excited to not only get reconnected with Ana, but have her join our staff team as well!

Ana has grown into a leader in the ESL program, playing a major role in supporting her neighbors as they grow in their English-language skills. This year Ana will have assisted 98 neighbors in learning English. Ana says:

I love helping my neighbors in their journey to learn English, especially when I notice a Guerrero (Mexico) dialect, where my family originally comes from. Every session I grow as a person and a leader, and gain more and more confidence.

Ana's story powerfully reinforces 3 of inCOMMON's beliefs:

Where we grow up matters - Ana would be the first to tell you that having a resource like inCOMMON in her childhood neighborhood played an important role in her development

Stable, affordable housing is essential - Ana's life was significantly disrupted when her family was priced out of Park Ave, and inCOMMON temporarily lost a whole household of leaders who were making a difference in their community

Local leadership is extremely effective in neighborhood change - Ana's personal connection to her neighbors uniquely positions her as a trusted ally in their journey toward growth and self-sufficiency

Your investment in inCOMMON empowers local leaders like Ana to transform vulnerable neighborhoods into places where kids and families can flourish. Through programs such as adult education, leadership development, and affordable housing development, inCOMMON is strengthening the capacity of neighbors to lead change in their own community.

This strategy is working! Over the past decade in Park Ave, inCOMMON's longest-standing neighborhood, we've seen a **11% decrease in violent crime, a 15% increase in graduation rates, and a 17% decrease in poverty!**

Would you please invest in local leaders like Ana to create change in vulnerable neighborhoods with a gift by December 31?

This holiday season your donation goes even further. We're excited to share that we have a \$50,000 matching gift - that means every dollar you give will be doubled!

YOU can make a lasting impact in our community by partnering with neighbors like Ana. Please join us in this mission of "alleviating poverty at a root level by uniting and strengthening vulnerable neighborhoods" with a gift of \$25 or more.

With hope, *Christian Gray & Rachel Bahl*

PS - Don't forget to make the most of your gift by donating before the end of the year. All gifts up to \$50,000 will be doubled by Dec 31!

Please mail form to:

inCOMMON Community Development
PO Box 3451
Omaha, NE 68103



Donations received will be used for non-profit purposes, in our capacity as a 501(c)3 charitable organization (federal tax i.d. number 47-0842143). Per IRS regulations, all gifts are directed at the discretion of the recipient organization, and are fully tax-deductible as provided by law