



You may have met Bruce at some point over the last twenty years if you ate breakfast or lunch at the Blue Bonnet Diner in Northampton. Bruce was proud to have worked there for two decades. Everything changed one day when he suffered a stroke while walking to work. As he recalls, “one day you wake up, and your life changes. I couldn’t walk. I couldn’t work. I didn’t know what to do.”

While he was receiving treatment at Cooley Dickinson Hospital, a social worker reached out to Danielle McColgan, a case manager at CHD. Danielle responded immediately, helping Bruce apply for social security and disability benefits, working with other agencies to find a place for him to live, and assisting him with basic needs like getting food and a phone.

Bruce is currently one of ninety-five people living in six, single room occupancy residences in Northampton. He meets Danielle every Friday for coffee, when she visits his building. “My goal is to keep everyone here housed.” To that end, she helps each tenant with their specific needs. “Sometimes it might just be giving someone a ride to the Survival Center. Other times I might have to talk to someone’s physician or counselor to help them navigate the medical or benefits system. Whatever I need to do to keep them on the right path, I’ll do it.” Danielle’s grassroots efforts have enabled her to develop trusting relationships with tenants. And research has proven that this type of supportive housing is a cost-effective solution to homelessness.

Today, Bruce says “This place rocks. I don’t know where I would be without Danielle.”