



The HOPE Unleashed Campaign is a community initiative focused on Housing, Opportunity, Progress, and Education for the Mount Vernon Park and Pettit-Rudisill neighborhoods.

Our \$15 million capital campaign pursues private investments to implement comprehensive and holistic transformation in southeast Fort Wayne.

**HOUSING** \$1,500,000

- Purchase 25–30 rental properties.
- Lower rental rate and increase access to homeownership.
- Increase stability for families to secure retention.

**OPPORTUNITY** \$2,500,000

- Purchase identified vacant commercial lots.
- Establish low-risk, multi-tenant incubator space.
- Build offices and community work space.

**PROGRESS** \$500,000

- Renovate Brewer Park.
- Create multi-age play space.
- Improve walkable infrastructure to promote physical activity.

**EDUCATION & HEALTH** \$10,500,000

- Build a state-of-the-art early learning center.
- Serve over 200 children and their families through the center.
- Construct a mental health, physical care, and developmental clinic.

**CHUCK SURACK & VICKI JAMES**  
Campaign Co-chairs

**JAVIER MONDRAGON**  
Bridge of Grace,  
Founder/CEO



Future Neighborhood Clinic



Future Early Learning Center



Future Brewer Park

**HOW TO GIVE**

Scan the QR code with your smartphone or send a check made payable to: Bridge of Grace CMC  
5100 Gaywood Drive  
Fort Wayne, IN 46806



bridgeofgracecmc.org



# A BRIDGE OF GRACE CAMPAIGN FOR SOUTHEAST FORT WAYNE



**THE WHY**

APPROXIMATELY **26,000 PEOPLE**  
47.3% MALE  
52.7% FEMALE

**46806 ZIP CODE DATA**

MORE THAN **60%** of the homes are **single-parent** households

Houses & Condos **10,336**  
Renter-Occupied Apartments **3,748**

**% OF RENTERS**  
Mount Vernon Park and Pettit-Rudisill Neighborhoods **60%**  
Indiana **31%**

**NEARLY 48%** of Pettit-Rudisill households made **less than \$25,000 annually**. Furthermore, **NEARLY 63%** of the households **earned less than \$34,999**. Pettit-Rudisill has **significantly fewer** households making **\$50,000 or more** a year than elsewhere in Fort Wayne.

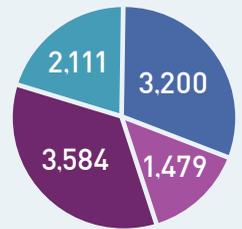
**HOUSING**

Affordable housing costs **30% or less of one's income**. Over the past decade, the affordable housing accessibility **HAS DECLINED**.

Estimated median house/condo value **\$59,157** vs. Indiana **\$156,000**

**NOWHERE** in the US can a family afford a modest two-bedroom apartment on a **minimum wage income**. According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition

**HOUSING OCCUPANCY**



Owned with mortgage  
Owned free & clear  
Renter occupied  
Vacant

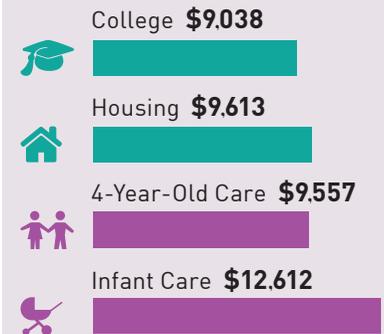
**EDUCATION**

**ONLY ABOUT 7%** of those older than 24 have a **COLLEGE DEGREE**, which is

**LESS THAN HALF** the national average.

For a family with median income, **care for one infant is 22% of the family income**.

**ANNUAL COST IN INDIANA**



The average cost of child care for an infant is more than the cost of in-state tuition at a 4-year public college.



# H

**HOUSING** renovation is a key component of the Bridge of Grace neighborhood revitalization strategy. By mitigating blighted homes, properties, and vacant lots, we have worked to enhance the quality of life for the Mount Vernon Park neighborhood residents. To further support Mount Vernon Park, Pettit-Rudisill neighborhoods, and the southeast Fort Wayne community, we want to increase access to homeownership, affordable housing, and economic stability.

According to US census data, approximately 60% of residential properties in Mount Vernon Park are rentals and 10% are unoccupied. The risk of displacement is on the rise for the legacy residents of our neighborhood.

We consider housing to be a tool that can increase access to wealth and home equity for low-income residents in southeast Fort Wayne. As we work to lower the rental rate and increase the homeownership rate, we are developing intentional relationships with area landlords. With the support of private funding, we desire to purchase homes in our target neighborhoods with the goal of creating permanently affordable and community-owned housing stock.

# O

**OPPORTUNITY** and equity are vital components to the success and economic growth of southeast Fort Wayne. Bridge of Grace believes equity is the path to prosperity and strives to close the opportunity gap for the residents of the Mount Vernon Park and Pettit-Rudisill neighborhoods. By implementing economic strategies, we aim to cultivate local entrepreneurs, retain existing businesses, and create an environment where locally owned businesses can prosper.

Once a thriving and occupied retail destination, southeast Fort Wayne is now home to the fewest number of retail establishments in the city. After listening to community members, we learned this untapped market is full of would-be entrepreneurs, but challenges including inequities, risk, and lack of experience create hesitance. Accessibility, proximity, and resources have become barriers to some residents of our underserved community.

To serve business owners and consumers, our vision is to purchase identified vacant commercial lots and establish a low-risk, multi-tenant incubator space. We will create a network of support for new and established entrepreneurs.

# P

**PROGRESS** is measured by momentum, and Bridge of Grace is driving the resurgence of the Mount Vernon Park and Pettit-Rudisill neighborhoods. We aim to facilitate comprehensive, sustained, and replicable revitalization and are motivated to improve the quality of life for the residents of southeast Fort Wayne.

We have encountered community members who consider departing southeast Fort Wayne to be their only hope for a positive future. We wish to counteract this challenge with hope and progress.

We believe that neighborhood revitalization strengthens southeast Fort Wayne by shifting residents' perceptions. As the community changes for the better, residents' neighborhood pride will increase.

Our efforts to revitalize southeast Fort Wayne will include the renovation of Brewer Park. Beautification and wellness features include playgrounds, sport courts, walking paths, and an art garden. Also included in the park renovation is a pavilion with restrooms and drinking fountains which will allow the Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Department to distribute summer meals to our neighbors.

# E

**EDUCATION** is key to breaking the cycle of poverty. There is a prevalent opportunity gap for children in the Mount Vernon Park neighborhood, and too many children are starting kindergarten unprepared. Ensuring strong starts for children in Mount Vernon Park requires improved quality of child care, early education opportunities, advocacy, and nurture of the whole child.

To support families, caregivers, and child care providers, we will build a state-of-the-art early learning center that will provide high-quality early care and education. The center will feature innovative classrooms, and we will employ highly qualified early learning professionals. We will serve more than 200 children daily through early care and education, parent outreach, and developmental screenings and services.

To demonstrate our commitment to the health and development of southeast Fort Wayne, as well as removing barriers for our neighbors, we are partnering with experts in our community to build a mental health, physical care, and developmental clinic in the Mount Vernon Park neighborhood.