

## Dream Centers of MI (Austin Kralisz)

- Dream Centers of MI is part of a “National” brand, associated with other “Dream Centers” in CA, AZ, etc. As the source of Christian Social Work, Dream Centers of MI tries to provide compassionate care with accountability. They are looking to provide services including warming centers, supportive housing for otherwise homeless, day care, transportation, etc.
- An issue with current warming centers provided through the government is that they are required to be no barrier warming centers. This means that they must accept individuals regardless of potential substance abuse or un-medicated mental health issues. Though this sounds good, due to insurance constraints, this limits the ability to provide shelter to women and children. Dream Centers of Michigan hopes to avoid this issue, and encourage guests to sober up before coming in.
- Dream Centers is non-profit, but doesn’t take government grants because of the regulations required. (Specific grants for specific projects may be taken on in the future if they are beneficial for a targeted service project).
- Austin Kralisz’ background includes 10 years at SOS and a recently completed Masters of Religious Ed. At Rochester College.
- Dream Centers of MI was recently started through Woodside Bible Church (15 campuses in Detroit Metro areas, 12 in affluent area, three in struggling areas).
- Through support of the congregations of Woodside, Dream Centers of MI was created, and they have obtained space in those three struggling area of Woodside Bible Church.
- Dream Centers of MI Main campus is Pontiac (Auburn and Opdyke).
- At the main campus, Dream Centers of MI provides warming center services. They serve hot meals three times a week. Prior to the meal there is a reflection or prayer, a Christian Message, that all participate in.
- Every Friday they also provide a 1-day food box. This “1-day” box actually includes enough food for longer than 1 day.
- Included with the meal is transportation to meals, available laundry all-day every day, showers available before the meal.
- Dream Centers of MI is starting to work on employment training and housing and is considering the potential of day care and transportation to help people begin new jobs.
- They are also looking at how to use approximately 88 acres off the back of campus (that they own) to build park space etc.
- Lookout House – a project of Dream Centers of MI is a house near the Pontiac campus. It houses 4, 18-24 year-old men that would otherwise have been homeless. They are trying to provide them housing, discipleship, and support. Besides housing they are provided life-skills training, job-training, etc. The residents are required to find some aspect of ministry to participate in at the Pontiac Woodside Church. One of the current individuals is the music leader for Pontiac Woodside church.
- The goal is to develop the first four residents, so that they can provide leadership and guidance in a structured fashion to others that are part of the church community. Through working with the first four residents, they hope to further develop the Lookout House program.
- In the house there is a “housing coordinator” currently in seminary. All utilities and food are provided. Each day includes a daily devotional in the house. The residents of the house work as the clean-up crew at the church twice a week. In addition, they provide daily review of church facility preparedness. The residents are employed but are also working on determining longer-term career plans and job-training needs.
- One of Austin’s goals is to bring more congregations into the fold, in support of Dream Centers of MI.
- Austin currently doesn’t have a formal plan to present, having only been on the job 3 months, but the facilities of Woodside include buses, gymnasiums, etc. providing the ability to provide so many services to others.
- The launch of Dream Centers was provided financially via Woodside but other donors have been involved as well including both businesses and individuals. Woodside makes appeals to their congregations to provide a lot of the ongoing support. Significant business support comes from community-minded businesses such as Chick-Filet and Hobby-Lobby. Dream Centers of MI is 3-years in, and financially stable.
- Austin is currently the only full-time employee – about to hire the next 2 full-time employees.
- They are currently looking into duplicating services of Pontiac campus at Warren and East Detroit campus as well.
- Austin extended an invitation to our commission to tour their facility.