

For Immediate Release

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Continuing a Legacy of Community Care

ICCF building celebrates its 100th birthday November 20

Philanthropy created and has preserved a center for community care in the East Hills business district. The D.A. Blodgett Home for Children at 920 Cherry Street was originally dedicated on November 20, 1908. This year the building celebrates a centennial birthday. The milestone will be marked this month as well as next spring in conjunction with the 35th anniversary of ICCF and the completion of ICCF's 500th unit of affordable housing.

ICCF is grateful for the legacy of community care it can carry forward at the location on Cherry. The building served as an orphanage for 40 years and as a rehabilitation hospital (Mary Free Bed) for 28 years prior to a lengthy vacancy and being purchased and restored by ICCF. Thoughts expressed at the original dedication in 1908 were echoed in the dedication of the ICCF home in 2007.

In tribute to his father in 1908, John W. Blodgett had this to say at the dedication:
“We can measure the progress of mankind by the importance and reverence given to the institution we call home. ... Always attracted to the helpless, it was but natural that the sympathies of my father should go out to the orphan... especially entitled to the protection of such a home as this.

My father also clearly recognized the saving grace of proper surroundings and influence during childhood. It may be truly said, therefore, that this building is the result of his sentiment and his practical humanity.

He designed to give to this city a home for children that fire could not destroy, and of such sanitary construction that disease could be lessened and controlled...”

Senator Julius Caesar Burrows, a friend of Delos A. Blodgett said, “Today we throw wide open the doors of this palatial home and in the name of its donor, Delos A. Blodgett, dedicate it to the children who now and in the years to come may enter within its portals and find refuge and protection beneath its friendly roof. We dedicate it to the relief of human suffering and to the promotion of human happiness. ...”

On October 25, 2007 at ICCF's ribbon cutting and dedication event Jonathan Bradford quoted Delos A. Blodgett, “For as we treat the foundling [orphan], so goes our society.” It is true Bradford asserted, that the manner in which we treat the vulnerable members of our society is representative of our values and it shapes the rest of our culture. Today ICCF, in the tradition of The D.A. Blodgett Home for Children and the Mary Free Bed Hospital, serves members of our community who are financially vulnerable and whose housing is at risk. ICCF is firmly committed to helping create a stable community rich with opportunity and fulfillment for all its residents.