



Sandra Roussel

Founder & CEO, Fresh Start Housing, LLC | Founder, A Fresh Start Method, LLC | Doctoral Candidate, Ball State University

Sandra Roussel is a social entrepreneur, educator, and doctoral candidate with over seventeen years of experience building programs that expand real economic opportunity for people facing housing instability. She is the founder and operator of Fresh Start Housing, a self-sustaining transitional housing and financial literacy program, and the developer of A Fresh Start Method, a licensable curriculum bringing that same approach to organizations nationwide.

Since 2009, Sandra has designed and operated every part of Fresh Start Housing's 15-month transitional housing and financial literacy program, from participant intake through goal achievement, without relying on grants or donations. In 2024, she founded A Fresh Start Method to bring this approach beyond her own program. The Method integrates four major learning theories, behaviorism, cognitivism, social constructivism, and connectivism, into a single curriculum addressing the cognitive biases, peer influences, self-control challenges, and institutional barriers that keep people from achieving lasting financial stability. She is currently leading a software development initiative to scale the Method for broader reach.

Sandra maintains active partnerships across the Department of Corrections, Child Protective Services, mental health facilities, and recovery centers, coordinating multi-sector collaboration that spans government, nonprofit, and community stakeholders. In 2025, she presented original research on financial literacy interventions at Ball State University's Benjamin Cohen Peace Conference, supported through the university's mentorship program for empowering Hispanic female students through equity-centered research.

EDUCATION

- Doctor of Education (Ed.D.), Adult and Community Education, Cognate in Executive Development and Public Service, Ball State University, expected 2027
- Master of Arts (M.A.), Executive Development and Public Service, Minor in Adult and Community Education, Ball State University, 2022
- Master of Science (M.S.), Clinical Mental Health Counseling, Clarion University, 2020
- Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), Psychology and Sociology, Clarion University, 2018, Cum Laude

CERTIFICATIONS

- Opioid Treatment Specialist Certificate, Clarion University, 2018

- CITI Program certifications in Social and Behavioral Research, Informed Consent, Responsible Conduct of Research, Mixed Methods, Trauma-Informed Care, AI in Higher Education, and Research Communication

HONORS AND AFFILIATIONS

- Graduate Student Excellence Award, Ball State University, 2025, recognized at the CHIRPS Student Symposium for research in transformative learning and community development
- Member, International Transformative Learning Association
- Member, American Association for Adult and Continuing Education
- Member, Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education
- Advisory Board Member, United Way Vitality Vision Council, contributing strategic guidance on initiatives to address generational poverty

A FOUNDATION BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Before her graduate studies, Sandra served in the United States Army National Guard and United States Army, including service with the 7-101st Aviation Airborne Division. She spent over a decade as a web applications developer, building custom software and managing database architecture, technical experience she now draws on in leading the Method's own software development for national scale.