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- Bank of American Foundation
- Central Massachusetts Agency on Aging
- Charter TV3
- Citadel Broadcasting Company
- United Bank
- Creative Form Graphics
- The Diocese of Worcester
- Elder Services of Worcester
- Episcopal City Mission
- City of Worcester Division of Elder Affairs
- Peoples United Bank
- George F. & Sybil H. Fuller Foundation
- Gilbane Building Company
- Knight Dik Insurance Agency, Inc.
- Price Chopper, The Golub Foundation
- Greater Worcester Community Foundation
- The Hanover Insurance Group
- The Health Foundation of Central Mass.
- Hoche-Scofield Foundation
- Holy Angels Church, Upton
- The Jacobson Family
- Metso Automation
- Mass. Dept. of Housing & Community Dev.
- Mass. Dept. of Transitional Assistance
- MLS/Property Information Network, Inc
- Paul and Phyliss Fireman Foundation
- Planting the Seed Foundation /BOLD STEPS
- Penny Wise Markets
- Rotmans Furniture and Carpet Store
- Saint –Gobain Abrasives, Inc.
- St. George Parish
- South High Community School
- The Stoddard Foundation
- UMASS Memorial Medical Center
- United Congregational Church of Worcester
- United Way of Central Massachusetts
- U.S Department of Housing & Urban Dev.
- Webster Five Cents Savings Bank Foundation
- Worcester City Manager's Division of Neighborhoods and Housing Development
- Worcester Telegram & Gazette



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CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS HOUSING ALLIANCE

2010 Annual Report



CMHA

CMHA

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MISSION

The Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance is committed to a leadership role in helping the communities of Greater Worcester and Worcester County respond to the needs of the homeless and near homeless by supporting prevention programs; ensuring the availability of high quality and appropriate sheltering and support services; encouraging the availability and access to decent affordable housing; and empowering people through education.



A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As the year of 2010 draws to a close, we reflect on a year of extreme challenges and great strides forward in our community and State in the goal of ending homelessness and building strong communities. The many accomplishments this year are made all the sweeter when we consider the context in which they were achieved. High unemployment and an economy that failed to turn the corner resulted in more families and individuals at risk of homelessness due to job losses, underemployment, foreclosure and budgets unable to support safe, affordable quality housing.



On behalf of the Board and staff at the Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance, I want to thank our partner agencies, community supporters, friends in the business and faith communities and our local and state officials who embraced these tough times not as an excuse to step back but rather as a call to do more. The number of families housed out of shelter or assisted from needing to enter shelter more than doubled. At a time when the number of families across the state being placed in emergency hotel rooms approached 1,000; we kept that number in the single digits in Worcester County.

Our partners in the single adult homeless field made dramatic headway in reducing the census at the PIP shelter through implementing a successful Housing First strategy. Support from the Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts, the United Way and the Commonwealth allowed us to launch an innovative education and employment program to give homeless families the tools and hope to begin to forge a pathway

to combat homelessness. This year, Walkers raised over \$120,000 in cash and in-kind donations and we enjoyed over 1100 participants in celebrating the 25th Annual WALK for the Homeless.

HOPE FOR HOUSING

HFH is an Interfaith Coalition of 26 congregations dedicated to preventing family homeless in Worcester County. HFH purchases food cards in bulk from Big Y, Stop & Shop, Shaws and Hannaford. Grocery cards are sold after services and the supermarkets donate a percentage of the sales to the HFH program to assist families to prevent homelessness.

In FY'10 HFH assisted 89 families and successfully distributed \$47,340 for homelessness prevention.

PERSONAL, OPPORTUNITIES, WORK, EDUCATION AND RENEWAL

P.O.W.E.R., launched in March of 2010, is an eighteen month educational program that offers employment readiness, training and placement and employment stabilization. Participants can access wrap around services which provide a pathway to self sufficiency and financial independence.

CMHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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approach in working with families to achieve independence.

In FY'10 the Village assisted 138 homeless families with shelter and wrap around services. Since its inception the Village has assisted over 560 families to move to permanent housing.

HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

- Provides homelessness prevention, housing stabilization services, and housing search assistance to income eligible families in Worcester County. Must have referral from Department of Transitional Assistance
- Works with local landlords, realtors, and housing developers to increase the number of available units affordable to low income families,

In FY' 2010, HAP assisted 302 families to move from shelter to permanent housing and provided follow-up housing stabilization services to an additional 400 families. With our partners at Friendly House and the Henry Lee Willis Center, 59 scattered site apartments provide shelter and support for homeless families.

YAH (YOUTH AGAINST HOMELESSNESS)

YAH- is a dynamic organization made up of teenagers from local public, private and Catholic High Schools in Worcester County. YAH's goal is to raise awareness in the community about homelessness and create a precedent for all students in Worcester to take an active role to make this a better community. YAH creates an environment in which all members have an opportunity to make a positive change in their community. YAH focuses on education, advocacy and community service. Its main objective is dispelling the homeless stereotype by raising awareness on who, how and why people become homeless. The growth of YAH has been impressive since its inception and it presently has chapters in five locations.



THE ANNUAL WALK FOR THE HOMELESS

The WALK is CMHA's signature event and raises awareness about housing & homelessness in Worcester County, and provides financial support

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out of poverty. Local businesses, foundation and individual private donors stepped up through increased giving to ensure that the Donations Clearinghouse and the Elder Home Repair Program could continue providing vital services to those most vulnerable in our community. State and federal government prioritized housing stability and made more not less resources available to support prevention and housing stabilization during an historic economic downturn.

I join you in celebrating the tireless work of the staff at CMHA and our sister agencies who made the seemingly impossible a reality for the thousands of lives they touched this year. I take strength and hope from the courage and resilience of the families and individuals we are honored to serve. The importance of what we all have done together is affirmed in the handwritten letter from a son, living out of the area, expressing his gratitude for the services of the Elder Home Repair program allowing his aging parents to remain safely in the home where they raised their family. The importance of what we do is found in the laughter of children running through the rooms of their new HOME and the young mom thanking us for the first warm comforter she has ever owned. We celebrate the pride and accomplishment of a parent who has completed a training program and gained a job to support their family. We take small steps each day and when we take them together as a community the impacts ripple throughout the community and overtime have a profound impact.

Never forget that each effort you make is attached to a human being and a life forever transformed by your caring and giving spirit!

My best looking forward, Grace Carmark



PROGRAMS

HOUSING COUNSELING AND HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION SERVICES

- Tenant/Landlord mediation
- Individual counseling on Landlord/Tenant rights and responsibilities
- Emergency payments for rental and utility arrearages (as funds are available)
- Housing rights and responsibilities trainings to landlords, tenants and service providers
- Walk-in and telephone counseling, information and referral to tenants and landlords

In FY'10 5,893 Households were assisted through the Housing Counseling program.

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NEIGHBORWORKS® HOMEOWNERSHIP CENTER OF WORCESTER

CMHA is proud to partner with the Oak Hill CDC, the Worcester City Manager's Executive Office of Economic and Neighborhood Development and Worcester Community Housing Resources to assist residents to realize and retain the American Dream of Homeownership. The Neighborworks® Homeownership Center of Worcester is located in the beautifully restored Odd Fellows Building 674 Main Street in Worcester. The HOCW provides the following services:

- Homeownership Orientation and Financial Fitness Classes
- Revolving 5 week First Time Homebuyer certification classes training prospective homebuyers from credit to closing
- Pre and Post Purchase Counseling
- Counseling Services for existing homeowners
- Downpayment Assistance, Affordable loan and insurance products
- Foreclosure/default prevention counseling

In FY'10 105 people attended the Orientation Program and 62 graduated from the first time homebuyer classes. There were 36 families who purchased their first home, and 121 individuals received foreclosure counseling

ELDER HOME REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE

- Minor home repairs for elder homeowners in Worcester and Southern Worcester County. Work is done by professionals for free., charges are for materials only.
- Routine maintenance such as snow removal, yard work, and gutter cleaning for elder homeowners in the City of Worcester. Volunteers welcome, donations accepted.

In 2010, 386 low income elder homeowners benefited from repair and or maintenance services through this program which allows seniors to remain independently in their own homes and promotes the preservation of valuable housing stock.

DONATIONS CLEARINGHOUSE

- Donated furniture and household goods assistance for families and individuals moving out of shelter, victims of fire, victims of domestic violence. Referrals from shelters and agencies working with the homeless. No Charge.
- Curbside delivery is available for a small fee.
- Rotmans Furniture Exchange Program.

In FY 2010, 625 unduplicated households made up of 1,656 individuals received furniture and household goods to make a fresh start and over 1,000 Worcester County residents donated items to make it all possible. Referrals came from 26 area agencies and service providers. A total of 12 drives were held to collect furniture and household goods.

PUBLIC EDUCATION, ADVOCACY, AND ORGANIZING

- Plan and support community response to need for safe affordable housing, shelter and appropriate supportive services
- Promote community awareness and support for best practices and new solutions to provide affordable housing, reclaim neighborhoods, and prevent homelessness
- Coordination of Continuum of Care in Worcester County including submission of annual McKinney Grant to HUD to fund Homeless Services, Shelter and Permanent Housing opportunities
- Advocacy on legislative and budget issues to increase affordable housing options, homelessness prevention and adequate supportive services to those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness

This program is the heart CMHA's mission striving to get to the root causes of homelessness with solutions that will realize the dream of reducing the need for services and providing safe quality housing and shelter to help people transition to self-sufficiency. In 2010 more than 757 participated in advocacy forums, a Speakers Bureau of people whose lives had been directly impacted by homelessness was formed, and broad based advocacy resulted in key legislative victories for homelessness prevention, shelter eligibility and affordable housing programs. \$5.5 million in funding was secured to provide funding for 695 beds for homeless service, shelter, and permanent housing programs on behalf of the Worcester County Continuum of Care.

THE VILLAGE AT CAMBRIDGE STREET

The Village is an apartment based family shelter program providing short-term housing, employment training, housing search, and other educational programming and services to assist displaced families transition to self-sufficiency. The Village celebrated its fourth birthday in February of 2008. The Village is an innovative program which takes a strength-based

