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- Alden Trust Foundation
- Anonymous Fund of GWCF
- Bay State Savings Bank
- Central Massachusetts Agency on Aging
- Charter TV3
- Creative Form Graphics
- The Diocese of Worcester
- Elder Services of Worcester
- City of Worcester Division of Elder Affairs
- Francis Asbury Palmer Fund
- George F. & Sybil H. Fuller Foundation
- Gilbane Building Company
- Price Chopper, The Golub Foundation
- Greater Worcester Community Foundation
- The Hanover Insurance Group
- Hoche-Scofield Foundation
- Holy Angels Church, Upton
- The Jacobson Family
- Metso Automation
- Mass. Dept. of Housing & Community Dev.
- MLS/Property Information Network, Inc
- National Center on Family Homelessness
- Oak Hill Community Development Corporation
- Paul and Phyliss Fireman Foundation
- Planting the Seed Foundation /BOLD STEPS
- Remax Vision
- Rotmans Furniture and Carpet Store
- Saint-Gobain Abrasives, Inc.
- South High Community School
- The Stoddard Foundation
- TJX
- United Bank
- United Congregational Church of Worcester
- United Way of Central Massachusetts
- UNUM
- U.S Department of Housing & Urban Dev.
- Webster Five Cents Savings Bank Foundation
- City of Worcester Division of Neighborhoods and Housing Development
- Worcester Telegram & Gazette
- Worcester Area Mission Society
- Worcester Community Action Council
- Worcester County Management Company



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CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS HOUSING ALLIANCE

2012 Annual Report



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

Courage, Hard Work, Compassion and Partnerships

Each year, it is my distinct challenge and pleasure to offer a summary of CMHA 's accomplishments and impact over the previous year. As I reflect on this past year, a few broad themes as opposed to any single specific or overarching activity or effort are what I have taken away and wish to highlight. These are themes that best capture the work that happens day to day at CMHA and within our partnerships with other agencies and with the families and individuals that we work with.



Working to reduce and ultimately eliminate homelessness within our region is an effort that requires courage in turning a long-established system rooted in emergency responses to one that is based on housing over shelter and long-term success over band aid solutions. Transitioning to this Housing First approach has required a great deal of courage on the part of those families served in making a commitment to their own plan to achieve self-sufficiency during a limited time period. The partner agencies have demonstrated great courage in adopting a new vision and new use of resources within their limited budgets, not to mention needing to retool and retrain staff to integrate their skills into a new model.

The task of redefining our community wide approach to homelessness and implementing a new model has indeed required very hard work. Front line staff, across agencies in the region, have had to work very hard to think out of the box and effectively target resources in a new way. Families and Individuals have had to work very hard to take steps

HOPE FOR HOUSING (HFH)

HFH is an Interfaith Coalition of 28 congregations dedicated to preventing family homelessness in Worcester County. HFH purchases food cards in bulk from Big Y, CVS, Hannaford, Shaws and Stop & Shop. Cards are sold after services and the stores donate a percentage of the sales to the HFH program to prevent family homelessness.

In FY 12 HFH distributed \$39,629.01 to 80 families and the average gift was \$495.37. This fall HFH celebrates its 5th Anniversary

PERSONAL, OPPORTUNITIES, WORK, EDUCATION AND RENEWAL (P.O.W.E.R.)

P.O.W.E.R. is an education and workforce development program designed specifically for homeless families or those living in transitional housing. P.O.W.E.R. fills a gap in the path towards self-sufficiency by adopting a long term model of individualized mentorship in order to transform the lives of participants. The program builds upon the commitment and motivation of participants to strengthen their education and job skills. P.O.W.E.R. develops individualized plans for each participant based on their own career goals and self-identified barriers. This is accomplished through comprehensive case management and stabilization services; referrals to support agencies; and by creating opportunities to expand professional experience. Through working with families on an individual level and by adopting a holistic approach, P.O.W.E.R. is able to advance its participants towards economic stability.

In FY12, P.O.W.E.R. assisted 53 individuals in workforce and educational development.

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tive program which takes a strength-based approach in working with families to achieve independence.

From July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012 the Village assisted 100 families and an additional 52 families received shelter and wrap around services in scattered site apartments.

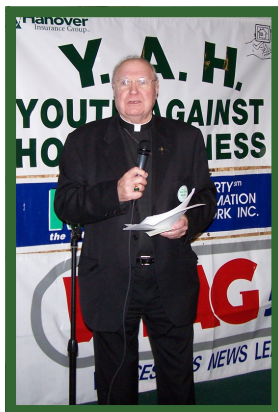
HOMEBASE

- Provides homelessness prevention, housing search and stabilization services to income eligible families in Worcester. Must have referral from Department of Housing and Community Development through the local office of the Department of Transitional Assistance. The program works with local landlords, realtors, and housing developers to increase the number of available units affordable to low income families

CMHA's HomeBASE Program assisted 286 families to obtain or retain safe, affordable housing in FY'12 in three different categories. 85 families were diverted/prevented from having to enter the family homeless shelter system. 76 homeless living in hotels were placed into housing and 125 families were assisted to move from homeless shelter into safe and affordable housing.

YOUTH AGAINST HOMELESSNESS (YAH)

YAH is a dynamic youth organization that creates an environment in which all members have an opportunity to make a positive impact in their community. Each school chapter focuses on education, advocacy, and community service. This year YAH held their first annual "Visions of Change Youth Summit". It was a rousing success and highly attended. Nine Worcester high schools showed their commitment to ending homelessness by sending groups of student representatives. Planning for the next summit to be held on April 10, 2013 is well underway.



THE ANNUAL WALK FOR THE HOMELESS

This signature event of CMHA raises awareness about housing & homelessness in Worcester County, and provides financial support to combat homelessness. Last year the WALK raised over \$124,000 in cash and in-kind donations to aid families who are in need of housing assistance. 1,100 WALKERS participated. Save the date for the 28th Annual Walk for the Homeless: Sunday, May 19, 2013

that are sometimes scary in charting their course to achieve economic and housing stability and believing in their ability to achieve goals within an economy that continues to struggle with high housing costs and limited employment opportunities.

The driving force that has bolstered the courage and driven the hard work in this process has always been and continues to be the compassion within our communities of Central Massachusetts and the firm belief that we all have a role to play in lifting our neighbors and improving the opportunities for all within our community. This compassion can be seen in the large numbers of community members, representatives from local businesses and faith-based institutions, as well as elected officials and other community leaders who have continued to step up and step forward to be a part of a solution that recognizes and seeks to overcome barriers for those in need of making a path forward to a healthy and safe life for their families.

Worcester and Worcester County has always built successes and confronted these challenges through strong partnerships across the region and its many sectors. CMHA is so very thankful to all who continue to partner with us in offering their valuable time, generous contributions and thoughtful support in addressing the challenges faced by those that we serve. I continue to be struck by the resilience and determination exhibited by those served and by the unwavering commitment across all sectors of our community to work to create a community in which everyone has a place to call home.



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'12 more than 7,000 Households were assisted through the Housing Counseling program.

284 Households were assisted with Homelessness Prevention Funds in FY12 with an average grant of \$515

NEIGHBORWORKS® HOMEOWNERSHIP CENTER OF WORCESTER

CMHA is proud to be a partner in the The NeighborWorks® HomeOwnership Center of Worcester assisting area residents with their housing needs, preventing homelessness, training landlords and securing productive homeowners throughout the community.

FY13 Annual production objectives for the NeighborWorks HomeOwnership Center of Worcester include:

- 600 Group Orientation Households participated
- 250 Households completed Homebuyer Training with 135 First Time Homebuyers
- 50 Households participating in Post Purchase Workshop
- 650 Households participate in foreclosure counseling via inquires and counseling- *40% of receiving counseling will stay in their homes*
- Lending program including funding from NeighborWorks®, Worcester Academy, and Community Block Grant, Rehabilitation, Emergency and Revolving Loan monies.
- Lead Abatement ~ Units of Cleared of Hazards- 90, Community Outreach and Education Goals- 50, Training goals- 100
- \$30,000,000 dollars of low/moderate mortgage loans facilitated
- \$125,000 dollars in down payment assistance
- \$400,000 dollars invested in rehabilitating homes

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 are welcome and donations are accepted.

July 1, 2011 through January 31, 2012, 318 Elder Homeowners were assisted through Repair and Maintenance Services.

DONATIONS CLEARINGHOUSE

- Donated furniture and household goods are distributed, free of charge, to families and individuals moving out of shelter, recovering from fire or natural disaster, fleeing domestic violence or elders at risk. Referrals come from shelters and agencies working with the homeless.



- Curbside delivery is available for a small fee in this effective partnership with Rotmans Furniture and Carpet.

Between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012 603 unduplicated households made up of 1,618 individuals received furniture and household goods to make a fresh start through 2,014 donations from Worcester County residents. Referrals came from 23 distinct area agencies.

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 2012 more than 500 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. \$5.3 million in funding was secured to provide funding for 474 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 was established in 2004. The Village is an innova-