



SUPPORTERS

- Alden Trust Foundation
- Caldwell Banker -Shrewsbury
- Central Massachusetts Agency on Aging
- Charter TV3
- Citadel Broadcasting Company
- Commonwealth National Bank
- Creative Form Graphics
- Diamond Staffing
- The Diocese of Worcester
- Elder Services of Worcester
- Episcopal City Mission
- City of Worcester Division of Elder Affairs
- Flagship 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 Inc.
- The Health Foundation of Central Mass.
- Hoche Schofield Foundation
- Holy Angels Church, Upton
- LVI
- 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
- 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 State College Foundation
- Worcester Telegram & Gazette



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CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS HOUSING ALLIANCE

2009 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

“A Year of Stepping Up: 2009”

As 2009 draws to a close, it will be remembered as a year in which so many stepped up to face the challenge of homelessness in our community and state with a new vision and a vigorous sense of purpose. That this mission was undertaken during the most difficult economic times of our time makes the bold steps and great success all the more extraordinary. Our staff and board and those at so many partner agencies are to be celebrated.

In the fall of 2008, 100 families and over 200 children were living in hotels in Worcester County as the emergency shelters were bursting at the seams. One year later, we are in the single digits for hotel stays and have occasional shelter vacancies to report. The fight to end homelessness is equally innovative and is focused on the single adult side with strong partnerships to transform from an institutionalized PIP shelter to a small assessment and triage center to ultimately close the shelter.

Moving to a housing centered as opposed to an emergency shelter centered approach is long overdue and the State Administration is to be credited for stepping up with the leadership and resources to make this transformation. The huge and common sense move of homeless services and shelter to the Department of Housing and Community Development sig-

lessness and provide aid through fundraising to those in need. By fighting homelessness in the community they hope to prevent homelessness from increasing and to one day eradicate homelessness all together in Worcester County. Through donations, dedication, and education YAH hopes to stop the spread of homelessness in Worcester County.



THE ANNUAL WALK FOR THE HOMELESS



This event raises awareness about housing & homelessness in Worcester County, and provides financial support to combat homelessness. This year, Walkers raised \$120,000 in cash and in-kind donations with more than 1100 participants.

HOPE FOR HOUSING

HFH is an Interfaith Coalition of 25 congregations dedicated to preventing family homeless in Worcester County. HFH purchases food cards in bulk from Big Y, Stop & Shop and Shaws. 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'09 HFH assisted 34 families and more than doubled its size of congregation participation.

CMHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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In 2009, more than 670 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. \$5.4million in funding was secured 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 approach in working with families to achieve independence.



In FY'09 the Village assisted 108 homeless families with shelter and wrap around services. Since its inception the Village has assisted over 360 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' 2009, HAP assisted 140 families to move from shelter to permanent housing and provided follow-up housing stabilization services to an additional 127 families. With our partners at Friendly House and the Henry Lee Willis Center, 59 scattered site apartments were brought on line in Worcester and Southern Worcester

County to provide shelter and support for homeless families.

YAH (YOUTH AGAINST HOMELESSNESS)

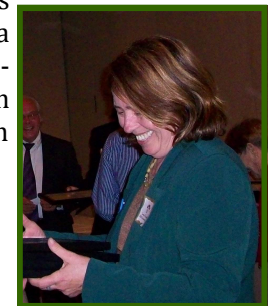
YAH – is an organized group of teenagers from local public, private, and catholic High Schools who are united from Worcester County. YAH's goal is to bring awareness to the community about home-

naled the commitment of the Administration and our Legislative Delegation in being full partners in this journey to end homelessness. Across Worcester County, leaders of the business, provider, faith community and concerned citizens stepped up to form a regional network to ensure coordination in executing plans to end homelessness. The "Planting A Seed Foundation" stepped up making small grants to help families afford the small but critical tools to take a path out of poverty such as uniforms to start a job, tuition to enter an employment training or certificate program, or books to complete an educational program. Members of 24 area congregations stepped up through the Hope For Housing supermarket card campaign using their collective buying power in exchange for a percentage match from area supermarkets for a homelessness prevention fund. Providers of educational/ employment service programs stepped up with support from the Health Foundation of Central Mass to develop employment / educational programs to assist families to achieve self-sufficiency. Local foundations and businesses have come forth and their generosity has been nothing short of amazing.

Finally and most significantly, the staff members carrying out this mission are to be applauded for their dedication, resourcefulness and flexibility in taking a new business model and running with it. The families and individuals receiving services have been full and valuable partners in developing and executing this new system which gives them a new option that houses them rather than warehouses them in shelter; they have stepped up to embrace a model that engages and empowers them.

May 16, 2010 marks the 25th Annual WALK for the Homeless. Over the years, we have seen twists and turns in the response to homelessness. We have never seen a year of such support, and holistic system change. Let us greet that day and the coming year with greater determination, community collaboration and hard work in the field. The success and hope one feels when they jingle the keys to their new home or select furniture at the Donations Clearinghouse and all that feeling means to a family, a child getting their own room or an individual having their own haven is our mission and results in a benefit and bonus to the health and vitality of our entire community.

Thank You,
Grace K. 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'09, 5,684 Households were assisted through the Housing Counseling program.

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'09 664 people completed the first time homebuyer classes. There were 268 families who purchased their first home, and 2061 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 2009, 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 2009, 616 unduplicated households made up of 1,622 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 50 area agencies and service providers.

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.