



CENTRAL
MASSACHUSETTS
HOUSING
ALLIANCE, INC.

2014 ANNUAL REPORT



CMHA

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www.cmhaonline.org



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CELEBRATING TWENTY YEARS OF LEADERSHIP, ADVOCACY AND CARING SERVICE DELIVERY



November 2014 marks the twenty year anniversary of the merger of a direct service housing agency and a homeless and housing advocacy group to form the Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance (CMHA). I joined the team one year before the merger, and I have been spending time reflecting on our history. I'd like to share some of the highlights with you.

In 1994, CMHA's budget was about \$360,000 with a core staff of 10. It is now over \$12 million with a staff of 50. In 1994, the agency had no State or Federal contracts. Today we serve as the lead agency for state funded family shelter in Worcester and HUD Continuum of Care Homeless dollars in the region, passing through over \$7.5 million to agencies providing shelter and services throughout Worcester County.. While we administered only \$40,000 in funds to prevent homelessness in 1994, this past year we distributed over \$430,000 in homelessness prevention funds to stabilize 276 households comprised of 832 individuals.

In 1994, the agency budget was about \$360,000 and is now over \$12 million and a core staff of 10 has grown to a staff of 50.

What is most heartening is that the growth of CMHA has been completely mission-driven. Each step forward has been carefully measured against fulfilling the combined, equally important missions of the agencies that formed CMHA: provide quality services to those at risk of homelessness and lead advocacy efforts to increase housing stability and eliminate the factors that lead to homelessness. We are grateful to a Board that has supported this mission over twenty years and to the longevity and continued dedication of a staff that partners in this mission and vision and carries it into the day to day work serving families and individuals with respect and dignity. We are grateful for the many businesses, faith based, political leaders and members of the general community who have continued to step up and stand with us each step of the way.

Here's to another successful twenty years of mission-grounded work to keep individuals, families and children housed, safe, and healthy.

My best,
Grace

STAFF MILESTONES

MILE 20

Grace Carmark 20 +
Sam Niford 20 +

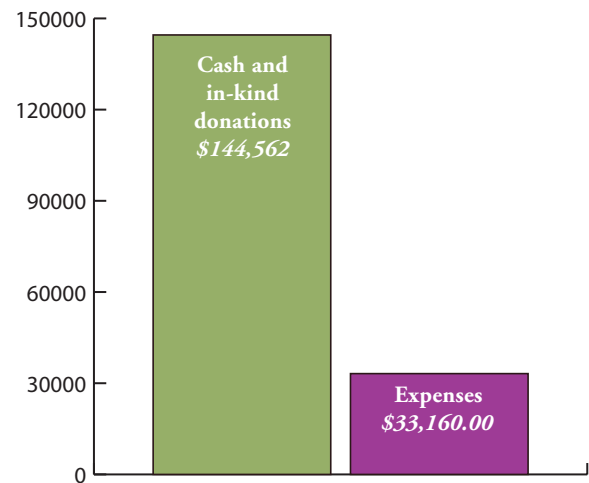
Mike Cahill 10 +
Jessica Cox Valade 10 +
Barbara Duda 10 +
Nydia Febo 10 +
Kelly Filock 10 +
Ann Gibbons-Smith 10 +
Emilia Ibanez 10 +
Patrick Mahoney 10 +
Noemi Martinez 10 +
Lynn Millette 10 +
Bethzaida Rodriguez 10 +
Rosa Salas 10 +
Maria Trepanier 10 +

MILE 5

Ruth Carrion Febo 5 +
Pamela Easter 5 +
Virginia Kaba 5 +
Katherine Kerr 5 +
Kathryn Kimball 5 +
Danielle LaRiviere 5 +
Patricia O'Leary 5 +
Patrick Smith 5 +
Miurka Torres 5 +
Enrique Villaronga 5 +
Jane Wangari 5 +

2014 WALK, RUN INCOME

Our 2014 Walk/Run for the Homeless raised \$144,562 in cash and in kind donations. Nearly 80% of the proceeds raised went to vital programs including CMHA, St. John's Food for the Poor Program, and Friendly House/The Interfaith Hospitality Network. We thank our co-chairs Father John Madden and Kevin O'Sullivan.



MESSAGE FROM CONGRESSMAN MCGOVERN



"I congratulate the Board and Staff of CMHA for 20 years of making a profound difference in the lives of thousands of families, individuals and children in Worcester County. CMHA has always respected the dignity and individual pathway to success for each and every family they work with and has incorporated those real life experiences to inform policy makers on how to best address the needs of those at risk, homeless or in need across our community."

PROGRAM SUCCESSES AND DATA

HomeBASE Program

In partnership with the Department of Housing and Community Development, 131 families were housed out of shelter and received stabilization/supportive services through the HomeBASE program in FY14.

Elder Home Repair and Maintenance

The program coordinates closely with a variety of partners in the Elder Service and Health Care network to allow elder homeowners to remain living independently in their own homes through providing repairs and routine maintenance. In FY14, the number of senior homeowners who were served was 315.

"Before Sam resurfaced my concrete steps, I had fallen on the loose stones. I now feel that the concrete stoop, steps, and walkway are secure when going in and out of the house. Sam checked my lighting over the front door. He put a roof diverter for the water, so the water wouldn't wear away the concrete and build up with ice on the stoop. Sam, I am so grateful to you for providing me with this home repair program. You are an incredible, kind man and an extremely hard worker." -Lynn



Donations Clearinghouse (DCH)



The DCH collects and redistributes gently used household goods and furniture to those moving from shelter, fleeing domestic violence, recovering from a natural disaster or elders at risk. The DCH helps

individuals and families to make a new start that makes a home.

DCH assisted 572 households comprised of 1,689 individuals. 746 donors contributed 2184 items to the DCH in FY13-14.

Community and business drives to support the DCH were held by:

- St. Mary's Church in Shrewsbury
- St. James Church in Grafton
- Congregational Church of Grafton
- TJX Corporation
- Unum (virtual drive)



"...the entire donation process, from first phone call through the pick up today, with Donations Clearinghouse has been excellent. This is mostly due to the time and care you personally provided. Thank you for your follow through and professionalism. I will spread the word about your organization to any of our friends looking to donate good household items."

~ Patrick and Heather Moran, DCH Donors

"It was great – helped me get started"

~Lillian A., DCH Customer

Housing Counseling and Homelessness Prevention

The CMHA Housing Counseling Program is the longest standing and highest volume program of the agency rooted in the prevention of homelessness through providing counseling and mediation to landlords and tenants as to their rights and responsibilities. Community resources, state prevention funds and other resources are brought together to develop a holistic approach to address issues that place families at risk of homelessness.

The Housing Counseling Program worked with 8,833 unduplicated households in FY14. The State Residential Assistance to Families in Transition (RAFT) program assisted 113 with homelessness prevention.



Convening the Worcester County Continuum of Care

CMHA is the convener of the Worcester County Continuum of Care and fosters long-term planning for developing the most effective and humane approach to reducing homelessness in the region which includes planning and ongoing collaborations with 20 agencies across the county. In FY14 CMHA secured over \$6 million to fund vital homeless services and supportive housing. Utilizing 3 full time staff members, CMHA also manages a county wide data collection and reporting system for all homeless programs within the continuum called the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

PROGRAM SUCCESSSES AND DATA

Public Education & Advocacy

The Public Education and Advocacy Program is at the heart of CMHA's mission; weaving together the delivery of quality services to homeless and at risk households within a larger advocacy agenda focused on addressing the root causes of homelessness. PE&A provides leadership to increase community awareness, strengthen coalitions, and mobilize support for policy/budget initiatives that promote long-term solutions. Key partners in this effort are families and individuals who have experienced homelessness who work with staff to share their stories and the barriers faced to obtain and maintain safe and stable housing for the long term. Partnering with local community supporters and state and national advocacy partners, we provide a voice drawn from real life experiences to inform decision-makers of how best to increase access to affordable housing, prevent homelessness and reduce the barriers to achieving self-sufficiency. In FY14, these collective efforts resulted in increased funding for the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP), the Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT) program, and the Tenancy Preservation Program (TPP).



Youth Against Homelessness (YAH)

Youth Against Homelessness (YAH) is a dynamic organization that creates an environment in which local high school students in Central Massachusetts have an opportunity to make a positive change in their community. Our mission is to bring awareness to the community about family homelessness. YAH Chapters can be found in the following schools: Abby Kelley Foster Charter High School, St. Mary's Junior/Senior High School, St. Peter Marian High School, and South High Community School.

Hope for Housing

Hope for Housing is a non-profit program developed by the Interfaith Coalition to Prevent Family Homelessness. The project raises awareness about homelessness in our community and utilizes the collective buying power of congregations to raise money for the prevention of family homelessness. Currently 28 congregations participate in the program, which utilizes gift cards to local stores. The retailers donate 2-10% of all sales to the Hope for Housing program to assist families at risk of homelessness. In 2014, \$18,258.95 was distributed to families for homelessness prevention services. Since its inception in 2008, the Hope for Housing Program has raised and distributed \$208,527 to prevent family homelessness.

POWER (Personal Opportunities for Work Education and Renewal)

POWER is an innovative program to assist families in shelter to attain self sufficiency for the long term. It is a collaborative program with partners in the workforce development community and the Worcester Community Action Council and all area family shelter providers.

In FY14, POWER assisted a total of 45 individuals with intensive case management and 22 people were placed in jobs.

For Elise (not her real name), the mother of three young boys, being homeless put her family in a constant state of upheaval and uncertainty during the five years they bounced from shelter to shelter in different communities. Elise believed that for her family to truly thrive she needed an education, permanent housing, and gainful employment.

Elise was referred to the P.O.W.E.R. Program by her case manager at a CMHA shelter. She studied for admission to training programs and college; and graduated from the Parenting Journey Seminar presented by Worcester Community Connections Coalition. Elise eagerly volunteered at Dress for Success, the boutique that suited her up for interviews and special events; secured an internship at the YWCA; and jumped into the fold for CMHA's Walk for the Homeless. Elise's compassion and sense of giving back is inspiring.

She achieved another life goal by securing permanent housing. The home she has created has helped her family thrive. With the stability of a home, her boys are excelling in school. Her son started sixth grade at the Nativity School and his younger brother is applying for next year. Elise has also focused on her own education. She is attending college and has a full time job, with future aspirations of working in the field of early childhood education.

Elise never lost sight of what she wanted from life: a stable home for her and her children, an education, and a job she loves. We're proud to have her as part of our CMHA family.

Family Shelter

The fastest growing segment of the homeless population in Worcester County and across the state and nation continues to be among families with school age children. The number of households of homeless families rose by 22% in Worcester County from 2013 to 2014. CMHA leads the effort to provide shelter with supportive services in Worcester with our partners at Friendly House and Catholic Charities. Families are assisted and supported, while in shelter, to access tools and services to overcome barriers and move from homelessness to self-sufficient living in their own homes. CMHA currently provides 180 units of family shelter and served 213 families in FY14. Of those families, 134 were moved from shelter units to permanent housing.

PROTECTING FAMILIES FROM HOMELESSNESS

SUPPORTERS

276 households



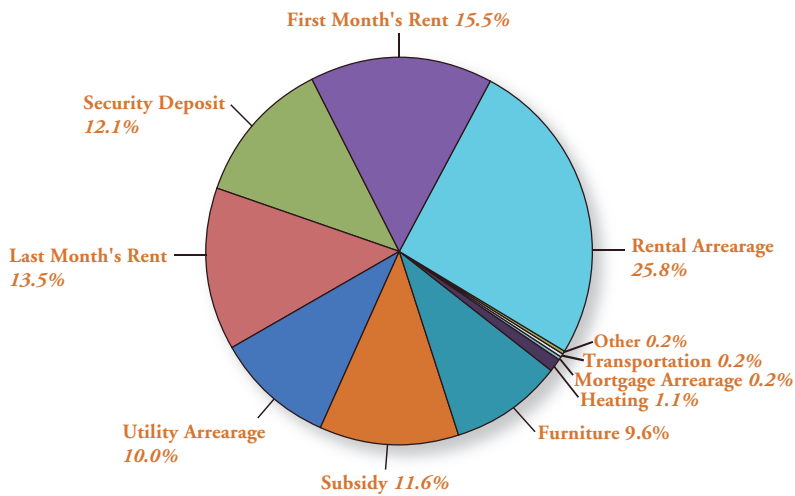
**823 people....
414 adults
+409 children**

**\$1,563 –
average amount**

**\$431,295 total
support provided**



HOW OUR DOLLARS PREVENT FAMILIES FROM BECOMING HOMELESS – FY14 IMPACT



- Alden Trust Foundation
- Bay State Savings Bank
- Central Massachusetts Agency on Aging
- Charter TV 3
- Chuck and Mud Band
- Coney Island Hot Dogs
- 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
- Greater Worcester Community Foundation
- Price Chopper/The Golub Foundation
- The Hanover Insurance Group
- Harvard Pilgrim Health Care
- Metso Automation
- Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development
- MLS/Property Information Network, Inc.
- Montachusett Opportunity Council
- National Center on Family Homelessness
- One Family, Inc.
- Paul & Phyllis Fireman Foundation
- People's United Bank
- Planting the Seed Foundation
- Polar Beverages
- Rainbow Furniture
- Reliant Medical Group
- ReMax Vision
- Rotman's Furniture and Carpet Store
- Saint Gabriel the Archangel Parish
- Saint-Gobain Abrasives, Inc.
- Southbridge Savings Bank
- South High Community School
- The Stoddard Foundation
- TJX Foundation
- United Bank
- United Way of Central Massachusetts
- UNUM
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Webster Five Cents Savings Bank Foundation
- Worcester Area Mission Society
- Worcester County Management Company
- City of Worcester Division of Neighborhoods and Housing Development
- Worcester Telegram & Gazette
- WTAG/WSRS
- Unibank
- Timothy P. Murray
- Parterre Garden Services
- Alternative Technology Group
- Hoche Scofield Foundation
- Serene Wedding Photography
- Oak Hill CDC

A SNAPSHOT OF FAMILIES WE SERVE THROUGH HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION FUNDS

Head of Household

Female	83.0%
Male	17.0%
Average Age	37.4
Employed	46.0%
Disabled	29.0%

Avg. Gross Annual Income \$18,380

Marital Status %

Divorced	10.5
Domestic Partnership	9.1
Married	12.7
Separated	6.9
Single	57.6
Widowed	3.3

Average Family Size 3.0

Single Parent Household 53.3%

Ethnicity

African American / Black	19.2
Asian	0.4
Hispanic	48.2
Native American	1.4
Other	1.1
White	29.7

Education

Certificate	2.2
College Degree	10.1
Did not Complete High School	26.4
High School or GED	45.3
Some College	15.9

Household Locations: Boston • Cherry Valley • Clinton • Douglas • Fitchburg • Gardner • Leicester • Lunenburg • Milford • Millbury • Northbridge • Northborough • Oxford • Paxton • Rutland • Spencer • Southbridge • Webster • West Boylston • Whitinsville • Worcester • **# of Housing Subsidies: 77**

SAM BITAR, PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



My first experience with CMHA was as a participant in the WALK for the Homeless. I was very impressed by the way the community rallied around supporting their efforts to eradicate family homelessness. Since joining the board, I have come to appreciate the work that CMHA does every day to bring awareness to the issues surrounding homelessness, to provide direct services to prevent homelessness and end the cycle of homelessness, and to advocate for a vulnerable population that often feels hopeless and abandoned by society. The dedicated staff of CMHA have been and continue to be an inspiration to me.

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"It has been a pleasure for me, both personally and professionally, to be able to work with CMHA for the past 15 years. My business consists of renting apartments and it is a wonderful situation to be able to have these families and children as tenants. The families are so happy once they get an apartment to call home. I cannot say enough about CMHA and how kind they are to our community.

My business has benefitted immensely from our partnership and we look forward to continuing our relationship to help the families of Central Massachusetts. "

*Sincerely,
Joan O'Rourke
Worcester County Management (owner, Michael O'Rourke)*



SAVE THE DATE
PLEASE JOIN US!
THE 30TH ANNUAL WALK/RUN
FOR THE HOMELESS
SUNDAY, MAY 17, 2015
ELM PARK, WORCESTER

For three decades, our Walk/Run for the Homeless has raised community awareness and valuable resources to help prevent family homelessness in Central Massachusetts. Help us reach even more families in 2015!

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