



STOHN'S
FOOD FOR THE POOR
PROGRAM
no woman, or child
ever is hungry.

LEADING THE WAY

HOME

2017 Annual Report



cmha
Central Massachusetts
Housing Alliance, Inc.

cmhaonline.org

Photo by Joe Santa Maria - Kill the Ball Media

A Message from the Executive Director



Reflecting on the many accomplishments, challenges and the hard work of 2017; I am also reminded that this has been a time in which many have felt unsettled in the changing world around us. The uncertainty and disruption that many have felt this year continually reminds me of the unease and lack of stability that is felt by so many who CMHA and our partner agencies serve feel on an ongoing basis. I am so impressed with the concern of staff to keep pushing forward and their relentless determination to remain focused on the mission and assisting families and individuals to move forward and attain a healthy and stable life for their families. We are most proud this year of the increases we have made in providing homelessness prevention, workforce development and stabilization resources available to all that we have the honor to serve. We are thankful to our many partners in the public, private and non-profit sectors for walking with us every step of the way. We are grateful to the incredible courage of the families we serve in making their journey forward and to the support we receive from the CMHA Board and all of our partners. New challenges and opportunities await in the coming year and I have never been more confident that our agency, partner agencies and our community are ready to push forward. Thank you all.

Looking forward,

Grace K. Carmark—Executive Director



Congratulations to the 2017 Award Recipients



We recognize the following people for their commitment to our community and who share the spirit of CMHA:

David Palmgren Memorial Award

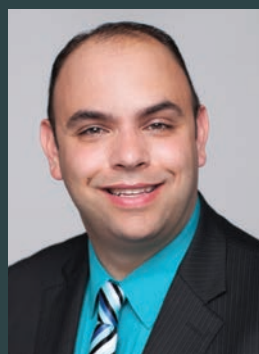
Paul Belsito, Hanover Insurance Group

Janice Nadeau Award for Housing and Community Service

Sarai Rivera, District 4 Worcester City Councilor

Judy Brown Cahill Award

*Amaryllis Chaves, Director of Greater Worcester
Housing Connection*



As we celebrate the success of the past year, and move forward to the challenges of 2018, I want to express my thanks and admiration to so many who are a part of the CMHA mission. We are blessed with a committed and engaged Board of

Directors, a staff who work tirelessly to push the mission forward on behalf of the people they serve daily, and so many partners from all sectors of the community who stand with us. It is an honor to serve as Board President of an organization that works collaboratively to make a real and positive impact on the lives of so many in our community. Our beloved former Board member Matt Ryan put it best when he said "Not everyone can do everything but all of us can do something."

Sincerely,

Sam Bitar – President



Board of Directors

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— *Vice President*

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Wedgewood

the mission

Prevention • Self-sufficiency • Advocacy and Education • Collaboration

“Recognizing the dignity of all, CMHA leads a collaborative response to homelessness that fosters long-term housing stability through prevention, quality services, education and advocacy.”

Convening the Worcester County Continuum of Care (CoC)

CMHA is the convener of the Worcester County Continuum of Care and fosters long term planning to develop the most effective and humane approach to reducing homelessness in the region. Efforts include planning and ongoing collaborations with agencies. In FY 2017, CMHA secured over 6 million dollars to fund 25 vital homeless services and supportive housing projects across the county. Utilizing three full time staff members, CMHA also manages a county wide data collection and reporting system for all homeless programs within the continuum to track success and needs in addressing homelessness. A diverse and broad range of community-based stakeholders serve on the CoC Advisory Board to ensure that services and housing provided by the CoC are the best match to community needs. The CoC provides 450 units of housing annually.

Public Education & Advocacy

Public Education & Advocacy is the heart of CMHA's mission of addressing the root causes of homelessness and encouraging long term housing stability. It works to raise awareness of the real issues of homelessness and lack of affordable housing opportunities in our community. This is done through a program of community education, coalition building, and mobilizing support for policy and budget initiatives that would result in real system changes and benefit those we serve. PE&A saw 19% increase in the number of person who attended its monthly Housing, Homelessness & Benefits meetings, a 4% increase in the number of attendees to its Family Housing Information Forum, and a 3% increase in the number are participates in the Legislative Luncheon. Through its advocacy efforts, CMHA worked with partner agencies to change rules that unfairly penalized HomeBase families, increased funding to the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP) allowing more families to access affordable housing, and protected funding for key programs in a difficult budget climate. Most importantly the program works with at-risk and formerly homeless families to influence decision makers and educating the public as to the barriers they face and puts a human face on the issue of homelessness.

Youth Against Homelessness

Youth Against Homelessness (YAH) is comprised of area High Schools faculty and students as they join together to help cultivate an atmosphere of engaged learning and positive change. CMHA works with our area high

\$40,000

AMOUNT
DISTRIBUTED FOR
HOMELESSNESS
PREVENTION
THROUGH HOPE
FOR HOUSING

56%

OF PARTICIPANTS
SECURED JOB,
INTERNSHIPS AND
EDUCATIONAL
OPPORTUNITIES
THROUGH
THE P.O.W.E.R
PROGRAM

9%

DECREASE IN
HOMELESS
FAMILIES IN
WORCESTER
COUNTY

3,024

HOUSEHOLDS
CONSISTING OF
7,560 INDIVIDUALS
WERE ASSISTED
BY THE HOUSING
COUNSELING
PROGRAM

185

FAMILIES HOUSED
OUT OF SHELTER

598

HOMEOWNERS
ASSISTED BY THE
ELDER HOME
REPAIR AND
MAINTENANCE
PROGRAM

1,049

INDIVIDUALS
ASSISTED BY THE
DONATIONS
CLEARINGHOUSE

schools to increase students' knowledge of current issues in the community and work collectively to explore real solutions they can initiate within their schools and neighborhoods. We believe a solid education improves the overall health and wellness of our community. Area high schools who participate include: Doherty Memorial High School, Burncoat High School, South High Community School, North High School, Worcester Technical High School, Claremont Academy, University Park Campus School, Abby Kelly Foster High School, Holy Name CCHS, Notre Dame Academy, Wachusett Regional HS, St. Peter-Marian CCHS. We are thankful to Hanover Insurance Group Foundation and Unum for their support of the 7th Annual Visions of Change Youth Summit which will be held on November 8, 2017.

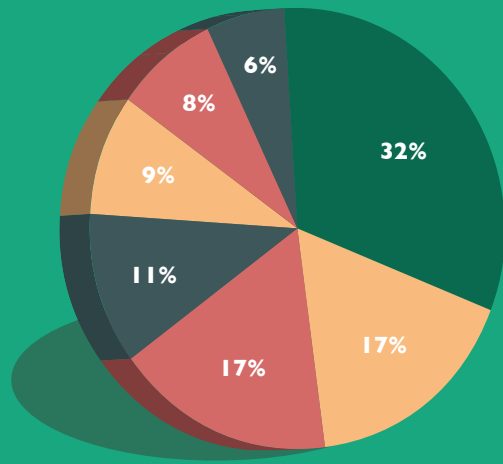
Hope for Housing

Hope for Housing is a partnership developed with the Interfaith Coalition to Prevent Family Homelessness and CMHA. HFH raises community awareness and utilizes the collective buying power of congregations to prevent family homelessness. Currently 29 Worcester area congregations partner with local retailers who donated 2-10% of all sales to CMHA's HFH homelessness prevention funds. In FY 2017, \$40,000 was distributed to families for homelessness prevention service. Since inception HFH has distributed \$285,000 in addition to providing homeless prevention support, HFH also increases awareness and understanding of issues of homelessness amongst the 29 participating congregations.

P.O.W.E.R. (Personal Opportunities for Work, Education, and Renewal)

POWER is a comprehensive, holistic, and collaborative program that provides workforce and educational development services through intensive individual coaching, workforce readiness classes, coordination with community partners, access to supportive resources, and development of a social support system. The focus of POWER is to work with and support program participants in their efforts toward family stability through establishment of career and education goals and pathways. With the goal to stop the cycle of family homelessness through support to and preparation of parents to enter the workforce and develop a career pathway, POWER creates a seamless system of support in collaboration with the program participant and their housing case manager: In 2016-2017 45 individuals received work readiness assessments and intensive case management and 23 enrolled in 4-week work readiness classes. 56% of participants either secured a job or internship or enrolled in a continuing education program.

HOW OUR DOLLARS PREVENT FAMILIES FROM BECOMING HOMELESS – FY 2017 IMPACT



Rental Arrearage.....	32%	Furniture	9%
First Month's Rent	17%	Utility Arrearage.....	8%
Security Deposit	17%	Subsidy.....	6%
Last Month's Rent.....	11%		

299 households **833** individuals **427** children **\$1,665** average assistance **\$500,000** total assistance

Family Shelter

The largest segment of the homeless population in Worcester County and across the nation continues to be families with school age children. While in shelter, families are assisted and supported to access tools and services in order to overcome barriers and move from homelessness to self-sufficiency and are supported to achieve independent living in their own homes. Services provided to families in and moving from shelter include workforce readiness, budgeting skills, housing search, and parenting skills and support. In FY 2017, CMHA provided emergency shelter and support services to 337 families and of those, 185 families were successfully housed out of shelter with follow up services. In 2017, a total of 304 families who had moved from shelter to housing received follow up stabilization case management services.

Elder Home Repair & Maintenance

The program coordinates closely with 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 to keep elders safely and independently housed. 598 unduplicated senior homeowners were served in FY 2017. The program promotes healthy independent living for senior homeowners, preventing them from needing to enter more costly institutional settings and preserves valuable neighborhood housing stock.

Housing Counseling and Homelessness Prevention

Housing Counseling is the longest standing and highest volume CMHA program. It's rooted in a prevention first model through providing counseling, education, and mediation to tenants and landlords as to their rights and responsibilities. Community resources, state and local prevention funds, and other resources are brought together in a holistic approach to address issues that place families at risk of homelessness. Mediation and problem solving is used to resolve housing issues and homeless prevention assistance is made available where the intervention will lead to housing stability. A total of \$500,000 in prevention resources were distributed to prevent homelessness for 299 households consisting of 427 children. A total of 8,398 individuals were seen by the program in 2017. An average intervention cost of \$1,685 prevented these households from entering shelter at a cost of \$3,000 per month with an average shelter stay of 6 months. Homelessness prevention is the most cost effective and best approach for families to achieve income and housing stability.

HomeBASE Program

HomeBASE is a flexible assistance resource available to families eligible for the state's Emergency Assistance (EA) program that provides assistance to help families find affordable housing and move from shelter to housing rapidly. This coordinated Rapid Re-Housing Strategy has proven to be a critical piece in reducing the costs of housing families in emergency shelter for long stays and to eliminating the practice of housing families in hotels. The resources allow families to quickly move to sustainable housing with follow up case management and supportive services. 185 families were successfully housed with this resource in FY 2017. The average assistance per family of \$5,000 makes good fiscal and moral sense in preventing families from languishing in shelter for 6 months at a cost of \$3,000 per month and most importantly promotes the independence and quality of life for families to move to self-sufficient living.

Donations Clearinghouse

The Donations Clearinghouse (DCH) provides an extraordinary service to families and individuals who have lost their homes and belongings, and are ready to begin anew. The program gathers reusable furniture and home goods from residents of Worcester County who no longer have a use for them, and offers them - free of charge - to those who need them desperately. Rotmans Furniture and Carpet Store is a key partner in providing this service, as are local churches and businesses who hold drives and perform service projects throughout the year. In FY 2017, the DCH assisted 1,049 individuals in 375 households referred by 69 area agencies. 642 Worcester area residents donated 2243 items to help families make a fresh start and make a house a place to call home.

We thank our partners who held drives for furniture and household goods, and lent their time and talent at the warehouse to repair and ready donated items:

- Ayer Recycling Committee
- National Grid
- People's United Bank
- St. James Parish of Grafton
- St. Mary's Parish of Shrewsbury
- St. Michael's on the Heights of Worcester
- St Peter-Marian Jr/Sr High School
- United Way of Central MA
- Unum



thank you.

\$136,660 raised



Thank you for making our 32nd Annual WALK for the Homeless a great success! With your help we raised \$109,768 and we received in kind donations that were valued at \$26,892. Nearly 85% of the proceeds raised went to vital programs in our community, including CMHA, Friendly House and the Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN), St. John's Food for the Poor Program and Hope for Housing (HFH). A big thank you goes out to our co-chairs, Father John Madden of St. John's Parish and Kevin O'Sullivan for their dedication, support and enthusiasm.

**Save the date, Sunday May 20th for the 33rd WALK for the Homeless.
Contact Amelia Peloquin for more information at apeloquin@cmhaonline.org**



cmhaonline.org

Photo by Joe Santa Maria - Kill the Ball Media



A snapshot of families we serve through homelessness prevention funds:

Head of Household

Female	80.9%
Male.....	19.1%
Average Age.....	38
Employed.....	52.5%
Disabled.....	25.8%
Average Gross Annual.....	\$31,000

Marital Status (%)

Single.....	59.2
Married	14.4
Divorced	13
Domestic Partnership.....	8.7
Separated.....	4.0
Widowed.....	0.7

Ethnicity (%)

Hispanic.....	53.5
White.....	24.4
African American / Black.....	19.4
American Indian.....	2.3
Other	0.3

Education (%)

High School or GED.....	42.8
Did not Complete High School.....	24.1
Some College.....	22.1
College Degree.....	8.0
Certificate.....	2.7
Client Refused / Unknown.....	0.3

Household Locations

Barre	Millbury	Uxbridge
Charlton	North Grafton	Webster
Clinton	Oxford	Wheelbright
Dudley	Shrewsbury	Whitinsville
Fitchburg	Southbridge	Winchendon
Gardner	Spencer	Worcester
Leominster	Sterling	
Milford	Townsend	

Average Family Size 2.8

Households with Children..... 70.6%

Single Parent Household..... 52.2%

Thank you to our supporters:

Alternative Technology
 Berkshire Bank Foundation
 Central Massachusetts Agency on Aging
 Charter TV 3
 Chuck and Mud Band
 City of Worcester Division of Neighborhoods and Housing Development
 Coney Island Hot Dogs
 The Diocese of Worcester
 Elder Services of Worcester Area
 City of Worcester Division of Elder Affairs
 Fallon Community Health Plan
 Francis Asbury Palmer Fund
 George F. & Sybil H. Fuller Foundation
 Greater Worcester Community Foundation
 Imperial Distributors
 Kill the Ball Media, Joe Santa Maria
 Price Chopper/The Golub Foundation
 The Hanover Insurance Group
 Metso Automation
 Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development
 Michael Martin
 MLS/Property Information Network, Inc.
 National Center on Family Homelessness
 People's United Bank
 Planting the Seed Foundation

Polar Beverages
 Rainbow Furniture
 Reliant Medical Group
 ReMax Vision
 Rotmans 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 Way of Central Massachusetts
 United Way of Sun Coast
 UniBank
 Unum
 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
 WCVB Channel 5 TV
 Webster Five Cents Savings Bank Foundation
 Massachusetts Woman's Home Missionary Union
 Worcester Area Mission Society
 Worcester County Management Company
 All Saint's Episcopal Church
 Belmont AME Zion Church
 Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church
 Christ Episcopal Church
 Christ the King Catholic Church

Epworth United Methodist Church
 First Baptist Church of Holden
 First Baptist Church of Worcester
 First Church of Sterling
 First Congregational Church of Shrewsbury
 First Congregational Church of West Boylston
 First Congregational Church of Worcester
 First Parish Church of Berlin
 Greendale People's Church
 Immaculate Conception
 Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Church
 Our Lady of the Rosary
 Paxton Congregational Church
 St. Columba Catholic Parish
 St. Francis Episcopal Church Holden
 St. George's Catholic Church
 St. John's Church Worcester
 St. Luke's Episcopal Church
 St. Luke's Episcopal-Hudson
 St. Mary's Catholic Church
 Trinity Church Northborough
 Trinity Lutheran Church
 United Congregational Church
 Wesley United Methodist Church
 Women's Initiative of Central Mass



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Leading the way home

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