



HOUSING FOR ALL!!!

NEWS FROM THE NEW MEXICO COALITION
TO END HOMELESSNESS

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Making Progress Ending Chronic Homelessness with the Coordinated Assessment System

by Stephanie Lefebvre, Office Manager

When Donna Trainer started working as a Coordinated Assessment Connection Specialist for the New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness in August 2016, she did not entirely know how her work would affect those dealing with chronic homelessness in the community. Having previously worked at St. Elizabeth Shelter and Santa Fe Health Care for the Homeless, Donna has known and cared about many of the people in need of resources for a while. She now sits with them and conducts the Coordinated Assessment survey, which helps identify people who are most vulnerable and most in need of housing.

The second part of the Coordinated Assessment System matches those identified as chronically homeless with housing opportunities across the State. From January 2016 to date, the Coordinated Assessment System has identified 743 chronically homeless households and matched 213 of them with housing. An estimated 81 more should be housed by year end. In 2017, Roman Seaburgh, Coordinated Assessment Director, expects that 1,000 households will be assessed as chronically homeless and 450 will enter into housing. The remaining households should be housed in the following year, and going forward, the newly chronically homeless households will be able to obtain housing within 30 days of requesting it.

For Donna Trainer, conducting the Coordinated Assessment survey is an important matter. She makes a point of "making people feel comfortable and not intimidated by the survey so they can respond the most accurately."

She says the questions she asks about their health and living situation can be difficult but she most enjoys the section about "planned activities", which often triggers people to talk about what they like doing and makes them smile.

While Donna works as Coordinated Assessment support staff for northern New Mexico from the NMCEH Santa Fe office, Rachel McHugh and BeeAnna Chavez replicate the efforts for the Albuquerque area and the southern portion of the State from the NMCEH Albuquerque office. All three are working with Roman Seaburgh.



Donna Trainer, in her office in Santa Fe, right after returning from conducting Coordinated Assessment surveys at the Interfaith Community Shelter.

NMCEH Advocates to Ensure Everyone Has an ID

by Lisa Huval, Associate Director

Have you ever imagined how hard life would be without a driver’s license or state ID card? We all need an ID to open a bank account, obtain a job, get an apartment or obtain public benefits such as Medicaid. For many people experiencing homelessness, obtaining an ID is the first step towards housing and stability. Yet it can also be one of the most challenging.

In 2007, the New Mexico Motor Vehicle Department (MVD) tightened the rules for obtaining a driver’s license or state ID in order to move New Mexico towards compliance with the federal REAL ID Act (the REAL ID Act sets minimum standards that each state must meet when issuing driver’s licenses or IDs.) The Coalition advocated against these new rules, because they would prevent many New Mexicans – including those experiencing homelessness – from being able to obtain an ID. As a result of our advocacy, MVD created the Alternative ID which is a valid form of ID that is easier to obtain. The Alternative ID has worked well for the past 7 years, allowing many people experiencing homelessness to obtain an ID and exit homelessness.

The Legislature passed a bill during the 2016 session to bring New Mexico fully into compliance with the REAL ID Act. Unfortunately, as a result of that bill MVD believes it can no longer issue Alternative IDs and will stop doing so in mid-October. At the same time, MVD has issued new proposed regulations to bring the requirements for obtaining a driver’s license or state ID in line with the new law.

The bad news is that it will be very difficult for many people experiencing homelessness to obtain a driver’s license or state ID under these news rules, which are quite restrictive regarding what type of documentation can be provided to establish identity. The good news is MVD is required to accept public comment on these proposed regulations, and the Coalition believes that feasible changes can be made to the proposed regulations that would make it easier for people to obtain a state ID. For a more details of our analysis and comments, please visit our website at www.nmceh.org.

While this may seem like a very dry and technical issue, this could have a huge impact on the lives of those experiencing homelessness in our state. This type of advocacy is an excellent example of the behind the scenes work that the Coalition does to end homelessness in New Mexico.

Our Progress Housing All Homeless Veterans and All Chronically Homeless People in New Mexico

by Hank Hughes, Executive Director

Since January 2015 we have been working on an effort to find and house all of the homeless veterans in New Mexico as well as all the people who are chronically homeless (people who have been homeless for a year or more either all at once or in several episodes are considered chronically homeless). The chart below is through August 2016.

Chronically Homeless People		Homeless Veterans	
Housed since January 2015	Still needing to be housed, estimate	Housed since January 2015	Still needing to be housed, estimate
536	874*	1,055	157*

* The numbers still to be housed are based on the coordinated assessment surveys we and our members conduct of homeless people, and since people are sometimes confused by the questions about veteran status and chronic homelessness, the actual number is likely to be lower.

Our goal is to reach the point where homeless veterans and chronically homeless people can obtain housing within 30 days of asking for assistance. We are close to this goal for veterans and at least a year away from the goal for chronically homeless people.

Our Sincere Gratitude Goes Out to These Individuals & Organizations

Thank You to Our Individual and Business Supporters (since last newsletter)

5 Star Burgers
Leslie Barclay
Jean Bergeron
Margaret Blackburn
Susan Boe and Stanley Robb
Maria Canfield
Sedena Cappannelli
Representative Gail Chase, *in memory of Sherry Sandlin*

Thomas Claffey
Susan and Patrick Conway Oliphant
Nina Dougherty, *in memory of Sherry Sandlin*
Mark and Bernadette French
Rebecca Frenkel
Stephanie Greene, *in honor of Emma Benjamin*
Julia Hunkins, *in honor of Raphael Benjamin*

Michael Mandell
Helene Pfeffer
Robert Schwartz, *in memory of Sherry Sandlin*
Sweet Water Harvest Restaurant
Aaron Taylor, *in honor of Mary McMaster*
June Wiley, *in memory of Thomas Wiley*

We really appreciate:

- **Leann Kemp** and everyone else at the **Mortgage Finance Authority** for putting on a great Housing Summit in September and for their work all year to help New Mexicans obtain affordable housing.
- The New Mexico office of the **Veterans Administration, Goodwill Industries**, and the **Veterans Integration Center** who are working especially hard to help us house all of the homeless veterans in New Mexico.
- **The City of Albuquerque**, especially **Heidi Jordan** and **Doug Chaplin** in the Department of Family and Community Services, for providing the funding we needed to more fully staff the Coordinated Assessment Project in Albuquerque.

Welcome to Our New Staff Members

Rada Moss is helping us expand and improve services for homeless people in all of New Mexico outside of Albuquerque. **Hana Ottesen** is managing the VISTA volunteers at our member agencies as well as helping expand and improve services for homeless people in Albuquerque. **Donna Trainer and Bee Chavez** are working on the coordinated assessment project. The four new positions are funded by grants from HUD and the City of Albuquerque.

Advisory Board:

Abigail Adler, Tom Ageson, Peter Chapin, Gloria Holloway

Board of Directors:

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Alexandria Taylor, Co-Chair, Valencia Shelter Services
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Lynn K. Valdez, Supportive Housing Coalition of NM
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Lynn Love, San Juan County Partnership
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Paul Lanier, Homeless Advocate
Theresa Armendariz, Las Casa Inc.
Connie Chavez, Barrett Foundation

Veterans Helping Homeless Veterans Board:

Mike Barr, Revell Carr, Tom Ageson, Chris Calvert, Mark French, Raphael Benjamin.

Staff:

BeeAnna Chavez, *Coordinated Assessment Connection Specialist*
Victoria Cruz, *Data Analyst*
Hana Ottesen, *Project Coordinator*
Hank Hughes, *Executive Director*
Lisa Huval, *Associate Director*
Julie Jacques, *HMIS Project Manager*
Stephanie Lefebvre, *Office Manager*
Lisa Maury, *Project Coordinator*
Rachel McHugh, *Coordinated Assessment Data Specialist*
Rada Moss, *Project Manager*
Benjamin Ofoma, *HMIS Data Quality Coordinator*
Mark Oldknow, *Program Director*
Roman Seaburgh, *Coordinated Assessment Director*
Donna Trainer, *Coordinated Assessment Connection Specialist*

Member Organizations and Individuals: For a list of our 77 members, please go to www.nmceh.org

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The New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness

- *Creating more housing for homeless people*
- *Quickly connecting homeless people to housing*
- *Holding governments accountable*

NMCEH Staff Are Helping Reggie Get Housing

by Donna Trainer, Coordinated Assessment Connection Specialist

Reggie Mosley, 50, has spent the better part of 5 years being homeless in the Southwest. Inspired by his namesake, his Uncle Reggie, he left New York City for the West to better his life. "I felt like I was getting a second chance", he said. "It was as if God was saying, 'you're not dead yet; get out there and get it done.'"

Reggie has a long and interesting work history. He fondly recounted his varied work experiences in life. Said to have "done everything", Reggie began work as a dishwasher in Grand Central Station at 15 years old, on his own accord and without his mother's insistence. He loved his time spent working in hospitals, especially transporting senior citizen patients and he feels that he had learned valuable new skills at every job, no matter the type of work.

Reggie became disabled some time ago and has struggled to find housing. He knows that being in a safe place to call home will help him maintain his sobriety and his health. Reggie is happy to be a part of the Santa Fe community where he feels that many of the service providers have been helpful and friendly to him. When NMCEH staff sat down with Reggie to complete his housing assessment, despite his story with the difficult times in his life, Reggie is quick to crack a smile and to give a thank you.



Reggie Mosley, sharing about his life experience and hope. He took the Coordinated Assessment survey so he can get housing after many years of homelessness.

Reggie mentioned that in his life a guiding principle can be, "I went out looking for one thing and found something else better along the way." This hopeful sentiment is his light that shines in dark places.