



HOUSING FOR ALL!!!

NEWS FROM THE NEW MEXICO COALITION
TO END HOMELESSNESS

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New Mexico Funded To Focus On Youth Homelessness!

By Fred Hernandez, VISTA Volunteer

The Northern New Mexico Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program is a result of collaboration between the New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness, Youth Shelters & Family Services, the Dreamtree Project, Childhaven, youth who have experienced homelessness, and other stakeholders across Northern New Mexico. This is a project built on HOPE and the deep conviction that we can and will eliminate youth homelessness in New Mexico for all youth and young adults who desire a safe place to call home.

HUD has awarded \$3.37 million to Northern New Mexican communities through a new pilot program, called the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP). This grant requires communities to collaborate in producing creative ways to solve youth homelessness. The New Mexico Coalition partnered with several key agencies and youth representatives to spearhead the pilot project that will utilize this federal funding to develop viable and sustainable solutions to end youth homelessness.

Two agencies that have taken leadership in implementing this project are Youth Shelters & Family Services of Santa Fe, and Dream Tree Project of Taos.

Youth Shelters & Family Service of Santa Fe has been providing street outreach, emergency shelter, transitional living, and other fundamental services to over 1200 homeless, in-crisis youth and family members each year. Dream Tree Project of Taos offers emergency shelter for teens, transitional living and life-skills classes for youth throughout northern New Mexico. These agencies have been at the forefront of this effort, contributing their knowledge to the initiative. Their expertise in developing best practices and programs tailored to the needs of youth experiencing homelessness makes them invaluable to New Mexico.

The data collected through this collaborative initiative would allow for a better approach in understanding how to tackle youth homelessness specific to our communities, paving the way for all other communities within our state.



Santa Fe Mayor Alan Webber addresses the 75 people from youth serving agencies in northern New Mexico who gathered in Santa Fe on October 25 to plan for ending youth homelessness in the region.

From the Executive Director

Measurable Progress Toward Ending Homelessness in New Mexico

A rather scrappy group of idealistic shelter operators (one of whom was me) and housing providers founded the New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness in the year 2000 with the lofty goal of housing everyone. It seems fair to look back and see what progress we have made. We, as a coalition of 85 agencies, have made some impressive gains.

A 25% Reduction in Homeless Count: Our annual point-in-time count is an indicator of how many people are experiencing homelessness taken on a single day in January. In 2011, there were 3,363 homeless people counted. That number decreased steadily through 2018 when 2,514 homeless people were counted. The reduction is due partly to an improving economy but also due to the increase in supportive housing that we have been working on all that time.

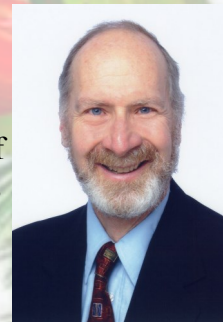
Six-fold Increase in Permanent Supportive Housing: We started with housing for 400 people who were disabled and homeless, and now we have housing for over 2,600 people who are disabled and were homeless. This includes new housing from federal programs, state programs, and local programs that we have pushed for at every opportunity. And we will keep working on this.

Veteran Homelessness Greatly Reduced: Albuquerque is where we have made the most gains in 2018. Las Cruces and Santa Fe have been certified as effectively ending veteran homelessness in their communities by the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, milestones we reached in 2016 and 2017. Albuquerque has been much harder since it has many more homeless veterans, but we will likely reach that goal in early 2019. In each community, NMCEH member agencies agreed to work together with the Veterans Administration to identify and house homeless veterans quickly. Meeting the federal goal means that homeless veterans can be housed within 90 days of asking for help.

A Plan to House Homeless Youth Backed by Money: In July, the NMCEH was awarded \$3.37 million to end youth homelessness in northern New Mexico. We spent September and October gathering input from partners in northern New Mexico and have submitted a draft plan to the Department of Housing and Urban Development about how we would propose to spend the money on new housing, services, and outreach, with the goal of housing any homeless youth in the 14 northern most counties within 30 days of their becoming homeless.

Convinced the Department of Motor Vehicles to Simplify Getting an ID: It took a lawsuit, but with the help of our partners including the Center on Law and Poverty and *Somos Un Pueblo Unido*, we convinced the state MVD to make it much easier for homeless people, or anyone, to get an ID or driver's authorization card. This is so important for people who have lost their ID in the process of losing their housing, as an ID is required to get new housing, a job, or even a motel room.

Using what we learn from housing homeless veterans and homeless youth, we can keep building the system of services and housing that will prevent homelessness when possible and rehouse anyone who becomes homeless within 30 days. We will continue to measure our progress until we reach this goal. Thanks to all of you who have helped as member agencies, donors, and friends!



*Hank Hughes,
Executive Director
NMCEH*

Our Sincere Gratitude Goes Out to These Individuals & Organizations

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

Margaret Blackburn
Building Adventures Unlimited, Inc.
Rebecca Frenkel
Patti & Steven Helfand
Ruth and Robert Howes
La Montañita Food Co-Op
Lynn Lewis, in memory of Susan Harrison Kelly
Suzanne and Frank Mulholland
Susan and Patrick Oliphant
Phillip & Leslie Stern, in memory of Susan Harrison Kelly

Congratulations to Meryl Lieberman, founder of Casa Milagro, permanent supportive housing in Santa Fe for homeless people with mental illnesses, for being named by the Santa Fe New Mexican as one of their 10 who made a

Board of Directors:

Nicole Martinez, *Co-Chair, Mesilla Valley Community of Hope*
Alexandria Taylor, *Co-Chair, Valencia Shelter Services*
Meryl Lieberman, *Treasurer, Casa Milagro*
Edward Archuleta, *Secretary, St. Elizabeth Shelter*
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Craig Sandoval, *Kewa House*
Carol Luna Anderson, *The Life Link*
Charlie Ward, *Good Shepard Center*
George Lyon, *Samaritan House*

And, **Special Thanks to:**

La Montañita Food Co-Op for designating NMCEH as the recipient of the donated bag credits when their customers get credit for bringing their own shopping bags.

Our **Albuquerque Fundraising Committee** for their going support!

The **New Mexico MFA** and especially **Leann Kemp**, for including NMCEH in the Housing Summit in September.

Enterprise Community Partners, for providing another two years of support for our Supportive Housing Toolkit Project.

Con Alma Health Foundation for a technical assistance grant that will begin in January to help us develop leadership among our member agencies.

Somos Un Pueblo Unido, the **Center on Law and Poverty**, the **New Mexico ACLU** and **Freedman, Boyd, Hollander, Goldberg, Urias & Ward PA** for pro bono legal work on improving regulations for people who need to get IDs from the State.

Advisory Board: Peter Chapin, Gordie Holloway, Peter Glankoff, Alan Jones, Abigail Adler, Sara Grab.

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Brie Sillery, *VISTA Project Coordinator*

Member Organizations: For a list of our 80 members, please go to www.nmceh.org

Please join with us to commemorate members of our community who have lost their lives from or correlating to homelessness.

The **Santa Fe Homeless Person's Memorial Vigil** will take place on Friday, December 21, 2018 at 3:00 PM in the Courtyard of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church (corner of Guadalupe & Agua Fria St). For more information please call Stephanie Lefebvre at 505-982-9000.

The **Albuquerque Homeless Person's Memorial Vigil** will take place on Friday, December 21, 2018 at 12:30 PM The event will start by meeting at the AHCH Memorial wall, followed by a short ceremony, silent march, music, light refreshments, concluded by lighting of candles. For more information please call Hana Gossett at 505-433-5175.

The **Las Cruces Candlelight Vigil** will happen on Friday, December 21, 2018 from 4 to 6 PM at Mesilla Valley Community of Hope, followed by a hot meal. Call MVCH at 575-523-2219 for more information.

The New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness



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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*



After escaping homelessness these young people are helping to end it for others. Right to left: Brandy Maldonado, Eleazar Flores, Cianna Padilla, Veronica Krupnick, Jazmyn Ward, and Sayra Lozano (Youth Action Board), and Scott Baumwald Youth Shelters staff member.

Living Through Homelessness, Now Helping to End It

By Hank Hughes, Executive Director

A dedicated group of young people meet every Thursday evening at Youth Shelters in Santa Fe, to work with NMCEH and Youth Shelters on ending youth homelessness in northern New Mexico. All have lived through homelessness in their own lives, and now they want to make sure other youth who are homeless have better options for escaping. Youth Shelters assigns a staff member, Scott Baumwald, to help organize this Youth Action Board.

Discussing housing and service options that would help most was the topic of a recent meeting. Sayra Lozano stressed the need for better child care options for young parents. Eleazar Flores talked about how the six months of rapid rehousing he received helped him but explained that for many people a longer term of assistance would be needed.

One idea that they all liked was for Youth Shelters and similar programs to help young people graduating from their housing programs to find compatible roommates to make housing on their own more affordable. Another topic was the need for case managers to have smaller case loads so that each youth could get more individual attention especially in the area of helping youth find jobs that were right for them. They also suggested a model of joint housing where older youth could mentor younger youth.

All of these ideas will become part of the planning document being assembled as part of the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program and many will be incorporated into the projects funded with the new grant (see page 1).