HOUSING FOR ALL!!!

NEWS FROM THE NEW MEXICO COALITION TO END HOMELESSNESS

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Larry Corriveau and Others Learn to SOAR

by Stephanie Lefebvre, Office Manager

Larry Corriveau had a very special connection to the SOAR process when he attended a training on March 19th and 20th. The NMCEH organized the SOAR training conducted by experts, Teddi Rivera, Debi Biringer and Valarie Carrillo. SOAR, which stands for SSI/SSDI Outreach Access & Recovery is a model for helping homeless people with disabilities successfully apply for SSI/SSDI (social security disability benefits). Nationally, 73% of all SSI/SSDI applications completed using the SOAR model are approved on initial application within an average of 91 days. Before SOAR such applications could literally take years to be approved. Nineteen participants, including Case Managers and Program Directors joined the training, motivated with improving the lives of their clients by helping them receive Social Security benefits.

At the beginning of the training session, each participant introduced themselves. Larry Corriveau was second to last to speak. The room went quiet as he spoke. Larry had been on a difficult journey, plagued with homelessness for over a decade, when he arrived in Albuquerque in 2012. Struggling with health and alcohol addiction issues he eventually checked in at the Good Shepherd, where for the following months he was able to work on his recovery. There, Larry met with a case manager who had just taken the SOAR training. Within weeks, Larry was approved to receive the benefits, which allowed him to make plans for his future. Next, Larry was able to find housing on his own. He now shares a home with someone in town. He plans on adopting a cat in the coming weeks.

Safely housed and financially secured, Larry now wants to help others exit homelessness and improve their quality of life. He decided that the SOAR training will get him started. He plans on volunteering at the Good Shepherd by filing SOAR applications. His main concern is deciding how to choose applicants over others when so many are in need. Ten days after the training, Larry filed his first two SOAR applications at the Social Security Administration Office.

SOAR trainers and trainees pose for a picture March 19th. Larry Corriveau stands behind two women, tenth from the left.

Our Sincere Gratitude Goes Out to These Individuals & Organizations

Special Thanks to:

- State Representatives Doreen Gallegos, Stephanie Garcia Richard, Tomas Salazar, Liz Thompson and Christine Trujillo and Senators Howie Morales and Nancy Rodriguez for working together to add $290,000 to the State budget for services for homeless people living in supportive housing.

- Gordie Holloway and Patti Ferguson for providing the food for our holiday party and **Abigail Adler** for hosting us.

- The Unitarian Church of Santa Fe for making NMCEH the beneficiary of their first Sunday giving in April.

- Mayor David Coss, for his two terms dedicated to improving affordable housing and the lives of those experiencing homelessness in Santa Fe.

- United Way of Central new Mexico, for hosting the NMCEH numerous training sessions.

- Piñon Fast Print for discount printing services.

-Dick Wagner of Wagner Digital, LLC, for discount webmaster services.

- The McCune Charitable Foundation for their recent generous grant to support the work of NMCEH.

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The US Department of Housing and Urban Development

Announcement:

There's still time!

Please join us May the 7th for the NMCEH Third Annual Conference at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center in Albuquerque.

For information and registration, please visit: *www.nmceh.org*
Or Call *(505)-982-9000*

Thank you to all the 2014 NMCEH Annual Conference Sponsors:

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Roswell Agencies Team Up to Provide New Permanent Housing

by Hank Hughes, Executive Director

There will soon be new permanent supportive housing for homeless people in Roswell. Eastern Regional Housing Authority and Turquoise Health and Wellness are teaming up to start a Shelter Plus Care program. This project was funded a few years ago as a project based program in Carlsbad, but the project had to switch to tenant based vouchers when the planned building was never built.

Chris Herbert, Cindy Ramos and Rita Lara from Eastern Regional Housing Authority met with Domingo Alonso, Alfred Velasquez, and Ruby Leos of Turquoise Health and Wellness and Hank Hughes of NMCEH on March 12 to review the program requirements and plan for the first tenants. When it is fully operational there will be over 9 housing vouchers for homeless people with disabilities and each tenant will receive supportive services from Turquoise Health and Wellness, which is Roswell's behavioral health agency. This is the first supportive housing program for homeless people in New Mexico's under-served southeastern corner.

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Thank You!
We want you to know that your thoughtfulness is truly making a difference in the lives of hundreds of New Mexicans in need of supportive services and housing!

The New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness

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- *Vibrant nonprofit housing programs*
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- *And public knowledge of real solutions*

Advocacy Pays Off at the State Legislature

by Lisa Huval, Policy and Advocacy Director

We have terrific news to share from the 2014 Legislative Session. The final FY2015 state budget that was passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor included $290,000 in new funding for homeless services. More specifically, this additional funding will be used to pay for transitional housing and permanent supportive housing services throughout New Mexico - two proven strategies for ending homelessness.

In 2013, we were able to secure $200,000 in additional funding for rapid re-housing programs. This means that we have increased state funding for homeless services by $490,000 over the last two years - a 50% increase over previous funding levels.

The active engagement of our membership was critical to our success. Eighty people from across New Mexico, representing twenty-one different organizations, joined us for our annual Lobby Day on January 29, 2014. We kicked off lobby day with a short training and breakfast at the Inn of the Governors. Then we walked up to the Roundhouse, where participants split into teams to track down their legislators.

Deborah Tang debriefs and offers final remarks at the end of the 2014 NMCEH Lobby Day.

Later in the session, our members wrote letters and called their legislators at key points in the budget process. Several members also came up to the Capitol later in the session to lobby key Senate Finance Committee members.

Our policy and advocacy committee will be meeting in April to develop our 2014-2015 advocacy agenda. We plan to build from our success the last two years and continue to advocate for increased state investment in proven solutions to homelessness.