

HOMELESS TIMES



A publication of the Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless

600-B East Gude Drive, Rockville, MD 20850

www.mcch.net

(301) 217-0314

Spring 2006

MCCH Clients Walk a Mile

This winter two Coalition clients participated in Walk a Mile, an innovative educational project run through the Community Action Board. This project attempts to bridge the gap between policymakers and their low-income constituents whose lives are directly affected by government policy but whose voices often go unheard. Seneca Heights tenant Maria C. was paired with Delegate Karen Montgomery (District 14) and Donald H., a resident of the Men's Emergency Shelter, was paired with Delegate Adrienne Mandel (District 19). Over the course of a month, these matches spoke weekly, participated in an in-person activity from each others lives, and the policymakers were asked to feed their families on the amount of money a family of their size would receive on food stamps.



Del. Montgomery with Maria and son at the Walk a Mile Closing Ceremony.

Walk a Mile enabled all participants to gain a greater understanding of each others lives by "walking a mile in each other's shoes." Maria explains that she and Del. Montgomery "shared more things in common than I ever would have thought." Del. Montgomery reveals, "It was wonderful meeting a woman, who despite very difficult circumstances, has managed to be a terrific mother doing the best she can for two young children, one with a lot of special needs." MCCH thanks everyone involved for their participation in the Walk a Mile program and is gratified that both Maria and Donald were able to engage in the important, and challenging, work of advocacy. Maria expresses how the program was self empowering; it "provided me with the opportunity to express concerns for homeless and low income families. In return, I gained a better understanding of the law and policy making process."

Coalition Homes Welcomes its First Tenants



Several tenants of Coalition Homes with MCCH's Carey Schneider.

Coalition Homes, Inc., MCCH's newest subsidiary, is now the proud owner of six efficiency apartments in a high rise building on Rockville Pike. Six formerly homeless individuals, who have been living in group homes operated by psychiatric rehabilitation programs, moved into their own apartments at the beginning of February.

The move from a structured group living situation to an apartment of their own marks the last step in a long journey these tenants have traveled. One tenant told us he had "been in 'em all" before he found his current program, naming the Men's Emergency Shelter, Avery Road Treatment Center, and

Chase Transitional Shelter. We wish these tenants much success in their new homes and thank Montgomery County's Department of Health and Human Services and Department of Housing and Community Affairs for their partnership which made this possible.

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Adrienne's Havens:

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Laytonville Havens:

Rebecca Urban, *Case Manager*, Anne Chapin, Pat Ellsbury, Stephanie Everette, Toni Smith, Catherine Nzams

Gaithersburg Havens:

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Seneca Heights Apartments:

Joseph Orenstein, Elaine Sands, Allison Suarez-Charles, *Case Managers*, Amanda Cavin, Raymond Griffin, Ernest Murray, Joseph Perry, Michael Shields, Clinton Wilson

Partnership for Permanent Housing:

Chandra Harris, *Senior Case Manager*, Marie Pyne, *Housing Support Specialist*

Ways to Help

Please contact Sarah Mahin at (301) 217-0314 x13 with any questions regarding these activities.

GoodSearch

Now you can raise money for the Coalition just by searching the Internet at GoodSearch.com. You use GoodSearch.com like any other search engine - the site is powered by Yahoo! - but each time you do, money is generated for the Coalition.

Here's how it works:

1. Go to www.goodsearch.com
2. Type "Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless" into the "I support" box and click on "verify"
3. Since GoodSearch shares its advertising revenue with nonprofit organizations, every time you search the web at GoodSearch, you'll be earning money for us.

GoodSearch also has a toolbar you can download from the homepage so that you can search right from the top of your browser.

You can keep track of how much we've earned by clicking on "amount raised" once you designate us as your organization of choice. The more people who use the site, the more money we'll earn, so please spread the word!!

Buy Wish List Items on Amazon.com

You can now purchase and have wish list items shipped to MCCH programs through amazon.com.

Instructions to view and donate wish list items:

1. Go to www.amazon.com
2. Click "Wish List" on the top of the screen
3. Type "Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless" in "Find a Wish List" and click on the "GO!" button
4. Scroll through the wish list and purchase items that you would like to donate to the Coalition's programs. Items purchased will be sent directly to the Coalition and you will receive a tax-donation letter acknowledging your gift in the mail.

Feed the Hungry

The Men's Emergency Shelter relies on donated food to feed its 170 residents. Please consider organizing a group of friends, family, neighbors or colleagues to prepare food for the shelter one day a month.

Workplace Giving Campaign

Payroll deduction is a great way to help men, women and children who are homeless in your community consistently and easily. Write in "Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless" and make a difference throughout the year!

The Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless, a community-based nonprofit organization, is a leading provider of permanent and transitional housing, emergency shelter and supportive services for people experiencing homelessness. The Coalition is an umbrella membership organization serving the provider network in Montgomery County through advocacy efforts, program coordination and educational activities. The Coalition spearheads a collaborative effort to implement a 10-year plan to end homelessness, "Homelessness in Montgomery County: Beginning to End."

Letter From the Board Chair

It is cold outside, our programs are filled to capacity, the emergency shelters are overflowing and there are still people living on the streets in Montgomery County. As you can see throughout this newsletter, the Coalition, with its many partners and supporters, is continually finding new ways to meet the challenges presented by this environment.

What keeps us going is the positive feedback from the hundreds of clients we serve each day. When the clients of Seneca Heights Apartments were recently surveyed this is what they had to say:

“My life is a lot less stressful.”

“I am able to maintain a savings account.”

“I feel mentally and physically stronger.”

“My unit was in mint condition when I moved in, and still is.”

“This program has been a big help and has changed my life.”

“Thank you for letting me live here. If you didn’t accept me I don’t know where I would be.”



*Carol Pearson
Board Chair*

Please join our efforts as we assist our least fortunate neighbors. There is information throughout the newsletter on ways to contribute today and over the next few months. For more details or for ideas on other ways to help, please contact our new Deputy Director Julie Maltzman, (301-217-0314 x11) who is already energizing our efforts to help end homelessness in Montgomery County.

Again thank you for your continuing support, your efforts are genuinely appreciated and are making a difference!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carol Pearson".

Investor Spotlight: The Carl M. Freeman Foundation

The Carl M. Freeman Foundation was established in 1960 and is committed to promoting quality community-based leadership and giving. Each year it donates over one million dollars to help fund local organizations. Over the past 45 years, the Foundation has supported hundreds of non-profit organizations, primarily in Montgomery County and Anne Arundel, MD and Sussex County, DE. The Coalition was recently awarded two grants, a major grant for our new initiative, Breaking Down Barriers, to assist with client financial needs, and a F.A.C.E.S (Freeman Foundation Assists Communities with Extra Support) grant, to allow children from the Partnership for Permanent Housing program attend summer camp. In addition, Julie Maltzman, Deputy Director, was a participant in this past fall’s first Carl M. Freeman Foundation Nonprofit Leadership Institute, an intensive training program for nonprofit employees. We are truly grateful to the Carl M. Freeman Foundation for their partnership and ongoing support.



MCCH’s Julie Maltzman and Sarah Mahin with Joshua Freeman, Chairman of the Foundation, at the F.A.C.E.S. award ceremony.

Safe Haven in Laytonsville Gets a Facelift



Laytonsville's newly renovated kitchen.

The houses at the Laytonsville Safe Haven have received a makeover thanks to Montgomery County's Department of Housing and Community Affairs. The front house has a new roof, exterior siding and an updated kitchen. The "back" house also has a new roof, a rebuilt sun room and a new heating and cooling system. Paved driveways have been added to both houses and they are now connected by a new cement walkway. Residents and staff are very pleased with the changes. The Laytonsville Safe Haven now has two fresh, modern, user-friendly houses conducive to providing mentally ill adults a healthy, supportive living environment.

MCCH Operating Overflow Shelter

In addition to operating our Men's Emergency Shelter and adjacent trailer at full capacity this winter, the Coalition is currently running an overflow shelter at another location in the county. As the county's emergency shelters became full, the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services asked the Coalition to organize and manage an overflow shelter. The number of men we provide emergency shelter to has reached a record high of 170 each night, a consequence of the ever-growing numbers of people experiencing homelessness in our community.

Seneca Heights Apartments Receives Computer Lab Donation

Seneca Heights Apartments received a donation of six computers and two printers from the Montgomery County Information Technology Foundation, Inc. on January 27, 2006. The Foundation is based out of Thomas Edison High School and provides local high school students with the opportunity to learn a job skill. The students receive older model, used computers which they clean and refurbish and then donate to a local nonprofit in need of a computer lab. Students and teachers from the program brought the computers, set them up, and installed all necessary programs for resident use.

The computers were officially presented to MCCH by Dr. Jerry Weast, Superintendent of Montgomery County Public Schools, on Thursday, December 22, 2005 at a ceremony at Thomas Edison High School. The ceremony was attended by the Coalition's Julie Maltzman, Deputy Director, Alice Forcier, Director of Housing Solutions, and Jen Wassmann, Program Assistant. Highlights of the presentation include speeches by the Superintendent and the students responsible for renovating the computers, who were justly proud of their part in giving this gift to the residents of Seneca Heights Apartments.

Seneca Heights is home to forty individuals and seventeen families exiting homelessness. Prior to the donation, there were only four computers available for resident use. With the new lab, our residents will be able to more easily job search, research on the internet, complete school work, and play games. The new lab is located in the main community room, which is the site of many SHA activities, including twice-weekly tutoring for the school-age children.



Edison HS students install the new computer lab at Seneca Heights Apartments.

Breaking Down Barriers Sees Early Success

Breaking Down Barriers (BDB), the Coalition's newest program, has already demonstrated its effectiveness by rapidly re-housing recently homeless individuals and families. Carey Schneider, the program's Housing Solutions Specialist, has been meeting with these clients, identifying the barriers which keep them from housing, and then assisting them in overcoming those obstacles with services and financial assistance. BDB has shortened the time people are homeless while limiting the trauma to clients and reducing the public cost of housing people in shelters.

The program is looking towards many success stories like that of Leslie, a working mother with two teen-aged sons. Soon after moving to the area after obtaining a job with the county government, Leslie's position was eliminated and, unable to pay her rent, she and her family lost their apartment. After being placed by the County's Health and Human Services in a motel for homeless families, Leslie began working at a department store but at a much lower salary, one which could not provide enough income to pay for a market rate apartment. BDB has partnered with a state program to provide Leslie a rental subsidy, arranged for her to receive donated furniture, and loaned her money to pay a storage bill allowing her to retrieve her family's belongings. Leslie and her family are now renting their own apartment in Montgomery Village and she is currently interviewing for another government job. We wish Leslie and her family much happiness and success in their new home.



Leslie with Housing Solutions Specialist Carey Schneider.

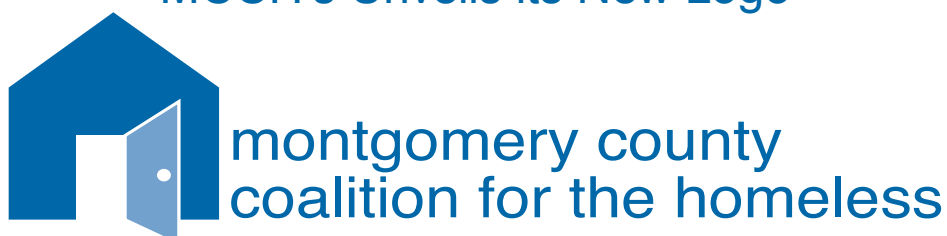
A Bright Holiday Season for MCCH Clients

Thanks to volunteer Santas, the residents at the four Safe Havens were treated to Christmas mornings filled with presents and surprises. Each resident was given the opportunity to submit a wish list; items included everything from coats and scarves to art supplies and electronics. Everyone was pleased with their gifts. A gentleman at Adrienne's was grateful for his radio because it allowed him to listen to jazz and remember a time when he had played saxophone in a band. A woman at Maplewood wrote: "Thank you so much for everything. It made for a warm and wonderful Christmas."

Residents of the Men's Emergency Shelter received lots of nutritious and festive food throughout the season as well as gifts of toiletries and clothing thanks to the generous donations of individuals, congregations and businesses. The Kiwanis Club of Gaithersburg sponsored a holiday family party at Seneca Heights, during which cookies were decorated, gifts were distributed, and photos in front of the tree with Santa were taken. The single adults all received gifts cards and the families received a variety of food cards, toys, and clothing. The Partnership for Permanent Housing families also received gift cards and donated toys. Several families were also sponsored by volunteers for the season.

A special thanks to all the holiday season donors!

MCCH's Unveils its New Logo



Join Us at the 10th Annual ShelterWalk 'n Roll

The walkathon raises awareness about homelessness in Montgomery County and funds to support the Coalition's shelters and programs. This year's event will include the music of "Jack Worthington & Stoney" and activities for the whole family.



Sunday, May 7, 2006
Rio Entertainment Center
Registration and activities
begin at 1:00 p.m.
Walk commences at 2:00 p.m.



Help the Homeless 2005

MCCH supporters joined tens of thousands of people for Fannie Mae's 18th Annual *Help the Homeless* Walkathon. In addition to raising funds to prevent and end homelessness, a significant element of this program is raising awareness about homelessness in our area. This past fall, MCCH alone engaged more than 4,700 youth through mini-walks at local schools, educational presentations and service projects. We are grateful to all the schools that participated in our youth engagement efforts, to our corporate partners for their generous support, and to Fannie Mae for making this wonderful program possible.



Somerset students chant "We Walk, We Talk, We Care, About Homeless People Everywhere!"



Students, teachers and parents at the Jefferson School show their support for ending homelessness.

Mini-Walk Schools

Bannockburn Elementary
Burning Tree Elementary
Carderock Elementary
Clara Barton Center for Children
F.S. Key Middle

The Jefferson School
The Oneness School
Roberto Clemente Middle
Somerset Elementary
Viers Mill Elementary
Westland Middle

Corporate Partners

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Thank You

To those who have given \$100 or more since our last newsletter.

MCCH is only able to print donations of \$100 or more. This reflects the incredible growth in support from people since MCCH's inception. All donors are appreciated - and each gift makes a real difference in the lives of people experiencing homelessness.

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Damascus United Methodist Church - Harwood House
Damascus United Methodist Women
Faith United Methodist Church
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Mid Atlantic Distributors
Pettit Family Charitable Foundation
R & F Metals, Inc.
Seneca Land, LLC
St. John's Episcopal Church
St. Matthew Presbyterian Church
St. Paul United Methodist Church
St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church
Taconic Anmed
Washington Waldorf School

In Honor Of

Harriet Anderson by Alfred and Nira Giddings.
Jeanne Andrews by Paul Andrews.
Kim Ball by Richard and Catherine Eig.
Minna Davidson by Criag Ludwig.
Blair Ewing by Martha Brockway.
Vicki Fish by Catherine Cleland.
Tom Folley by Kathryn and Samuel Folley.
The Hammond Family by Kathy Donnelly.
The Bob and Nancy Holland Family by Edward and Judith Holland.
Rev. Bob Keffer by L. Frances Jansen.
Will and Joan Kennedy by WM.H. and Coryne Melton.
Donald Kolar by Joseph and Kathy Kolar.
Molouh Loghman-Adham by Hossein and Mojgan Loghman-Adham.
Rose McNair by D. Faye Conley.
Ben Moran by Miriam Lippman.
Kelley O'Dell by Stephen and Jennie Lane, and Bill and DeAnn O'Dell.
The Olivers by Arturo Betancourt and Lulu Delacre.
Michael Purdy by Stephen and Jennie Lane.
Tammy Schmidt by Sharan and Howard London.
Jeff and Debbie Schwartz by Frances Nan Jensen.
Michael Tomasulo by anonymous.
Marge Whipple by Mark Whipple and Renee Raffini.
Paul and Barbara Wileden by Mary Wileden

In Memory Of

Hiram Evans by Jim and Jean Hochron.
Catherine Forman by Alice Forman.
Claire London by Lester and Estelle Cohen.
Charlotte Taylor by Alford and Charlotte Taylor.



Join Us!

Saturday, June 10th, 2006

MCI Center

Tickets available through MCCH or at
www.hoopsforthehomeless.org

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